



September 2024

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2024-25 academic year! The purpose of this newsletter is to help students and caregivers stay on track in planning for education after high school and learn about College Now programs and events, scholarship opportunities, financial aid, deadlines and more -- all designed to pave the way for a successful future.

Each month, you'll find important updates and reminders tailored to each grade level, along with tips on how families can actively support their student's educational journey.

SAVE THE DATE



Cleveland Goes to College Fair

Wednesday, September 25

East Professional Center
1349 East 79th St., Cleveland

It's never too early to start thinking about college -- let us help! By attending our Cleveland Goes to College Fair, you'll open up a world of postsecondary opportunities by meeting representatives from both in-state and out-of-state postsecondary institutions. Click [here](#) to view a list of this year's registered institutions. We'll be adding more as the event approaches, so be sure to check back often! This exciting event is tailored just for you, designed to

provide a comprehensive overview of your postsecondary options and help you discover your path to success. We look forward to seeing you there!

This event is open from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. for CMSD students and 5 - 7 p.m. for the public.

[Register here](#)

COLLEGE NOW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WEBINARS

Cracking the Code: The Importance of Test Prep

**Tuesday, September 17
6 p.m.**

Discover why test preparation is crucial for success and how it can impact your college admissions. Gain insights into effective study strategies, resources and the new digital SAT format.

[Register here](#)

Financial Aid 101: Unlocking College Funding

**Wednesday, September 18
6 p.m.**

Explore the various types of financial aid available, including grants, loans and work-study programs. Learn how to navigate the financial aid application process to maximize your funding opportunities.

[Register here](#)

Finding Your Perfect Fit: College Admissions and Best Fit Panel

**Tuesday, September 24
6 p.m.**

Hear from admissions experts about finding the best fit for your college journey. Get tips on what colleges look for in applicants and how to make your application stand out.

[Register here](#)

FINANCIAL AID CORNER



Attention class of 2025! The 2025-26 [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) will open on December 1, 2024. You need to complete the FAFSA form to apply for student aid such as federal grants, work-study funds, and loans. Completing and submitting the FAFSA form is completely free!

Get a head start on the financial aid process by:

- [Creating an FSA ID](#). All contributors (parents) on your FAFSA will need an FSA ID.
- Collecting 2023 income, tax and asset documentation for all contributors and students.
- Researching financial aid deadlines for all prospective institutions.

[Learn more about the FAFSA](#)

SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Scholarships are an incredible source of financial assistance for college students. Unlike loans, scholarship funds are free money. That means you don't have to pay them back over time -- an assurance that can vastly reduce financial stress and help you focus more on your studies.

Check out the opportunity below!



The Gates Scholarship

Application deadline: Sunday, September 15

The Gates Scholarship is a highly selective, last dollar scholarship for

outstanding minority high school seniors from low-income households. Each year, this scholarship is awarded to exceptional student leaders with the intent of helping them realize their maximum potential.

[Apply here](#)

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS



Get paid to study for the ACT and PSAT with impact!

Why should I test? It is recommended that students take at least two entrance exams before submitting college applications. Scoring well on entrance exams can increase a student's eligibility for merit-based aid and special scholarships. Although many institutions across the nation no longer require entrance exams, we encourage students to take at least two exams before graduating. Plus, colleges/universities may require a test score for specific academic majors and scholarships.

How can I prepare? College Now's [impact!](#) program provides students with ACT or PSAT test preparation and guides students through college and career research. Our Fall 2024 impact! test sessions are in-person at multiple sites throughout Northeast Ohio and regular attendance is required to successfully complete the program. **Note: Students may register for any available location, regardless of their home high school.**

But that's not all - students who complete an impact! session receive a stipend!

[Register here](#)

STUDENT CHECKLIST

What should you do now to support your future?

Stay on track for the school year by checking off the items in your grade's checklist!

Freshmen

- Meet with your [College Now advisor](#).
- Get set up on your school's college & career planning tool (Naviance, SchoolLinks, PATHWAYS, etc.) if available. Log in and complete one task.
- Meet with your guidance counselor. Confirm that your course schedule will set you on the right track. See what additional courses your school offers.
- Get involved! Join a club or team sport, volunteer or work part-time.
- Register to take the [PSAT](#). The first test date this year is October 8.

Sophomores

- Meet your [College Now advisor](#) and guidance counselor to confirm that your courses will put you on the right track this year.
- Athletes: If you plan to play sport in college, meet with your coaches to make sure you are on track. Ask your guidance counselor about taking NCAA-approved courses.
- Set up or log into your college & career planning tool (Naviance, SchoolLinks, PATHWAYS, etc.) and familiarize your self with the college admissions process.
- Create or continue to build your resume (a record of your accomplishments, awards, activities, work experience, etc.).
- Join extracurricular activities and volunteer in your community. If you haven't participated in activities outside of class, now is the time to sign up! Consider school clubs, sports, a part-time job or other activities.
- Ask about test dates for the PSAT and Pre-ACT. Plan to take either test in October. [Khan Academy](#) offers free resources to help you prepare.

Juniors

- Meet with your guidance counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate.
- Sign up for [College Credit Plus](#).
- Set a system (e.g. notebook, excel sheet) to track your plans. Ask your [College Now advisor](#) for assistance.
- Plan to take the PSAT in October and the SAT/ACT in the spring. Review information about the PSAT/NMSQT with your counselor. Keep your eye out for information about how College Now can help your prepare for these tests.

- Log in to your college & career planning tool (Naviance, SchoolLinks, PATHWAYS, etc.) and review your checklist for junior year, including updating your career interest profile.
- Explore college and career options through your college & career planning tool. Check college visit information through your school to learn when college admissions representatives will be visiting.
- Continue participating in extracurricular activities or join one if you haven't already. Consider school clubs, sports, part-time jobs, etc.
- Keep track of your accomplishments, activities and work experience. These will be important pieces of your college applications.

Seniors

- Meet with your [College Now advisor](#) to discuss the college application process.
- Update your resume for your college applications.
- Make sure your course schedule is rigorous, challenging and includes all necessary courses for graduation.
- Confirm you are on track to meet all graduation requirements.
- Register for the [ACT](#) and/or [SAT](#) if you are interested in retesting or taking the other exam. Prepare by [registering for a test prep session](#) with College Now.
- Athletes: If interested in playing sports at the collegiate level, complete the [NCAA requirements](#).
- Ask one or two teachers, counselors or administrators (depending on institution requirements) for letters of recommendation. Ask your references what information they need from you and follow up with an email to them with your resume attached. Please allow 2-4 weeks for them to prepare a thorough recommendation.
- Complete and fine-tune your prospective college list. Ensure your list includes the three categories: safety, match and reach. Enter your list in your school's college & career planning tool, as directed by your counselor, so that you can ensure that your transcripts and letters of recommendation are sent in a timely manner.
- Create your [ESA ID](#).
- Record and save the information in a secure location.
- Meet with college representatives and attend college fairs.
- Research the required essays for each college, work on drafting the essays and compile a list of application deadlines.
- Schedule interviews at selected colleges, if applicable.

FAMILY CHECKLIST

What should you be doing with your student to support your future?

It's never too early to have conversations with your student about their

interests and future. At the beginning of the year, take some time to review your student's hobbies and ask them about careers they're interested in for the future.

Middle School

- Check in with your student to see how they are doing, as middle school may include more homework, different types of classes and new friend groups.

All High School Grades

- Continue to discuss your student's interests and encourage them to sign up for sports, clubs and other extracurricular activities.
- Attend workshops on college and career opportunities offered at your student's school.
- Attend college fairs and any exposure opportunities that may be offered.
- Help your student create a professional email address they can use throughout high school. This email should be used on applications for both colleges and jobs. Remind your student to get in the habit of checking their email regularly.

Juniors

- Support your student in taking the ACT or SAT by helping them plan a test date that works with their schedule. Make sure to reach out to your student's [College Now advisor](#) or contact College Now to enroll in test preparation sessions or get support for fee waivers if eligible.
- Confirm your student has set up a College Board account on College Board's [website](#). Once they have an account, you should be notified of important testing information as well as other webinars about college admissions.

Seniors

- Ensure that your student works with their College Now Advisor or school counselor to gather letters of recommendation.
- Help your student apply for college, trade school and/or military schools. Review the [Common Application](#) for colleges and work with your student to make a calendar of application deadlines.
- Think about what you can afford to pay for college or trade school. A [Net Price Calculator](#) can help you understand the costs of college.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



Miami University Bridges Program



University of Dayton

Get an inside look of Miami University with the overnight Bridges Program! This immersive experience allows accepted participants to engage with students and professors in the classroom, eat in student dining halls, stay overnight with current students and experience campus life. Apply by Monday, September 23!

[Apply here](#)

Fall Preview Days

Immerse yourself in campus life at the University of Dayton by attending Preview Days. These events are designed to introduce prospective students to the university. Throughout the event, you will learn about the admission process, explore academic programs and meet faculty, staff and students.

[Register here](#)

See you next month! In the meantime, reach out to your College Now [advisor!](#)



[Contact us](#)

Post Office Plaza
1500 West 3rd Street, Suite 125
Cleveland, OH 44113
216.241.5587
collegenowgc.org

<%asm_group_unsubscribe_url%>

