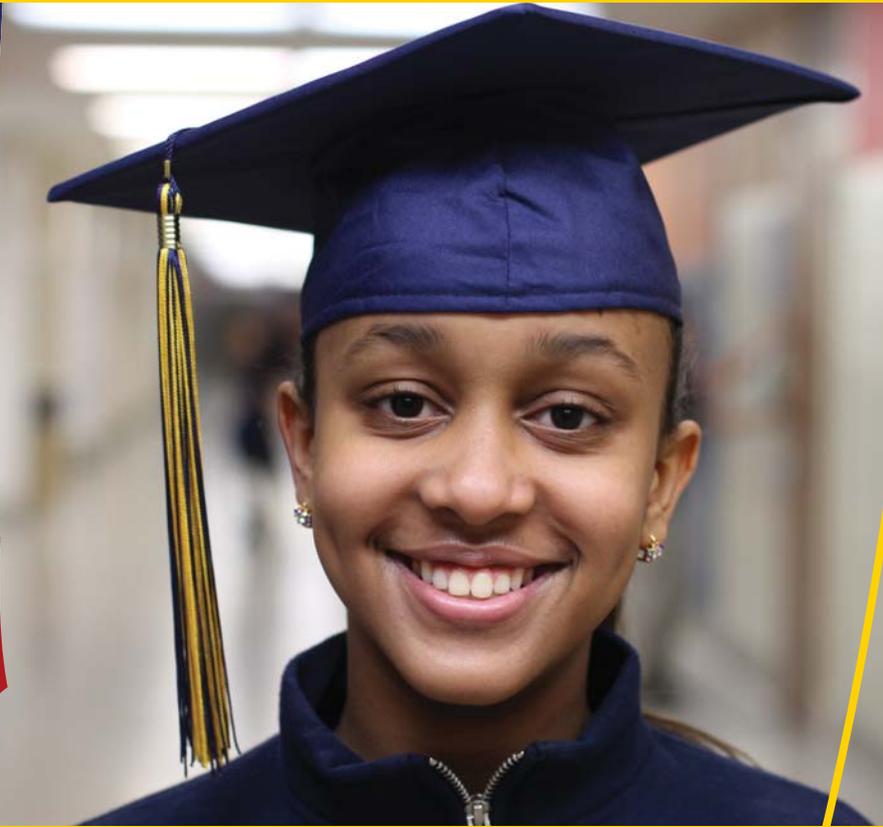


COLUMBIA ACADEMY

OUR MISSION

Columbia Heights Public Schools create worlds of opportunity for every learner in partnership with supportive small-town communities by challenging all to discover their talents, unleash their potential and develop tools for lifelong success.



PREPARING FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Creating College
and Career-Ready
GRADUATES



Preparing for college and careers in middle school

College may seem like a long way off for you while you are enrolled at Columbia Academy. At this time, you do not need to know exactly what you will do for a job; however, you do need to start preparing for your future today.

In Columbia Heights Public Schools we are creating college and career-ready graduates. We are here to help you on your pathway to discover your talents, unleash your potential and develop the tools you need for lifelong success.

When we talk about “college,” we mean formal education after high school. Some people will choose a four-year university, while others will select a two-year community or technical college. When we talk about career-readiness, this includes options like an apprenticeship or job-training program. To get a great job, you need to plan on continuing your education after you graduate from Columbia Heights High School.

In this booklet, you and your parents will find helpful information to prepare you for college and careers. Use this guide to learn about good habits in middle school, preparation for high school and career opportunities. Additional resources are readily available at www.colheights.k12.mn.us/pathway.

Columbia Academy staff are here to help you succeed in middle school so that you are prepared for high school and on a pathway to college and career readiness. As you have questions, please make an appointment with your Assistant Principal by calling 763-528-4701.

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COLUMBIA ACADEMY ACADEMIC BENCHMARKS

- ✓ Earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher each semester.
- ✓ Achieve a Meets or Exceeds on MCA Reading Standards by sixth grade.
- ✓ Achieve a Meets or Exceeds on MCA Math Standards in eighth grade.
- ✓ Meet college readiness benchmarks on the EXPLORE test in eighth grade.

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
HIGH SCHOOL

COLUMBIA
ACADEMY

HIGHLAND, NORTH PARK
& VALLEY VIEW
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

EARLY
CHILDHOOD

COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS
PATHWAY

Preparing for college

High school classes

Preparing for high school at Columbia Academy is the most important step you can take to become college and career-ready right now. Once you are in high school, many free classes, such as PSEO, Advanced Placement and Concurrent Enrollment, count toward college credit. You can possibly earn up to two full years of free college credit by the time you graduate from Columbia Heights High School.

College admissions

Colleges and universities today look not just at your grade point average and assessment scores, but also what you did while you attended Columbia Academy and Columbia Heights High School. When colleges review applications, they like to see strong academics and extra-curricular participation and volunteering. You can start working on all of these at Columbia Academy today!

Test benchmarks

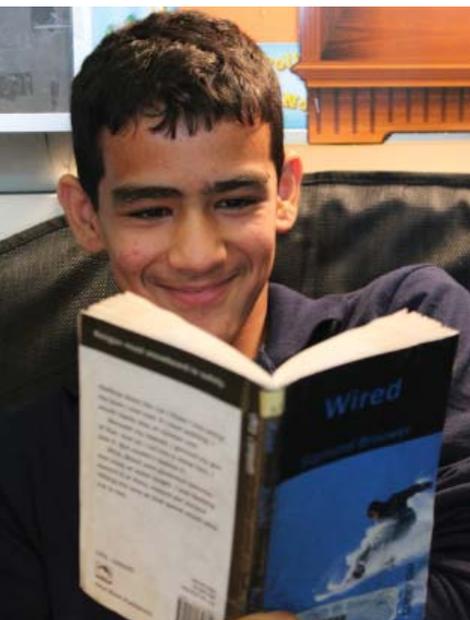
The EXPLORE test is taken in the fall of eighth grade. It is a stepping stone for the high school PLAN and ACT (college placement) tests. To be on track for college readiness, you should aim to meet or exceed the following benchmark scores on your EXPLORE test:

EXPLORE Test Section	Benchmark (Goal) Scores
English	13
Math	17
Reading	16
Science	18



Careers in ARTS

- Fashion Designer
- Advertising Executive
- Graphic Novel Artist
- Music Therapist
- Broadway Performer
- Film Editor
- Underwater Photographer



Parents: Help your child develop good study habits, such as doing homework at the same time and place every day and having the necessary materials to complete assignments.

Careers in ENGINEERING

- Aerospace Engineer
- Game Designer
- Robotics Engineer
- Medical Device Developer
- Construction Site Engineer
- Software Engineer

STUDENT CHECKLIST

✓ All Year, Every Year

- Take at least one semester of middle school Spanish. Plan to take at least two years of Spanish at Columbia Heights High School (CHHS) to strengthen your college acceptance options.
- Set high standards for yourself. Your target GPA should be 3.0 or better. This means earning grades of A or B in every class. Giving up and failing is NEVER okay. Set a goal and work toward accomplishing it.
- Come to school on-time every day. When you miss or are late for school, you miss opportunities to learn.
- Do your homework every night in a specific, quiet spot at home. Also, read at least 30 minutes every night as reading is important for your writing skills, speaking skills and helps you learn about the world.
- Become involved in school or extra-curricular activities that let you explore and learn more about your interests.
- Use your school technology tablet at school and at home to improve your academic skills.
- Think about college as an important part of your future. Discuss your thoughts with your family and with Columbia Academy staff and teachers.
- Talk with adults who have interesting jobs. Ask questions like, “What do you like about your job?” and “What education did you need for your job?”
- Do your best on standardized tests (OLPA, MCA and EXPLORE). If you are having trouble, do not give up, ask for help.
- Develop and practice academic and life skills to help strengthen your chances of becoming a professional like a lawyer, doctor or NBA player.
- Research a variety of exciting careers through websites like www.iseek.org and www.actstudent.org/career.



(Advancement Via Individual Determination) supports all sixth-graders by preparing them for college and career readiness and success in a global society.



STUDENT CHECKLIST

GRADE 6

✓ Sixth-grade

Student Goal for Semester 1: _____

Students: Check the box where you fall on this continuum for Semester 1, Grade 6.

Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> All A and B grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> A, B and C grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> Some D or F grades
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 missed day	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 missed days	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more missed days
Tardiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 tardies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more tardies
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
Referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 referrals		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more referrals

Did you meet your Semester 1 goal? Yes No Explain: _____

Student Goal for Semester 2: _____

Students: Check the box where you fall on this continuum for Semester 2, Grade 6.

Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> All A and B grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> A, B and C grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> Some D or F grades
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 missed day	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 missed days	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more missed days
Tardiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 tardies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more tardies
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
Referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 referrals		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more referrals

Did you meet your Semester 2 goal? Yes No Explain: _____

Sixth-grade student reflections:

What did I do well this year? _____

What can I improve upon for next year? _____

What careers am I interested in? _____



✓ Seventh-grade

Student Goal for Semester 1: _____

Students: Check the box where you fall on this continuum for Semester 1, Grade 7.

Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> All A and B grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> A, B and C grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> Some D or F grades
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 missed day	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 missed days	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more missed days
Tardiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 tardies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more tardies
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
Referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 referrals		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more referrals

Did you meet your Semester 1 goal? Yes No Explain: _____

Student Goal for Semester 2: _____

Students: Check the box where you fall on this continuum for Semester 2, Grade 7.

Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> All A and B grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> A, B and C grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> Some D or F grades
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 missed day	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 missed days	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more missed days
Tardiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 tardies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more tardies
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
Referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 referrals		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more referrals

Did you meet your Semester 2 goal? Yes No Explain: _____

Seventh-grade student reflections:

What did I do well this year? _____

What can I improve upon for next year? _____

What careers am I interested in? _____

✓ Eighth-grade

Student Goal for Semester 1: _____

Students: Check the box where you fall on this continuum for Semester 1, Grade 8.

Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> All A and B grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> A, B and C grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> Some D or F grades
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 missed day	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 missed days	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more missed days
Tardiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 tardies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more tardies
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
Referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 referrals		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more referrals

Did you meet your Semester 1 goal? Yes No Explain: _____

Student Goal for Semester 2: _____

Students: Check the box where you fall on this continuum for Semester 2, Grade 8.

Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> All A and B grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> A, B and C grades this year	<input type="checkbox"/> Some D or F grades
Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 missed day	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 missed days	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more missed days
Tardiness	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 tardies	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 or more tardies
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair
Referrals	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 referrals		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more referrals

Did you meet your Semester 2 goal? Yes No Explain: _____

Eighth-grade student reflections:

What did I do well this year? _____

What can I improve upon for next year? _____

What careers am I interested in? _____



Open-ended questions to ask your child:

- 1. Tell me about the best part of your day. What was the hardest thing you had to do today?**
- 2. Tell me about what you read in class.**
- 3. What classes really stretch you, academically, and why?**
- 4. What's the biggest difference between this year and last year?**
- 5. What rules are different at school than our rules at home? Do you think they're fair?**
- 6. Can you show me something you learned (or did) today?**

✓ Semester 1

- Attend a parent night to learn about the iPads and tablets our students use at Columbia Academy.
- Attend all school conferences.
- Sign-up for and use SchoolView.
- Work with your child to select at least one extra-curricular activity for the school year.
- Help your child build, organize and consistently use their binder or planner.
- Ask about applying to AVID.

✓ Semester 2

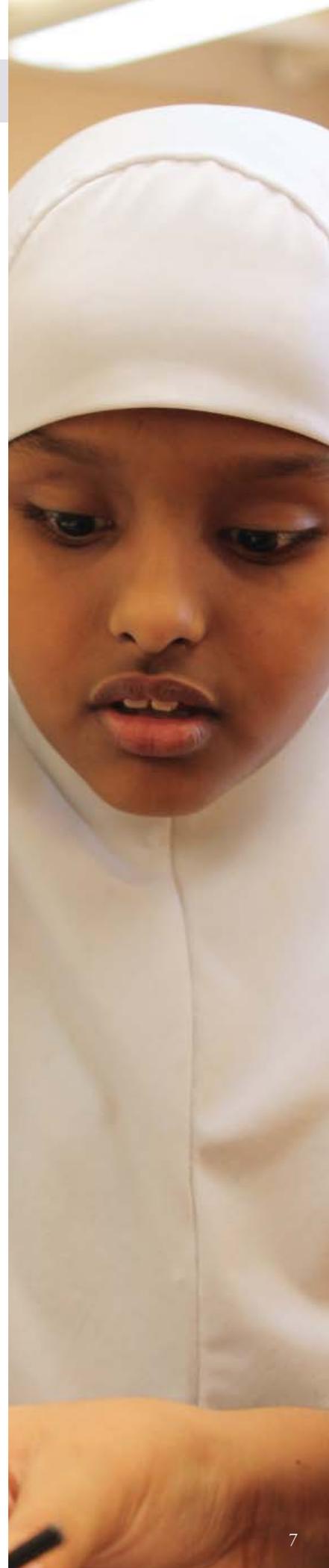
- Work with your student to do his or her best in preparing and taking the MCA tests.
- Attend all school conferences.
- Check your student's GPA at the end of each semester.
- Have a goal of a minimum of four books that your student will read during the summer.
- Attend the CHHS National Honor Society ceremony, the Academic Awards Night or the Graduation ceremony with your student to build up anticipation for success at Columbia Heights High School.
- With your student, attend a college fair at CHHS during the day or one of their twice a year college prep nights.
- Attend the Columbia Academy Career Day.



PARENT GRADES 6 THROUGH 8 CHECKLIST

✓ All Year, Every Year

- Check to see that your child is always completing his/her homework.
- Ensure your child attends school on-time every day; good attendance builds strong achievement.
- Help your child develop good study habits, such as doing homework at the same time and place every day and having the necessary materials to complete assignments.
- Talk with your child about his or her interests and how these match with a college major and career.
- Encourage your child to read every day without any distractions.
- Ask open-ended questions about school every day.
- Ensure your student uses his/her school technology tablet at school and at home to improve their academic skills.
- Talk to your eighth-grade child about his/her EXPLORE results (winter).
- Get involved at school. Attend events such as concerts, science fairs, showcases and family nights.
- Volunteer or mentor, chaperone a dance or class party or come in and talk to students about your job.
- Engage in family/school partnership committees/activities to help identify ways to help all students achieve academically.
- Stay in contact with your child's teachers and principal so that they can let you know about any changes in your student's behavior or schoolwork.
- Make sure you and/or your child get a public library card to check out books regularly.
- Talk with your child about grades, standardized tests and report cards and help him or her find help if necessary.
- Attend a quarterly Columbia Academy Proud Presentation to celebrate Honor Roll students.
- Encourage your child to read, write and speak in your home language.
- Use the FAFSA4caster (www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov) to find out how much federal aid your child might receive for college.



Other Exciting CAREERS

- Pharmacist
- Archeologist
- Diplomat
- Sports Statistician
- FBI Agent
- Police Officer
- Firefighter
- CSI Forensic Scientist
- Middle School Teacher
- Astronomer

PREPARING FOR CAREERS

✓ Invest your time now to earn more later

By 2020, most Minnesota jobs will require specialized college or career preparation. The table below shows a variety of jobs and the education required for them.

High School Diploma or less	Licensed	Associates Degree	Bachelors Degree	Masters Degree and above
Housekeeping	Barber/hairstylist	Childcare worker	Robotics Engineer	Scientist
Cashier	Carpenter	Computer and office systems repair	Computer programmer	Architect
Security Guard	Electrician	Dental hygienist	Multimedia Arts	College Professor
Waitress	Plumber	Firefighter	Biochemist	Doctor, Pharmacist
Clerk	Welder	Mechanic	Network Systems Analyst	Lawyer
Telemarketer	Driver	Medical Technician	Registered Nurse	Psychologist

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *Federal Student Aid, My Future, My Way: First Steps Toward College—A Workbook for Middle and Junior High School Students*, Washington, D.C., 2014.

A college education will offer you more money, more job opportunities, and more freedom than a high school education. On average, a person who goes to college earns more money than a person who doesn't. Over a lifetime, a college graduate can earn more than \$1.5 million more than a high school graduate.

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-2013*



Preparing for high school at Columbia Academy is the most important step you can take to become college and career-ready right now.



**Columbia
HEIGHTS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WORLDS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERY LEARNER
Serving the Communities of Columbia Heights, Hilltop & Southern Fridley

COLUMBIA ACADEMY

900 49th Avenue NE

Columbia Heights, MN 55421

763-528-4500

www.colheights.k12.mn.us/ca