

1. **Push Yourself:** Take challenging courses

Encourage students to take as challenging a course load as possible. Many colleges and universities consider the rigor of courses taken in high school to be as important as GPA, particularly in math and science. These can also help students when they enter college, as they may be able to skip certain math (College Algebra, pre-Calculus, etc.) or language courses (Spanish 101, 102, 201, etc.) and free up time in their class schedule for other courses.

2. **Be Aware:** High school graduation requirements vs. college entrance requirements

Be aware, the minimum admissions requirements for individual colleges may not match the minimum requirements for high school graduation in Oregon. Also, seniors should not "check out" academically just because they have completed graduation requirements. Colleges often look at final transcripts to confirm that the student has stayed mentally and academically engaged for the entire senior year.

3. **Get Involved:** Participate in school activities and community service

Encourage students to be involved in extra-curricular and volunteer opportunities. Before college and scholarship application reviewers make their decisions they look at the variety of students' activities. Scholarship donors often choose to honor students who show potential for being involved in their communities.

Point out the advantages of participating in a variety of activities. Also encourage students to develop depth within their activities or combine activities that coincide with their career interests.

If you are working with younger students make sure they keep an accurate record of all their activities, accomplishments and work for pay in an updated résumé or [activities chart](#).

4. **Do Your Best:** Come to school with a drive to succeed

Encourage students to do their very best in school. This is obvious but it is the biggest factor for preparation for college and admission. Be a cheerleader and an advocate for your students' academic success.

5. **Get to Know Schools:** Learn as much as you can about specific colleges and universities

Encourage students to take advantage of any school sponsored field trips to college campuses and to attend school financial aid events. The college admissions staff at these events are there specifically to answer their questions and want to be a resource for them.