

**A Challenging High School
Education for All**



“Getting every child to graduate high school with a meaningful diploma... is one of the biggest challenges our country faces.”

—Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings

The **No Child Left Behind Act of 2001** helps to ensure that all children receive a high-quality education and holds schools responsible for making sure that all children are learning. The information below is consistent with this important law.

Making Sure Your Child Is Ready

High school is the training ground for college and work. Today, most good jobs require a college education. The way for your child to get ready for college is to take challenging courses. A strong schedule of classes—such as English, math (algebra I and II, geometry, trigonometry, calculus), foreign language, science (biology, chemistry, physics), and history or social studies—should help your child do well on college entrance exams and will prepare him for the even tougher college courses. The level of math, science and foreign language education students receive will be important for our country’s global competitiveness and national security.

In addition, high school activities, for example internships, community service and sports, can build skills needed on the job, such as responsibility, time management and leadership.

Continue to stay involved as your child progresses through high school. While it is likely that your child will want some independence, stay aware of your child’s studies and after-school activities.

What Your High School Child Needs to Succeed

College is a critical goal for success in high school and in life. College graduates earn about 43 percent more than high school graduates. At the end of 2005, those with at least a bachelor's degree had a median weekly income of \$1,029, while those with a high school diploma earned about \$585 a week.*

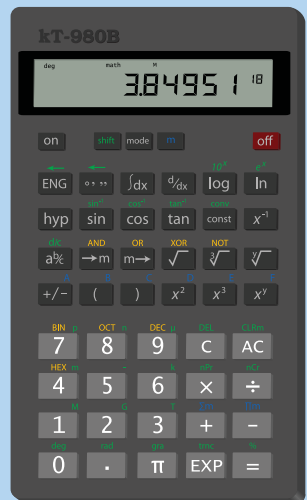
There are all kinds of academic choices for high school students. Charter schools or magnet schools, which focus on themes, may help to encourage your child's talents and interests. Some high schools offer Advanced Placement courses that might allow your child to skip some of the beginning-level classes in college and, perhaps, graduate early. Another approach to challenging courses is offering high school students college courses so they earn college credits while they are still in high school.

You may also want to look for programs designed to help students succeed in college by teaching study skills and providing tutoring, and programs that help students apply to college (see Resources).

*U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers: Fourth Quarter 2005," USDL 06-98, Jan. 19, 2006.

**"And so for the students
... it's up to you to decide
to continue to soar and
seek new heights."**

—President George W. Bush



Partnering With Teachers and Counselors

It is important for you to know your child's teachers and counselors. The counselor usually handles class registration and schedules, and should be told of problems at home, such as divorce or illness, that could affect your child's schoolwork.

Be sure to attend school "open houses" or parent nights to meet your child's teachers, and request parent-teacher conferences when needed. Teachers will often give you their e-mail addresses so you may contact them easily. Teachers may have their own Web sites where they post class notes and homework assignments. Teachers and counselors can also give you names of tutors if your child needs extra help, and such tutoring may be free.

Counselors have checklists for applying to college and for financial aid. Counselors can tell you when college entrance exams are given, especially the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT). Most colleges require one of these tests for admission consideration. The school or local library may have guides to help prepare for these tests. The U.S. Department of Education is an important source of financial aid for college through grants and loans (again, see Resources).

Safety

Theft is the most common school crime. Tell your child to keep his belongings locked up and to leave valuables at home.

In 2003, 29 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported that they had been offered drugs at school, 13 percent had been in a fight on school property, and 9 percent had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.* Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, a student may leave a school that the state says is persistently dangerous, or if he or she is the victim of a violent crime at school, and then attend another public school in the same school district.

Paying attention to your child's behavior and friends can help your child get through the high school years safely. Be aware if your child's grades drop or if your child is sad or angry. Counselors, social workers, school psychologists and others trained in solving these types of problems can be helpful. Staying involved with the school can help; you can get information from your school's parent-teacher organization and the school newsletter. Most importantly, talk to your child about any concerns you may have.

*U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*. 2005. Washington, D.C.

Examples of Resources

U.S. Department of Education:

<http://www.ed.gov> or

<http://www.ed.gov/espanol/bienvenidos/es/index.html?src=gu>

or call 1-800-USA-LEARN

Federal Student Financial Aid: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

Upward Bound/TRIO: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html>

Advanced Placement:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html>

Early College High School Initiative:

<http://www.earlycolleges.org/>

Hispanic Scholarship Fund: <http://www.hsf.net/scholarship/programs/hs.php>

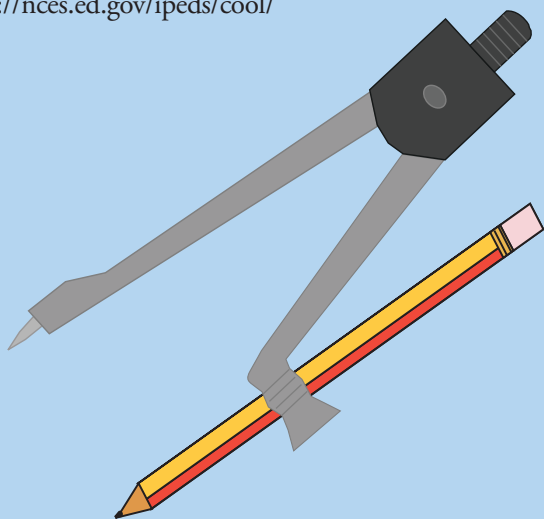
National Hispanic Recognition Program:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about/scholarships.html>

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute:

http://www.chci.org/chciyouth/resources/links_hs.htm

“College Opportunities On-Line” directory of two- and four-year colleges and universities: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool/>



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