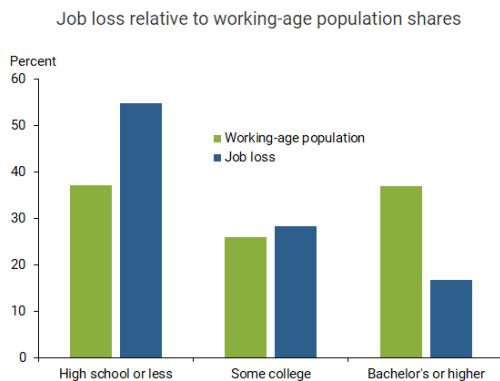


October may be **College Knowledge Month** in Minnesota, but at SPCPA planning for college success is a year-round, multi-year endeavor. Why? Two reasons. **1st**... a college education is key to financial stability in an ever-changing economic landscape. [Federal Reserve Bank](#) research recently highlighted the positive role having a college degree has had on workers during Covid-19 disruptions:



2nd... it takes four years of sustained effort and learning across the academic spectrum to create a college-ready high school graduate.

- Four-year colleges and universities** (bachelor's degree granting institutions) expect a high school transcript that has (at a minimum):
 - 4 years of English,
 - 3 years of Math,
 - 3 years of Social Studies,
 - 2-3 years of Science (with at least 2 laboratory experiences),
 - 0-2 years of the same World Language.
- The **more selective** the school, the more likely they are to expect **4 years of classes in every subject area** (including World Language).
- Two-year colleges** (Associates degree granting institutions) expect students to complete the graduation requirements of their state/school.

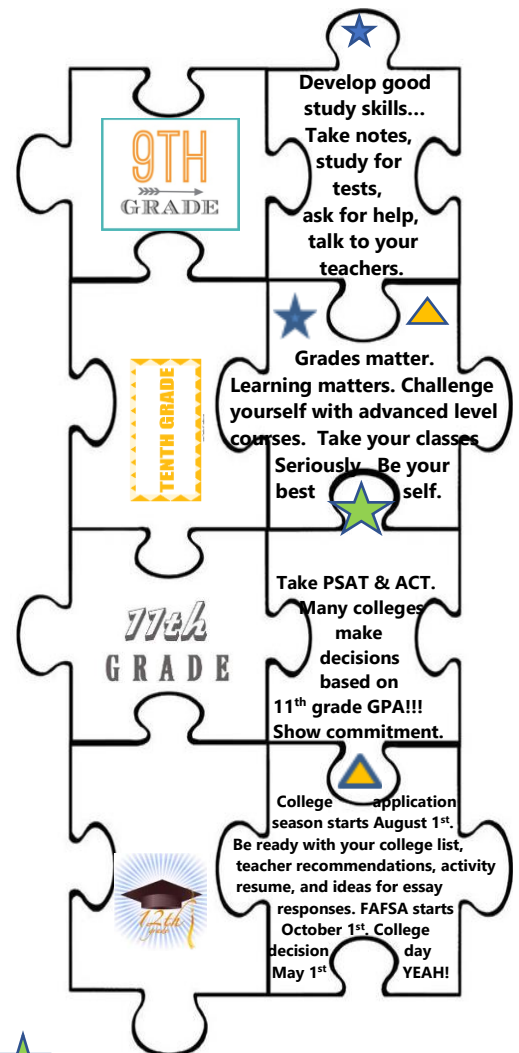
As a college preparatory high school, SPCPA's graduation requirements match the four-year school list of expectations, with these exceptions: World Language (*optional but highly recommended*), 5 Arts credits per year enrolled (*versus 1 or 2 elective credits/semester at other high schools*).

For students interested in pursuing the performing arts in college, the conservatory training a student receives over four years of high school at SPCPA uniquely prepares them for the rigors of a degree focused specifically on these areas (BFA, BM) as well as the more broadly focused BA/BS degrees.

What are colleges looking for in a student?

- Academic Achievement (GPA)
- SAT/ACT scores
- Rigor of classes (H/AP)
- Senior Class Schedule (Maintain Rigor)
- Extracurricular Activities
- Community Service
- Essays
- Recommendation Letter(s)
- Interview (for some private colleges)
- Alumni of the university
- Special Talents
- **FIT!!!**

College Planning Puzzle



- ★ Look for activities outside of school to become involved in to try out your interests and develop leadership skills.
- ▲ Make college visits a priority.

Wondering what grades/test scores it takes to be a competitive college applicant at the schools that interest you?

Check out [gpacalculator](#)....

GPA CALCULATOR									
SEARCH FILTERS		SCHOOL	STATE	SAT 25	SAT 75	ACT 25	ACT 75	AVG GPA	ACCEPT %
Choose your state: Minnesota		College of Saint Benedict	Minnesota	1413	1773	23	28	3.7	77%
Select score type: GPA		Gustavus Adolphus College	Minnesota	1080	1340	24	30	3.7	63%
Pick your score: Min: 2 Max: 5 Your Score: 5.0		Concordia College at Moorhead	Minnesota	990	1280	22	28	3.6	78%
SEARCH		St. Olaf College	Minnesota	1760	2110	26	31	3.6	60%
		University of Minnesota Morris	Minnesota	1550	1970	23	28	3.6	60%
		St. Catherine University	Minnesota	970	1170	20	25	3.6	59%
		University of St. Thomas	Minnesota	1040	1280	23	28	3.6	87%
		Bethel University	Minnesota	1020	1250	22	28	3.5	71%
		Northwestern College	Minnesota	966	1313	22	27	3.5	60%
		Saint John's University	Minnesota	1415	1810	23	28	3.5	75%
		Martin Luther College	Minnesota	0	0	22	27	3.5	97%
		The College of Saint Scholastica	Minnesota	1230	1540	21	26	3.5	78%
		Hamline University	Minnesota	1450	1850	21	27	3.5	70%
		University of Minnesota Duluth	Minnesota	1360	1780	22	26	3.4	78%
		Crown College	Minnesota	765	890	18	24	3.4	56%
		Bethany Lutheran College	Minnesota	0	0	20	26	3.3	78%
		Winona State University	Minnesota	0	0	21	25	3.3	62%
		University of Minnesota Crookston	Minnesota	1220	1540	19	24	3.2	73%
		North Central University	Minnesota	900	1110	19	26	3.1	97%

Supportive Parent/Guardian College 101s:

- It's never too early to begin familiarizing yourself with ways to finance a college education...
 - This process begins with the FAFSA. Click [here](#) for a quick FAFSA tutorial.
 - Your base year matters. Click [here](#) to learn more.
 - Click [here](#) to learn about the MN tax credit for 529 College savings plans.
 - Interested in setting up a 529 Plan? Click [here](#) for Minnesota's option.
 - Will scholarships be an important part of the affordability equation? Click [here](#) for a list of scholarship aggregators then create an account on one or two of them to better understand your future options.
- Make visiting colleges a family activity -- start researching schools together and look for opportunities to schedule on campus visits at a variety of colleges and universities.
- Encourage your student to pursue their interests, form friendships with supportive peers, and work hard in classes. Make it a family mantra: **Grades matter. Every class counts.**
- Help your student develop good study habits and be an engaged learner who:
 - Appreciates the value of their academic subjects.
 - Gets to know their teachers, so that they feel comfortable asking for recommendations.
 - Takes ahead and learns to manage their commitments.
 - Takes responsibility for their academic performance.
- Discuss the impact social media can have in creating a negative impression for college admissions officers and future employers. Encourage your students to "scrub" their Social Networks. For more information click [here](#) and [here](#).

Terminology to Know

- Public:** Institutions that are predominately funded by public means through the government, not typically religiously affiliated, levels of selectivity vary
- Private:** Not operated by governments, although may receive public subsidies, especially in the form of tax breaks and public student loans and grants
- Selective Admission:** Universities that have guidelines students must meet for admission
- Open Enrollment:** These institutions do not have minimum academic standards for general admission to the college
- Rolling Admissions:** Applications are reviewed and decisions rendered as they are submitted
- Early Decision:** Decisions are binding, if admitted, a student must withdraw all other applications
- Early Action:** Similar to ED but decisions are NOT binding

Curious about possible careers to match **YOUR** interests?

There are many ways to learn about possible careers. For starters, talk to people who are doing jobs that interest you. Don't be afraid to ask your dream job "experts" as well as other adults who have experiences to share pertinent questions such as, "What do you think it takes to be successful in (career name)?" or "Tell me about the educational choices you made to have a career in (industry name)?" Another good step is to pay attention to what interests you. Not sure what type of jobs you might like? Look for opportunities to volunteer, intern and/or get paid experience in a variety of areas to help you gain enough perspective to have an opinion. Online resources can also be a great starting point to career exploration. **My Next Move** is designed to help students explore possible options and discover what it takes to be successful in each field. It also provides job outlook statistics, education requirements and links for related careers which can be helpful to know before taking on college debt. Click [here](#) to learn more.

