



## Preparing Your Child for College



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Secretary of Higher Education



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## Examples of Career Opportunities Available to College Graduates

### Two-Year College (Associate Degree)

Administrative Assistant  
Automotive Mechanic  
Computer Technician  
Dental Hygienist  
Graphic Artist  
Hotel/Restaurant Manager  
Medical Lab Technician

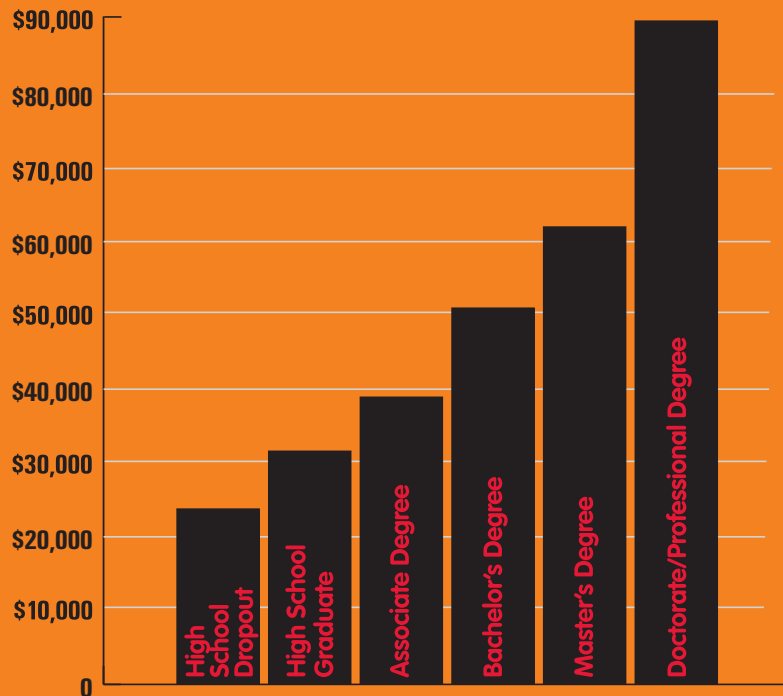
### Four-Year College (Bachelor's Degree)

Accountant  
Computer Systems Analyst  
Dietitian  
Engineer  
FBI Agent  
Journalist  
Teacher

### More than Four Years (Various Grad Degrees)

Architect  
Economist  
Lawyer  
Physician  
Priest or Rabbi  
Scientist  
University Professor

## Yearly Earnings Based on Level of Education



US CENSUS BUREAU EARNINGS IN 2005

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## After high school, then what?

What your child accomplishes in high school will unlock the door to his or her future careers and dreams. These four years are key. So now is the time to ask: What is your child's long-term goal? What interests your son or daughter? What does your child want to be? All these things are good to know to help your child plan for the future. Many jobs today require training beyond high school. It's never too early to plan.

## Why should your child go to college?

College can help your child have more career choices, make more money, and have a better chance at a fulfilling career. College opens doors in the world by offering opportunities that can help your child grow personally and intellectually. College can help shape your child's dreams and offer ways to make those dreams a reality.

Your child's career goals determine the kind of additional education required. For a professional career or more advanced studies, your child may choose a four-year college or transfer to a four-year college from a two-year or community college. In Maryland, almost every county has a community college that provides career training as well as academic transfer programs. The next section shows the minimum graduation requirements and offers suggestions to make sure your child is on track for college.

# Minimum Graduation Requirements



## English – 4 credits

## Math – 3 credits

(Colleges prefer Algebra I & II and Geometry). Students should take rigorous math early and often (all four years).

## Science – 3 credits

(Colleges prefer laboratory sciences, including biology, chemistry, and physics. Some may require four years of laboratory science).

## Social Studies – 3 credits

## Foreign Language, Advanced Technology, or Career and Technology Program – 2 credits

(Most colleges require at least two years of the same foreign language).

## Fine Arts – 1 credit

## Technology – 1 credit

(Basic computer literacy makes the transition to college easier).

## Physical Education – 1/2 credit

## Health – 1/2 credit

## Electives – 3 credits

## 75 hours of approved service learning

## Passing any required State tests

*Note: Local counties may require more than minimum listed.*

# What can you do to help?

Your support is important to your child's success and happiness. Let him/her know that teachers, counselors, and you want him/her to be challenged and to succeed.

From the start, emphasize the importance of going to school every day and of getting good grades. Colleges look at grades from a student's entire high school career. Showing that you care about your child's grades is critical.

If you are concerned about your child's grades, talk to teachers and counselors to see how you and they can help. Take your child with you when you go to visit teachers and counselors. Encourage your child to read for school and for fun. Ask what he/she is reading about.

It's never too early to discuss college. Visit colleges that might interest your child. You can call the admissions office to find out when tours, open houses, and other information sessions are scheduled. Ask the college to send your child a packet of information about the college.





## Paying for college

**Financial assistance comes in three main types:**

### **Grants and Scholarships, Loans, and Work-study**

Grants and scholarships are aid students don't have to pay back. Grants are usually given to students whose family income is not large enough to pay for college, while scholarships are usually given to recognize the student's academic achievement, athletic ability, or other talent.

Scholarships may come with conditions, like maintaining a certain major or grade point average. Student loans must be repaid, usually with interest, after the student graduates or stops going to school. Parents may also take out loans for their child's education. Work-study is a federal aid program administered by colleges that allows students to work to earn money to help pay for school.

Encourage your child to talk to his or her guidance counselor or contact the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Its Web site, **www.MDgo4it.org** has information about colleges and financial aid. The most important tool for getting financial aid is filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) **www.fafsa.ed.gov**. It is almost impossible to get money from the State or federal government without completing this form.

## Finding More Information

High school guidance counselors, college admission offices, librarians, and the internet can all provide you with more information about careers, colleges, vocational training, and financial aid. The Maryland Higher Education Commission's Web site (**www.MDgo4it.org**) provides extensive information about college options and financial aid in the State. You may also visit the Web site of the Maryland State Department of Education at **www.marylandpublicschools.org**, which offers information for parents and students, including homework help.

### **Other sources of college preparation information**

*The Kids College Almanac: A First Look At College* by Barbara C. Greenfield and Robert A. Weinstein.

The U.S. Department of Education offers numerous publications and Web sites to help you: **http://www.ed.gov**

**www.CollegelsPossible.org** is a Web site for parents and students with links to more sources of information.

The College Board provides information about the SAT plus lots of other general information free to parents, students, and colleges:  
**www.collegeboard.com**

The Maryland State Department of Education's Web site, **www.marylandpublicschools.org**, offers information geared to parents, students, and teachers.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission offers information about colleges and universities and financial aid: **www.MDgo4it.org**

The Maryland Business Roundtable for Education has a great Web site for teens, **www.BeWhatIWantToBe.com**, that lets them explore exciting careers and what it takes to qualify for them.

FAFSA on the Web: **http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/**. This form can be completed online or a paper application can be obtained by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4FED-AID.

For general information on federal student aid go to **http://studentaid.ed.gov**

FastWeb lists thousands of private scholarships: **www.fastweb.com**

**www.finaid.org** is a comprehensive site for financial aid information.