

# **Bishop Ireton High School Guide to College Planning 2009-2010**

Bishop Ireton High School  
Office of Counseling Services

Mrs. Patricia Armstrong  
Counselor (A-G)  
[armstrong@bishopireton.org](mailto:armstrong@bishopireton.org)  
703-212-5187

Ms. Erin O'Leary  
Director of Counseling Services (H-N)  
[o'learye@bishopireton.org](mailto:o'learye@bishopireton.org)  
703-212-5188

Mrs. Marie MacKenzie  
Counselor (O-Z)  
[mackenziem@bishopireton.org](mailto:mackenziem@bishopireton.org)  
703-212-5179

Mrs. Gail K. Georgieff  
Registrar and Guidance Assistant  
[gailg@bishopireton.org](mailto:gailg@bishopireton.org)  
703-212-5193

Fax: 703-212-8173  
Bishop Ireton High School Code: 470019

The information contained herein is intended to serve as a general guide to the college exploration, application, and admission process. It is the responsibility of each student and family to research thoroughly all options, to check with schools directly regarding admission requirements and application and financial aid deadlines, and to meet registration deadlines for standardized tests as published in the SAT and ACT registration brochures.

## COLLEGE EXPLORATION

---

### CONSIDERATIONS

The first step in the college exploration process is to take a good look at yourself. What are your goals, your academic strengths and weaknesses, your reasons for going to college? In selecting colleges to research some factors to consider are:

- Location - Do you want to attend a school close to home, in-state or out-of-state? Do you prefer a rural, urban or suburban location?
- Size of school - Do you want to attend a small school (under 5,000 students), a medium size school (5,000 - 15,000 students) or a large school (more than 15,000 students)? Are large classes taught by teaching assistants (TAs) or will you have an opportunity to interact with your instructors?
- Academics and Activities - Does the college offer courses and a degree program in your area of interest? Does it have an Honors Program? Does it offer internships, co-op programs, or an opportunity to study abroad if that is your interest?
- Matriculation information - How many years will your program take to complete? Four years? Five years? Six years?
- Support services - Most colleges provide some support services for students with special learning needs. These range from minimal (extended time on tests only) to outstanding (extended time, study and organizational skills support, readers, tutors, etc.). It is important to check with the college's Disability Support Services Office to learn the exact nature of support services available.
- Culture and Personality - Do you want to attend a school where the student body is similar to you or do you want the experience of a more diverse student body? Is Greek life important or are there enough social activities for students who do not want to join fraternities and sororities? Do students stay on campus for the weekend or do they travel to a neighboring campus for fun?
- Campus Safety - Will you feel safe walking from the library to your dorm room late at night? Are escorts provided? Ask for a copy of the college's annual report on campus crime statistics.
- Housing - What accommodations are available? Dormitories/houses? Single room/doubles/triples? Are dorms available for students after freshman year?
- Athletics - At what level will you be able to play sports? If you become injured and are unable to play, will you still want to attend that college?
- Student Services - Are medical and dental facilities located on-campus or nearby? Are counseling services available? Are there places of worship? What are the services offered by the Office of Career Services and are there sufficient opportunities for employment recruiters to meet with students? What is the university's placement rate in your major?
- Cost - Public institutions cost less than private institutions. In-state public institutions generally cost less than out-of-state public institutions. It is important to gather information about all forms of financial aid (grants, loans, work/study and scholarships) before you dismiss a college or university from

consideration.

One factor **not** to consider: College ranking. There is no way to fairly compare one institution to another.

After researching schools, talk with your counselor and narrow your list to six to eight schools of varying selectivity: one or two schools where you have a 90 percent chance of being admitted; two schools where you have a 75 percent chance of being admitted; two schools where you have a 50 percent chance of being admitted; and one or two schools where you have a 25 percent chance of being admitted. **All these schools should be “first choice” schools.** Although the task may seem daunting, the student does exercise some control in the college process. There are ultimately three decisions to be made and the student will make two of them: where to apply, and where to enroll, if accepted. The college decides which students to accept. If your self-study is honest and your research is thorough you will be able to make good choices. Remember that **there is no one “right” college for anyone. There are many.**

## **RESOURCES**

There are many resources available at Bishop Ireton to assist in the college exploration, and application process. Among them are:

### **The Counselors and Registrar/Guidance Assistant**

Counselor offices and the Registrar/Guidance Assistant are located in the administrative wing of the school. The counselors are available to meet with students daily and with parents by appointment. The counselors meet with each grade level several times throughout the year. The final phase of the college process begins in the spring of the student’s junior year with group meetings, individual meetings and formal presentations. Bishop Ireton’s *Preparing for College Workshops* includes informational programs on *How to Use the PSAT/NMSQT Score Report as a Tool to Prepare for the SAT Reasoning Test; The Bishop Ireton College Application Process; The Anatomy of a College Admission Decision; College Financial Aid/FAFSA Workshop; and Surviving the First Year of College.* In addition, a workshop, scheduled in the fall, offers freshmen, sophomores and juniors tips and strategies on preparing for the PSAT/NMSQT in October. Juniors are offered the opportunity to take a complete, full-length **practice SAT Reasoning Test** at Bishop Ireton before they take the SAT for the first time in the spring.

In addition to providing comprehensive guidance, counseling and testing services to all of the students at Bishop Ireton, the Office of Counseling Services will process over 2,500 college and scholarship packets during this year’s college cycle. Students and their parents are encouraged use the resources available to them at Bishop Ireton, attend the programs on *Preparing for College*, and be proactive in their college exploration/selection/application process. They must research their options, be aware of important dates and deadlines and communicate with their counselor throughout the entire process. **It is the student’s responsibility to register for standardized tests on time, to request teachers’ letters of recommendation and to meet college application and financial aid deadlines.**

## **The College Resource Center**

The College Resource Center is located in a room adjacent to the counselors' offices. The College Resource Center is open to students and parents from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. The College Resource Center houses printed information including Guides to Colleges, college/career information, special interest books, and admission test information, registration and preparation materials. The College Resource Center also contains scholarship information and applications and announcements regarding summer enrichment programs. The College Resource Center is equipped with a work station containing two computer monitors and a printer, where students may access college and university web sites, complete college applications online or access any number of helpful web sites, including the *TCCi: Family Connection* software program. Students are also permitted to use the telephone in the College Resource Center to call colleges to request information and applications, make appointments to visit, or check on the status of their application file. The College Resource Center provides a comfortable area for visiting college representatives to meet and talk with students. Large groups of students meet with college representatives in the Atrium. While there are resources available in the College Resource Center, it is important to remember that **colleges prefer that students communicate with them directly** via e-mail or telephone to discuss requirements, important dates or to request application materials.

## **The Writing Center**

The Writing Center is open during the school day and is staffed by Bishop Ireton English teachers. These teachers are available to advise students in the preparation of their college essays. In fact, a requirement of the senior English curriculum is to prepare a college essay utilizing the resources of The Writing Center.

## **Additional Sources of Information**

*Family Connection*, Bishop Ireton and Office of Counseling Services web page and e-mail announcements, and postings in the College Resource Center are additional sources of important information regarding college applications, college admission testing, scholarships, college fairs and college representatives' visits to Bishop Ireton.

## **COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTS**

---

No doubt over the last few years you have heard and read in the media the very public debate over the role of standardized testing in the college admission process. A small but increasing number of colleges and universities (in addition to community colleges) do not require students to take standardized tests. However, at this time, the majority of colleges to which Bishop Ireton students apply do require students to submit scores from standardized testing, either the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT, and, for some colleges and universities, the SAT Subject Tests. Amid much publicity, the College Board unveiled a new SAT Reasoning Test in March 2005. Although much of the test remained the same, analogies were removed from the “Verbal” portion of the test, more critical reading passages were added and the entire section was renamed “Critical Reading.” In the math section quantitative comparisons were removed and “enhanced” math concepts (from Algebra II) were added. A third section, Writing, was added to the test, which replaced the previous SAT Subject Test in Writing.

### **THE SAT REASONING TEST**

The SAT Reasoning Test is a standardized three hour and 45 minute test, administered by the Educational Testing Service of the College Board, that measures critical reading, mathematical and writing abilities that students develop over time, both in and out of school. The highest possible score on the SAT is 2400. Each edition of the SAT Reasoning Test includes the following:

#### **Critical Reading**

- Two 25-minute sections; one 20-minute section
- Multiple-choice questions with emphasis on sentence completions and passage-based reading
- Score Range: 200-800

#### **Mathematics**

- Two 25-minute sections; one 20-minute section
- Multiple-choice questions with emphasis on numbers and operations, Algebra I, II and functions, Geometry, Statistics, Probability and Data Analysis
- Score Range: 200-800

#### **Writing**

- One 35-minute multiple-choice section with emphasis on identifying errors and improving sentences and paragraphs
- One 25-minute student-written essay which effectively communicates a viewpoint and defines and supports a position
- Score Range: 200-800  
Multiple Choice Subscore: 20-80;  
Essay Subscore: 2-12

(All information from the College Board)

Most students take the SAT Reasoning Test at national administrations during their junior and/or senior years in high school. At Bishop Ireton it is recommended that students take the SAT Reasoning Test for the first time in the Spring of their junior year (i.e., in January, March, May or June ) and another time in early fall of senior year. (Some students may choose to take it additional times.) At this time, policy regarding the Writing test varies by institution. Students must check the web site for each institution to which they will be applying to learn whether or how it will use the new writing component.

There are fees for the SAT Reasoning Test and SAT Subject Tests. Fee waivers are available from the College Board for students who meet federal guidelines for financial need. Eligible students include students who receive free or reduced-cost lunch under the National School Lunch Act, students whose families receive assistance under part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, students who receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, and students in families whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level as established by the U.S. Census Bureau (information from the College Board). It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to notify the Office of Counseling Services in a timely manner if they believe they are eligible to apply for fee waivers. Registration for standardized tests may be made online, by phone, or by mail, however, **the College Board recommends that students register for tests online.** Registration information forms and practice tests are available in the College Resource Center and at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

## THE SAT SUBJECT TESTS

SAT Subject Tests, also administered by the Educational Testing Service of the College Board, are designed to measure students' knowledge and skills in particular subject areas, as well as their ability to apply that knowledge. Selective colleges may use the Subject Tests for admission. Many colleges use the Subject Tests for course placement, and to advise students about course selection. Some colleges specify the Subject Tests they require for admission or placement; others allow applicants to choose which tests to take. It is important to check individual college admission requirements. Subject Tests fall into five general subject areas:

### English

Literature

### Mathematics

Math Level I

Math Level II

### Social Science

U.S. History

World History

### Physical Science

Biology E/M Physics

Chemistry

### Languages

#### Reading Only

French Latin

German Modern Hebrew

Italian Spanish

### **With Listening**

Chinese	Japanese	German
French	Korean	Spanish

All subject tests are one-hour, multiple-choice tests. However, some of these tests have unique formats:

- The Biology E/M Test contains a common core of 60 general-knowledge multiple-choice questions, followed by 20 multiple-choice questions that emphasize either ecological (Biology E) or molecular (Biology M) subject matter. After completing the core questions, test takers choose the section for which they feel most prepared.
- Language Tests with Listening (Chinese, ELPT, French, German, Japanese, Korean and Spanish) consist of a listening section and a reading section. Students taking these tests are required to bring an acceptable cassette player with earphones to the test center.

SAT Subject tests are scored in the same manner as the SAT Reasoning Test. Subscores are provided for listening, usage, and reading sections of some Language Tests. These subscores are reported on the 20-to-80 scale.

Students are advised to take some SAT Subject Tests (e.g., Biology E/M and U.S. History) as soon as they complete a course of study in that subject, while the material is still fresh in their minds, so for many students that will be in June of their sophomore or junior year. Students should review *Taking the SAT Subject Tests* and ask their counselor or teacher for guidance regarding when to test. **It is the student's responsibility to register for and take the required tests by the appropriate dates. Students must check carefully each institution's admission requirements.**

### **New Policy- Score Choice**

**Starting in the fall of 2009, Bishop Ireton High School will no longer include ANY test scores on the transcript. Students must request their scores be sent directly from College Board or ACT to all the colleges and universities to which they are applying.** College Board has instituted a new policy called Score Choice. Score Choice gives you the option to choose which scores (by test date for the SAT and by individual test for the SAT Subject Test) you send to colleges. You can choose scores from one, several, or all SAT test dates. When you register for the SAT, you will be given the option to sign up for four free Score Reports. You have nine days after taking the SAT to add, change or remove a college from your score report. If you want to order more than four score reports, or send score reports more than nine days after the test, it will cost \$9.50 for each report.

(All information regarding the SAT Reasoning Test and the SAT Subject Tests from the College Board. More detailed information regarding these tests may be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).)

## **Students with Disabilities and the SAT/Subject Tests/AP**

### **Eligibility**

A student with a documented disability *may* be eligible for accommodations on College Board tests. To be eligible, the student must:

- Have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations,
- Have documentation on file at school that supports the need for requested accommodations **and meets The College Board's guidelines for documentation**, and
- Receive **and use** the requested accommodation(s), due to the disability, for school-based tests.

A student who is denied accommodation(s) by the College Board may appeal to the College Board for reevaluation.

### **Guidelines for Documentation**

An IEP, a 504 Plan or a Bishop Ireton Student Assistance Plan does not automatically guarantee students' eligibility for accommodations on College Board's tests. In order to meet the College Board's requirements, the documentation on file at Bishop Ireton must:

- State the specific disability, as diagnosed;
- Be current (In most cases the evaluation and testing should be completed within five years of the request for accommodations; for psychiatric disabilities, an annual evaluation update must be within 12 months of the request for accommodations.)
- Provide relevant educational, developmental and medical history;
- Describe the comprehensive testing and techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis (including evaluation date(s) and test results with subtest scores from measures of cognitive ability, current academic achievement, and information processing);
- Describe the functional limitations (how the disability impacts learning);
- Describe the accommodations requested, and state why the disability qualifies the student for such accommodations on standardized tests; and
- Establish the professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about license or certification and area of specialization.

### **Guidelines for Extended Time**

Most students who are granted the accommodation of extended time on their standardized tests and who use regular test formats will test at a national testing center (i.e., at their local public school). Students who require the use of a computer or an audiocassette version of the test or other special accommodation(s) that cannot be accommodated at a national testing center may test at Bishop Ireton. **It is the student's and parent's responsibility to submit the appropriate documentation and request for accommodation(s) to the Office of Counseling Services in a timely manner and to**

**consult with their counselor regarding the special testing schedule.** For more detailed information on testing services for students with disabilities please contact your student's counselor or visit the College Board's web site at [www.collegeboard.com/ssd/](http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/). You may also contact the College Board's Services for Students with Disabilities Office at 609-771-7137. (All information from the College Board.)

## **THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) PROGRAM**

Fourteen (14) Advanced Placement (AP) classes are offered at Bishop Ireton. **All students at Bishop Ireton who are enrolled in AP courses must take the appropriate AP exam(s).** Scores range from 1 (low) to 5 (high) and students who receive scores ranging from 3 to 5 *may* earn college credit, advanced placement, or both, depending on the college or university. Students must check the policy of each college or university to which they are applying regarding credit. A fee is charged for each AP exam. A fee reduction *may* be available for students who meet federal eligibility guidelines (discussed in section entitled **SAT Reasoning Test**).

## **THE COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM (CLEP)**

The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), another program of the College Board, allows students to obtain college credit or advanced placement by demonstrating knowledge (however attained) in 34 different subjects. Students may take the 90-minute CLEP exams on computers at national test centers, including Northern Virginia Community College. For more information on the CLEP program please visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

## **ACT**

The ACT measures academic achievement in four areas: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. An optional fifth test, Writing, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay. Scores are based upon the total number of correct answers and, unlike the SAT Reasoning Test, there is no penalty for guessing. Students may earn scores between 1 (low) and 36 (high). Some students *may* perform better on the ACT than the SAT Reasoning Test as it is more like a school-based achievement test. In addition, many colleges and universities will accept either the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT for admission. **It is the responsibility of the student to check the requirements of the institutions to which they are applying to see which admission test(s) they require.** Registration packets and practice tests for the ACT are available in the College Resource Center and at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org), however, students are encouraged to register for the test online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

## **Students with Disabilities and the ACT**

A student with a documented disability *may* be eligible to receive accommodation(s) on the ACT on certain national test dates. Eligibility requirements and guidelines for documentation are similar to the College Board's requirements for the SAT Reasoning Test and SAT Subject Tests but test dates and deadlines vary. Information and forms for applying for extended time national testing are available in the College Resource Center

and at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or by calling ACT at 319/337-1851. **It is the responsibility of the student and his or her family to submit the appropriate documentation and request for accommodation(s) to the Office of Counseling Services in a timely manner.** For more information on testing services for students with disabilities, please contact your student's counselor or ACT.

## PREPARING FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS

The College Board makes a distinction between *preparing* and *coaching* for the tests. They recommend a strong academic background as the best preparation for the SAT Reasoning Test. In addition, they recommend that students:

- Become familiar with the test's format, directions, question types, and patterns;
- Review algebra and geometry;
- Learn how to navigate the answer sheet;
- Learn how to guess wisely.

They also recommend that students take the free, online practice test and/or practice on the full-length exams in their publication, *The Official SAT Study Guide: For the New SAT* or their software program, *The Official SAT Online Course*.

There are many commercial coaching programs that claim to be able to “demystify” the SAT and that guarantee they can raise your score. A listing of some of these commercial programs is contained in the Appendix. **Bishop Ireton does not endorse or recommend any particular commercial coaching program.** However, if you decide to enroll in a program you should find a program that best fits your particular needs. You should: 1) check to make sure that the instructor has relevant educational experience; 2) make sure the program uses real (past) SATs for practice tests; and 3) time the class to end just before you take the real test. You might consider taking the SAT Reasoning Test one time (in the spring of junior year) with self-review and then investigate commercial coaching programs, if necessary, to prepare for the second test (in the fall of senior year). Time spent in a commercial test prep course must not be at the expense of your academic coursework so, if you are considering a commercial program, you may wish to consider scheduling it in the summer.

---

## COLLEGE VISITS AND INTERVIEWS

---

### COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES' VISITS TO BISHOP IRETON

During the school year many college representatives visit the Bishop Ireton campus. Students may visit with these representatives with permission of their teacher. An alternative is to bring a note from parent(s) requesting that the student be released from class to meet with the college representative. **It is the responsibility of the student to comply with Bishop Ireton attendance policies and procedures, to request permission ahead of time and to make up any missed work.**

## **THE CAMPUS VISIT**

The campus visit provides the opportunity to learn about many of the intangible qualities one cannot experience from reading a catalog or visiting a web site. It is an important part of the college selection process. Juniors should begin visiting colleges in the spring. Spring Break is a wonderful time to make visits.

Contact the institution's Admission Office to schedule a visit. If possible, arrange to stay overnight in one of the dormitories. Allow at least three hours to tour the campus. Prior to the visit, review the college catalog or visit the college web site, paying particular attention to admission requirements. Develop a list of questions about admissions (you may want to take a copy of your unofficial transcript with you), curricula, facilities, programs, internship opportunities/career placement assistance, financial aid, etc.

When you visit, take a tour of the campus but also visit the areas that are not on the official tour. Talk with students about the college environment and its academic, extracurricular and social life. Attend class(es), if possible. Talk with department chairs and/or faculty members. Visit the Student Center and pick up a campus newspaper (and the local newspaper) to learn what is important to the community. Visit a dorm and eat lunch in the cafeteria. Tour the athletic facilities, the library, and the drama, theatre and art facilities, if they are of special interest to you. Meet with a financial aid officer. Take a tour of the surrounding neighborhood.

### **The Interview**

There are three basic types of interviews:

- Personal Interview on campus with an Admissions Officer. The student must be prompt, appropriately dressed and prepared to ask and answer questions. It is best to think of the interview as a conversation, rather than a "grilling."
- Personal Interview with local alumnus. Following the application deadline, an alumnus of the school may contact you to schedule an interview. Again, it is important to be well prepared.
- Group Interview on campus. This provides an opportunity to discuss thoughts and concerns about information not found in the college literature. Students will not be asked personal questions during a group interview.

### **After the Visit**

- Promptly follow up with a thank you note to the Admissions Officer with whom you met.
- Make notes of your visit as soon as possible, recording your impressions of the campus.
- Review the college view book, catalog and web site. You may consider the information in a more meaningful way after your visit.

## COLLEGE ATHLETICS

---

A student-athlete who intends to participate in NCAA Division I or Division II athletics as a freshman in college must register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse at the end of his or her junior year. To register visit the NCAA's web site, [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org). Print out *Transcript Release Authorization Copy 1* (for preliminary transcript) and *Transcript Release Authorization Copy 2* (for final transcript) and submit them to the Bishop Ireton Registrar who will then send the official high school transcripts to the Clearinghouse. Student-athletes are reminded that when completing the SAT and/or ACT registration forms they must include the code 9999 in order that the Clearinghouse can receive their test score(s).

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Student-athletes must meet certain academic requirements to participate Division I or Division II athletics.

#### *Division I*

- Graduate from high school
- Complete 16 core courses
  - 4 years of English
  - 3 years of math (algebra I or higher)
  - 2 years of natural or physical science (including one year of lab science)
  - 1 extra English, math or natural or physical science
  - 2 years of social science
  - 4 years of extra core courses (from any category above, or foreign language, non-doctrinal religion or philosophy)
- Earn a minimum required grade point average in your core courses
- Earn a combined SAT or ACT sum score that matches your core-course grade-point average and test score sliding scale

#### *Division II*

- Graduate from high school
- Complete 14 core courses
  - 3 years of English
  - 2 years of math (algebra I or higher)
  - 2 years of natural or physical science (including one year of lab science)
  - 2 additional years of English, math, or natural or physical science
  - 2 years of social science
  - 3 years of extra core courses (from any category above or foreign language, non-doctrinal religion or philosophy)
- Earn a 2.00 grade-point average or better in your core courses
- Earn a combined SAT score (Critical Reading and Math) of 820 or an ACT score sum of 68

NOTE: If you enroll in a Division II college on or after August 1, 2013 you must complete 16 core courses

## RECRUITING

A student-athlete can assume that he or she is involved in **serious** recruiting when a head or assistant college coach contacts them **in person** or **by phone** more than once. College coaches send out thousands of letters each year. A general letter to a student-athlete is a mass mailing tool and *may not* be a good indicator of serious recruiting. Handwritten notes generally indicate a stronger interest.

A student-athlete may visit any campus an unlimited number of times at his or her expense. During the senior year only, a recruit may receive one expense-paid visit to any college or university. A student may not make more than **five** such visits in total.

## NATIONAL LETTER OF INTENT

The National Letter of Intent (NLI) is the “contract” that a student-athlete signs with a college or university, formalizing the student’s acceptance of that institution’s scholarship offer (for one academic year). Once a student-athlete signs a Letter of Intent, no further recruiting contact with any other institution is allowed to occur. Contact [www.nationalletter.org](http://www.nationalletter.org) for more information.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Only colleges in Division I or II of the NCAA or Division I of the NAIA may offer athletic scholarships. Institutions may disperse these in the form of full, half, or partial grants. Scholarships must go toward expenses related to tuition, room, board, fees and books. Not all colleges participating at the same competitive level in the same sport offer the identical number of scholarships. While football and basketball tend to offer a full complement, most other sports do not. Student-athletes must inquire about scholarship availability from each school recruiting them. Scholarships are **not** guaranteed for four years but are renewed on an annual basis. (Information from the NCAA Clearinghouse.)

## FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ADMISSION DECISIONS

While the landscape of higher education has changed dramatically in the last few years (greater number of highly qualified applicants, greater number of applications submitted) the factors that most influence an admission decision have remained relatively the same. Colleges and universities responding to a survey by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) in spring 2006 considered the following to be the most important factors in admission decisions:

- Grades in College Prep Courses
- Admission Test Scores

Supplemental Factors that may enhance a student’s application include:

- Application Essay or Writing Sample

- Teacher and Counselor Recommendations
- Interview
- Work and Extracurricular Activities
- Demonstrated Interest

Depending upon an institution's "mission and/or governing mandates," a student's race or ethnicity, ability to pay tuition, residence, and alumni contact(s) *may* affect the admission decision (NACAC *State of College Admission*, May 2006).

**Grades in College Preparatory Courses** (College Preparatory, Honors, AP). A strong academic record in challenging courses throughout high school is the most likely factor to influence an admission decision. For more selective colleges and universities there is strong emphasis on Honors and AP courses.

**Admission Test Scores** (SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests, ACT). Schools consider test scores an important "piece of the puzzle," and they are viewed in the context of the whole student. Although their relative usefulness in predicting college success has been debated, they continue to play a major role in college admissions.

**Essay or Writing Sample.** Colleges use these to judge the depth of a student's understanding of an intellectual or social issue and to show writing style, technical correctness and fluency.

**Counselor and Teacher Recommendations.** These first-hand observations by educators present information about a student's personality, motivation for learning, or personal philosophy that may not become known in any other way. Some colleges require the counselor's letter of recommendation only. Other colleges require the counselor's and teachers' letters of recommendation and/or forms. And, finally, some colleges do not require any letters of recommendation.

**Interview.** Some colleges require a personal interview by a staff member or an alumnus. At other colleges the interview is optional or is not an option.

**Community Service/Extracurricular Activities.** Very simply, colleges want students who will contribute to their community life. Just how much weight (if any) will be placed on a particular factor (e.g., leadership ability) will vary from college to college.

**Demonstrated Interest.** Some colleges record the number of contacts they have had with prospective students and use that number to gauge how serious a prospective student is in attending the institution.

Students are encouraged to review freshman class profiles found in college guides or on college web sites to compare their quantifiable features with those of admitted students. They may also access the licensed software program available through Bishop Ireton, *Family Connection* to view scattergrams (containing grade point averages and standardized test scores without names) of Bishop Ireton alumni who applied to various colleges and universities in previous years.

## **THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS**

---

This is the culmination of all your hard work and research. It is time to narrow down your list of colleges and universities to a manageable number. Approximately eight schools should be enough (and be certain that you can really picture yourself there!). Make sure that you have completed admission requirements (SAT Reasoning Test and/or ACT, and, for some schools, SAT Subject Tests) and that you meet the application deadlines. As you complete your applications, it is important to understand the various types of admission plans:

- **Regular Admission** - requires the applicant to submit all application materials before a specific deadline. Decisions are usually announced by early April. Most colleges encourage students to apply online but if you mail your application, you must make sure you understand the difference between the terms “postmarked by” and “received by.”
- **Rolling Admission** - qualified applicants are admitted on a first come basis. Applications submitted early have a greater chance of being accepted so students may wish to give these applications priority.
- **Early Decision** - process in which students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. Only a student who is ready to make a deliberate and well-reasoned first-choice decision should apply under an Early Decision plan. While pursuing admission under an Early Decision plan, students may apply to other institutions, but may have only one Early Decision pending at any time. **Students must seriously consider the implications of applying under a binding Early Decision plan before they apply.**
- **Early Action** - requires the applicant to submit application materials early, usually early-mid November. The date varies by institution. Students accepted under a non-binding Early Action plan have an opportunity to receive an early reply but still have time to hear from all other colleges and to consider all financial aid packages before making a decision.
- **Single-Choice Early Action** – applicant may seek an admission decision from one school only in the early cycle but are free to apply elsewhere under Regular Decision.

### **THE BISHOP IRETON PROCESS**

Before completing the college application form it is necessary to have completed and submitted to the Office of Counseling Services the following:

- Transcript Release Form (must be signed by parent even if the student is 18)
- Student Brag Sheet
- Parent Brag Sheet
- Summary of Activities, Accomplishments and Awards

In addition, students are required to obtain two (2) letters of recommendation from teachers. Your counselor will provide an additional letter of recommendation. It is the responsibility of the student to formally request **in writing**, using the blue “Teacher Recommendation Request Form” provided by Bishop Ireton’s Office of Counseling Services, letters of recommendation from teachers. It is important to note that some college applications contain teacher recommendation **forms**. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the teacher recommendation form from the college (if required) along with the Bishop Ireton “Teacher Recommendation Request Form.” The student must deliver the “Teacher Recommendation Request Form” directly to the teacher(s), with an appropriately addressed (to the college) and stamped envelope. **It is the responsibility of the student to give these requests directly to the teacher.** When you ask teachers for letters of recommendation or to complete forms please remember that many students will be requesting this of them and allow sufficient time. **It is important to identify and ask teachers early.**

When completing the application each student must:

- Adhere to Bishop Ireton and college deadlines.
- Read the application thoroughly before completing it.
- Type or neatly print (in black ink) the application, if using paper form.
- Make sure the essay topic is addressed correctly.
- Ensure that all ancillary pages to the application contain the student’s name and social security number (if required) in the upper right hand corner.
- Take their essay to the Writing Center for review and assistance.
- Deliver the institution’s teacher recommendation form, if part of the application, and/or the written request for recommendation with stamped, addressed envelope directly to the teacher.
- Make a photocopy of the application for their records (or print out a copy if applying online).
- If using paper application, mail the application to the college or university well before the due date, using appropriate postage.

The student’s package (if completing the paper application) will include:

- Completed application form (including essay(s) and work samples, if requested)
- Application fee
- Summary of Activities, Accomplishments and Awards, if requested
- Self-addressed, stamped postcard (for confirmation of receipt)

Teacher(s)’ letters of recommendation/recommendation forms will be sent directly **by the teacher** to the college or university. To complete the application process the student must submit to the Office of Counseling Services (the Registrar/Guidance Assistant) the following:

- The completed Gold Transcript Request Form containing the complete name and address of the college/university to which you have applied/will apply. **No email requests will be accepted.**

- The Secondary School Report Form (if part of the college application).
- A check made payable to Bishop Ireton High School for transcript fee. (The first transcript is free. The fee for each additional transcript is \$5.00.)

**You must allow the Office of Counseling Services AT LEAST four weeks (of working days NOT INCLUDING THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS BREAKS) before the high school packet is due at the college or university. If you do not adhere to this deadline, there is no guarantee that the packet will reach the college or university by their application deadline. Approximately 200 seniors will be applying to a minimum of eight colleges and universities each (many to the same colleges with the same deadlines). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their request is placed in a timely manner. Bishop Ireton requests that students complete and submit the College Packet Request Form(s) with names and addresses of institutions to which they have applied/will be applying early, even if they have not yet completed and submitted their application to the institution. Requests will be processed at Bishop Ireton as they are received, regardless of the institution's deadline.**

The Office of Counseling Services will prepare and mail to the college a packet that consists of the following:

- The official (six semester) high school transcript.
- Bishop Ireton High School Profile
- Counselor's letter of recommendation
- Completed Secondary School Report Form, if required
- Bishop Ireton High School self-addressed, stamped postcard (for confirmation of receipt)

First semester transcripts will be sent automatically to **all** colleges/universities to which the student has applied. **Students do not need to submit mid-year or end-of-year report forms to Bishop Ireton, however, they must complete any forms and provide any information requested of them by the college or university.** End-of-year transcripts will be sent to the college/university the student has notified Bishop Ireton they will be attending. Students must request additional transcripts be sent to an institution at which they have been "wait listed" if they wish that institution to also receive a final transcript.

**It is the responsibility of the student to inform colleges and universities to which they have applied of any *changes* in their senior year course schedule, Summary of Activities, etc., which occurred *after* a student initially applied to the institution. As a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), Bishop Ireton High School honors the policy regarding reporting and will inform colleges and universities when a student drops a course or transfers to a less rigorous course after application has been made.**

**Please note that all tuition payments and other fees and obligations owed Bishop Ireton MUST BE CURRENT in order for a transcript to be released. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the status of your account, please contact the Bishop Ireton Business Office directly.**

## **FINANCING YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION**

---

When thinking about your college options it is important to consider cost. College costs include tuition, room and board, transportation expenses, and related costs such as books, fees, computer, etc. In general, public institutions cost less than private institutions. However, private institutions are sometimes able to put together a financial aid package that is competitive with some public institutions. Students and their families are encouraged to discuss their options and financial aid offers directly with the institution(s). When applying for financial aid it is important to remember that the financial aid application uses the family's tax information from the calendar year preceding the school year. Thus, if a student will begin college in August 2010, the family will report income from the 2009 tax form. It is also important to remember that some aid (e.g., aid awarded by colleges and universities) is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis so it is important to apply for aid as soon as possible, certainly by the institution's published deadline.

### **FEDERAL AID**

There are many ways to finance a college education. The major source of aid is the Federal Government. A few of the student assistance programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education are:

- The Federal Pell Grant Program
- The Federal Work-Study Program
- The Federal Perkins Loan Program
- Federal Stafford Loan Program
- Other Federal Loans

There are additional programs for which a student *may* be eligible. For detailed information please consult the Financial Aid Offices of the institutions to which you are applying.

### **Eligibility**

In order to be eligible to receive federal aid a student must meet the following criteria:

- The student must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- The student must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment at an eligible institution in an eligible program of study.
- The student must have a high school diploma or its equivalent, or have the "ability to benefit" from a program of study.
- Most males must register with the Selective Service and must file a statement indicating registration status.
- The student must not have had federal benefits suspended or terminated as a

- result of a drug offense conviction.
- The student must file a Statement of Educational Purpose stating that all funds will be used solely for educational purposes.
  - The student must maintain satisfactory academic progress.
  - The student must be enrolled at least half time to be eligible for some programs.
  - The student must not be in default on a federal educational loan or owe a refund on a federal educational grant. In addition, the student must not have borrowed in excess of federal loan limits.

Federal programs may have additional eligibility criteria.

### **FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)**

The first step in applying for federal financial aid is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This is the form that the federal government uses in determining eligibility for federal financial aid. The FAFSA form is available in paper format and on the web at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). **It is important to remember that after initially accessing FAFSA on the web, it may take two to three days before you actually receive your pin number and can begin to complete the FAFSA form online.** The advantages to completing FAFSA online are that the results are available faster and there is an opportunity to correct errors before the form is submitted and thus save time. FAFSA should be completed as soon after January 1 of the senior year as possible. For assistance in completing FAFSA you may call the Federal Student Aid Information Center toll-free at 1-800-4-FED-AID. In addition, the Office of Counseling Services hosts an annual Financial Aid Workshop for parents in December. Once the FAFSA is completed the student's financial need will be analyzed to determine how much the family can **reasonably** be expected to contribute to the student's education. The result of this process is called the Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

### **CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE**

In addition to FAFSA some colleges and universities also require that students complete the *CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE* to receive nonfederal student aid funds. The *PROFILE* is a program of the College Board and students may register for this program via the Internet at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). Students should register for *PROFILE* as soon as they are certain of the schools to which they are applying and at least four weeks before the earliest school or scholarship program deadline. Students must contact the Financial Aid Office of the college or university directly regarding their requirements and deadlines.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS**

Scholarships and grants provide money that does not have to be repaid. Information regarding scholarships is available in the College Resource Center, online and in college and university Financial Aid Offices. Students are encouraged to check these resources frequently.

The Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) Program provides grant money to Virginia residents who attend private colleges or universities in Virginia. In addition, the Maryland State Scholarship Administration awards millions of dollars to Maryland residents who attend Maryland colleges and universities.

Students and parents are advised to be wary of organizations that charge a fee to provide financial aid information and to perform a scholarship search or that **guarantee** scholarship awards. Visit the Federal Trade Commission's web site at [www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edeams/scholarship/index.html](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edeams/scholarship/index.html) or call the National Fraud Information Center at 1-877-FTC-HELP to receive information regarding scholarship scams and fraud in financial aid. You may also access College Board's web site [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and NACAC's web site [www.nacac/preventscams.html](http://www.nacac/preventscams.html) to learn about scholarship scams.

## **ROTC**

The following Military Scholarships are awarded on the basis of merit:

- Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).
- Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps.
- Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps.

ROTC scholarships can cover the cost of college tuition and books, plus provide a stipend per month for personal expenses. It is the student's responsibility to research the application policy and ROTC programs at the individual schools, as programs may differ from school to school.

## **SERVICE ACADEMIES**

Students may also consider applying to one of our nation's distinguished service academies. In addition to receiving a first rate, cost-free education, all students at the academies receive modest pay and allowances. Graduates are commissioned as officers in one of our armed services. In addition to a nomination from a Congressman or Senator, candidates must apply to the service academy of their choice. The application process should begin in the spring of the student's junior year. Information for candidates seeking nomination to service academies is available from your senator's and congressman's offices or on their web sites. Information on the academies' admission requirements and standards can be obtained by visiting the institutions' web sites or by contacting the admissions offices.

United States Military Academy  
[www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)

United States Naval Academy  
[www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)

United States Air Force Academy  
[www.academyadmissions.com](http://www.academyadmissions.com)

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy  
[www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)

United State Coast Guard Academy  
[www.cga.edu](http://www.cga.edu)

## Helpful Web Sites

### **Popular Web Sites:**

<http://connection.naviance.com/ireton> - Family Connection website to Bishop Ireton college statistics and college search information (*to access this web site, see your guidance counselor.*)

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) - SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Subject Test(s) registration form and testing preparation strategies, college searches, scholarship and financial aid information

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org) - ACT Registration and practice tests, college searches, scholarship and financial aid information

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) - FAFSA application form

[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) - Common application form for selected colleges and universities

### **Financial Aid/Scholarship Web Sites:**

<http://www.finaid.org/> - Scholarships, loans and financial aid

<http://www.finaid.org/calculators/finaidestimate.phtml> - Calculate your "Estimated Family Contribution"

<http://apollo.gmu.edu/finaid/> - Links to Scholarships, Government web sites and financial aid information

<http://www.theoldschool.org/> - Financial Aid Resource Center

<http://www.financialaid.com/> - Scholarship searches and financial aid information

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) - Scholarship Searches

### **College/Career/Scholarship Web Sites:**

<http://www.mycollegeguide.org> - Answers many questions about college

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Prepare/> - Questions and answers about how to prepare for college

<http://www.globalcomputing.com/university.htm> - List of colleges in the United States

[www.studyincanada.com](http://www.studyincanada.com) - Colleges in Canada

<http://www.princetonreview.com/> - College and scholarship searches and apply online

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) - Scholarship searches

<http://www.freschinfo.com/> - Scholarships, Financial Aid and College information

<http://apps.absolutelyscholarships.com/exec/scholarship> - Find a college and search a scholarship data base with over 200,000 scholarships

<http://www.search4careercolleges.com/> - Information on colleges, financial aid and scholarship links

[www.collegequest.com](http://www.collegequest.com) - Financial aid and scholarship information.

<http://www.collegenet.com/> - College, scholarship and financial aid information

<http://www.petersons.com> - Scholarship, financial aid, resumes, careers, test preparation and summer opportunities

<http://www.MyMajors.com>

### **Students with Disabilities Web Site:**

<http://www.nichcy.org/> - National Info Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

## SAT and ACT Test Preparation Resources

There is variety of test prep companies offering programs which vary in length, focus and teaching style and price. This list is provided as a courtesy to the Bishop Ireton community and inclusion on this list is NOT AN ENDORSEMENT of a particular program or course. If you do decide that a test prep class is for you, it is important to investigate which type of class will work best for your learning style. Please keep in mind, that the best test prep advice is to do your school work and homework, continue to read to increase your vocabulary, work hard in school and take practice tests.

The Counseling Services office will not make specific recommendations or endorsements for test prep companies. Some of the companies on the list do offer classes at Bishop Ireton in the evenings and on the weekends and may offer a discount or scholarship to BI students.

<a href="#">Dalby Tutoring</a>	703-356-2728	
The Hunt Course www.huntprograms.com	703-425-7656	<i>\$50 tuition discount to BI students if you register before December 1<sup>st</sup>. Classes will be held at BI and 10 other Virginia locations.</i>
<a href="#">Huntington Learning Center</a>	800-CAN LEARN	
<a href="#">Ivy Bound Test Prep</a>	877-975-1600	
<a href="#">Kaplan Test Prep</a>	800-527-8378	<i>\$350 tuition discount to BI students enrolled in a Kaplan course. Classes held at BI and other Virginia locations.</i>
Revolution Prep www.revolutionprep.com	877-738-7737	<i>Classes offered at BI.</i>
<a href="#">RLK Educational Services</a>	301-656-0900	
SAT Prep Course		<i>Taught by Bishop Ireton's very own Mrs. Henry and Mr. Bulcavage. Classes held at BI. See Mrs. Henry or Mr. Bulcavage for details.</i>
<a href="#">Studyworks</a>	301-986-8012	
<a href="#">Summit Educational Group</a>	800-698-8867	
<a href="#">Sylvan Learning Center</a>	703-671-5621	
<a href="#">Tenley Study Center</a>	202-362-2419	
<a href="#">The Princeton Review</a>	800-2REVIEW	
Tutor Find www.tutorfind.com	800-64-TUTOR	

Bishop Ireton High School Counseling Services Office  
does not endorse or recommend any particular company or program.

# Writing Your College Essay

(A service of *RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE, a coeducational, liberal arts college in Ashland, Virginia*)

---

## Introduction

If you are like most students, you see the college essay as another hurdle that you must jump on the way to being accepted at the college of your choice. In fact, the essay is not a hurdle but a rare *opportunity*; it is a chance for you to "talk" directly to the college's admissions committee and to help them "see" you as a thinking and feeling person, rather than simply a set of impersonal statistics. Except for the interview, it is your only chance to share your thoughts, insights, and opinions; to highlight your accomplishments; and to convey your maturity and outlook on life. If you see the college essay in this way - as an opportunity - then it is clearly worth the effort to put some extra time, thought and energy into writing it.

## Purpose of the Essay

The college essay is extremely important for two major reasons:

1. It enables the college admissions office to evaluate your communication skills. Through your essay they can assess the clarity of your thinking and your ability to convey your thoughts in written form.
2. It enables the admissions office to learn more about you as a person, beyond what grades and SAT scores can convey.

A well-written essay can speak worlds about your attitudes, feelings, personal qualities, imagination and creativity. For the admissions staff, it adds another important piece to the puzzle because it distinguishes you as an individual, different from any other student who is applying.

## Choosing a Topic

The choice of a topic is frequently not an issue, because many colleges and universities will either give you a topic to write about or present several rather specific topics from which you must choose. Other colleges may simply "suggest" broad general topics or give you total freedom to write about something that interests or concerns you. Regardless of whether you must respond to a prescribed topic or come up with one of your own, here are a few general hints about the most effective way to approach your topic:

- Narrow your topic and try to be as specific and illustrative as possible.
- Relatedly, the easiest topic to write about is yourself. No one knows more about you than you. Since one important purpose of the essay is self-revelation, it is no place to be shy or modest, although you should not exaggerate. If you choose to write about yourself, remember that little incidents and facts are often the most revealing of character and outlook.
- Do not be afraid to write about something you think is a little different. A unique topic or approach is often refreshing to a college admissions officer who has been reading applications all day. Further, an unusual or off-beat essay is an excellent way to show your creativity.

## Preparing to Write

Before actually sitting down to write a first draft of your essay, spend some time organizing your thoughts. Develop a framework for your essay so it will have a smooth and logical progression from one idea or incident to the next. Consider *your* purpose in writing, what you want to convey, and the tone that you think is most appropriate for the topic. Decide on a style that is comfortable for you, not one that you think the college admissions committee prefers. Finally, remember that organizing your thoughts and deciding on a framework does not mean you must be overly rigid at the start; leave room for flexibility and creativity as you actually begin writing.

## Writing the Essay

You do not have to get it right the first time! Instead, write the first draft of your essay with the main focus on content, communicating your thoughts. Then set it aside for a day or two. Reread it with a fresh perspective, and make any necessary changes. This is also the point at which you should consider matters of organization, style, grammar, spelling, and tone.

Once you have rewritten your first draft, you may wish to try it out on your family, friends, English teacher, or guidance counselor. While the final product and final "voice" should be yours, they may be able to offer helpful suggestions for technical or other improvements.

Within this general outline for actually writing the essay, there are some "do's" and "don'ts" which I would like to highlight:

### Do's

- Do think "small" and write about something that you know about
- Do reveal yourself in your writing.
- Do show rather than tell. By giving examples and illustrating your topic, you help bring it to life.
- Do write in your own "voice" and style.

### Don'ts

- Don't write what you think others want to read.
- Don't exaggerate or write to impress.
- Don't use a flowery, inflated, or pretentious style.
- Don't neglect the technical part of your essay (grammar, spelling, sentence structure).
- Don't ramble - say what you have to say and conclude.

Your college essay, along with your high school record, standardized test scores, and extracurricular involvement, will provide the bases upon which the college makes its admissions decision. A thoughtful, well-written essay can affect in a very positive way that final decision. Keep this in mind and take full advantage of the opportunity, which the college essay affords you.

THIS ARTICLE MAY BE REPRODUCED.

**Bishop Ireton High School  
201 Cambridge Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

## **Transcript Release Form**

Public Law 93-380, Protection of Rights and Privacy of Students (Buckley Amendment), requires that we obtain permission of the parent or guardian before we release information about a student. Please complete the form below and return it to The Office of Counseling Services.

PLEASE NOTE: All tuition and other payments must be current in order for transcripts to be released.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(required even if the student is 18 years of age or older)*

*This form must be completed only one time.*

**Bishop Ireton High School**  
**201 Cambridge Road**  
**Alexandria, Virginia 22314**  
CEEB No.: 470019

---

(Student Name)

**Summary of Activities, Accomplishments and Awards**

Use an additional sheet of paper if necessary

**Senior Year:**

**Junior Year:**

**Sophomore Year:**

**Freshman Year:**

## **Student Information Sheet**

*The more information you provide, the more in depth and personalized letter of recommendation we can write. Please answer the questions after you have put some thought into them and use an additional piece of paper if necessary.*

---

(Student Name)

What three (3) adjectives would your friends use to describe you?

What are you most proud of during your high school years? Describe how you accomplished what you did.

Are there any circumstances that affected your academic performance? (e.g. job, home responsibility or conflicts, illness, or others factors which are unique to your background).

Please expand on your accomplishments and activities. Highlight any areas that are not self-explanatory.

How do you think you have contributed o the school community in your 3 years here?

Please give me an anecdote/story about yourself that will help me better understand you and that will illustrate your personality and your unique qualities.

What, in particular, would you like us to stress in your letter of recommendation?

## Parent Information Sheet

*Please share your insights to assist us in getting to know your son or daughter better. It will be very helpful to us as advocates in their college admissions process if you will take some time to reflect on the items below and return the completed questionnaire to your child's counselor. Feel free to be funny, be serious, be honest, and of course, be proud! Please respond to all of the following that apply to your child. Thanks for your time and thought.*

---

(Student Name)

What do you consider to be the most outstanding accomplishment(s) (academic, social, personal) of your student during the past three years?

In what area(s) has your student shown the most growth and development?

What do you consider to be your student's outstanding personality trait(s)? Please include an anecdotal example.

Describe a characteristic or accomplishment that we might not know about, again something that won't show up on his/her Activities Record.

Please describe your student in five adjectives.

Are there any unusual or personal circumstances that may have affected your student's educational experiences (**which you would like us to share with the college/university**)?

*Please add on an additional page anything else you think we ought to know. (e.g. educational background, special family situation/trauma or medical history, personal challenges and achievements or just a wonderful story that may help distinguish your child)*

## College Preparation Timetable and Checklist

### **FRESHMAN YEAR**

Take challenging courses and do well in them. Establish a four-year academic plan. If you need help, consult with teachers and with your counselor. Read a variety of materials. Take the PSAT/NMSQT. Begin using the college research software *Family Connection*. Get involved in extracurricular activities and perform community service. Select challenging courses for sophomore year.

### **SOPHOMORE YEAR**

Continue to take challenging courses and do well in them. Read widely. Review your academic plan. Take the PSAT/NMSQT. Continue your involvement in extracurricular activities. Select challenging courses for junior year.

### **JUNIOR YEAR**

Continue to work hard in school and to monitor your academic progress. Select challenging courses for senior year (including math and language courses, if possible). Take the PSAT/NMSQT and review the *Score Report* to determine area(s) needing improvement. Take the SAT Reasoning Test (and SAT II Subject Test(s), if required). Consider taking the ACT. Continue with extracurricular activities and community service. Seek out opportunities to display your leadership skills. Talk with parents, counselors, teachers, and friends about college options. Research colleges, universities, military academies and ROTC programs/requirements. If considering Division I or II college athletic programs, register with NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse at end of Junior year. Attend *How to Use the PSAT/NMSQT Score Report as a Tool to Prepare for the SAT Reasoning Test*, *The Bishop Ireton College Application Process* and other special programming on *Preparing for College*.

### **SENIOR YEAR**

Continue to work hard to improve your academic grades. Colleges look unfavorably on students who let their grades fall or who take fewer or less rigorous courses in their senior year.

### **September**

\_\_\_\_\_ Set up a calendar for the college admission process. Use this calendar to record test dates, application deadlines, college fairs, Bishop Ireton deadlines, etc. Set up a file to organize college applications, forms, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Complete your BI forms (list of activities, brag sheet, etc.) and give a

copy to your Counselor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Request letters of recommendation from teachers using *Teacher Recommendation Request Form*. Check on status. Write thank you notes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Register for SAT Reasoning Test and/or ACT and SAT Subject Tests, if required.

\_\_\_\_\_ Refine the list of colleges to which you will be applying.

\_\_\_\_\_ Schedule an appointment and meet with your Counselor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Work on college applications. Visit the Writing Center for assistance with essays. Consider whether Early Decision or Early Action is appropriate for you.

**Be aware of college application deadlines. Remember that the College Packet Request Forms must be turned in to the Office of Counseling Services AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS BEFORE APPLICATION DUE DATE.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Attend *The Anatomy of a College Admission Decision* at Bishop Ireton.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continue with extracurricular and community service  
Keep your grades up; don't give in to "Senior Slump." Colleges will see your first and second semester senior grades.

\_\_\_\_\_ Meet with college representatives at Bishop Ireton and attend College Fairs.

### **October/November**

\_\_\_\_\_ Take the SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT and/or the SAT Subject Test(s), if appropriate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continue working on college applications.

\_\_\_\_\_ Research scholarship opportunities in the College Resource Center and online.

### **December**

\_\_\_\_\_ Remind parents to attend the *College Financial Aid/FAFSA Workshop* at Bishop Ireton.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continue working hard to keep your grades up.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take SAT Reasoning Test/SAT Subject Test(s)/ACT, if necessary.

## January

- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete and submit financial aid form(s) (FAFSA, Profile, etc.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Continue to research scholarship opportunities in the College Resource Center and online.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take SAT Subject Tests(s), if required.

## February - June

- \_\_\_\_\_ February: First semester grades automatically sent to all colleges.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Continue to research scholarship and financial aid opportunities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consider revisiting colleges and universities to which you have been admitted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consider and compare all offers of admission and financial aid.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bring **copies** of letters of acceptance and scholarship awards to the Office of Counseling Services.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep track of admission decisions.  
Discuss options and strategies with your college counselor regarding admit/deny/wait-list status.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete and return to the Office of Counseling Services your *Senior Survey*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ National Candidates' Reply Date: May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Arrange for housing. Send deposit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ace your AP and final exams. Arrange with College Board to have AP scores sent to your college.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consider taking CLEP exams (consult with your college).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend *Surviving the First Year of College* at Bishop Ireton with your parents.
- \_\_\_\_\_ June: Final Grades automatically sent to your selected college.

**Over the past five years students from the Bishop Ireton High School have been accepted to the following colleges and universities.**

American University	High Point University
Appalachian State University	Hiram College
Beloit College	Hofstra University
Boston College	Hollins University
Boston University	Howard University
Bridgewater College	Illinois Institute of Technology
Brown University	Indiana University
Bucknell University	International University in Geneva
Carnegie Mellon University	Jacksonville University
Case Western Reserve University	James Madison University
Cedar Crest College	John Carroll University
Clemson University	Johns Hopkins University
Coastal Carolina University	Juniata College
College of Charleston	Lehigh University
College of William and Mary	Longwood University
Columbia University	Loyola College in Maryland
Cornell University	Loyola Marymount University
Creighton University	Lynchburg College
Dickinson College	Manhattan College
Drexel University	Marquette University
Duke University	Mary Baldwin College
Duquesne University	Marymount University
Earlham College	Massachusetts Maritime Academy
East Carolina University	Miami University
Eckerd College	Michigan State University
Elon University	Middlebury College
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	Morehouse College
Emerson College	Mount St. Mary's College
Florida State University	New York University
Fordham University	North Carolina State University
Franciscan University of Steubenville	Northeastern University
Furman University	Northern Virginia Community College
George Mason University	Ohio State University
Georgetown University	Old Dominion University
George Washington University	Pennsylvania State University
Georgia Institute of Technology	Philadelphia University
Gettysburg College	Princeton University
Goucher College	Purdue University
Hampden-Sydney College	Radford University
Hampton University	Randolph-Macon Woman's College
Harvard University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Sacred Heart University  
Saint Francis University  
Saint Joseph's University  
Saint Louis University  
Salisbury University  
Seton Hall University  
Shenandoah University  
Shepherd University  
Shippensburg University  
Smith College  
Southern Illinois University  
St. Andrew's Presbyterian College  
St. John's College  
St. John's University  
St. Mary's College of Maryland  
Susquehanna University  
Syracuse University  
Temple University  
The American International  
University (London)  
The Catholic University of America  
The Corcoran College of Art  
and Design  
The George Washington University  
The University of Scranton  
The University of Texas  
Towson University  
Tulane University  
Tusculum College  
United States Air Force Academy  
United States Coast Guard Academy  
United States Merchant  
Marine Academy  
United States Military Academy  
United States Naval Academy  
University of Alabama  
University of California  
University of Chicago  
University of Colorado  
University of Dallas  
University of Delaware

University of Florida  
University of Georgia  
University of Glasgow  
University of Kentucky  
University of Maine  
University of Mary Washington  
University of Maryland  
University of Massachusetts  
University of Minnesota  
University of Mississippi  
University of New Hampshire  
University of New Haven  
University of North Carolina  
University of North Florida  
University of Notre Dame  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Richmond  
University of San Diego  
University of San Francisco  
University of South Carolina  
University of Southern California  
University of Southern Maine  
University of St. Andrew's  
University of Toronto  
University of Virginia  
Vanderbilt University  
Villanova University  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Virginia Military Institute  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and  
State University  
Virginia State University  
Wagner College  
Wake Forest University  
Washington and Jefferson College  
Washington College  
Washington & Lee University  
West Virginia University  
Winthrop University  
York College of Pennsylvania

