

Would You Like to Visit a College, University, or Training Program?

Dear Student:

In your Universal Encouragement Program guidance survey, you indicated an interest in a postsecondary visit—a chance to explore education or training after high school. Visiting can help you picture your future, discover programs that interest you, and learn what you need to do to prepare.

You can explore four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, technical schools, and apprenticeship training centers. You do not need to have a career or school picked out before you visit. Asking questions and discovering possibilities are good reasons to go!

Arrange a visit

- **Start with the counseling office.** Ask about school-sponsored visits, college and career fairs, and opportunities to meet college or training representatives at our school. We can help you identify places to explore.
- **Check the institution's official website.** Look for "Visit," "Campus Tours," "Admissions," or "Open House." Many institutions let you register online. You can also call or email the admissions office or training coordinator.
- **Ask about activities that interest you.** Depending on availability, you may be able to tour classrooms, laboratories, workshops, residence halls, or student facilities; observe a class; or speak with an instructor, admissions counselor, or current student. Arrange these activities ahead of time.
- **Plan the practical details.** Confirm the date, location, transportation, and whether a parent, guardian, or other trusted adult can join you. Follow your school's procedures if you will miss classes. Tell the host in advance if you need accessibility accommodations or language assistance.

If transportation or travel costs make visiting difficult, let me know. We can explore nearby programs, school group visits, virtual options, and any visit assistance the institution offers.

Prepare before you go

Read a little about the institution and choose a few programs or activities you want to learn about. Write down your questions and bring something for taking notes.

If possible, visit when classes are in session so you can observe a typical day. An open house may offer additional demonstrations and opportunities to meet staff.

For planning tips and a visit checklist, see [College Board's BigFuture campus visit guide](#).

Questions worth asking

Choose the questions that matter most to you:

- **Programs and preparation:** What can I study or train for here? What high school courses, skills, or application requirements should I prepare for?
- **Learning experiences:** Can students participate in internships, hands-on projects, research, or paid work experiences? What does a typical class or training day look like?
- **Costs and financial help:** What is the total cost, including tuition, fees, books, tools, transportation, and housing if needed? What grants or scholarships are available? What might I pay after financial aid?
- **Student support:** What tutoring, academic advising, disability services, counseling, and career guidance are available?
- **Daily life:** What are the commuting or housing options? What activities help students meet others and feel connected? How does the institution support student safety?
- **Completion and next steps:** How long does the program take? What degree, certificate, or credential will I earn? What information is available about graduation, transfer, or employment outcomes?

For a technical or career-training program, also ask whether it prepares graduates for any required license or certification. For an apprenticeship, ask about pay, work schedules, classroom instruction, and entry requirements.

Explore online, too

Virtual tours can help you explore before an in-person visit or learn about places you cannot easily reach.

- **The institution's own website:** Look for virtual tours, recorded presentations, online open houses, and live question-and-answer sessions.
- **CampusTours:** Search for college virtual tours and interactive campus maps.
- **NACAC College Fairs:** Find in-person and virtual fairs where you can connect with representatives from multiple colleges.

Explore Virtual Learning and Training

Your visit can also help you explore programs that let you learn online. Colleges, universities, and training organizations may offer fully online programs or hybrid programs, which combine online learning with in-person activities. These options may give you greater flexibility, but it is important to understand how they work.

A virtual tour shows you an institution. A virtual learning program lets you take courses or complete training online. Ask whether the institution offers online options in subjects or careers that interest you.

Here are useful questions to ask:

- How are classes taught? Do students attend live online sessions at scheduled times, complete work on their own schedule, or do both? What deadlines and attendance requirements apply?
- What must I complete in person? Are campus visits, laboratory work, workshops, exams, internships, or clinical experiences required? Where would I complete them?
- What technology will I need? Ask about reliable internet access, computers, software, equipment, and any additional costs. Are loaner devices or technical support available?
- How will I get help and connect with others? Can online students meet with instructors, receive tutoring and accommodations, work with classmates, and use career services?
- What will the program prepare me to do? Ask what credential you will earn and whether it meets requirements for your intended career, professional license, or further education. Your counselor can help you check accreditation and recognition.
- What is the total cost? Include tuition, fees, technology, supplies, and any required travel. Ask whether students in that specific online program qualify for financial aid.

Think about how you learn best. Online learning often requires you to manage your time, follow through independently, and ask for help when you need it. A quiet place to study and dependable technology also matter.

If you are curious, ask your counselor about an age-appropriate online course or short learning experience you could try. It can help you discover whether virtual learning fits your needs before committing to a longer program.

Reflect afterward

Write down what you liked, what concerned you, and what you still want to know. Ask yourself: *Could I learn, feel supported, and work toward my goals here?* Compare your notes across visits and follow up with any unanswered questions.

If you are in middle school, focus on discovering possibilities and learning how your interests connect with future education or training. In high school, you can begin comparing programs, requirements, costs, and timelines more closely.

Please stop by the counseling office so we can plan your next step together. You do not have to figure everything out on your own.

Sincerely,

Your Counselor