



Dr. Carlin's Test Prep

Find out what you  
**NEED** to know  
about the college  
prep process!

# College Prep for Parents

**Dr. Scott Carlin, Ph.D.**  
Founder and CEO, Dr. Carlin's Test Prep

# Dr. Scott Carlin, Ph.D.



## **Educational Background**

- Bachelors of Arts - **University of Notre Dame**, 1997
- Masters of Education - **University of Notre Dame**, 2003
- Ph.D. in Curriculum, Teaching, and Educational Policy - **Michigan State University**, 2010

## **Professional Experience**

- 10 years of teaching experience at secondary and university levels
- 15 years of professional ACT/SAT Prep experience.
- Former Academic Advisor to student athletes at The University of Notre Dame
- Provided test preparation services to thousands of students and hundreds of teachers throughout the country in a variety of formats: in-person courses, individual tutoring, school sponsored seminars, and teacher professional development
- Founder and CEO of Dr. Carlin's Test Prep and College Consulting



# Resources

- Resources and links mentioned in this presentation are available on our website
- Presentation slides also available on our website
- <http://www.drcarlinstestprep.com/links-college-prep-for-parents.html>
  - Password protected page: **PARENTS**

# What Should We Do?

## A Plan for Each Grade Level

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Explore
  - What is available?
  - What does college offer?
- 9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Plan
  - Good Grades – College Prep Curriculum
  - Involvement – Extra-curriculars
- 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Prepare
  - Keep up grades and involvement
  - Begin research – college inventory
- 11<sup>th</sup> Grade: Test
  - Keep up grades and involvement
  - October - PSAT
  - ACT and SAT (multiple attempts)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: Apply
  - Keep up grades and involvement
  - Apply for Scholarships
  - Apply for College

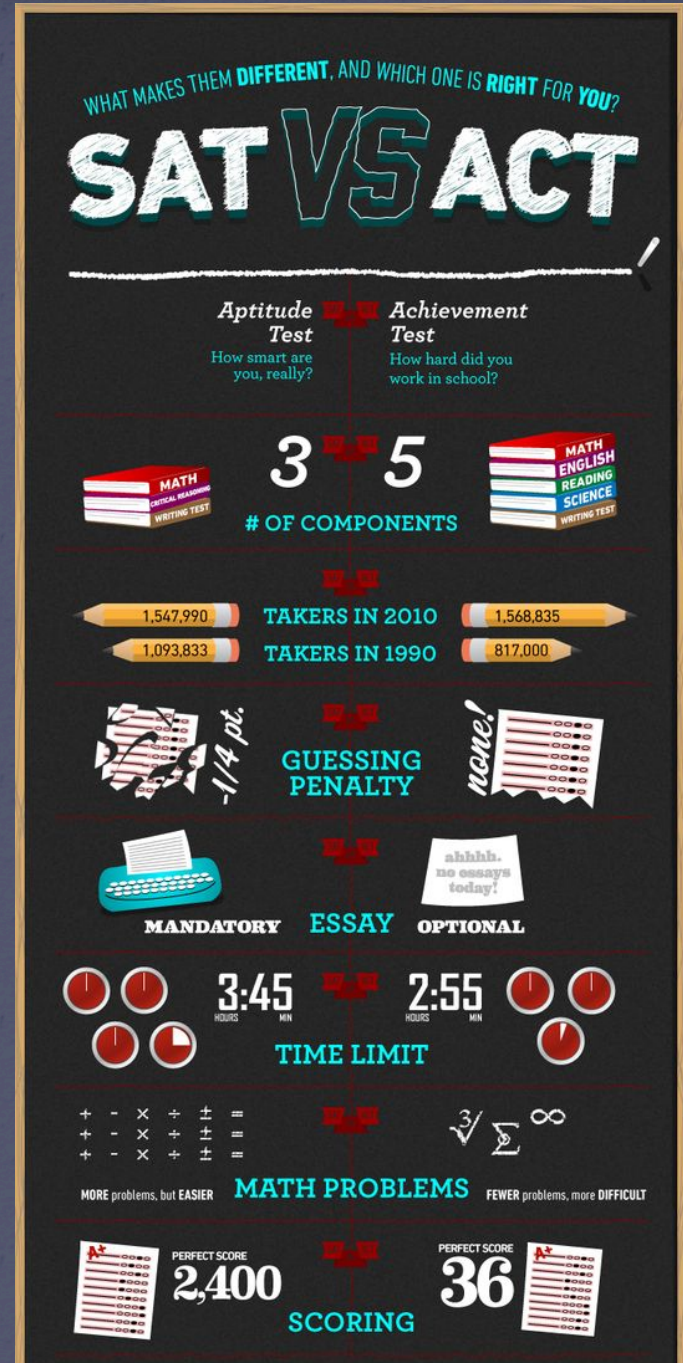
Detailed Checklist  
on Resource Page!



# ACT & (current) SAT

## Differences Between the Tests

- Which test should your student take?
  - 1/3
- Mean ACT = 21 (out of 36)
- What is a “good” ACT score?
- Mean SAT = 500 (out of 800/section)
  - Current – 3 sections = 2400 total points
  - New (2016) – 2 sections = 1600 total points
- What is a “good” SAT score?



# ACT & SAT

## Importance of Tests

### ➤ Admissions

➤ 4 Years = 4 Hours

➤ Normed / Curved

➤ Examples:

➤ U of M: 29-33

➤ MSU: 24-29

➤ Notre Dame: 32-34

➤ IU: 24-29

➤ Purdue: 25-30







































### ➤ Scholarships

➤ Points = \$

## Michigan College Minimum Requirements

### Colleges in Michigan: GPA & ACT Tiers

of college freshman class based on information found on institutions' websites & [www.careercruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com)

Ave. GPA 2.5-2.8 Ave. ACT 16-19	2.8-3.2 18-22	3.3-3.5 21-25	3.5-3.8 23-29	3.8-4.0 29-36
    	            	          	     	  



# ACT & SAT

## Prepping and Retaking the Test

- How many times should a student take the test?
- Superscore
- Test Prep
  - In-Person Courses
  - Webinars
  - Individual
- There is no substitute for guided practice

### ACT Superscore











ACT Test Date	June	Sept	Superscore
English	25	29	29
Math	32	30	32
Reading	28	25	28
Science	30	32	32
Composite	29	29	31

### SAT Superscore

John's Scores	May	October	Superscore
Math	550	650	650
Reading	650	550	650
Writing	550	600	600
Total	1750	1800	1900

# THE REDESIGNED SAT

## Current vs. New

-  **1. A perfect score will be 1600, not 2400.**  
How exactly this will happen (the allocation of points per section) has not yet been announced.
-  **2. The essay will be optional.**  
Students will now have to write an analysis of a paragraph (no more canned examples).
-  **3. No obscure vocabulary words.**  
Vocabulary-based exercises will test words students can expect to see in college courses.
-  **4. No more guessing penalty**  
Currently, students lose  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a point for every wrong answer. On the new test, there will be no penalty for wrong answers.
-  **5. Fewer random reading passages**  
Passages will be more focused on historical and scientific topics.
-  **6. More advanced math**  
There will be a new section called "Passport to Advanced Math" with pre-calculus & trigonometry.
-  **7. No calculator allowed on parts of the math section.**  
For 25 out of 80 minutes, students will have to rely on mental math.
-  **8. Paragraphs containing grammatical errors**  
No more hunting for mistakes in short sentences.
-  **9. More charts and graphs**  
Students will have to integrate multiple sources of information.
-  **10. Computer-optional, at select locations**  
Currently, the test is only available on paper.

Current SAT – May, June, Oct, Nov, Dec 2015, and Jan 2016

New SAT – March 2016



# PSAT / NMSQT

## Scores and National Merit Scholarships



- PSAT = Preliminary SAT
  - Precursor to the SAT...same question types and sections, but no writing
- Also called....NMSQT = National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
- Test taken by 9, 10, and 11 graders in October
  - Can take it even if not given at student's school
- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade – baseline scores / practice for SAT
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade - qualify for National Merit Scholarships
  - Qualifying score different by state
  - \$2,000-\$2,500 if finalist
  - Additional \$ given by colleges to finalists (big \$)

New PSAT – Oct 2015

# COLLEGE PREP TRAIL GUIDE

## Grade Level Steps and Resources

- Free guide on our website
- Month-by-month guide for students 8-12 grade to become “college ready”
  - Links, Resources, Printable Guides, Checklist

WEEKLY ACTION PLAN					
<i>"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure."</i> -Colin Powell					
Directions: List your assignments, homework, and projects on a daily basis for each of the courses on your schedule. Organization is Key!					
Student's Name: _____ Week of: _____ Goal: _____					
COURSE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY

NEXT WEEK (Coming Up):

College Exploration Guide	
<i>"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."</i> -Andre Gide	
Instructions: Learn more about getting into college by visiting websites to discover admissions requirements and financial information.	
College #1:	Location: _____
Average GPA, ACT, and SAT scores of incoming freshmen _____	
Application Requirements (Common App/Own App? Supplemental Essays? Recommendation Letters?) _____	
Tuition: _____	
Types of Scholarships Offered: _____	
College #2:	Location: _____
Average GPA, ACT, and SAT scores of incoming freshmen _____	
Application Requirements (Common App/Own App? Supplemental Essays? Recommendation Letters?) _____	
Tuition: _____	
Types of Scholarships Offered: _____	
College #3:	Location: _____
Average GPA, ACT, and SAT scores of incoming freshmen _____	
Application Requirements (Common App/Own App? Supplemental Essays? Recommendation Letters?) _____	
Tuition: _____	
Types of Scholarships Offered: _____	

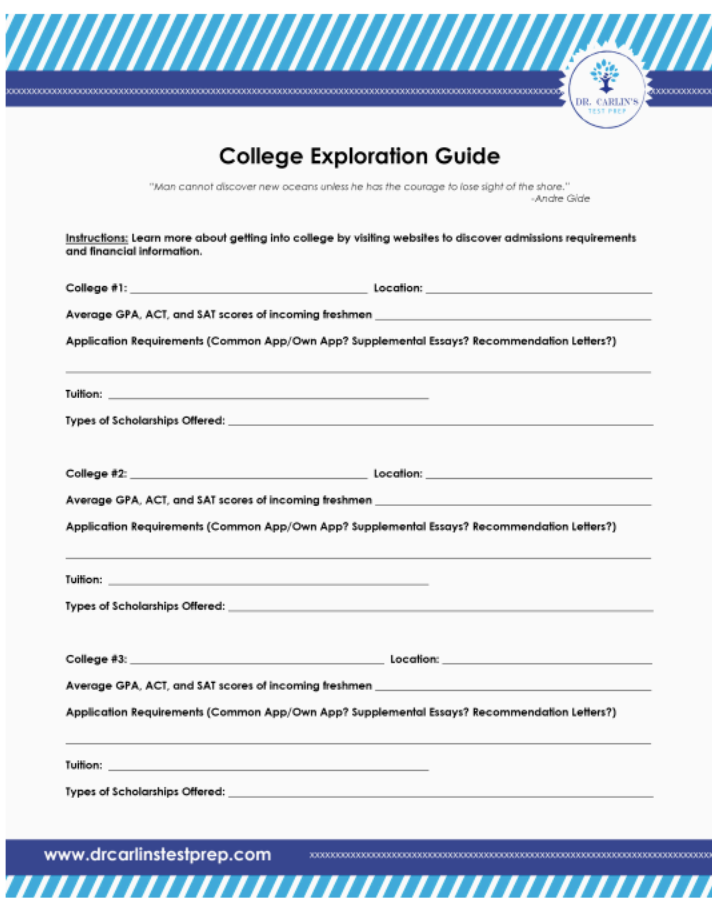
www.drcarlinstestprep.com



# COLLEGE SEARCH PROCESS

## How to Find the Best Fit

- Not Sure Where to Start?
  - Posted links on our resources page
- What is important to your student?
  - Location
  - Type of School
  - Selectivity
  - Available programs & majors
  - Price
    - Public vs. Private, In-State vs. Out
  - Big vs. Small
  - Environment
  - Extracurricular and athletics
- College visits recommended



**College Exploration Guide**

*"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."  
-Andre Gide*

**Instructions:** Learn more about getting into college by visiting websites to discover admissions requirements and financial information.

College #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Average GPA, ACT, and SAT scores of incoming freshmen \_\_\_\_\_

Application Requirements (Common App/Own App? Supplemental Essays? Recommendation Letters?) \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of Scholarships Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

College #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Average GPA, ACT, and SAT scores of incoming freshmen \_\_\_\_\_

Application Requirements (Common App/Own App? Supplemental Essays? Recommendation Letters?) \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of Scholarships Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

College #3: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Average GPA, ACT, and SAT scores of incoming freshmen \_\_\_\_\_

Application Requirements (Common App/Own App? Supplemental Essays? Recommendation Letters?) \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of Scholarships Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

[www.dracarlinstestprep.com](http://www.dracarlinstestprep.com)

# COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

## The Common App and Individual App

- **The Common App** = A standard application form accepted by 475+ colleges. Fill out this application **ONCE** and submit it to any of the colleges that accept it.
  - Common App essays
  - Supplemental essays
- **Individual App** = Schools that do not use the Common App have their own applications

The screenshot shows the homepage of The Common Application. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: About Us, Member Colleges & Universities, Common Questions, Download Forms, Other Resources, and Contact Us. Below the navigation bar, on the left, is a text block describing the organization. On the right, the main heading 'THE COMMON APPLICATION' is displayed in large, bold, serif font, followed by the subtitle 'For Undergraduate College Admission'. Below this, there are three main sections: 'NEWS' with a date '01/29/2009' and a record of applications submitted, 'APPLY!' with a login form (User Name, Password, Login button) and links for new users, and 'FEATURED' with the Clark University logo and website URL. The bottom of the page features a long list of member colleges.

**THE COMMON APPLICATION**  
For Undergraduate College Admission

**NEWS**  
01/29/2009  
Record Number of Applications Submitted  
The Common Application set a new record on December 31st, 2008. It was the first 100,000+.

**APPLY!**  
User Name:   
Password:   
  
Never Registered? [Go here](#)  
Forgot Login? [Go here](#)

**FEATURED**  
**CLARK UNIVERSITY**  
CHALLENGE CONVERSION  
<http://www.clarku.edu>



# COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

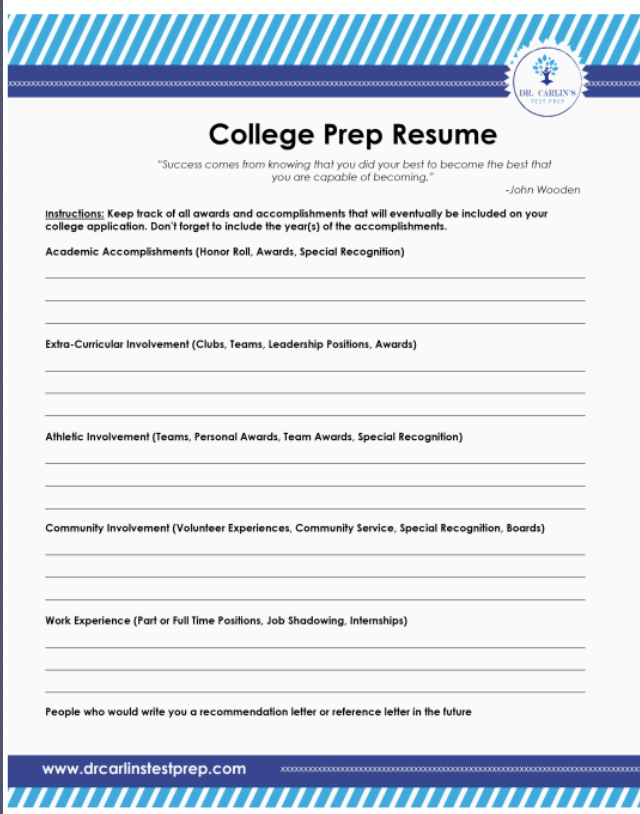
## Essays and Personal Statements

- Critical Piece to the application. (NO INTERVIEW)
- Most important piece of writing to date in students' lives
- What sets a student apart/makes one unique?
- Try to avoid clichés and trite language
- There has to be a HOOK! (First line & Last line)
- Originality, Intelligence through communication, and answering the actual prompt compellingly

# COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

## Student Resume and Extracurricular Activities

- Build your resume 8-12
  - keep track of all awards, honors, activities, and leadership positions
- Categories:
  - Academic
  - Athletic
  - Arts
  - Service
  - Employment
- What are colleges looking for?
  - Quantity vs. Quality



The image shows a template for a 'College Prep Resume'. At the top, there is a blue and white striped header. Below the header, on the right, is a circular logo for 'DR. CARLIN'S TEST PREP' featuring a tree. The title 'College Prep Resume' is centered. Below the title is a quote: 'Success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.' attributed to '-John Wooden'. The instructions state: 'Instructions: Keep track of all awards and accomplishments that will eventually be included on your college application. Don't forget to include the year(s) of the accomplishments.' The form is divided into several sections, each with a title and a set of lines for writing: 'Academic Accomplishments (Honor Roll, Awards, Special Recognition)', 'Extra-Curricular Involvement (Clubs, Teams, Leadership Positions, Awards)', 'Athletic Involvement (Teams, Personal Awards, Team Awards, Special Recognition)', 'Community Involvement (Volunteer Experiences, Community Service, Special Recognition, Boards)', 'Work Experience (Part or Full Time Positions, Job Shadowing, Internships)', and 'People who would write you a recommendation letter or reference letter in the future'. At the bottom, there is a blue bar with the website 'www.drcarlinstestprep.com'.

**College Prep Resume**

*"Success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming."*  
-John Wooden

Instructions: Keep track of all awards and accomplishments that will eventually be included on your college application. Don't forget to include the year(s) of the accomplishments.

Academic Accomplishments (Honor Roll, Awards, Special Recognition)

Extra-Curricular Involvement (Clubs, Teams, Leadership Positions, Awards)

Athletic Involvement (Teams, Personal Awards, Team Awards, Special Recognition)

Community Involvement (Volunteer Experiences, Community Service, Special Recognition, Boards)

Work Experience (Part or Full Time Positions, Job Shadowing, Internships)

People who would write you a recommendation letter or reference letter in the future

www.drcarlinstestprep.com



# COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

## Recommendations and Transcripts

1. Be Proactive in Asking for Recs and Transcripts
  - Give plenty of time for them to complete
2. Counseling/Guidance Office at School for Transcripts
3. Recommendations should be personal and unique
4. Choose individuals who say “YES” enthusiastically and won’t write a “form” letter.
5. Detailed and Personal can win out over “Title”

# COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

## When and Where to Look

### ➤ Where do grants and scholarships come from?

1. **Local** (Community Organizations) – Less competition – ask guidance office for list of local scholarships
2. **Employer** – Many employers offer scholarships for students of employees
3. **Federal and State**
  - Governments
  - Private Scholarship Sources
4. **Individual Colleges and Universities**

### ➤ When to apply?

- In tandem with completing college applications
  - Summer between Junior and Senior year
  - Every scholarship has a different deadline!
  - Complete FAFSA – available Jan.1 of Senior year
- List of resources on our website



# COLLEGE READY PODCAST

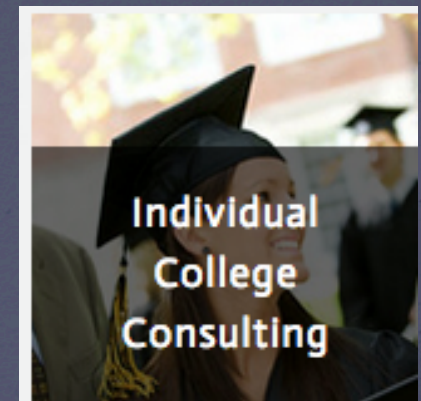
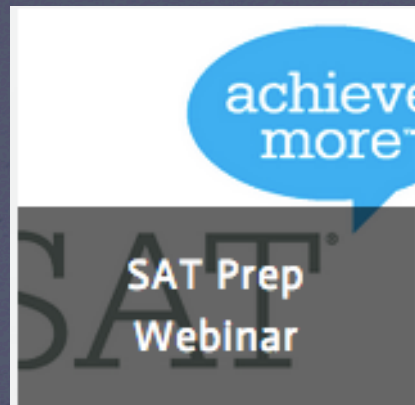
College Prep Advice and Interviews

- Weekly podcast
- College Prep Topics
  - ACT
  - New SAT
  - AP (Adv. Placement) Courses
  - Where to Begin?
- Interviews with Key Players
  - Admissions Counselor
  - Academic Advisor for Student Athletes
- Available on iTunes or from our website



# COURSES and SERVICES

- ACT Prep
  - Webinars, In-Person Courses, and Individual Tutoring
- SAT Prep
  - Webinar, In-Person Courses, and Individual Tutoring
- Top 10 College Survival Tactics: Ensuring Success as an Undergrad (Sunday, May 17, 4:00-5:30 pm EST)
- College Application Completion and Essay Revision Guidance





# Questions?

- If you have a question, click the hand icon and I will unmute you so that we can all hear your question
- I will be happy to stay online longer than 8:30 to answer questions
- If you have a question later, email me at [drcarlin@drcarlinstestprep.com](mailto:drcarlin@drcarlinstestprep.com)
- Don't forget to like us on Facebook (Dr. Carlin's Test Prep) to receive helpful college prep information and updates