

PLANO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Counseling and Guidance – Grades 9 - 12

“College Readiness”

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The Plano ISD Secondary Counselors are committed to preparing all students for post secondary education. The counselor, as the academic leader, is responsible for the comprehensive preparation of students. Counselors use the vertical team approach for college readiness, creating alignment throughout the secondary school years. Working closely with families, counselors monitor students regarding their choice of academic plans. Parent meetings, classroom presentations, orientation events, and academic conferences are offered to ensure that all students meet their individual goals.

Academic Conferences – Individual and small group academic conferences are the cornerstone of successful planning for students in Plano ISD. Eighth grade small group conferences present an overview of graduation requirements, courses, endorsements, and college expectations for applicants. A four year plan is developed for the student’s high school years. In the tenth and eleventh grades, students and parents participate in individual academic conferences to plan for the coming school year. Graduation requirements, credit evaluation, and course opportunities are discussed as well as post-secondary planning. Senior students receive college admission information and individual support as they make college application decisions. The 9-12 school counselors are the district’s best resource for college readiness.

Naviance – The district uses Naviance to track and analyze data about college and career plans. Through the Family Connection tool, students and families may research colleges and careers, set goals, track meetings and upcoming events, learn about summer learning and local scholarship opportunities, and other college admissions information.

Honors Courses – An honors curriculum includes a wider range and greater depth of subject matter than that of the regular course. Emphasis is placed on higher level and critical thinking skills, on creative, productive thinking and on independent guided research.

Advanced Placement – Plano ISD offers 31 AP courses at high schools and senior highs. The program allows students to complete college-level studies while still in high school. Courses must meet rigorous criteria and teachers have received additional training. Students taking AP courses are encouraged to take the appropriate AP exams. Students may receive college placement and credit based on their examination score. The College Board indicates that AP high school courses help students qualify for scholarships, improve skills necessary for college level work, and effectively compete in the college admissions process. AP participation promotes college readiness both in academics and maturity. In 2015 Plano ISD gave 2912 AP exams to 2464 students at the high school level. At the senior high schools, 10927 exams were given to 4033 students. 82% of Plano ISD students scored a 3 or higher on AP exams in 2015.

International Baccalaureate – The IB program is offered at Plano East Senior High School and is a rigorous course of study designed to meet the needs of highly motivated secondary students and to promote international understanding. The IB Program requires each student to take courses in six academic areas. To qualify for the International Baccalaureate Diploma, students must take examinations in six subject areas, participate in the Creativity, Action, and Service (CAS) program, and write an extended essay during the 11th and 12th grade years. In 2015 there were 83 full diploma candidates and 78 International Baccalaureate Diplomas were awarded. 543 exams were given and 486 were passed.

Dual Enrollment – In partnership with Collin College, juniors and seniors may take dual enrollment courses and earn both high school and college credit for US History, English 4, Government, and Economics. Courses are taught on senior high campuses by Collin College professors.

PSAT – Tests taken in the sophomore and junior year. Junior year results determine National Merit Semi-Finalists. The test measures critical reading skills, math problem solving skills, and writing skills. The test consists of a 60 minute critical reading section, a 25 minute math section with no calculator, a 45 minute math section with a calculator, and one 35 minute writing section.

ACT – A 2 hour and 55 minute test consisting of four subtests: English (English usage), Math (based on Algebra I, II, Geometry, and Trigonometry), Reading, Science Reasoning (a science-based reasoning test). There is an optional 40 minute writing section. The subtests measure ability to perform typical intellectual tasks asked of college students and is designed to measure intellectual skills and abilities, not specific content. ACT scores range from 1-36 with the composite score being the average of all five subtests.

Scores 2015:	English	Math	Reading	Science
District	25.2	26.3	25.8	25.4
State	19.8	21.1	21.1	21
National	20.4	20.8	21.4	20.9

SAT – The current SAT Reasoning Test is divided into three subtests: Critical Reading, Math and Writing. Each subtest is scored between 200 and 800 with a possible high score of 2400. A revised version of the SAT will be introduced in March 2016. The 3 hour test will consist of three subsections: Critical reading, Writing and Math. There will be an optional 50 minute essay offered. Two subsection scores will be reported on a 200 – 800 point scale: evidence based reading/writing and math. The high score for the SAT will be 1600 points with the writing scale reported separately.

Scores 2015:	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
District	556	593	535
State	470	486	454
National	495	517	484

National Merit Semi-Finalists and Finalists – The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. Students qualify for entry based on scores earned in the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Finalists are determined by high academic performance and SAT scores. There were 74 Semifinalists and 78 Finalists from the PISD class of 2015.

Support and Education – Plano ISD hosts two college nights, holds financial planning seminars, and offers college admission process presentations. Families have several opportunities to participate in parent education classes as well as learn about academic planning. Counselors assist students with the college admission process including applications, scholarship information, and letters of recommendation.