



College & Career Planning Handbook

CinDay Academy High School

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"The wise man bridges the gap by laying out the path by means of which he can get from where he is, to where he wants to go." J.P Morgan.

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Goals

Our College and Career planning program aims to empower every student to take the lead in planning and preparing for their future, through carefully organized modules that begin early in their CinDay Academy journey.

We take a “*one-size-does-not-fit-all*” approach to career- and college counseling. Multiple advisors are dedicated to mentoring and coaching a handful of students that they get to know individually, spending time helping them design and craft the best plans to build on their individual strengths, and lay solid foundations for their future.

In addition, curriculum is designed to weave the 4 key career skills of Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking and Communication at every step, building the blocks to become future professionals in college and the workplace.

Planning Timeline

Prior to 9th Grade

Innovation Days

Every student has multiple opportunities to learn about different fields of work during “*Innovation Days*” as early as 4th grade. Project-based learning enables students to choose, research and present concepts involved in a myriad of career fields, and learn from their peers.

Field Studies & Guest Speakers

A unique aspect of the CinDay experience is the high level of community involvement, through field studies and professional guest speakers in the classroom. Career-based information is interlaced with academic skills at every turn, exposing students to opportunities early.

Leadership & Strategies for Academic Success program

8th grade students benefit from a Leadership and Strategies for Academic Success program, to learn efficient and effective learning habits, personal learning style, organization, time management, note-taking and testing techniques, sowing the seeds for a successful high school transition, and foundations for college-level studies.

Accommodations Information

Any Middle School through 12th Grade students who benefit from learning accommodations for special circumstances, will receive planning advice catered to their needs, to prepare for college-entry standardized testing and/or career paths and life skills.

9th Grade/Learning Independence Level S1 - Discovery

The focus is on **self-discovery**, facilitated by your Advisor. You will be helped to discover best-match, high-growth-potential, traditional and 21st Century careers, including the pathways that lead to particular positions, by taking the Birkman® personality and career match test.

The Birkman® Test

Since 1951, the Birkman® Method has been an industry leader in personality assessment, assisting over 3.5 million participants, by dialing into understanding their hard wiring. Leading companies such as Proctor & Gamble, Wal-Mart, Colgate University, Emory, Coca-Cola and NASA use the Birkman®. This multi-dimensional, scientifically reliable tool focuses on measuring personal strength behaviors, underlying needs and expectations, stress behaviors and interests, to reveal multiple, ingrained personality dimensions. This information, combined with the expertise of Birkman Master Certified Professionals, directs in discovering best match possibilities to achieve, thrive and flourish.

Parents and students are invited to a presentation of individual results, given by a Birkman Professional and is given a chance to ask questions and discuss options.

Career Exploration Project

Each student is helped by their Advisor to explore some of their personal best-match careers, through project-based learning. Students are helped to research and present the latest data regarding:

- technical skills & level of education required
- possible college courses, majors, degrees, licenses, credentials and extra-curriculars/internships
- industry growth in the last 5 years and projected growth
- average salary range

They are given the opportunity to present this information and give opinions about why their top choices of careers excite and challenge them.

Career Interviews

Students are helped by their Advisor to interview professionals from different career fields. This can take the form of a group or face-to-face interview, or a virtual interview using technology.

Resume-Building Workshop

Students are encouraged to begin the process of building experiences for their resume. They are given and encouraged to search for opportunities to shadow, serve or experience throughout the year. Increased flexibility in study schedules enables them to begin weaving career involvement into their school week. It's important that the resume not only be pursued, but put together in a document. This will be used on later college applications.

Curriculum Evening

Hosted by all our Advisors and Content Teachers, this program introduces parents and students from 9th through 12th grade to the multiple ways students can take college-level courses, earn college credit during High School, and work on career-related projects. We also outline the broad trends in terms of what colleges and employers are looking for.

College Selection Seminar

Presented by NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling), and OACAC (Ohio Association for College Admission Counseling) member professionals, 9th graders and their parents benefit from gaining a first insight into what's involved in the college bound process, from selection to the application process.

Extra-curricular Activities

While the transcript is key, college admissions officers take a holistic view of all components of a student's application when making admissions decisions.

We recommend students follow their individual interests in the special talents they want to develop; be it in the visual and performing arts, athletics, leadership activities etc... and they engage themselves civically. Activities should be chosen judiciously. Instead of loading up on many activities, high school students should focus on the quality and depth of their activities. In terms of admission, it's more important for students to be consistently involved in one, two, or three activities and/or sports over a number of years, than superficially involved in eight or more, over shorter periods of time, for example. CinDay Academy offers regular extra-curricular activities, and students are also eligible to incorporate sports teams at their local public High School.

10th Grade/ Learning Independence Level S2 – Digging deeper

The focus is on developing a richer **self-understanding**, both in academics, social-emotional learning, and continued career exploration. Advisors provide the support and framework to help students maximize their potential, encouraging them to plan elective courses and seek enrichment opportunities that help them to further their strengths and passions.

Career Interviews

Students are helped by their Advisor to organize interviews of professionals from different career fields that pique their interest, and fit with their Birkman results from 9th grade. This usually takes the form of a face-to-face interview, and the student completes a self-reflection task after the interview.

Job Shadows

Students are encouraged to take part in ½ or full day job shadows of professionals in careers that interest them and are a good fit. CinDay Academy's network of corporate partners and professional mentors facilitates this process for students, providing them safe, optimized shadowing opportunities in a maximum number of career fields. Students complete post-shadow assignments to reflect and share on their experiences with Advisors and peers.

Extra-curricular Activities

While the transcript is key, college admission officers take a holistic view of all components of a student's application when making admissions decisions.

We recommend students follow their individual interests in the special talents they want to develop; be it in the visual and performing arts, athletics, leadership activities etc., and that they engage themselves civically. Activities should be chosen judiciously. Instead of loading up on many activities, high school students should focus on the quality of their activities. In terms of admissions, it's more important for students to be consistently involved in one, two, or three activities and/or sports over a number of years, than superficially involved in eight or more, over shorter periods of time. CinDay Academy offers regular extra-curricular activities, and students are also eligible to incorporate sports teams at their local public High School.

Resume-Building Workshop

Students are encouraged to begin the process of building experiences for their resume. They are given and encouraged to search for opportunities to shadow, serve or experience throughout the year. Increased flexibility in study schedules enables them to begin weaving career involvement into their school week. It's important that the resume not only be pursued, but put together in a document. This will be used on later college applications.

FAFSA Forecaster

Families are encouraged to complete the FAFSA4-caster from the U.S Department of Education. An early personalized estimate of their eligibility for federal student

financial aid, this tool calculates an estimate of the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and uses it to determine the amount of federal financial aid the student is likely to receive.

This tool is not as accurate as the actual FAFSA, but it can still provide a useful estimate of what students can expect. Students and parents can also use [net price calculators](#) to get an estimate of their eligibility for need-based aid at specific colleges and universities.

PSAT/NMSQT – Individualized Preparation

Students have the opportunity to enter the National Merit Qualifying Program for recognition and college scholarships, by taking the PSAT test in October. CinDay Academy offers students an individualized preparation program.

ACT – Individualized Preparation

Students may benefit from timeline planning and testing preparation earlier than 11th grade, in order to meet College Credit Plus requirements, to obtain a fast-track pathway to graduation, or simply to plan ahead. We consider coursework completed and future goals to create an individualized testing time line that's right for each student.

College Selection Seminar

Presented by NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling) and OACAC (Ohio Association for College Admission Counseling) member professionals, 10th graders and their parents benefit from gaining a deeper insight into what's involved in the college bound process, from selection to application.

College Fairs

All students and parents are invited and encouraged to attend virtual and regional college fairs held periodically at colleges in the surrounding area, some of which have up to 150 colleges in attendance. Information is posted on the High School blog throughout the year, via the CinDay Academy app.

11th Grade/Learning Independence Level S3 – Engagement

The focus is on maximizing engagement to realize individual goals; engagement in academic, social-emotional, and career areas. Students may continue to explore new passions or areas of interests, through projects or experiential learning, but they have acquired a strong sense of self that will help to increase engagement and in good decision-making. The goal is that they are able to articulate what motivates them to excel.

Advisors meet several times weekly with students, to track, support and maximize their progress.

ACT/PSAT – Individualized testing timeline and preparation

Students benefit from an individualized timeline planning and testing preparation, learning tried and tested techniques to maximize the test scores needed for college applications. CinDay Academy offers a state-mandated ACT test to all students in the Spring of their Junior year.

Students should plan to take the ACT several times, up until the end of Junior year or beginning of Senior year. If students wait too long into Senior year, they risk the scores not being reported in time for an early action deadline, which are often tied to merit scholarship consideration at colleges.

College Selection Seminar

Presented by NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling) and OACAC (Ohio Association for College Admission Counseling) member professionals, 11th graders and their parents benefit from gaining a deeper insight into what's involved in the college bound process, from selection to application. An update on the landscape of college admissions, an outline of available college counseling-related activities, and resources for testing and financial aid is explained.

College Visits/Scholarships

Advisors help students to lay the groundwork for college visits, providing them with the resources to collect and track data on potential colleges and best-fit environments. Students are encouraged to search for potential scholarships.

Resume-building workshop

While students have attended previously, this is a fantastic opportunity to do a final update to the resume before college applications start. Students are encouraged to continue building on experiences; opportunities to shadow, serve or experience throughout the year. Increased flexibility in study schedules enables to weave more career involvement into their school week. It's important that the resume not only be pursued, but put together in a document, which will be used in college applications.

Students attend a workshop run by professionals, on how to build the best resume, and present their multiple career and extra-curricular experiences, to college admissions or employers, to maximum effect.

Professional Networking workshop

This is an opportunity for upperclassmen to learn how to create and use a LinkedIn account and how to network for increased career opportunities using the latest 21st Century tools and techniques.

Job shadows/Internships

Students are encouraged to take part in multiple, full-day job shadows of professionals in careers that interest them. CinDay Academy's network of corporate partners and professional mentors facilitates this process for students, providing them safe, optimized shadowing opportunities in a maximum number of career fields. Students complete post-shadow assignments to reflect and share on their experiences with Advisors and peers. Upperclassmen are encouraged to set up regular job shadows or part-time internships, to have increased on-the-job experience. Increased flexibility in study schedules enables students to weave these experiences into their school week with ease.

Extra-Curricular Activities

While the transcript is key, college admissions officers take a holistic view of all components of a student's application when making admissions decisions.

We recommend that students follow their individual interests in the special talents they want to develop; be it in the visual and performing arts, athletics, leadership activities etc., and that they engage themselves civically. Activities should be chosen judiciously. Instead of loading up on many activities, high school students should focus on the quality of their activities. In terms of admissions, it's more important for students to be consistently involved in one, two, or three activities and/or sports over a number of years, than superficially involved in eight or more, over shorter periods of time. CinDay Academy offers regular extra-curricular activities, and students are also eligible to incorporate sports teams at their local public High School.

Course Selection and Project-Based Learning

CinDay Academy helps students source professional mentors, and pre-college or college-level courses/resources, tailored to their chosen fields of study in college, or potential career paths. These tools are springboards to increased hands-on, project-based learning linked to particular career paths. Students deepen their understanding and practice of what it means to be an independent learner in the 21st Century, in readiness for college and the workplace.

21st Century Career Skills

This module enables upperclassmen to study and practice up-to-date career skills on the subjects of emotional intelligence, communication and team-building, using material from world-renown authors and speakers.

Leadership Opportunities

Upperclassmen are encouraged to take on leadership opportunities within the school and wider community. CinDay Academy's community-based network and opportunities for flexible study scheduling facilitate this process.

College Application Essay (end of 11G)

CinDay Academy provides coaching in individualized writing and editing services to students who are navigating the stressful and pressure-filled task of college essay writing. Advisors guide students in crafting essays that will showcase their talents, strengths and personality, and make them stand out in the highly competitive world of college admissions.

The Common Application (end of 11G)

With more than 700 member colleges and only one application, The Common Application simplifies the process by collecting much of the student's information in one place. This prevents students from repeating the details of their background, education, activities, and testing over and over again, for every school on their list. It also enables students to stay on top of deadlines and manage school-specific tasks – without leaving the system. The application process opens August 1st, so students should begin working on their application during the summer before Senior year.

Apply for FSA ID (Summer before 12G)

While you are not required to have an FSA ID to complete and submit a *FAFSA on the Web* (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application, it is the fastest way to sign your application and have it processed. It is also the only way to access or correct your information online, or to pre-fill a *FAFSA on the Web* application with information from your previous year's FAFSA.

The FSA ID allows students and parents to identify themselves electronically to access FSA Web sites.

An FSA ID is made up of a username and password and can be used to log into *FAFSA on the Web*.

12th Grade/ Learning Independence Level S4 – Ownership

By this time, students have had ample opportunities to articulate their passions and values. They have had substantial, hands-on experience of various careers that resonate with them. They know about the variety of college options available, and requirements to meet. Each student's short-list is a reflection of the valuable one-to-one time they have spent with their Advisor.

Students should be continuing to build on experiences from previous school years, including:

- Regular job shadows/internships/leadership roles
- College visits: finalize choices
- College applications
- Finalize resume & essay
- Re-take the ACT and continue with test prep, as needed
- Complete the CSS (College Scholarship Service) profile for those colleges that require it
- Request information on Financial Aid seminars
- File the FAFSA after October 1st
- Apply for private scholarships
- Consider Early Action (often tied to scholarships) vs Early Decision (binding)
– applications due October 15 – December 1 (*usually – check with colleges*)

Early Decision Application

Early decision is binding. This means if you are accepted through early decision, you are committed to attending that school (regardless of later financial aid), and will withdraw any applications you may have submitted to other colleges. You may not apply to more than one college under early decision. If you are not accepted, you will either be rejected or deferred. Not all colleges offer Early Decision.

If you are not accepted, you will either be rejected or deferred. Rejected applicants may not apply again that year. Deferred applicants will be reconsidered during the regular admission period and are free to apply to other schools.

Early Action Application

Early action is non-binding. This means you are not bound to attend if you are accepted. You may also apply early action to multiple colleges. Early action deadlines usually fall around the same time as early decision. Not all colleges offer Early Action. A newer trend is colleges requiring students to apply by the Early Action date IF they wish to be considered for merit scholarships.

The obvious advantage of early action over early decision is the opportunity it gives you to apply to, and ultimately compare financial aid packages from several schools. If you are accepted early decision, you risk missing the admission deadlines of other schools

while you wait for your award package to arrive. If that award is lackluster, the options are fewer.

Early decision deadlines are often in October and November, and students are typically notified of the decision in December.

Our Advice

If you're sure that you've found your best-fit school, you know it's one you want to attend, you're a strong candidate for admission, and you know that you can afford the tuition, go ahead and apply early decision.

That is a whole lot of research and comparison to have done by fall of your senior year, though, and if you're uncertain about any of those factors, you're not alone! Keep your options open by applying early action, or by the regular deadline. Teenagers can be prone to changing their minds.

Letters of Recommendation for College Applications

At the beginning of senior year, students are required to ask teachers, advisor or Principal and others to write a letter of recommendation. Please allow plenty of time for this to happen, and keep the writer aware of any deadlines. It is suggested to request in early September. The student will also need to give the person proper access via the Common App and other college applications. Colleges typically dictate how many letters and who can be asked, this will be found in the application.

Send ACT, SAT and/or SAT Subject Test Scores

While the Common App allows students to list their test scores, almost every university requires students to submit their test scores directly from the testing agency. This is done in the testing agency's online portal with a credit card.

Apply for Financial Aid

For some colleges, once the student has applied, they are automatically considered for scholarships. At other schools, there is a separate application (with a deadline!) for scholarships. Be certain to check, as this can be a large saving on college expenses.

Both the FAFSA and the CSS Profile are available starting October 1st. Every family should complete the FAFSA, regardless of income. At some colleges, you will not be considered for any aid, even merit aid, unless the FAFSA is complete. Some schools also require the CSS Profile (there is a fee for this). Be sure to check if the CSS Profile is required.

Searching for private scholarships can continue through the winter of 12th grade.

Rising Senior Summer College Applicant To-Do List

A goal without a plan is only a wish! Use our handy checklist specific to rising seniors, to make sure you are making the most of your summer to hit your goals!

Hyperlinks to useful documentation: (documents & links also available through Advisors, and on CinDay Academy Moodle site).

College Advising Essentials

A full, detailed guide from the College Board which is downloadable from their site <https://counselors.collegeboard.org> under “Resources”, or available from your CinDay Academy Advisor. Includes:

- Finding the Perfect College
- FAQ College Entrance Exams
- Campus Visit Checklist
- The Anatomy of a College Application
- College Application Materials Checklist
- College Application Tips
- College Application Tracker
- Tips for Letters of Recommendation
- The College Essay
- Financial Aid Tips
- The Great Sorting Game
- College Exploration Worksheet

College Application Process

NACAC Guide to the College Admissions Process
<https://www.nacacnet.org/>

The Common App – applications to more than 700 colleges
<http://www.commonapp.org/>

College-level Course Selection

See which credits earned in High School are transferable to which colleges
<https://transferology.com>

College Search Tools

College Board College Search Finder “Big Future”
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>

College Niche (reviews by students)
<https://www.niche.com/colleges/rankings>

College Factual College Search Tool

<https://www.collegefactual.com>

Princeton Review College Search Tool

<https://www.princetonreview.com/college-search>

Colleges That Change Lives

<https://ctcl.org>

Testing

Registration for the ACT

<http://www.act.org>

Registration for the SAT

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>

List of Test Preparation Resources

<https://yescollege.com/post/act-sat-prep>

Scholarships and Financial Aid

College Board Scholarship Finder

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>

FAFSA Forecaster (estimate aid)

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate>

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

<https://fafsa.ed.gov>

Financial Aid/ CSS (College Scholarship Service) Profile

<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org>

The Dayton Foundation's Scholarship CONNECT

<https://www.daytonfoundation.org/scholars.html>

Fastweb Scholarship Search

<https://www.fastweb.com>

College and Career Planning Checklist

	Grade/Ind.Level	✓
Birkman test and career-match report	9 / S1-4	
Career Exploration Project	9 / S1	
Career Interviews (give number)	9-12 /S1-4	
Curriculum Evening	9-12 / S1-4	
College Selection Seminar	9-12 / S1-4	
Extra-curricular Activities	9-12 / S1-4	
Job shadows/ internships (give number)	10-12 / S3-4	
Resume-building workshop	10-12 / S1-4	
PSAT /NMSQT	10-11/ S1-4	
FAFSA4caster	10-11/ S1-4	
ACT (give number taken)	10-12 / S1-4	
College Fairs (give number attended)	10-12 / S1-4	
College Visits (give number)	10-12 / S1-4	
Professional Networking Workshop	10-12 / S1-4	
21 st Century Career Skills Module	10-12 / S1-4	
Leadership experiences	10-12 / S3-4	
College Application Essay	11/ S1-4	
The Common Application - apply	11/ S1-4	
Create an FSA ID	11/ S1-4	
Complete CSS & apply for scholarships	11-12/ S1-4	
Request letters of recommendation & give access via the Common App	12/ S1-4	
Consider Early Action vs Early Decision	11-12 / S1-4	
Request information on Financial Aid	11-12/S1-4	
File the FAFSA from October 1st	11-12/S1-4	
Print and read the College Advising Essentials Handbook (See Hyperlinks to useful Information, page 9)	11-12/ S1-4	

Rising Senior Summer College Applicant To-Do List

- Having difficulty selecting colleges to visit and apply to? Set up a counseling session with your advisor or Curriculum Director
- Plan out your college visits – it’s normal to do revisits during senior year
- Center in on your best-fit careers using your Birkman Career Match Report & job shadow/internship experiences
- Look at the Common App essay prompts and contact colleges to request supplemental essay prompts if they require such
- Complete “Personal Statement” essay, using the Common App or individual college prompts
- Update your resume: having a good resume will result in better recommendation letters and SAVE TIME on applications
- Check if your schools accept Common App, Coalition or their own application system
- Register for the Common App before summer, register for non-common app schools also
- Start your applications during the summer – less to do when school starts
- Check application deadlines & track them on a spreadsheet. Deadlines are NEVER extended!
- Request recommendation letters (Spring & September)
- Request High School, AP, CCP and CLEP transcripts – from CinDay and colleges you were enrolled in
- Request ACT/SAT scores to send to colleges when you are finished testing
- Register for FSA ID and complete the FAFSA (October). You may also need the CSS Profile to get scholarships.