

# Goals for College and Career Readiness

## Freshman Year

- ☐ Build strong academic, language, mathematics, and critical-thinking skills by taking challenging courses.
- ☐ Study hard and get excellent grades.
- ☐ Strengthen your vocabulary by increasing your reading.
- ☐ Become involved in co-curricular activities.
- ☐ Meet your high school counselor and discuss your plans for the next four years.
- ☐ Browse through college literature or surf the web to get an idea of what types of schools may be of interest to you.
- ☐ Check out what high school courses colleges require.
- ☐ Know NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) requirements if you want to play sports in college.
- ☐ Keep an academic portfolio and extracurricular record.
- ☐ Research career possibilities.
- ☐ Continue saving money for college.

## Sophomore Year

- ☐ Keep a record of your extracurricular involvement, volunteer work, and employment (all year).
- ☐ Make sure you are on top of your academic work. If necessary, meet with your teacher for additional help.
- ☐ Volunteer: this is a great way to identify your interests and to develop skills.
- ☐ It is never too early to start researching colleges and universities. Visit your counseling office to browse literature and guidebooks. Use the internet to check out college and university websites. Websites like [www.cfnc.org](http://www.cfnc.org), [www.ACT.org](http://www.ACT.org), and [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) allow you to review and compare both North Carolina and out-of-state institutions. Attend the GCS College Night in October to meet admissions representatives.
- ☐ Plan now for wise use of your summers. Consider taking a summer course or participating in a special program (e.g., prospective engineers, writing seminars, or music/theatre camps) at a college or community college. Work a summer job or volunteer in your community.
- ☐ During the summer, you may want to sign up for a PSAT/SAT/ACT prep course, use computer software, or do the practice tests designed to familiarize you with standardized tests.
- ☐ Make your summer productive. Continue reading to increase your vocabulary.



## Junior Year

- ☐ Junior Year PSAT scores are used to qualify a student for the National Merit Scholarship Competition, the National Achievement Program, and the National Hispanic Scholars Program.
- ☐ You will be administered an ACT test in the spring by your high school at no cost to you.
- ☐ Register for the spring administration of the SAT. Register early at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) to ensure you have a seat. Check with your school counselor before registering to see whether you qualify for a fee waiver.
- ☐ Actively research colleges and universities and plan campus visits both during your junior year and the summer after.
- ☐ Attend the GCS College Night to meet admissions representatives and to ask questions about the colleges and universities.

## Senior Year

- ☐ Check on application and financial aid deadlines for the schools to which you plan to apply. They may vary, and it is essential to meet all deadlines!
- ☐ Meet with your counselor to be sure your list includes colleges appropriate to your academic and personal record. Review your transcript and co-curricular records with your school counselor to ensure their accuracy.
- ☐ Attend the GCS College Night to get your questions answered by admissions representatives.
- ☐ If you need financial aid, talk to your counselor about the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) process. Check to see whether the colleges to which you are applying require any other financial aid form. Register for the CSS Profile if required and obtain the college's own financial aid forms, if available.
- ☐ Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.
- ☐ Request that your counselor send your final transcript to the college you will attend. Notify the college of any private scholarships or grants you will be receiving.