



Sabine High School Senior College Guide

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SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

September – October

Register for the ACT and/or SAT tests. If you have access to the internet, you can register online. The ACT web address is www.act.org and the SAT web address is www.collegeboard.com. **Our school code is 442825.**

Prepare for the ACT and/or SAT. You can find test questions from previous ACT or SAT tests and skill building exercises at the SAT and ACT web sites. Longview High School also offers an ACT or SAT preparation course. See Mrs. McCoy for information.

Write or call the colleges that you would like to attend and ask for an application for admission, financial aid and scholarship information, and housing information (if applicable).

Plan visits to the colleges in which you are interested. Many colleges have a Saturday set aside in the fall and spring just for this purpose. Watch for these in the Senior Bulletins.

Check to make sure that you are meeting all graduation requirements.

November – December

Begin preparing your college application. You may apply to any state college in Texas using the Texas Common Application. This application may be picked up in the counselor's office, or you may apply online at www.applytexas.org. You may also access information on college addresses, essay requirements, application deadlines, and fees at this site or in the application booklet.

Check housing availability if you plan to live on campus. Housing is often hard to find if you do not apply early. You must have an application for

admission on file before they will process a housing application.

Attend the College and Career Night at Maude Cobb Activity Center which is usually held during the middle of November.

Begin preparing a resume or list of school activities, honors received community activities, and volunteer service. This will help you when scholarships arrive.

January – February

Apply for financial aid as early after January 1st as possible. The application you use for this is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You may find it online at www.fafsa.ed.gov/ or you may pick up an application in the counselor's office. It is to your advantage to apply online. Your parents will need to have their income tax return filled out before you apply. **We will have a financial aid meeting for you and your parents sometime in January or early February to explain more about the process.**

Register to take the THEA (formerly TASP) test if you haven't already done so. **You must take this test before you may enroll in any college level course at a Texas public college, university, or technical institution unless you are exempt.**

Begin filling out any scholarship applications. Be sure to check the wall by the main office weekly for any new scholarships.

Request letters of recommendation to use with scholarships.

March – April

Continue to fill out scholarship applications. The majority of local scholarships will be received during this period.

You should begin receiving admissions offers and financial aid awards from your prospective colleges. Compare these offers and weigh your options. Most of the larger schools ask that you make a commitment by May 1.

May – June

Notify the school which you have decided to attend by the deadline. Also notify the schools you have decided not to attend.

Fill out a transcript request in the office requesting that a final transcript be sent to the school you have decided to attend.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

There are basically four types of colleges. Here are the differences between them:

Community or Junior College – these are small, local colleges which offer two-year programs for students to earn associate degrees. Some students transfer to a four-year college or university from a community college. All core curriculum classes taken at a community college in TX are transferable to TX public universities. Kilgore College is an example.

Public or State College or University – These are four-year colleges which offer programs of study that lead to a Bachelor's degree. Most also offer graduate programs of study for persons with Bachelor's degrees which lead to Master's or Doctorate degrees. Texas A&M, University of Texas, and Texas Tech are examples.

Private College or University – These are four-year colleges which are owned by private institutions. Most of these colleges are operated by religious institutions. Baylor and LeTourneau are examples.

Vocational or Technical Schools – These schools have specific programs which prepare you for a particular career such as computer networking, auto technology, etc. Texas State Technical College is an example.

COLLEGE VISITS

There is no better way to learn about a college, university, trade school, or technical school than through a campus visit. Students get the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the faculty, facilities, spirit, service and campus atmosphere. It is better to see through your own eyes rather than rely on the

words of a friend or a college brochure. Do not make the mistake of many by putting little effort into the campus visit and end up greatly regretting it.

Seniors may use 2 school days for college visits. **You must fill out a College Visit Request Form and obtain all the necessary signatures before each visit.**

The purpose of a college visit is to get detailed information concerning a college a student may want to attend. Since choosing a college is an important decision, it is advisable that parents attend all college visits with their child. **Many colleges and universities host open houses on a Saturday for this purpose. The college open house format offers detailed information about the school, the application process and financial aid.** If the college you are considering does not offer this option, then a weekday visit may be necessary. Spontaneous visits to colleges are not recommended. If a visitation time has not been scheduled, the college representative may not have time to meet with you.

- Requests should be made at least 2 days in advance
- Requests should not be made during May
- Requests should not be made by students with attendance problems
- Requests should not be made by students who are failing classes
- The college day will be counted as an absence for the student. It is the student's responsibility to contact teachers and make up any work missed

When preparing for a campus visit:

- Arrange for your visit in advance. Be sure to schedule an appointment with the Admissions Office and the Financial Aid Office.
- Inform your counselor of your choices. Many schools have special weekend events and tours and send brochures to the counselor.
- Familiarize yourself with the college before the visit so that you can ask pertinent questions.
- Be prepared to tell the school about your areas of interest. Summarize your awards, activities, honors, test scores. Carry a copy of your unofficial transcript with your class rank and grade point

average.

While on the campus:

- Carry a notebook to keep important information obtained.
- Tour the campus, meet with faculty, visit several classes and observe extracurricular activities in progress.
- Talk to students on campus. Ask them about the academic and social climate on campus.
- Check the student residence halls and dining facilities.
- Ask about financial aid and scholarships.
- Identify career planning and placement services.
- Investigate transportation options.

After the visit:

- Write a thank you note to the staff and faculty members who assisted you.
- Begin ranking the schools of your choice and narrow them down to a few.

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. **Write or call each school** for an admission form, financial aid and scholarship information, and housing forms, if applicable.
2. **Be aware of deadlines!** Check with each college to become aware of the deadlines for submitting applications and financial aid forms. Know the difference between “must be postmarked by” and “must be received by.” **Missing a deadline can mean missing out on being selected to the college of your choice.**
3. **Application Form.** Complete an application form. Kilgore College applications are available in the counselor’s office. The Common Application for Freshman Admission can be used for all four-year public colleges in Texas. It is to your advantage to complete this form online because it will alert you to any omissions of information. Some colleges charge an application fee.
4. **Admissions Test Scores.** Most four-year colleges require that you take the SAT or ACT. Be sure that you have your SAT or ACT test scores sent to the school if you did not have them sent when you took the test.
5. **High School Transcript.** Fill out a **Transcript Request** form in the office to have an official transcript sent to the college.
6. **Essay.** Some colleges require you to write an essay. Some tips on completing the essay are included in this handbook.

You should apply to the colleges as soon as you have made a decision where you want to apply. Make a checklist to help you outline the admissions requirements, financial aid, and scholarship deadlines for each college.

ADMIT TOP 10%

A Texas public college or university must admit you if:

- Your grade point average places you in the top 10 percent of your high school graduating class, and
- You apply no later than two years after you graduate from a Texas high school, and
- **You must submit a completed application and all other required documents for admission by the deadline date.** It is best to apply early. Texas A&M suggests that you apply before December 1st in order to be granted your choice of a major. This rule does not apply if you attend a community college before applying to a Texas public college or university.

THE ACT AND SAT

The ACT and SAT tests are college entrance exams. If you are going to attend a two-year college such as Kilgore College or Tyler Junior College, you do not have to take the SAT or ACT; however, you may need to take them in order to apply for certain scholarships. **If you plan to transfer to another college after attending a two-year college, most colleges will base your admissions on your grades at the previous college, not the ACT or SAT. Even if you plan to attend a community college first, it is recommended that you take the ACT or SAT if you plan to attend a four year university later.**

If you are planning to attend a four-year college, check the [Compendium of Texas Colleges and Universities](#) in the counselor's office or on the web, or the college catalogs or web sites to see which test the school requires. Most colleges in Texas accept either one, but check to make sure.

The SAT Reasoning Test will cost \$41.50. The late registration fee is an additional \$21.00 for the SAT, so be sure to register on time. If you sign up online, you can receive your SAT scores online for free about 2 weeks after the test date. The SAT web site is located at www.collegeboard.com.

The SAT format changed with the March 2005 test. The new SAT includes a writing section, a critical reading section and a math section. The changes are as follows:

Writing: Students will be asked to write an essay that requires them to take a position on an issue and use examples to support that position. Multiple choice questions will be included to see how well students use standard written English.

Critical Reading: The critical reading section, currently known as the verbal section, will include shorter reading passages along with the existing long reading passages. Analogies will be eliminated, but sentence-completion questions will remain.

Math: The new math section will include Algebra II topics, such as exponential growth, absolute value, and functional notation, and will place greater emphasis on other topics such as linear functions, manipulations with exponents, and properties of tangent lines.

The ACT also changed in February 2005. Students may take the regular ACT or the ACT Plus Writing. The ACT Plus Writing will include a 30-minute writing test. The ACT costs \$29.00 and the ACT Plus Writing costs \$43.00. Some colleges require the writing test. Check with the colleges where you plan to apply to determine if you need to take the writing test. There is also a list by state on the ACT web site at <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/index.html>. You may sign up for the test on the ACT web site at <http://www.actstudent.org/>.

Registration

If you have access to the internet, the easiest way to register is online. The SAT is given at Kilgore College and Longview High School. The ACT is given at Kilgore College, Longview High School and LeTourneau University. **Be sure to include our high school code 442825 on your application so that your scores will be sent to the high school and placed on the back of your transcript.** Also, include the college code of the colleges to which you are applying so that your scores will be sent to them. It will cost you extra if you have them sent later.

Preparation

Longview High School has ACT and SAT preparation courses. The courses consist of three classes, two afternoons and one Saturday morning session. You can call Longview High School for information or print out a registration application found online at <http://www.lisd.org/lhs/guidance/seniors%20index.htm>. Click on the link for the SAT Prep Course or ACT Prep Course Registration Form. Practice materials can also be found online at several websites and purchased at bookstores. Links to the websites can be found under the SAT & ACT information of this guide.

THEA TEST (Formerly TASP)

All students entering a Texas public college, university, or technical institute must take the THEA test before they will be allowed to register for any courses. If you do not pass any section of the test, you will be required to enroll in and pass remedial classes in the area you failed to pass before taking college classes. For example, if you do not pass the math portion of the test, you will have to take and pass math remedial classes before you will be allowed to enroll in college algebra.

You may be exempt from the THEA if you meet one or a combination of the following:

SAT combined verbal and math score of 1070 or higher with a minimum of 500 on verbal and 500 on math.

ACT composite score of 23 or higher with a minimum of 19 on English and 19 on math.

TAKS Exit test scores of 2200 in math and 2200 in English Language Arts with a writing score of 3 or higher. (If you are exempt due to TAKS scores, it will be printed on your Exit TAKS score sheet that you received in June.)

Scores from the three different tests may now be used for exemption in different academic areas. For example, you might use your verbal scores from the SAT to be exempt from taking the THEA reading and writing sections; and you might use your TAKS math scores for exemption from the THEA math section. Check with the admissions office of the college where you are going to attend for more information.

Please be aware that if you are THEA exempt due to TAKS scores, some colleges, including Kilgore College, require that you obtain a certain score on the ACT, SAT, or a math placement test before you can enroll in College Algebra. Not all colleges have this stipulation, but many do. Check the college catalog of the college where you plan to attend for their policy.

THEA test fee is \$29.00. The late registration fee is an additional \$20.00. You

may register online and see the testing dates at <http://www.thea.nesinc.com/>.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

At some point during your senior year, you may have the need to obtain a letter of recommendation. Many colleges, universities and scholarship programs require them as part of their application process. Usually you will need to ask your principal, counselor, teachers, and/or someone outside the school to write these letters for you.

The following guidelines will help you in this endeavor:

- You should start by making a list of people who could write a recommendation for you.
- Pick up a **Letter of Recommendation Information** form in the counselor's office. Complete the form and make copies.
- **At least 2 weeks before you need the letter**, schedule a short meeting with each person whom you would like to have write a recommendation for you. Ask them if they would be willing to write a letter of recommendation. If they agree to write the letter, give them a copy of the completed Letter of Recommendation Information form.
- **After you pick up the letter of recommendation, be sure to follow up with a thank you note.**

TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

Many of you will be needing transcripts (a copy of your grades and test scores) sent to colleges to which you apply or for sending with scholarship applications. If you need a transcript, please pick up a [Transcript Request Form](#) in the office. Fill out the form, have it signed by your parents, and return it to Mrs. Burns. An official transcript is embossed with the SHS seal and can only be mailed or enclosed in a sealed envelope. An unofficial transcript has not been stamped and may be handed to you. College admissions offices require official transcripts to be mailed to them directly from the high school. Kilgore College will accept transcripts from you as long as it is in a sealed envelope. Most scholarship applications do not require official transcripts. Unless it is stated in the scholarship application, do not ask for an official transcript for scholarship applications because they must be in a sealed envelope. **As stated in your SHS Student Handbook, transcript requests must be submitted to the office three days in advance of the date in which you need them, so plan ahead.**

FINANCIAL AID

Applying for Financial Aid

All students applying for any federal financial aid must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is the only application the student must complete to be considered for all federal aid including the following:

- Federal PELL Grants
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG)
- Federal Stafford Loans
- Federal Perkins Loans
- Federal Work-Study

There is no charge for filing the FAFSA. We receive the FAFSA sometime in November, but it cannot be filed before January 1st. Parents and students need to have completed their income tax forms before completing the FAFSA. Students can send data to a maximum of six institutions by following directions on the form.

The FAFSA may also be filed electronically via the internet after January 1st at www.fafsa.ed.gov/. It is to your advantage to fill out the form online.

Financial Aid Terms

Federal Pell Grant Program – Financial assistance awarded by the federal government on the basis of need. The grant may be used for tuition, room and board, books, or other educational costs and requires no repayment.

Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan – Formerly called the Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL) Program, Stafford loans are available based on demonstrated financial need. Interest is subsidized by the government and does not accrue while the student is in college. Loan amounts increase as the student moves up and gains credit toward a degree. File the FAFSA form

for consideration.

Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan – These loans are available and are not need based. Interest is not subsidized during college and can be paid as it accrues or after graduation. Interest rates are favorable. File the FAFSA form for consideration.

Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) – Parents can borrow up to the entire cost of the student's education, less financial aid. Repayment must begin within 60 days of disbursement. Approval is based on credit history. Interest rates are favorable.

Federal Perkins Loan Program – Loans funded by the federal government and awarded by the institution. The loans feature low interest rates and are repayable over an extended period of time.

Federal Work-Study Program – A government supported financial aid program coordinated through financial aid offices whereby an eligible student may work part time while attending classes at least half time.

Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 – Education tax credits and interest deductions may be available. Consult your tax professional or visit the website of the U. S. Department of Education.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The scholarship process requires much hard work. Don't pass up the small \$200 – \$500 scholarships. These will help pay for books and can mount up to a large sum of money if you receive several. The best advice I can give you is to apply, apply, apply. The more scholarships for which you apply, the better your chances are of receiving one. **Be neat and follow the directions exactly.** Read the entire scholarship application before you begin. Plan what you are going to write before filling out the form or make a copy of the form and use one as a practice form. Scholarships should be typed or printed neatly in black ink.

The best place for you to find scholarships is through the Financial Aid Office of the college where you are going to attend, so be sure to check with them early. Many of these scholarships are due in January or February. I receive scholarships mostly from local businesses and organizations. When I receive scholarship information, I will pass it on to you through bulletins sent to your English teachers. I also keep copies of these bulletins in my office and will put a copy outside the main office. I receive most scholarship applications during March and April, so you may want to check these sites weekly during those months. You may also access the senior bulletins through this web site.

Many scholarships are based on your ACT or SAT scores, class rank, and grade point average. **Be sure to take the SAT and/or ACT early in the fall** and keep your grade point average high. Other factors may include volunteer work, leadership roles, sports, and extracurricular activities.

I will provide scholarship information that I receive through bulletins that will be sent to your English teacher. I cannot stress enough that it is your responsibility to listen to the announcements, or come in and check the bulletins often and pick up applications for the scholarships in which you are qualified. If the scholarship is to be mailed, you may mail it yourself. If you give it to me, I will mail all of the applications at the same time in the same envelope. Be sure you get the scholarships to me **the day before they are due.** Make a copy of the scholarship before giving it to me or mailing it. Some scholarships state that they are to be given to the counselor. Please have those scholarships to me by 3:30 the day they are due. I cannot accept them after the due date.

LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The following is a list of some of the local scholarships which have been awarded to our students in the past:

Former Sabine Students' Association
Kilgore Charter Chapter of the American Business Women's Association
Kilgore Rotary Club
Liberty City Ladies Club
Liberty City Lions Club
Longview Elks Lodge
Longview Partnership
Sabine ISD Athletic Booster Club
Sabine ISD Band Boosters
Sabine High School Student Council
Sabine Middle School Student Council
Sabine High School PTO
Shallow Creek Ladies Golf Association
Strong Family Reunion
First Baptist Church of Kilgore
David Smoak's Scholastic All Stars
East Texas State Fair
Deep East Texas A&M Club
Texas Exes Association
Upshur-Rural Electric Coop

College Scholarships

This is just a sample of some of the scholarships offered by Texas colleges and universities. As information is sent to me by the colleges, I will pass it on to you through the Senior Bulletins. Contact the Financial Aid Office at the college to learn more about the scholarships and due dates at a particular college.

Kilgore College Presidential Scholarship – Due February 1st – Provides tuition, fees, and use of books for 4 semesters. Students must meet certain requirements in order for the scholarship to continue after the first semester. To be eligible to apply, high school seniors must meet at least two of the following three

criteria:

- ACT score of 25 or above, or SAT score of 1100 or above
- High school GPA of 92 or higher (4.2 on our 5.0 scale)
- High school class rank in upper 10% of graduating class

Kilgore College General Scholarships – These are multiple scholarships which can be applied for with one application. The application is usually due around **March 1st**. A few scholarships are based on need and will require the completion of the FASFA. The student must have applied for admission to Kilgore College in order to be considered as a scholarship applicant.

Tyler Junior College Presidential Scholarship – Scholarships are for \$2,000 per year award for tuition, fees, and expenses. Eligibility requirements are:

- ACT score of 23 or higher (minimum 19 in math and English), or
- SAT of 1070 or higher (minimum of 500 on math and verbal)
- Recommendation by high school counselor, principal or superintendent
- Exhibited leadership qualities in extracurricular high school and community activities.

Tyler Junior College Dean's Scholarship – Scholarships are \$1,000 per year for tuition, fees, and other expenses. Eligibility requirements are the same as for the Presidential scholarship.

Tyler Junior College General Scholarships – These scholarships are awarded annually to students who demonstrate academic achievement, financial need, and leadership and meet any other requirements for the scholarship. They range from \$100 to \$2,000 annually.

The deadline for Tyler Junior College Scholarships is usually **March 1st**.

Texas A&M Scholarships – More than 600 scholarships based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities, leadership, SAT or ACT scores, and in some cases financial need. Opportunity Award Scholarship applications must be completed online and are due **January 10, 2006**.

University of Texas at Austin Freshman Scholarships – Apply online using the Texas Common Application for Freshman Scholarships at <https://www.applytexas.>

org/adappc/commonapp.WBX.

Deadline is **December 1st**.

Glossary of College Terms

Academic Probation

Trial period for a student not making satisfactory academic progress, usually caused by a deficient grade point average.

Associate Degree

Degree granted for completion of a course of study, usually two to three years at a community college or junior college.

Audit

Attending a course without getting credit for it.

Baccalaureate Degree

Bachelor's degree awarded for completion of an undergraduate curriculum, usually four years in length.

Bachelor of Arts

Academic degree conferred on those completing undergraduate study, usually lasting four years, in liberal arts or humanities.

Bachelor of Science

Academic degree conferred on those completing undergraduate study, usually lasting four years, in the sciences.

Bursar

College or University collector of various payments (tuition, etc.)

College Work Study

A federal financial aid program providing on and off campus employment.

Credit Hour

The system of assigning a given number of credits to a college course. A three credit hour course usually represents a class that meets for 3 hours per week. A four credit hour course is usually a course which has a lab that meets once a week in addition to the 3 hours of classtime.

Dean

A senior administrative officer of a college or university; examples are Dean of Students and Dean of Admissions.

Deferred Admission

Accepted student delays entering college in order to study, travel, or work.

Doctorate

Highest academic degree awarded by a college or university of advanced graduate study.

Early Decision

A student applies to first-choice college early in their senior year and agrees to withdraw all other applications to enroll at that college if accepted.

Financial Aid Director

The person in charge of determining monetary assistance for college expense. This person usually has some discretion to adjust a financial aid package or make other decisions relative to a student's financial aid.

Full-time Student

A student who enrolls in at least 12 credit hours per semester.

Humanities

Courses concerned with thought and human relations, philosophy, literature, classical languages and the fine arts.

Liberal Arts

Courses in humanities, social sciences, and the abstract sciences as opposed to technical or professional subjects.

Major

Subject in which a student takes the greatest concentration of courses.

Master's Degree

Degree conferred for completion of a program of postgraduate work, usually lasting for three years.

Matriculate

To enroll in a degree program or be accepted as a candidate for a degree.

Minor

Subject in which a student takes the second greatest concentration of courses.

Registrar

University official who keeps records of enrollment and academic standings.

Seminar

Courses in which a small group of students, headed by a professor, engage in research and discussion.

Syllabus

Outline of a course.

Trimesters

Three approximately equal periods of three to four months in the school year.

Undergraduate

A student who is attending college who has not yet earned a degree.