

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE FAIR EXPERIENCE

Before the Fair

Consider all the characteristics of colleges – location, size, admission statistics, student body, academic programs, clubs/organizations, athletics, job placement rates, and more. Use the search and comparison features on Naviance and College Board to narrow down your type of college. Review college websites before the fair to identify questions you may have for colleges. Review the list of colleges attending so you can plan to visit with those colleges and have an effective fair experience.

What to Bring

Bring a notepad and writing utensil to jot down thoughts about colleges and to keep track of important questions to ask, or take notes on your phone. **OUR FAVORITE TIP:** Make self-stick labels with information so you do not have to fill out so many information cards in one evening. This way, you can use your time to chat, not write. Colleges will request your information on these cards so they can keep in touch with you. The following information should appear on your self-stick label, but please note that information cards may ask for more or less information. Any size self-stick label is fine, but you may need a larger label to fit all of the information.

Name
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip Code
Phone number(s) and Email
High School Name
Graduation Year
College Major/Area of Interest
GPA and Test Scores, if taken

During the Fair

Bring a bag for all of the handouts. Focus on the colleges you really want to know about, especially those colleges you may not have a chance to physically visit in the near future. Show your “demonstration of interest.” Ask questions and request materials and business cards from the representatives. Take a few minutes after each visit to jot down notes from your conversation. Plan to allow a few minutes at the end to stop by booths you didn’t plan on visiting – you never know which unexpected colleges could be a match for you.

After the Fair

Organize your thoughts, notes and materials. Visit websites and take the “virtual tour” that may be offered on the website. Begin to consider which colleges you would like to physically visit – possibly those schools that really impressed you at the fair. If you had a very successful conversation with a representative, consider sending a note of thanks and appreciation. Continue showing “demonstration of interest.”

Final Tip

Students – you should be speaking with the representatives. While it is understandable and common for parents to ask questions, you should approach them first and start the conversation. Do not stand behind your parent(s), letting them do the talking. After all, this is *your* college education!