

One Day Monthly

September 2009



Spending some time planning now can ensure that our children are prepared for college admission in the years to come.

Volume 2, Issue 1

Topics in this issue:

- Planning the high school years
- Preparing for college

Planning the High School Years

The following is an excerpt from Cinda Lewis' middle school and high school portion of the seminar, Homeschool 101, which she gave at One Day Academy's Bringing His Children Home conference on August 15, 2009.

One of my favorite scriptures in times of uncertainty or trial is Jeremiah 29:11. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Preparing for the future can seem overwhelming, but the wonderful truth is that God knows our children and what he has planned for them. We have the privilege to walk them through these years, teaching them to hear God's voice and direction. What a relief it is to learn that our home school does not need to be perfect to be excellent and profitable. It does, however, need to be consistent and well thought out. Obviously,

the last thing any parent wants is to realize that their senior is missing years of academically necessary coursework. Spending some time planning now, however, can ensure that our children are prepared for college admission.

High School Requirements

The One Day Academy website, oneday-academy.com, lists the Texas Graduation Requirements for public school students. Even though homeschooled students are not obligated to legally fulfill these requirements, parents need to realize what public schools expect from their graduates, since these are the students with whom our children will someday compete for entrance into universities and colleges.

In Texas public universities, the law mandates that the top 10 percent of public school students be automatically admitted. Unfortunately, this law does not

apply to homeschoolers and has the unintended consequence of making it harder for non-public school students to gain admittance into these institutions. However, most universities have an academic admission policy to accommodate bright, desirable students based on minimum coursework requirements, high entrance exam scores, dual-credit hours, and community service activities. Minimum coursework requirements vary, but generally include four years of English and math (the Saxon curriculum embeds its geometry across Algebra I, Algebra II, and Advanced Mathematics); three years of science; and two years of the same foreign language.

Obviously, most students take more than just the minimum coursework, but this should provide the framework for a high school scope and sequence.

One of the most powerful

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Coming in October:
Academic Development
Honor Society

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Advice to Parents of Younger Students

Write down the reasons for home educating and the philosophy of your homeschool and allow that to be the filter through which you make decisions about materials. It is easy at first to take on too much, so

don't become overly ambitious.

Stick to the basics in the early years of reading, writing, and math with making science, art, etc. your "fun times."

Your best resources are other parents who have home educated; they can advise you on organization and/or curriculum choices.

*-Kay Crislip
Veteran homeschool mom
and member of ODA faculty*

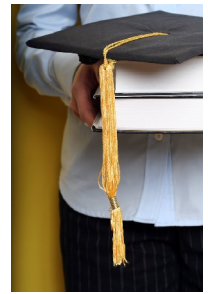
Important Advice for the College Bound

When the time comes to fill out college applications, students find that the forms are full of questions about who they are, what kind of student they have been and what they've done with their life so far. The student who has been preparing through high school for college will have no problem shining on their college applications and receiving those coveted acceptance letters. Using the following guidelines, homeschooled students can look just as good as any other students applying to colleges.

TAKE A COLLEGE PREP CURRICULUM

The high school transcript, which shows the classes taken in high school and grades given, will be the first and most important part of the college application. The transcript needs to show colleges that the student will be ready for college level work. When the student has taken classes that follow the Texas Education Agency Recommended Graduation Plan curriculum, or even better, the Distinguished Graduation Plan, colleges know that the student

has met or sometimes exceeded their admission requirements. Taking dual-credit classes at the community college during eleventh and twelfth grades is a great strategy for homeschooled students. Explore what classes are available at your community college that will meet the requirements for your high school diploma. You have a chance to give more credibility to your homeschooled education, please colleges who like to see dual-credit classes on student transcripts, and get college credits, too.



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PREPARE FOR AND TAKE STANDARDIZED TESTS

I don't know too many students who love taking tests. The fact is an SAT or ACT score will be required to apply to four-year colleges and universities. The truth is that standardized tests should not be looked at only as a necessary evil but recognized as a golden opportunity. A good score can open doors to colleges and bring scholarships that will reduce the cost of college. Schools will accept either the SAT or ACT and will always take the highest

scores achieved. So, don't hesitate to take more than one test. The best tip I can give is take a good SAT/ACT prep class and plan to take the test two or three times.

BE ACTIVE

Students must be active outside of school and involved in extra-curricular activities. Colleges can look at the transcript and score reports to see what kind of student you are; they ask questions about extra curricular activities, honors and awards, community service, employment, and leadership roles. The point is

not to have a long, meaningless list of activities. Get involved and stay committed to activities that are meaningful to you. Keep track of your time involved as much as possible; it will make filling out applications a lot easier later on and you are less likely to forget something. Remember that many scholarships are based on leadership experiences, community services, or activities: you have to have done those to be able to compete for scholarships.

*-Lydie McVay
Mrs. McVay is One Day Academy's College Advisor*

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Lydie McVay

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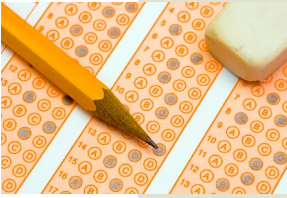
Applying for College: The All-Important Essay

The easiest way to sway an admissions officer on an application is through the college essay. Admissions officers read thousands of application essays every year. With a great essay, the student can become an extraordinary applicant in a sea of ordinary applicants. I have heard countless complaints from admissions officers that the essays turned in are very poor in general. There is no better way to get noticed as an applicant than with a unique, well-written essay. Students should concentrate

on telling a story that only he or she can tell. The essay should demonstrate how the student writes and, more important, how he or she thinks.

Admissions offices are not looking for the next Pulitzer Prize-winning essay in your application. Also, don't try to second-guess what they want to read in an essay. They want to hear the voice of the student. My best advice to seniors is to relax and write a great essay that reveals who they are.

-L.M.



Consider registering your child in an SAT/ACT preparation class.

Planning the High School Years, from page 1

ways to prepare for university level work while earning honors high school credit is to take dual-credit courses. (see article, page 2)

Things Not to Miss

There are critical gates that students and parents should be aware of while planning each year of high school. During freshman year, draft a four-year plan for meeting graduation requirements and college admission. This is the time to choose meaningful extra-curricular activities. Be sure to keep records of these for fu-

ture scholarship applications.

Early in September of sophomore year, register to take the PSAT for practice. It is given in mid-October. In the spring, register to take the THEA (TX Higher Education Assessment). It is helpful when registering for dual-credit courses. Consider taking a CLEP test over summer to gain college credit. Sign up in July for any dual-credit courses to be taken in the fall. During junior year, register for the PSAT by early September at local high school. It counts this year. It is given only once in mid-October. Narrow your list of colleges

and begin visiting them. Take an SAT/ACT prep course and register to take those tests at least two times in the second half of the school year.

Also during this year, if you are interested in attending a military service academy, go to local academy day in March at Bowie High School. Begin applying online for each academy. Sign up to attend their summer camps.

In the spring, take AP exams for college level courses you may have taken. In the summer, create a rough draft of your college admission essay and begin applying for scholarships and grants.

During senior year, students should start applying to colleges September 1 (sometimes earlier). Make note of deadlines and select teachers/advisors for writing your recommendations. If you'd like to boost test scores, retake the SAT/ACT in the fall.

After January 1, complete the FAFSA (Free Application of Federal Student Aid). Deadline is March 1. Many colleges adjust their tuition according to the information in this form. In May, mail your final transcript and spring grades to the college to which you are attending in the fall. Take the SAT II or AP exams to place

out of academic requirements.

Raising our children through the high school years is such a wonderful opportunity, and I encourage you to enjoy this moment even as you prepare for the future. The time you have is as fleeting as it is foundational—a time to quiet the voices of the culture and to embrace the Creator of the Universe. May God bless you as you plan for the years ahead, and may He give you His wisdom as our children walk in the destiny God has for them.

-Cinda Lewis
Homeschool mother of
Robert and Beverly

Maintaining a Transcript

Sample forms for transcripts can be found online (the HSLDA website is one source). For parents new to transcripts, the trickiest part can be determining credit and GPA.

Credit Hours

One semester's worth of work equals a .5 credit hour, and similarly, two semester's worth of work equals 1 credit hour. In general, approximately 100 hours of tutorial instruction equals 1 credit hour.

Calculating a student's grade point average (GPA)

Credit (1/2 or 1) x grade value (see below) = grade point total

Grade	Grade Value
A 90 - 100	4.0
B 80 - 89	3.0
C 70 - 79	2.0
D 60 - 69	1.0

GPA = grade point total divided by credit hour total

-C.L.

Homeschool Handyman's Corner: Teaching Your Children Basic Homeowner Skills

Homeschooling can involve more than just academics. As parents, we should help our children learn useful skills by emphasizing practical application of every subject.

One Day Monthly will offer a regular column intended to encourage practical home education by involving your children in home maintenance and repair tasks. There are components of every home that should be maintained. Sooner than we expect, our

children will grow up to live in homes of their own. Where else will they learn basic residential skills, if not from us?

While not everybody is a homeowner, most homeschool families fall into this category and the rest of us can benefit from such knowledge. Some maintenance applies to renters and apartment dwellers as well.

Future issues will cover toilets, appliances, property hazards, fences and gates, batter-

ies, electrical safety, drains, irrigation, garage doors, lawn equipment, and much more. If you would like to suggest a particular subject, drop me a line.

Our next issue will discuss often-overlooked maintenance of air conditioning systems.

Jim Peisker
jpeisker@yahoo.com

Jim is a homeschool dad who has worked 28 years as an electrical engineer; he has been fixing stuff all of his life.

Involve your children in home maintenance tasks.



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Find us on the Web:

<http://onedayacademy.com>

Announcements

- One Day Academy is sponsoring the **Central Texas College Fair** October 10. (see article below)
- **Portraits:** students and faculty, if you have not sat for a year-book portrait, please go to the Lakeline campus on 9/22, or the Georgetown campus on 9/23. You can also schedule an appointment during one of the makeup days: Round Rock, 10/15; South Austin, 10/16. Portrait packages, including teacher and student i.d. cards, are available for a fee. There is no charge for yearbook photos.
- The **2010 Yearbook** is on sale. If you did not receive an orientation packet containing the form, you can pick one up at the campus sign-in desks, or contact Susan Peisker at shpeisker@yahoo.com for an order form. Please order by Dec. 1.
- Two of our campuses now have **youth pastors** available for a few hours each week to spend time with the students: Dripping Springs and Georgetown. Please contact David Swarbrick at 736-8823 or the pastors at the campuses to learn more.
- **Math tutors** are now available:
 - Monday, SW Capstone: 11-2; Tuesday, Lakeline: 12-3
 - Wednesday, Georgetown: 10-12, Bastrop: 10-12
 - Thursday, RR Capstone: 11:30-1:30; Friday, South Austin: 10-12
- The ODA **Honor Society** is looking for members. Contact Sherry Garia at sherryg@austin.rr.com for more information, and look for an article on Honor Society in our October issue.

College Fair Coming Soon



Mark Benoit talks with a representative from West Point at last year's College Fair.
Photo by Anna Bright

Following last year's success, One Day Academy is excited to announce the details of the upcoming 2009 Central Texas Homeschool College Fair, slated for Saturday, October 10 from 9:30-11:30 am. In 2008, over two hundred and fifty people as well as forty colleges participated in the event. The main change from last year's fair is the location; this year it will be held at Hyde Park Quarries in the gymnasium.

Students and families will be able to talk with representatives from schools such as the University of Texas-Austin, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, Texas State University, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, St. Edward's University, Howard Payne University,

and Colorado Christian University. West Point Military Academy, Austin Community College, and Air Force and Army ROTC will be represented at this year's fair.

College Fair is a chance for college-bound students to personally meet the representatives who will most likely be reviewing their admissions applications. "Seniors have a wonderful opportunity to show strong interest in the school and make a favorable impression," said Lydie McVay, One Day Academy's College Advisor. "I believe that homeschooled students and parents feel better coming to this fair knowing that they will be able to get specific questions answered."

Mrs. McVay also pointed out that the fair is a good time to find out

about dual enrollment at ACC. "Homeschooled students who plan to have dual-credit classes in high school can have answers to all their questions right there."

Feedback from past fairs has been positive: students can meet representatives from their schools of interest, and Mrs. McVay said, "Students have often commented on discovering a new school of interest for them at the event."

For a complete list of attending colleges, directions, and other information, visit the One Day Academy website: <http://onedayacademy.com/event-calendar/college-fair/>.

*-Cassidy Woodall
Newsletter Staff*