



STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

David E. Skaggs
Executive Director

August 25, 2007

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Throughout Colorado, seniors like your child are thinking about their last year in high school. They face life-changing decisions that will establish their pathway to success later in life. These days, education after high school is no longer just an option, it's a necessity, and steps taken during the senior year will greatly affect your child's academic success after high school.

Notwithstanding their eagerness to exert their independence, seniors still need parents' advice and encouragement, especially about continuing their education past high school. As a parent myself, I understand the essential role and influence you have with your child.

The scores from the ACT college entrance exams, which your child took as an 11th grade student last April during the statewide testing day, were sent to your child and the counseling staff at his or her high school.

ACT scores are key indicators of academic preparedness and the fundamental skills needed to do college work. The following scores usually predict readiness for college:

- Reading 21
- English 18
- Mathematics 22
- Science 24

If your child's scores are lower, consider taking steps *now* to improve his or her level of academic preparedness and ACT scores, such as:

- Enrolling in supplemental online coursework or tutoring, such as free ACT test preparation offered at www.CollegeInColorado.org
- Adding another math, science or writing course during the senior year
- Taking weekend or after-school courses offered by your school district or local community college

The counseling office at your child's high school should be able to provide more information about other options. Every public high school in Colorado has resources to help parents and students develop a plan to improve a student's preparation for post-secondary education.

Preparation in high school and taking a serious course load during the senior year pay off. Studies are clear that taking much of senior year "off" because a student has the credits needed to graduate is usually a big mistake. Academic skills need to be exercised, or they get rusty. And students who wait until

college to prepare thoroughly for future coursework often need to take remedial courses in math, reading or writing.

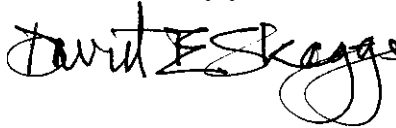
These remedial courses can be helpful, but they are also expensive and time consuming, and the same material can be covered at no cost while your student is still in high school. Remedial courses in college are not credited toward completion of a college degree and can add extra semesters to time needed to earn a degree – a huge disadvantage because added time in college involves real costs in additional tuition and lost earnings. It makes obvious sense for your child to take these classes in high school so he or she can be ready for college and earn a degree at an earlier date.

A college degree will almost always lead to a more secure future, greater opportunities, more career options, a higher income, enriching experiences and a more fulfilling life. It is never too early – or too late – to start planning for college. Colorado offers numerous programs to help with college preparation, and a good place to start is the Website www.CollegeInColorado.org.

I hope the information in this letter and the enclosed flier (with answers to many questions that come up at the start of senior year) will be helpful to you and your child in completing his or her educational preparation and in planning ahead.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David E. Skaggs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping flourish at the end of the name.

David E. Skaggs
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Higher Education

Enclosure