



SOUTH RIVER HIGH SCHOOL

Planning Guide for Seniors

Class of 2011





Contact the Guidance Department

410-956-5600 ext 210

Counselors are assigned to students by alphabetical listing.

They may be reached via e-mail at:

Aa-Dn	Nancy Baker	nrbaker@aacps.org
Do-Je	Ramona Bigelow	rbigelow@aacps.org
Jf-Nd	Amy Richard	arichard@aacps.org
Ne-Sc	Chad Bickel	cbickel@aacps.org
Sd-Zz	Kristen Krycia	kkrycia@aacps.org

Registrar	Nancy Egnew	negnew@aacps.org
Guidance Secretary	Theresa Chaffer	tchaffer@aacps.org

Introduction

Congratulations on reaching the first step to your senior year of high school. All too soon, you will find yourself walking across the stage to accept your diploma. Between now and then, you will probably be making plans for what to do after graduation.

Whether you hope to launch straight into a university degree program or make a layover at the community college, whether you are ready to splash right into a career or dip your toes in a specialized training program first. Now is the time to consider the road ahead and begin the steps that will get you to the place you want to be.

This Guidebook is intended to help you find your way.

The South River High School Guidance Department is your traveling partner. We offer a variety of services that can make your college and career planning process easier to navigate, including opportunities to meet with college and career school admissions representatives, in-school community college placement testing and registration, post-high school planning magazines, access to college, career-training, military and enrichment program promotional materials, and our on-line tool

FamilyConnection at *southerhigh.org*.

Need more help?

Look to your School Counselor for additional resources and information.

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Making Your Senior Year Count

Senior year is a good chance to stretch your legs and take the first steps down the road to the future. Make the best of this opportunity by:

Planning a class schedule that is challenging and serves your future plans

The courses you take in your senior year can affect how colleges perceive your application. Most colleges want prospective students enrolled, and doing well, in rigorous courses. While there is no need to stack your deck with all AP classes, a challenging course load shows you are serious about your work and improves your chances of acceptance.

Getting a head start on college level work

Take advantage of the Anne Arundel Community College JumpStart program which lets students take courses for college credit while still in high school. Knock out some entry level requirements and get a glimpse of what the work will be like when you become a full-time student.

Taking advantage of extracurricular activities and volunteer service opportunities

This is your chance to develop skills outside of the classroom. Involvement in extracurricular activities, community service, church, clubs or sports builds character, team spirit and leadership, traits colleges and employers crave.

Checking out a variety of colleges and university programs

How can you know which college or trade school will fit you best? By asking questions and taking a tour. Meet admissions representatives at college fairs and in-school visits. Arrange a tour of the campus, guided by a current student. Get a feel for the community around the school. Get to know people who have taken classes at the school or who graduated from it.

Applying for scholarships and research financial aid opportunities

College is expensive. Get help funding your future through scholarships and financial aid programs. Get to know the college financial aid officer, apply for federal grants and school based scholarships through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and check out local, state and national scholarship opportunities.

Exploring career options through employment

Working is about more than just earning a paycheck to cover gas and date nights. To be a successful employee, you must be reliable, responsible, presentable and flexible. To get the job, you have to apply and be interviewed. Once on the job, you have to figure out how to meet the needs of your employer. The experience you gain at work will be invaluable later on, no matter what career path you choose.

Marketing yourself with a resume

When you apply to college, you are selling yourself. The best marketing tool is a well crafted advertisement. While a great deal of weight is applied to your high school transcript, college admissions representatives and scholarship committees want to know more about who you are. Make it easy for them with a resume that outlines your talents, interests, experiences and awards. Get to know the organization you want to impress and craft your resume to demonstrate why you are the best candidate.

Requirements You Need to Graduate From High School

Minimum Credit Requirements

Subject	Minimum Credit Requirements—26	
English	4	1 credit in English 9 1 credit in English 10 1 credit in English 11 1 credit in English 12
Social Studies	3	1 credit in United States Government 1 credit in World History 1 credit in United States History
Mathematics	4	1 credit of Algebra I* 1 credit in Geometry 2 mathematics elective credits
Science	3	1 credit in Biology 2 credits of other lab based science including: Earth Science • Life Science • Physical Science
Physical Education	1	1/2 credit in Fitness for Life 1/2 credit Physical Education Elective
Health	1/2	1/2 credit in Health Education
Basic Technology	1	Foundations of Technology or see the AACPS High School Program of Study Handbook for a listing of courses that meet the Basic Technology Requirement.
Fine Arts	1	Music, Art, Dance, and Theatre Arts courses
Electives	8.5	Any elective course may count. (See World and Classical Language or Advanced Technology requirement for University System of Maryland Completer)

In addition to meeting the specific credit requirements, a student shall successfully complete one of the following:

Two credits of world or classical language
(two consecutive years of the same language),

or

Two credits of advanced technology education.

or

A state-approved career and technology program

Students must attend high school for four years unless a pre-approved AACPS alternative is satisfied.

**Those students earning 2 credits in Algebra I will earn a total of 5 credits in Mathematics*

World and Classical Language Requirement

Students may elect to take two credits of a world or classical language rather than two credits of advanced technology or a career completer program. The world and classical language option meets one of the criteria for qualifying the student for the University System of Maryland. It is recommended, however, that students who elect this option continue in the program beyond the second level, if possible.

Credit by Competency and or Examination

Students may be awarded credit towards graduation for demonstrated competency and/or examination for courses determined by the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County Public Schools. At the present time, the Board of Education has authorized competency credit to students who completed Level I of a world or classical language, Algebra I, and/or Geometry.

Credit Earned in Middle School

Students may also earn high school credit in Chinese, French, Spanish, Russian, Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry by successfully completing the course(s) in middle school and passing the final exam.

Basic Technology Credit Requirement

Students must fulfill a one-credit graduation requirement in basic technology. Courses that may be used to fulfill this requirement are identified as part of their description (see the AACPS High School Program of Study, available from the Guidance Office).

Advanced Technology Credit Requirement

Students may elect to take two credits of advanced technology rather than two credits of the same world or classical language or a career completer program. A student with the required math courses and two credits of advanced technology will qualify as a University System of Maryland Completer. However, the student must verify the admissions requirements for each University System of Maryland institution to determine if the advanced technology courses meet the institution's admission requirements.

Completer Program Paths

The Maryland School Performance Program requires that high school students enroll in courses that prepare them for post secondary education, gainful employment, or both. The school system has courses that when taken in proper sequence, will prepare students for employment.

The three program completer options are:

University System of Maryland completer

Career program completer

Dual Completer

University System of Maryland Completer

The student pursues a sequence of courses in preparation for post-secondary education upon high school graduation. Minimum requirements include 2 years of the same world / classical language *or* 2 credits in advanced technology courses, as well as Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II.

The high school coursework requirements in the table below apply to students seeking admission to any University of Maryland institution. Each has guidelines for evaluating applicants who have not completed all the required courses for admission. In some cases, students who lack a required course are permitted to take it their freshman year in college. In other instances, students are permitted to demonstrate their competency in a given field as an alternative to passing a required high school course. While these represent the minimum high school course requirements for entry in the University System of Maryland institutions, individual campuses and programs may have additional requirements.

University System of Maryland Required Coursework	
Subject	Years of Courses
English	4
Social Studies	3
Laboratory Science	3
Mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)	4
The same World / Classical Language <i>or</i> Advance Technology Credit	2
Academic Electives	6

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC)

In addition to the University System of Maryland institutions, Anne Arundel County Public Schools enjoys an excellent working relationship with Anne Arundel Community College. AACC is an open door institution which admits those who may benefit from post-secondary education in both transfer and career programs. To help students succeed in college, AACC has established policies and procedures to evaluate and assess their academic abilities.

Career Program Completer

Career Completer

The student pursues a sequence of courses to develop skills in preparation for employment upon high school graduation. These courses and programs are offered at both Centers of Applied Technology or at the high schools through the Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences or Technology Education Departments. These career completer programs are approved by the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Learning.

Tech Prep Completer

Some of the career completer pathways are identified as Tech Prep pathways. The students completing these pathways pursue a sequence of study beginning in high school and continuing through at least two years of post-secondary education. Many of the Tech Prep programs offer articulation agreements with local post-secondary institutions. These agreements allow students to earn college credit for courses taken in high school.

Dual Completer

The student pursues a sequence of courses that fulfills both Career and University System of Maryland requirements.

Service Learning Requirement

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) graduation requirements for students include a requirement in Service Learning. The Anne Arundel County Public Schools integrates this requirement into existing subjects or courses starting in 5th grade. Students complete Service Learning projects and activities from 5th through 10th grades so that each student, upon completion of the 10th grade, should have met the Service Learning graduation requirement.

Service Learning Implementation in AACPS

- Students in the 5th grade will complete 5 hours of Service Learning through social studies activities.
- Students in the 6th through 8th grades will complete 10 hours of Service Learning in each grade level for a total of 30 hours.
- Students taking the US Government course in 9th grade will earn 20 hours of Service Learning.
- Students in 10th grade will complete 10 hours of Service Learning in their English 10 class and 10 hours of Service Learning in a 10th grade Biology course.

All students transferring into an Anne Arundel County public high school from out of state must complete 40 hours of Service Learning to meet the MSDE graduation requirement at the high school level. All students transferring into an Anne Arundel County public school from within the state of Maryland must have documentation for 40 hours of Service Learning from their previous school(s) or complete the balance for a total of 40 hours.

Seniors are not exempt from completing the Service Learning graduation requirement. Those who are missing hours will fulfill the requirement, through the school counselor's office, in a manner decided by the local school principal.

High School Assessments

The High School Assessments (HSA) consist of four tests — one each in Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, English 10, and Government. Students, including middle school students taking high school level courses, take each exam after they have completed the corresponding course containing the Core Learning Goals. These tests are traditional paper and pencil assessments that include multiple choice and essay items (short answer and extended answers). Students must take these tests as a requirement for high school graduation. A passing score on the HSA exams is required in order to earn a Maryland High School Diploma.



Advanced Placement (AP) Diploma Endorsement

Anne Arundel County Public Schools believe that students who engage in a rigorous program of study should be recognized for their efforts. To provide this recognition, AACPS has developed an Advanced Placement Diploma Endorsement.

In order to earn the AP Diploma Endorsement, a student must:

- *Earn a minimum of 5 AP credits*
- *The credits must be in 4 of the 5 domains:*
 - Languages (English and/or world or classical language)
 - Social Studies
 - Mathematics
 - Natural Sciences
 - Computer Science and/or Fine Arts
- *Earn all 'A's and 'B's in AP classes taken; those receiving one 'C' are included provided there is at least one offsetting 'A'.*
- *Sit for a minimum of 5 AP exams*

Special Conditions to Complete Graduation Requirements

In addition to earning credits during the regular school day and year, credits may be earned, at the discretion of the local school system, through various other programs. ***No student may earn credit more than once for the same course.*** Additional ways to earn credit include:

Summer School

The secondary summer school program provides students the opportunity to make up work in which they were unsuccessful, to improve grade averages in sequential subjects and to earn credits in order to meet high school graduation requirements.

Evening School

The Evening High School program offers students who are currently attending a daytime high school the opportunity to make up credits or take additional courses. For those students who do not finish high school, Evening High School offers the chance to complete the high school education and earn a high school diploma.

Early College Access - AACC Jump Start

The Jump Start College program is a jointly sponsored dual enrollment program between Anne Arundel Community College and the Anne Arundel County Public High Schools. This program is designed to allow students the option to begin exploring college level courses and programs during the school day. Jump Start participants will attend regularly scheduled college classes with currently enrolled college students. Students will earn credit in college level course work which may be applied to future academic programs at Anne Arundel Community College or may be transferred to other colleges and universities.



NCAA FRESHMAN-ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

Core Courses

- **NCAA Division I requires 16 core courses as of August 1, 2008.** This rule applies to any student first entering any Division I college or university on or after August 1, 2008. See the chart below for the breakdown of this 16 core-course requirement.
- **NCAA Division II requires 14 core courses.** See the breakdown of core-course requirements below. Please note, Division II will require 16 core courses beginning August 1, 2013.

Test Scores

- **Division I** has a sliding scale for test score and grade-point average. See www.eligibilitycenter.org for details.
- **Division II** has a minimum SAT score requirement of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.
- The SAT score used for NCAA purposes includes **only** the critical reading and math sections. The writing section of the SAT is not used.
- The ACT score used for NCAA purposes is a **sum** of the four sections on the ACT: English, mathematics, reading and science.
- **All SAT and ACT scores must be reported directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center by the testing agency. Test scores that appear on transcripts will not be used. When registering for the SAT or ACT, use the Eligibility Center code of 9999 to make sure the score is reported to the Eligibility Center.**

Grade-Point Average

- Only core courses are used in the calculation of the grade-point average.
- **Be sure** to look at your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses on the Eligibility Center's Web site to make certain that courses being taken have been approved as core courses. The Web site is www.eligibilitycenter.org.
- **Division I** grade-point-average requirements are listed on a sliding scale. See www.eligibilitycenter.org for details.
- **Division II** grade-point-average requirement is a minimum of 2.000.

DIVISION I	
16 Core-Course Rule	
16 Core Courses:	
4	years of English.
3	years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
2	years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
1	year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
2	years of social science.
4	years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or nondoctrinal religion/philosophy).

DIVISION II	
14 Core-Course Rule	
14 Core Courses:	
3	years of English.
2	years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
2	years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
2	years of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
2	years of social science.
3	years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or nondoctrinal religion/philosophy).

PLEASE NOTE: Beginning August 1, 2013, students planning to attend an NCAA Division II institution will be required to complete 16 core courses.

For more information visit the NCAA Eligibility Center Web site at www.eligibilitycenter.org or call 877-262-1492.



Senioritis

Senioritis, the “disease” that attacks many students in their last year of high school and causes a lack of interest in academic performance, can have dire consequences for future college plans.

With thousands of applicants vying for a limited number of seats in the freshman class, colleges can afford to be highly selective in accepting candidates for enrollment. Prospective students can no longer count on guaranteed admission and generous financial aid packages.

High school seniors must commit to a college choice by May 1, but their final transcripts will not reach college admissions counselors until late July. If a college discovers that the prospective student has not maintained a consistent level of academic performance throughout the year, they can, and will, withdraw acceptance. By that time, students may have registered for classes, started paying tuition and met the roommate. All of a sudden it is too late to pick another school and they end up with no where to go.

College officials are serious when they say that acceptance is contingent on maintaining senior year grades, for example:

- The University of California system of schools was projected to withdraw 450 offers in 2009 for poor high school performance in the senior year⁽¹⁾,
- In 2006, UC Berkley canceled 37 offers, at UCLA 73 offers were withdrawn and San Francisco State University gave up 63 offers⁽²⁾ for the same reason;
- Also in 2006, it was reported that the University of Boulder Colorado rescinded 45 offers, 10 after August 1, and the University of Washington left 23 students without a college when their acceptance was withdrawn⁽³⁾.

Keeping on Track

Seniors can find ways to stay excited, active and focused throughout the senior year by:

- *Maintaining a Challenging Course Load*
Take the most rigorous courses available, including AP classes (which can also earn college credit). Choose classes wisely and stick to those choices.
- *Being Responsible*
Celebrate and enjoy the senior experience - responsibly. Participate in graduation festivities, senior prom, clubs, sports and volunteer activities.
- *Trying out an internship or career-focused job*
Sample careers through internships, employment or by taking classes at community college.
- *Tracking activities and deadlines*
Build time management skills that will serve throughout college. Be on time (or early) for submission deadlines, test registrations, extracurricular activities, events, etc. Use time wisely and avoid taking on too much.
- *Making smart choices*
There is no need to obsess over the admissions process to the point that everything else, including grades, suffers. Its all about balance and making good choices.

By keeping Senioritis in check, students can leave high school confident of where they are headed and better prepared to face the rigors of a college education.

(1) “This year ‘senioritis’ may have dire consequences” Mamlet & VanDeVelde, USA Today 2008

(2) “Colleges crack down on taking freshmen with ‘senioritis’” T. Schevitz, San Francisco Chronicle 2006

(3) “Slackers Beware” L Pappano, New York Times 2007



Taking Steps Toward College

Now that you have marked out your path toward graduation, it is time to begin the next part of your journey into college. The road ahead is well defined but time is short. The highly coveted and competitive schools demand that prospective students apply very early in order to make the list for admissions consideration. Want to be prepared to meet the deadlines and be among the first to be chosen? Here are the things you will need to do:

- *Get to know your Guidance Counselor*

Your Counselor has been watching your progress since 9th grade, making sure that you are on track to graduate, but how well do they really know **you**. Make an appointment to talk about your hopes for the future and let them help you figure out how to make it happen.

- *Take the SAT or ACT*

Standardized tests help colleges compare you with other applicants.

- *Attend college fairs, in-school meetings with admissions representatives and visit college campuses*

Get to know the personality of the schools you are interested in attending and see if they match what you want out of a college experience.

- *Request letters of recommendation from teachers, mentors, counselors, employers, etc*

Good character references can make you a more desirable candidate for admission to a college. Ask a variety of adults, not just teachers, to send a letter of recommendation.

- *Practice writing college essays*

A college essay gives the admissions counselor a glimpse of who you are and what you are about. Take your time, be honest and edit carefully before submitting your work.

- *Complete college applications and request high school transcripts well ahead of deadlines*

Fill out the college's application as soon as possible and make sure that you have ALL the additional documents, like the Secondary School Report, in order when you request transcripts.

- *Explore financial aid options and start looking for scholarship opportunities*

Take advantage of the financial aid and scholarship search engines available on the Internet and check out the scholarship list on [FamilyConnection](http://FamilyConnection.southerhigh.org) at southerhigh.org.

- *Complete the FAFSA in January*

Schools use the data from the FAFSA to determine scholarship packages and financial aid offers.

- *Keep up with your high school coursework and outside activities*

Just because you have been accepted **does not** mean that you can slack off on school work. Do not succumb to 'Senioritis.' Colleges have been known to withdraw their offers if grades have taken a sudden downturn.

- *Provide supplemental transcripts, as needed, throughout the year*

Most colleges continue to track your progress long after you have turned in an application. Mid-year reports and final transcripts may be required. If so, be sure to have them mailed soon after the semester ends.

- *Choose the college you plan to attend by May 1*

Once you have made your choice, your trip is not over. Watch for additional information from the college for orientation, course selection, housing applications, payment, parking, work/study options, etc. Keep to the deadlines, follow all the instructions, and ask for help if you need it.



FamilyConnection at *southerhigh.org*

South River High School has taken the college planning process into the electronic age with **FamilyConnection** by *Naviance*. Students can research schools, track the application process, explore careers, hunt for scholarships and arrange visits with college representatives all in a single, safe location.

Cool Tools You Should Use

My Resume and My Personality Type

make it easy to record accomplishments and assess personal strengths to simplify exploration of college and career options

My Colleges

compare schools, select the ones of interest and track pending applications; look for in-school visits by college admissions representatives and register for meetings

College Enrichment Programs

clearing house for summer activities, special events, and college-based recruitment programs

Scholarship List

Search for scholarships by category or browse through them all

FamilyConnection's e-mail feature helps School Counselors get the word out on college visits, fairs, scholarship opportunities, expiring deadlines and other college related news and events.

How To Get There

Log on to *www.southerhigh.org*, click on *Information*; then *Guidance*, and hit the link to **FamilyConnection**. Once at the **FamilyConnection** home page, enter as a *Guest* to view all the open scholarships, upcoming events and links to schools, careers and financial aid websites. Access to student pages requires a passcode - contact SRHS Guidance at 410-956-5600 ext210 for more information.



Guidance Department

Special Issue

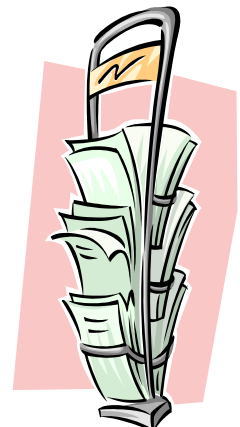
Scholarship Navigator

South River High School

Introducing the Scholarship Navigator

Even as seniors are gaining the opportunity to go on-line with **FamilyConnection** at *southerhigh.org*, the South River High School Guidance Office is offering another way to get out breaking college and scholarship news.

The Scholarship Navigator will post special events, list college visits, announce new scholarships and offer tips on how to apply to schools and for money. Look for copies in the English 12 and AP English classrooms, the Media Center and Guidance Office.



The SAT and ACT Exams

The **SAT** is the nation's most widely used college admissions test, a distinction that it has held for more than seven decades. It is taken by more than two million students every year and is accepted by virtually all colleges and universities. **SAT** tests measure knowledge of subjects learned in the classroom, including reading, writing, and math, and how that knowledge can be applied inside and outside of school. It helps colleges get to know a student better by giving them insight into how the student thinks, solves problems, and communicates. Apply for the **SAT** are available on-line at www.collegeboard.com.

The **ACT** is a curriculum based test that assesses a high school student's general and educational development and their ability to complete college level work. The multiple choice tests cover 4 skill areas - English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. The writing test, which is optional, measures a student's ability to plan and write a short essay. Apply for the **ACT** on-line at www.actstudent.org.

Mail-In forms for both exams are also available in the Guidance Office.

Use the South River High School Code **210494** when applying for either exam

To send **SAT** and **ACT** scores to colleges, the scores must be requested directly from the host organization - **SAT** from www.collegeboard.com; **ACT** from www.actstudent.org. If requesting scores after tests have been administered, payment of a fee is required (you may request free score reports to be sent to the schools of your choice at time of test registration).

High Schools do not have permission to send SAT or ACT scores to colleges.

SAT Exam Dates 2010/2011

SAT Date	SAT Subject Tests™ Available	Register-By Date	Late Registration
			Mail
Oct 9	SAT and Subject Tests	Sept 10	Sept 24
Nov 6	SAT and Subject Tests	Oct 8	Oct 22
Dec 4	SAT and Subject Tests	Nov 5	Nov 19
Jan 22	SAT and Subject Tests	Dec 23	Jan 7
Mar 12	SAT Only	Feb 11	Feb 25
May 7	SAT and Subject Tests	Apr 8	Apr 22
Jun 4	SAT and Subject Tests	May 6	May 20

ACT Exam Dates 2010/2011

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
September 11	August 6	August 7 – 20
October 23	September 17	September 18 – October 1
December 11	November 5	November 6 – 19
February 12	January 7	January 8 – 21
April 9	March 4	March 5 – 18
June 11	May 6	May 7 – 20

How Do You Decide Which College?

How do you start the college search process? With a Wish List and the Internet. Summer is a good time to check out college websites, either individually or by using one of the dozens of search engines that are available, and to request information by mail.

Once school begins, South River High School provides its juniors and seniors with many opportunities to meet with college representatives, usually during the fall. Students are invited to attend as many as **6** of these meetings.

College specific information is presented by the school's admissions counselors, who are well versed in the unique benefits of their institution and knowledgeable in the requirements for admission. They will happily explain degree programs, course options, finances, housing, extracurricular and sports activities, and what the off-campus community is like.

College fairs are also a good place to browse college options. Anne Arundel Community College and Broadneck High School both host fairs in the fall. Colleges, universities and technical schools from across the country are invited to bring their marketing materials and talk with prospective students and their families.

When meeting with representatives, keep an open mind. Take the literature that is offered, ask for a viewbook, information on majors and a financial aid brochure and get a business card. Review the information after you get home and call the representative if you have more questions.

It is good to have some idea of what you want out of a college experience when you sit in a meeting or drop by a fair. If you sort of know what your ultimate goals are after college, ask questions about how that school can help you reach those goals.

Once you have narrowed down your choices, make time to visit the campus of each, preferably while classes are in session. Request a tour with a current student and afterward, walk around unescorted. Some things to keep in mind:

- *Each college has a personality*, which is reflected in its general student body. Figure out what that personality is and whether it will be a good fit for yours.
- *Each school is unique*. Ask your tour guide or representative what it is that makes the school special and different.
- *Some schools are easier to pay for than others*. Check out what it will cost to go to school, including room and board if needed, and explore opportunities for financial aid, work-study and employment off-campus.
- *How accessible are professors, advisors and counselors?* Will it be easy to get help when you need it? Look for supplemental services such as a Writing or Math Lab, a Careers Advisor, tutoring, research assistance and library / media services.
- *How far from home do you want to be when you go to school?* If you live on campus, is there plenty to keep you busy when you are not in class or studying so you don't get too homesick? Ask about the accommodations, the food, the social scene.

If you approach selecting a college the same way as you choose friends, the transition to higher education will be a smooth experience. Know what interests you have in common, how you will fit in and whether the school can meet your needs in a way that suits your style and your budget.

Glossary of Admissions Programs

There are a number of admissions programs used by the colleges and universities. Although these programs differ widely, some of them require you to do considerable planning well before the senior year. The various admissions programs are:

Early Decision

This plan is suggested for students who are academically strong and know that they want to attend a particular college. With Early Decision, students apply in November or December and are notified of acceptance about a month later. Candidates who are accepted are required to withdraw their application to other colleges and agree to matriculate at the college that accepts them. Students should not apply to more than one early decision program and should understand clearly the commitment they are making.

Early Action

This differs from early decision in that students are not required to accept admission or withdraw other applications if accepted. Early action is offered chiefly by selective institutions. Students have until the regular admission deadline to decide whether or not to attend.

Rolling Admissions

Colleges using Rolling Admissions accept students who meet the academic requirements on a first-come / first-served basis until it fills the freshman class. No strict application deadline is specified. Applications are reviewed and decisions are made immediately (usually within 3 - 4 weeks). This method is commonly used at large state universities, such as schools within the University System of Maryland, so students are encouraged to apply early for the best chance of acceptance.

Regular Admissions

Colleges require applications to be received by a certain date and then notify all candidates at one time, usually in the spring.

Early Admission

Colleges allow high school students to enroll before they complete graduation from high school. Admissions standards are more stringent for early admission.

Open Admission

A policy adopted by a number of institutions which allows virtually all applicants to be accepted, regardless of academic qualifications.

Mid-Year Admission

An option offered by some colleges to certain candidates; students are allowed to start classes in the second semester instead of the fall.

Concurrent Enrollment

High school students may be permitted to enroll in college courses while still attending high school. Jump Start at Anne Arundel Community College is an example of Concurrent Enrollment.

Deferred Admission

Accepted students are allowed to postpone enrollment for one year.

Crafting That College Essay

College admissions counselors use everything on an application to determine whether the candidate for enrollment will be a good fit for the school, including a personal essay. A good essay can bump your application to the top of the selections pile; a feeble one makes you look bad to the people you want to impress.

Make yourself stand out from the pack by following a few simple tips:

1. **Start Early** - Give yourself plenty of time to craft a good essay. It takes a while to put your thoughts in order, edit what you write, have someone proof your work and get that final draft just right.

2. **Be Natural** - Write about what is important to you, something that moves you, an issue, event or person that is significant to you and affects your view of the world.

3. **Be Honest** - After looking at thousands of essays, college admissions counselors can spot lazy writing and plagiarism a mile away.

4. **Be Creative, Take a Risk** - Don't settle for easy. Or common. Stay away from sports analogies or loss of a loved one. While important milestones to you, these are themes counselors see too often. Be different, be sincere, be concise, skip cute and silly. Be a good storyteller and write an entertaining piece.

5. **Be Focused** - Keep your essay on a single theme. No grocery lists here, applications already cover all your accomplishments. Stick to the subject of your essay and use anecdotes to support your thinking.

6. **Write Freely, Then EDIT, EDIT, EDIT** - On your first draft, let the words flow. Put down whatever comes to mind. Once you have said all you can say, start cutting. This is not a high school paper; during the editing process, knock off the introductory and summarizing bits and go right to the meat of your story.

7. **Get a Second Opinion** - Once the essay suits you, pass it to a qualified person (teacher, mentor, friend from the school newspaper, etc) to look it over. Ask for suggestions and be open to their advice.

8. **Give it a Final Once Over** - Before you hit the send button on your application, be sure your essay meets the word count requirements, is free of spelling and syntax errors and is directed to the correct school or person. And remember, an on-line application is a formal communication, not e-mail or Twitter. Skip the use of acronyms and emoticons in your correspondence when sending your work.

Make your essay as well written as you can, but keep in mind that it is not the only part of your application that admissions counselors are looking at when they are deciding if you will be a good fit for their school.



Types of Scholarships and Financial Aid

College Specific Awards

Colleges often have scholarship money available that is used to develop the financial package offered to an applicant who has been granted admission. These scholarships are available under a variety of terms that may include maintaining a certain GPA, pursuing a specific major, etc.

Scholarship awards can be offered to students for achievement in athletics, academics or service or from individual academic departments.

Private Organization Awards

There are thousands of private organizations that offer scholarship awards, ranging from \$50 to \$20,000 or more. Within the “Private” category, there are many types of organizations to consider, including:

Corporations
Religious Organizations
Unions
High School Communities or School Districts
Local Chambers of Commerce
Private Funds
And many more...

State and Federal Sources

The federal government provides \$33 billion in grant aid to post-secondary education students annually. The aid is offered in several forms, including:

Need Based Federal Aid
Pell Grant
Subsidized Stafford Loans
Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
Federal Work/Study
Perkins Loans

Additional financing options include:

Federal PLUS loans (also known as Direct Plus Loans)
Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
Other Parent Loans
Alternative Student Loans

Most college-based and federal scholarships, grants and loans require completion of the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** in order to determine financial need. For more information on the FAFSA, visit www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Watch for more information about scholarship opportunities in the SRHS newsletter “The Scholarship Navigator” and in e-mails from the Guidance Department through [FamilyConnection at southriverhigh.org](mailto:FamilyConnection@southriverhigh.org).

Appendix

High School Materials Needed to
Process Applications and Transcript Requests

Appendix A
SRHS College Application Processing

Appendix B
Transcript Checklist / Request Form

Appendix C
SRHS Release of Records Form

Appendix D
College Planning Worksheet

Appendix E
Tracking Chart for Applications

College Application Processing by SRHS

To apply to a college, university, trade or technical school, students will need to start with an application. Most offer on-line applications; be sure to download any forms to be completed by high school staff - including the Secondary School Report and counselor / teacher recommendation forms. Most applications require a short essay in addition to the application. Be sure to check submission deadlines and track your application progress.

High School Materials Needed to Process Applications and Transcript Requests:

All students applying to post-secondary schools must complete the following:

South River Senior Survey for 1st Semester

Located on *FamilyConnection* at southriverhigh.org, the information provided in the survey helps counselors to complete recommendation letters. Students who need assistance accessing *FamilyConnection* can stop by the Guidance Office for help.

Release of Records Form

Every student requesting a transcript **MUST** have a parent signature on the Release of Records Form before transcript requests can be processed. One Release form is valid for the entire school year.

Transcript Checklist

There is a \$2.00 fee for each transcript requested.

Use the Transcript Checklist to request transcripts for mailing. Release of Records and Transcript Checklist forms are available on-line at southriverhigh.org (see Paperwork and Forms) and through *FamilyConnection* at southriverhigh.org (in the *Document Library*) or may be picked up from the Guidance Office.

Secondary School Report

Available from the college or university or their on-line application site. Print the form for the counselor to complete.

Counselor Recommendation Form

Also available from the college or university. Print the form for the counselor to complete. You must have already completed the "South River Survey for 1st Semester Seniors" prior to requesting a recommendation. If you are unable to take the survey, it is highly recommended that you provide the counselor with a detailed resume of your achievements and extracurricular activities.

Students must turn in the Transcript Fee, Transcript Checklist, Secondary School Report and Counselor Recommendation forms All At One Time to Mrs Egnew, School Registrar, for processing.

Transcripts will not be sent until the Transcript Checklist, Release of Records and Payment have been received.

All Request for Final Transcripts will be processed after July 15th

Allow 10 working days for processing of transcript requests with additional forms.

Transcripts that do not need additional documentation will be mailed within 3 work days of receipt of the request and payment.

Students may track processing of transcripts on-line at FamilyConnection at southriverhigh.org

Teacher Recommendations

Most colleges, universities and tech/trade schools rely on teacher recommendations to make decisions regarding acceptance.

When asking a teacher to write a letter of recommendation , you will need to:

- ✓ Plan ahead. Teachers need 3-4 weeks to write a letter of recommendation. Make your request well ahead of the college acceptance deadline.
- ✓ Provide the teacher with a stamped, addressed envelope to mail their letter of recommendation directly to the school.
- ✓ Supply a resume or copy of your completed "South River Survey for 1st Semester Seniors."
- ✓ Follow up with the teacher and remember to say, "Thank You."

SOUTH RIVER HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT CHECKLIST

Student Name: _____ Date: _____ Counselor: _____



I have requested transcript(s) for the following colleges on the Family Connection Website. (Please list each college and include the college address, application due date and mark if you have included a Secondary School Report or need a counselor recommendation.)

Name of College and Address	Due Date	Transcript Only	Secondary School Report	Counselor Recommendation
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College Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

College Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

College Name _____

Address _____

Address _____



Payment for the transcript(s) is attached in the amount of: _____



I have completed the South River Survey for 1st Semester Seniors at the Family Connection Website.

Bring this form, payment and Secondary School Reports to Mrs. Egnew in Guidance. Transcripts will not be processed until after the Release of Records form, the Transcript Checklist and payment are received. Please allow 10 working days to process transcripts with Secondary School Reports or Counselor Recommendations.

For Office Use Only

Date Received _____ Date to Counselor _____ Date Sent _____

RELEASE OF RECORDS

SOUTH RIVER HIGH SCHOOL
Telephone: (410) 956-5600 • (Fax) (410) 956-5137



Transcript: Includes up-to-date subject grade performance through high school.
Cost: The transcripts cost \$2.00 each.
Time: Please allow three days to process a transcript request. If you are requesting a counselor recommendation, allow up to ten working days.

I, the undersigned, hereby give South River High School permission to release the records of:

(Print Student's Name Clearly or Name While in School)

Year of Graduation

to post-secondary educational institutions, prospective employers or for scholarships upon request of the student. Counselors reserve the right of confidentiality for all recommendations.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



This consent is required from the parent or guardian of a student who has not reached the age of eighteen. A student who has attained the age of eighteen may sign for release of his/her records. One release form will suffice for release of pertinent school records to all post-secondary education institutions and to prospective employers. **NO** records will be sent anywhere without completion of this form.

Please return this form to Mrs. Egnew in the Guidance Office.

Use this Chart to stay on top of your College Application Process...

College Name, Address and Contact Info	Application Info	Recommendations (names / date sent)	Asked that Scores be Sent			Asked for Financial Aid Reports	Notes
	Deadline:		SAT	Other	FAFSA		
	Essay Done?		ACT		Profile		
	Date Sent:		SAT Subject		Other		
	Deadline:		SAT	Other	FAFSA		
	Essay Done?		ACT		Profile		
	Date Sent:		SAT Subject		Other		
	Deadline:		SAT	Other	FAFSA		
	Essay Done?		ACT		Profile		
	Date Sent:		SAT Subject		Other		
	Deadline:		SAT	Other	FAFSA		
	Essay Done?		ACT		Profile		
	Date Sent:		SAT Subject		Other		
	Deadline:		SAT	Other	FAFSA		
	Essay Done?		ACT		Profile		
	Date Sent:		SAT Subject		Other		

Notes