



# ASPIRE Volunteer Advisor Handbook

## 2009-10

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## Welcome to ASPIRE (Access To Student assistance Programs in Reach of Everyone)

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Welcome to ASPIRE!

You are reading this handbook because you have chosen to volunteer in a program that has been making a difference in the lives of Oregon students since 1998. Thank you for your dedication and willingness to help!

ASPIRE is a program of The Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC), and was developed as a collaborative project between OSAC and The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF), a private nonprofit organization based in Portland whose mission is to enhance nonprofit community development projects.

OSAC assists students through its universal scholarship application (more than 400 scholarships on one application), and through its administration of the Oregon Opportunity Grant, a need-based grant that can be accessed by filing a FAFSA. Information on the scholarship application and the Oregon Opportunity Grant can be found online at [GetCollegeFunds.org](http://GetCollegeFunds.org).

ASPIRE began in 1998 after extensive research on how to encourage students who do not traditionally think of themselves as college bound. These students may lack awareness of their options, have limited financial resources, or their cultural and family expectations do not include postsecondary education. ASPIRE is designed to serve any student in the school. By being inclusive, the program strives to reach students who feel they cannot attain a college education.

ASPIRE helps high school students through one-on-one volunteer mentoring support. Activities include academic preparation, college and scholarship application, and career exploration. The ASPIRE Advisor positions attract a broad spectrum of adult volunteers. Three groups seem particularly interested in volunteering: 1) parents/guardians of high school students; 2) professionals who want to work with students interested in their field of study ; and 3) retired school teachers and administrators.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide you with the reference materials and resources you will want to have at hand as you work with students.

**Chapter 1** provides new ASPIRE Advisor volunteers with a brief overview of each of the basic advising topics that make up the heart of the advising curriculum.

**Chapter 2** breaks down curriculum and advising topics by grade level and provides associated resource information. This chapter allows you to quickly scan for a particular advising area and tells you where to look for help on that subject.

**Chapter 3** contains the ASPIRE calendar which lists important dates by month and suggests advising topics that are broken out by grade level.

On behalf of the Oregon Student Assistance Commission, thank you so much for your willingness to help Oregon youth. We look forward to working with you during your time with ASPIRE.

Sincerely,

The ASPIRE Team



# Chapter 1 Getting Started

## You Will Make a Difference

Studies have shown that help and encouragement from a caring, trusted adult can be a prime factor in determining whether a student will pursue postsecondary education. As an ASPIRE advisor, you will fill a unique role in the life of a student; an adult who is there solely to help guide and assist them in pursuing education beyond high school.

Your relationship will develop as you learn from and about each other. You will both discover things you have in common and those which make you distinct from each other. Age, ethnicity, cultural background, language, and personal interests are just some of the factors that may shape your advisor/student relationship.

At year's end students may or may not choose to express their gratitude for the help you have given them. Yet you might run into students years later and only then learn how you positively impacted their lives. Either way, your students have learned how to research colleges and careers, how to apply to a school, how to compose scholarship essays, and how to focus on a goal. The work you do *is* significant and you *will* make a difference.

See the Volunteer Section of the ASPIRE website for advising tips and resource materials  
[ASPIREoregon.org](http://ASPIREoregon.org)

**ASPIRE** Access to Student Assistance Programs In Reach of Everyone

ASPIRE is a program of  
Oregon Student Assistance Commission  
[www.osac.state.or.us](http://www.osac.state.or.us)

- About ASPIRE
- ASPIRE Map
- News/Updates
- Web Links

- STUDENTS AND FAMILIES
- ASPIRE VOLUNTEER ADVISORS
- ASPIRE COORDINATORS

[Success stories](#)

If you think college is too expensive...if someone says you're not smart enough...think again.

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## The First Meeting

### Student Assignment

You and the ASPIRE coordinator will determine the initial number of students you will be assigned depending upon the time you have available, the students' needs and goals, their grade level, and any areas of interest you may have in common.

### Getting Acquainted

Before your first meeting with a student, take the initiative in making this first meeting as comfortable as possible. Teenagers often have different communication styles, so don't be discouraged if they are at first not very conversational. Chances are they are taking in everything you say and will repeat it verbatim to their friends and family!

To get started, share your educational and employment background with them. Generally, students will be keenly interested in learning about who you are. Then ask a few open-ended questions, such as:

- ★ What courses interest you?
- ★ Which clubs or organizations do you belong to? What do you do with them?
- ★ Do you participate in extra curricular activities or sports?
- ★ What kinds of part-time jobs have you had?
- ★ Have you done any volunteer work?
- ★ What kind of education beyond high school are you considering?
- ★ How do you think an ASPIRE Advisor can be of help to you?
- ★ What is the best way to contact you to schedule or cancel a meeting?

### Using the Student Tracker

The ASPIRE coordinator will provide you with a Student Tracker to use each time you and your student meet. Sit together and fill out the first part of the form, which contains a section for career and college interest areas and a checklist by grade level of activities the student should consider completing.

On the reverse side, make a brief notation of the date, volunteer hours and topics discussed each time you meet. It provides the school with a written record of your meeting and helps counselors and teachers check on the student's progress. The form is kept onsite by the ASPIRE coordinator and will be available to you.

### Setting Ground Rules

It is important that the student have a clear understanding of the commitment, the expectations and obligations associated with participating in ASPIRE. Let the student know you are making a commitment to them as well. Explain the importance of mutual dependability; that if they are unable to attend a scheduled meeting, it is their responsibility to let you know in advance. After three "no-shows" you may, as an advisor, opt out of the commitment to this student. **This handbook contains a sample Student/Advisor Contract you may use to set ground rules (pg. 11)**



### Where Do I Start?

As an ASPIRE advisor you will quickly learn that no two students are alike and advising will not always proceed in a straight line. New advisors often ask what they should work on first. The best course is to follow the student's lead if they express specific needs or desires.

For instance, if the student knows he or she is college-bound and has a good idea of career field objectives, begin by researching colleges that offer majors in that field. If the student has a desire to attend school but has no clear direction, begin to formulate a plan by making a list of activities to work on throughout the year:

- ★ Investigate career possibilities
- ★ Investigate schools that are a good fit for their career interests
- ★ Make sure they are taking the necessary courses required for admission
- ★ Determine costs of attendance
- ★ Apply for admission
- ★ Search and apply for scholarships
- ★ Apply for financial aid

### CIS/Career Research

If Career Information Systems (CIS) is available in your high school, it is an excellent assessment and research tool for students in the areas of career choice, colleges and their respective courses of study, and Oregon scholarships. Ask your ASPIRE coordinator how to access CIS online. If you do not have access to CIS at your site, ask about other career research resources at your high school such as OLMIS, Bridges or ASVAB.

### Course Rigor

Encourage students to take as challenging a course load as possible. This will help them compete in the college and scholarship application process and prepare them to take college level coursework.

Minimum requirements met for high school graduation in Oregon may not match the course requirements needed to go to college. Many colleges and universities consider the rigor of courses taken in high school to be as important as GPA, particularly in math and science. Seniors should not “check out” academically just because they have completed graduation requirements. Colleges often look at final transcripts to confirm that the student has stayed mentally engaged for the entire senior year.

### School Activities, Community Service

Before college and scholarship application reviewers make their decisions they look at the variety of a student's activities. Scholarship donors often choose to honor students who show potential for being involved in their communities later in life.

Be aware of activities your student is involved in, and point out the advantages of participating in a number of activities. You may want to encourage a student who is involved only in extra-curricular activities at school to seek out community activities. Also encourage students to develop a depth within their activity or combine activities that coincide with their career interest.

If you are working with underclassmen, urge them to become involved, and make sure they keep an accurate record of all their activities, accomplishments and work for pay as they go along.



Postsecondary  
Options

***Postsecondary Options:***

- ★ Apprenticeships
- ★ Occupational/career school
- ★ Vocational-technical school
- ★ Community college
- ★ 4-yr. Oregon public college or university
- ★ 4-yr. Oregon private college or university
- ★ 4-yr. Out-of-state public college or university
- ★ 4-yr. Out-of-state private college or university

Students should make sure their desired major or possible majors are offered at the colleges they apply to, because not every 2 or 4-year school hosts the same programs. Students would be wise to contact the departments they're interested in to learn details about program offerings, and research how the strengths of various programs compare to other colleges.

Students interested in attending an occupational school need to do adequate research in order to find a reputable school offering a course of study that will best suit their educational goals. Students should:

- ★ Check the OR Dept. of Education website to find out if a school is licensed to do business in the state: [OR Dept. of Education Private Career Schools](#)
- ★ Ask if the school participates in the Federal Student Loan Program. Federal student loans offer more advantageous terms to students than do loans taken out at alternative institutions: [Student Aid on the Web](#)

Vocational/  
Technical  
Schools

Ask the school about their job placement rate upon completion.. The U.S. Dept. of Education requires occupational schools to maintain an 80% placement rate for graduates. Keep in mind that credits earned at an occupational school will not be transferable to a community college or university.

Admission  
Requirements

Before selecting a school, students must assess the college's entrance requirements to determine if they qualify. To do this, explore the school's website and note minimum course and GPA requirements, necessary tests, essays, and application deadlines.

Students should evaluate how important it is for them to be close to home. They'll also want to consider whether they want to live in an urban setting, small-town environment, or on a rural campus.

Geographic  
Location and  
Campus Size

Large schools and small schools have significantly different environments, social experiences, and opportunities for activities. Small schools might offer a more personalized education with smaller class sizes, and students are more likely to be known on campus. Larger schools may have larger teacher/student ratios, but could offer more majors and opportunities.



Campus & Community Personality	<p>What are the other students like? What do they care about? What do they do for fun? Do students compare grades? How do people dress? What's the prevailing political philosophy? Are there religious groups on campus? Are there sororities and fraternities? Find out if the admissions office could put the student in touch with current students or recent graduates. Help students arrange a visit so they can experience the campus atmosphere in person.</p>
Cost	<p>Cost is an issue when deciding where to attend college, but students shouldn't automatically cross a college off their list based on cost. Until students apply for financial aid and receive colleges' award offers, there's no way to know how much money they will actually have to pay. Scholarships, grants, and tuition waivers are one way to help defray the cost; often private colleges will have more money to award than less expensive schools.</p>
Tests	<p>Four-year colleges and universities generally require that a standardized test be taken to apply for admission. Oregon community colleges do not require standardized tests, but do have their own placement tests. Each school's website and/or admissions office will give you the information you need on test requirements.</p> <p>There may be test fee waivers available at the high school to students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. See a school counselor for more information.</p>
PSAT	<p><b>PSAT/NMSQT – Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude/Nat'l. Merit Scholarship Qualifying</b> This is a test designed to prepare juniors (freshmen and sophomores may also take it) for the SAT, and is also the basis for National Merit Scholarship awards. It is administered each year in October (see Monthly Calendar).</p>
SAT	<p><b>SAT – Scholastic Aptitude Test</b> The SAT is usually taken in the spring of the junior year or during the senior year and is required for admission to many schools and some scholarship programs. Students are allowed to take the test multiple times, but should do so in time for their scores to be received before colleges' priority deadlines.</p> <p>The SAT measures three sets of skills – verbal, math and writing – and tests a student's aptitude for scholastic work, not intelligence. Low scores are not necessarily indicative of a student's ability to do competitive work in college, and A's and B's in challenging high school courses may offset a poor showing. Further information is available online at collegeboard.com.</p>
SAT Subject Tests	<p><b>SAT Subject Tests</b> Formally known as SAT II, these one-hour tests cover 17 different academic subjects. Some colleges will require one or more of these tests for admission.</p>
ACT	<p><b>ACT – (formerly known as American College Test)</b> The ACT is also used widely by college and university admission offices. Students planning on taking this test should do so in the spring of their junior year. Students may also take it during their senior year and should do so in time for their scores to be received before the college's priority deadline.</p> <p>The ACT tests a student's ability in English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. Low scores are not necessarily indicative of a student's ability to do competitive work in college. Further information is available online at actstudent.org.</p>



Which Test To Take?

The SAT and ACT tests are similar because they are both administered on Saturdays, they both take approximately three to four hours to complete, and students may take them multiple times. Many schools require one or the other of these tests but not both. Typically, they will accept either the SAT or the ACT. It is important that the student has current admissions information for any school they are applying to and act accordingly.

Each of these tests has a different orientation. The SAT is known as a reasoning or logic-based test. It tends to favor students with better vocabularies, and of the two tests, is considered to be more “coachable.” Students who have a strong vocabulary and who do well on reasoning problems will have an edge with the SAT.

The ACT has traditionally been linked more closely to a typical high school curriculum than the SAT. It does not quiz on vocabulary, but tests language skills through reading comprehension and grammar questions. The ACT may be better suited to students who generally do well in school, but not on standardized tests, and to those comfortable with science. It is considered a more “forgiving” standardized test, because it does not penalize random guessing.

Students with disabilities may qualify for extended test time, but approval and arrangements must be made in advance.

Scholarships and Essays

Scholarships are an important part of the college financial aid picture. There are thousands of scholarships available at the national, state, local, civic, and school levels.

While researching scholarships, students should keep in mind that scholarship applications are time and labor-intensive. Since their chances of being awarded go up as the size of the applicant pool goes down, they will want to spend more of their time and energy applying at the state, local, or school level.

Students should never pay someone else to perform a scholarship search for them. They cannot find anything for students that students cannot find on their own.

Some Tips:

Scholarship Tips

- ★ Preparing a scholarship application requires real effort, and the successful student will be motivated, self-disciplined, organized, and willing to meet deadlines.
- ★ Students should carefully track their hours and level of involvement in extra-curricular, volunteer, and community service activities.
- ★ There are many books available on scholarship application and essay writing. Check your ASPIRE College/Career Center, library or the internet for resources.
- ★ Request letters of recommendation well in advance of deadlines.
- ★ Request high school transcripts well in advance of deadlines.
- ★ Retain copies of all applications and correspondence.

Scholarship Myths

Some Myths:

- ★ **Only those students with high GPA’s get scholarships.** Many scholarships are based on financial need or on merit other than academic achievement.
- ★ **Only low-income students get scholarships.** Merit scholarships are also based upon a variety of accomplishments such as community service, sports, academics, etc. and may not consider financial need.
- ★ **Only athletes get scholarships.** Athletic scholarships make up a very small percentage of total scholarship dollars awarded.



Financial Aid  
Advising

As an ASPIRE advisor you are not a financial aid expert! You should not ask for family financial information or help prepare any financial aid applications. There are numerous resources available to students; many are listed in the curriculum section of this handbook. It is helpful for you to assist them in locating resources, and keep them focused on timelines.

Any questions students or their parents have about filling out the FAFSA should be directed either to a school counselor, to the financial aid office of the local community college, or to a school they plan on attending. If further help is needed, direct the student to the College Goal Oregon event on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Visit [CollegeGoalOregon.org](http://CollegeGoalOregon.org) for information on the site nearest your school.

Listening Tips  
for Mentors

Listening is a critical communication skill for ASPIRE advisors. A general rule is to talk about one-third of the time and listen the other two-thirds. The following are guidelines for effective listening skills:

- ★ **Use your body posture** to indicate you are listening actively. Young people are quick to pick up nonverbal messages so sit in a relaxed position. Don't fold arms across your chest, frown, stare, turn away or tap feet or fingers.
- ★ **Make eye contact** as an effective nonverbal means of showing that attention is focused on the student. Be alert to whether eye contact is making the student feel uncomfortable. In some cultures it is rude to make direct eye contact with an adult. A young person from such a culture may not return eye contact, but will look past the mentor, at the floor, or shift his or her gaze around the room.
- ★ **Nod and say** "uh-huh," or "I see," or "really"? These minimal responses demonstrate active listening and encourage the student to continue without inhibiting his or her talking.
- ★ **Do not interrupt and do not plan what to say next** while the student is talking. Concentrate on what the student is saying.
- ★ **Encourage the student to continue** by restating their last few words in the form of a question, such as: "How are you doing today?" "I'm doing fine." "Doing fine?" Or, "I got sent home from school yesterday." "Sent home?"
- ★ **Listen for feelings as well as facts.** Watch for nonverbal clues and body language.
- ★ **Reflect back** to the student by paraphrasing what he or she has said and the feeling behind it, in order to ensure understanding of the student's thoughts and emotions.



## Student/Advisor Contract

**Phone and e-mail contact are only allowed per school policy. Please check with your school counselor before exchanging personal contact information.**

1. Meetings will be cancelled one day in advance if either person can't make it. We will contact each other by (select one):  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Text \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Note \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_
2. All e-mail contact will be cc'd to the ASPIRE coordinator.
3. All meetings will occur during school hours on school grounds.
4. Student will be prepared for meetings and understands the advisor is here to help and not to do the work for the student.
5. If student misses three appointments without canceling in advance, student will lose the privilege of having an ASPIRE advisor.

Student Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Junior/Senior Curriculum

Section	Topics	Tools	Source
1 Introductions	Educational Goals	Student Portfolio . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Students &amp; Families</a>
	Ground Rules	Student Schedule . . . . .	Student
		Student/Advisor Contract . . . . .	<a href="#">Pg. 11</a>
2 Exploring Options	FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
	Choosing a School	College 101 presentation . . . . .	ASPIRE staff
		CIS Undergraduate Sort . . . . .	<a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
		Barrons/Petersons College Guides . . . . .	ASPIRE Center or Library
		College Board Index of Majors . . . . .	ASPIRE Center or Library
	Program Requirements	CIS Undergraduate Sort . . . . .	<a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
	Careers	CIS Assessment/Career Search . . . . .	<a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
		OR Bureau of Labor: Career forecasts, wages, program req., training providers . . .	<a href="#">QualityInfo.org</a>
		Questions to Ask During a Job Shadow . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
		CIS Assessment/Career Search . . . . .	<a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
Voc/Tech Programs	Directory of licensed private career schools	<a href="#">ODE.state.or.us/search/page/?=402</a>	
	Tips on Private Career Schools . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>	
Apprenticeships	Oregon Bureau of Labor . . . . .	<a href="#">BOLI.state.or.us</a>	
Job Corps	Job Corps Website . . . . .	<a href="#">JobCorps.gov</a>	
Military	ASVAB Career Exploration/Test . . . . .	<a href="#">ASVABProgram.com</a>	
3 Making A Plan	Activities, Community Service	OSAC Activities Chart . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
	Choosing the Right Courses	Course Rigor . . . . .	<a href="#">Page 6</a>
		CIS Undergraduate Sort . . . . .	<a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
		High School Course Offerings . . . . .	High school curriculum



Section	Topics	Tools	Source
4 SAT/ACT Tests	What Are They?	PSAT/SAT/ACT Overview . . . . .	Pgs. 8 and 9
	Test Preparation	SAT Test Prep . . . . .	<a href="http://Collegeboard.com">Collegeboard.com</a>
		SAT Question of the Day . . . . .	<a href="http://CollegeBoard.com">College Board.com</a>
	When to Register/Test Dates	ACT Test Prep . . . . .	<a href="http://ACTstudent.org">ACTstudent.org</a>
5 College Visits		PSAT/SAT/ACT Test Dates . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE Calendar</a>
	On Campus	Questions/Ask During Campus Visits	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
	Virtual Campus	College Evaluation Chart . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
6 Applying	College Fairs	CIS Undergraduate Sort . . . . .	<a href="http://OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
	Admissions Process	College Fair Schedules . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE Calendar</a>
	College Contact Info	Things to Consider/Choosing a School	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
		NW Education Loan Association . . . . .	<a href="http://Nela.net">Nela.net</a>
	Common Application Application Process	Min.Requirements/OUS Schools . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
		App. Deadlines/OUS Schools . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
7 Essay Writing & Letters of Recommendation	Writing a Winning Essay	Oregon Public & Private Colleges . . . . .	ECMC Opportunities Booklet
		Oregon Community Colleges . . . . .	ECMC Opportunities Booklet
	Recommendations	Universal App. for 300+ Colleges . . . . .	<a href="http://CommonApp.org">CommonApp.org</a>
		College Application Tips . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
8 Scholarships	Brainstorming topics	Friend/Family Brag Sheet . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
	Writing a Winning Essay	My Unique Qualities . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
		“How To” Books . . . . .	ASPIRE Ctr. or Library
	Recommendations	Tips on Submitting Applications and Essays. . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
		Letter to Recommendation Writer . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
Overview National State and Local	Overview	Finding \$\$\$ for Oregon Students . . . . .	ASPIRE Staff
	National	Internet-based search engines. . . . .	<a href="http://ScholarshipExperts.com">ScholarshipExperts.com</a> ; <a href="http://FastWeb.com">FastWeb.com</a>
		OSAC Scholarships . . . . .	<a href="http://GetCollegeFunds.org">GetCollegeFunds.org</a>
	State and Local	Oregon-based Scholarships . . . . .	<a href="http://OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
		Local/Civic/School Scholarships . . . . .	ASPIRE Ctr. or School Counseling Office



Section	Topics	Tools	Source
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9</b></p> <p>Financial Aid</p>	Paying for College	ECMC Opportunities Booklet . . . . .	ASPIRE Ctr.
		Federal Student Aid at a Glance . . . . .	<a href="http://StudentAid.ed.gov">StudentAid.ed.gov</a>
	Federal Financial Aid	Funding Your Education Booklet . . . . .	ASPIRE Center
	State Financial Aid	Oregon Opportunity Grant . . . . .	<a href="http://GetCollegeFunds.org">GetCollegeFunds.org</a>
	FAFSA PIN Number	FAFSA Online . . . . .	<a href="http://Pin.ed.gov">Pin.ed.gov</a>
	FAFSA	FAFSA Worksheet . . . . .	<a href="http://Fafsa.ed.gov">Fafsa.ed.gov</a>
		FAFSA Application Form . . . . .	<a href="http://Fafsa.ed.gov">Fafsa.ed.gov</a>
	CSS Profile	High School Financial Aid Night . . . . .	College representatives
	Budgeting	Supplementary Financial Aid Form	<a href="http://CollegeBoard.com">CollegeBoard.com</a>
		Standard Student Budgets for Oregon Institutions	<a href="http://ASPIRE_website/Volunteers/Resources">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>
Award Letters	Student Budget Form . . . . .	<a href="http://ASPIRE_website/Volunteers/Resources">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>	
	Understanding Your Financial Aid Award . . . . .	<a href="http://ASPIRE_website/Volunteers/Resources">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a>	



## Freshman/Sophomore Curriculum

Section	Topics	Tools	Source
<b>1</b> Introductions	Educational Goals Ground Rules	Student Portfolio . . . . . Student Schedule . . . . . Student/Advisor Contract . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a> Student <a href="#">Page 11</a>
<b>2</b> Exploring Options	FAQ Choosing a School  Careers  Voc/Tech Programs  Military	Frequently Asked Questions . . . . . College 101 Presentation . . . . . Things to Consider When Choosing a School Barrons/Petersons College Guides . . . . . College Board Index of Majors . . . . . CIS Career Assessment . . . . . OR Bureau of Labor OLMIS Website: Occupational forecasts, wages, educational requirements, training providers . . . . . Questions to Ask During a Job Shadow . . . . . CIS Schools Search . . . . . Tips on Private Career Schools . . . . . ASVAB Career Exploration/Test . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a> ASPIRE staff <a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a> ASPIRE Ctr. or Library ASPIRE Ctr. or Library <a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>  <a href="#">QualityInfo.org</a> <a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a> <a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a> <a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a> <a href="#">ASVABProgram.com</a>
<b>3</b> Making A Plan	Activities, Community Service Choosing the Right Courses	OSAC Activities Chart . . . . . Course Rigor . . . . . CIS Undergraduate Sort . . . . . High School Course Offerings . . . . .	<a href="#">GetCollegeFunds.org</a> <a href="#">Page 6</a> <a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a> High school Curriculum
<b>4</b> Tests	What are they? Registration and Test Dates	PSAT/SAT/ACT Overview . . . . . PSAT/SAT/ACT Weblinks . . . . . PSAT Test Date . . . . . SAT/ACT Test Dates . . . . .	Pgs. <a href="#">8</a> and <a href="#">2</a> <a href="#">College Board.com</a> ; <a href="#">ACTstudent.org</a> Check with ASPIRE Coordinator <a href="#">ASPIRE Calendar</a>
<b>5</b> College Visits	On Campus Virtual Campus	Questions to Ask During a Campus Visit . . . . . CIS Undergrad Sort . . . . .	<a href="#">ASPIRE website/Volunteers/Resources</a> <a href="#">OregonCIS.uoregon.edu/home/</a>
<b>6</b> Scholarships	Overview National	Scholarships and Essays . . . . . Finding \$\$\$ for Oregon Students Presentation . . . . . Scholarships for Freshmen and Sophomores	<a href="#">Pg. 9</a> ASPIRE Staff <a href="#">ScholarshipExperts.com</a> ; <a href="#">FastWeb.com</a>



# ASPIRE Advising Calendar

## 2009-10

## SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sept 9 – SAT registration deadline for 10/10 test

Sept 12 – ACT Test

Sept 12 – Foster Youth Conference

Sept 18 - ACT registration deadline for 10/24

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR SEPTEMBER

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Research colleges/universities/voc-tech schools on CIS
- ★ Check priority application deadline dates for schools they are interested in attending
- ★ Register for SAT and ACT tests
- ★ Review SAT or ACT scores if tests were taken last year, to determine if they need to be retaken
- ★ Review transcript to be sure they can meet admissions requirements of selected school(s)
- ★ Register with 1 or 2 online scholarship search engines such as FastWeb.com, FinAid.com, ScholarshipExperts.com, etc.
- ★ Keep track of scholarship application deadlines
- ★ Learn about college fair dates and locations

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Study and register for PSAT
- ★ Explore career possibilities in CIS
- ★ Review courses for this year and plan for senior year and beyond.
- ★ Put together a list of 10 colleges of interest. Plan on applying to at least 3-6 schools during senior year
- ★ Order college catalogs
- ★ Learn about college fair dates and locations



# SEPTEMBER 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 SAT registration deadline for 10/10 test	10	11	12 ACT Test  Foster Youth Conference
13	14	15	16	17	18 ACT registration deadline for 10/24 test	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

## OCTOBER SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Oct 1 - SAT registration deadline for 11/7 test
- Oct 9 - ASPIRE Fall Conference  
Western Oregon University, Monmouth
- Oct 9 - OSU Campus Preview Day
- Oct 10 - SAT test
- Oct 11 - Mid-Willamette College Fair  
Lane Community College Gymnasium, Bldg. #5  
Eugene, OR Noon to 3:00 p.m.
- Oct 12 - Douglas County College Fair – Roseburg High School  
11:30. to 3:00 p.m.
- Oct 13 - Central Oregon College Fair  
Deschutes County Fairgrounds  
Redmond, OR 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Oct 14 - PSAT test
- Oct 15 - Southern Oregon/Northern California College Fair  
Medford Armory  
9 a.m. to Noon
- Oct 16 - WOU Making College Happen
- Oct 17 - PSAT test
- Oct 17 - Foster Youth Conference
- Oct 17 - OIT Campus Preview Day
- Oct 17 - WOU Campus Preview Day
- Oct 24 - ACT test
- Oct 24 - U of O Duck Preview Day
- Oct 25 - Portland College Fair - Oregon Convention Center  
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Oct 26 - Portland College Fair – Oregon Convention Center  
9:00 a.m. to Noon
- Oct 27 - Boise College Fair – Boise Center on the Grove  
9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- Oct 30 - SAT registration deadline for 12/5 test

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR OCTOBER

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Keep track of school/scholarship application deadlines. Note *types* of deadlines - are any related to school-level scholarship programs?
- ★ Register for SAT and/or ACT tests
- ★ If applying to a private college, find out if college will accept the common application found at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
- ★ Begin work on college admissions application essays
- ★ Develop a filing system for applications, essays, school information, etc
- ★ Fill out request forms for letters of recommendation to give to teachers, counselors and/or employers
- ★ Learn about college fair dates and locations

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Register for PSAT, which will be given this month at their high school
- ★ Become involved in school and community! Colleges and scholarship donors look for a strong GPA and involvement in extra-curricular activities, volunteerism, community service, and work for pay
- ★ Explore the CIS website (if available) to explore career possibilities and complete the skills assessment form
- ★ Learn about college fair dates and locations

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Explore the ASPIRE website to learn about their post-high school options
- ★ Learn about college fair dates and locations. Encourage them to attend to get an idea of what kinds of schools are out there



# OCTOBER 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 SAT registration deadline for 11/7 test	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 ASPIRE Fall Conference OSU Campus Preview Day	10 SAT Test
11 Mid-Willamette College Fair	12 Douglas County College Fair	13 Central Oregon College Fair	14 PSAT Test	15 Southern OR/Northern CA College Fair	16 WOU Making College Happen	17 PSAT Test Foster Youth Conference OIT Campus Preview Day WOU Campus Preview Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 ACT Test U of O Duck Preview Day
25 Portland College Fair	26 Portland College Fair	27 Boise College Fair	28	29	30 SAT registration deadline for 12/5 test	31

## NOVEMBER SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Nov 6 - ACT registration deadline for 12/12 test

Nov 7 – SAT registration deadline for 12/12 test

Nov 7 – WOU Campus Preview Day

Nov 10 - OIT Campus Preview Day

Nov 11 – EOU Campus Preview Day

Nov 13 – SOU Campus Preview Day

Nov 13 – WOU Making College Happen

Nov 14 - PSU Campus Preview Day

Nov 14 - OSU Cascades Fall Preview Day

Nov 18 - PSU Bridges

Nov 21 – OSU Beaver Open House

Nov 23 - College Night in Oregon

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR NOVEMBER

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Get FAFSA worksheet and begin work now on gathering necessary information
- ★ Start researching state, school and local level scholarships
- ★ Begin work now on scholarship essays
- ★ Find out if any of their college choices require an additional financial aid application, such as the CSS Profile
- ★ Be mindful of application deadlines. Remind them to keep copies of everything sent!
- ★ Locate (usually online) *current* financial aid information for schools they are interested in attending
- ★ Remind them to talk with family about payment options for post-secondary ed.
- ★ Review SAT/ACT scores and if necessary, plan for prep classes

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Begin reviewing SAT/ACT preparation materials
- ★ Determine what type of school might be a good fit - community college, career-tech school, 4-yr. college, etc.
- ★ Begin researching schools online and in college guidebooks (Barron's, Peterson's)
- ★ Begin searching for scholarships at the national level. Encourage them to register with 1 or 2 online scholarship search engines such as FastWeb.com or FinAid.com
- ★ Encourage them to attend their school's financial aid night, with a parent or guardian if possible.

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Look at college or training school admission requirements to get an idea of what kinds of classes need to be taken now
- ★ Encourage them to volunteer, particularly in a field they may enjoy or in a career area that is of interest to them



# NOVEMBER 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6 ACT registration deadline for 12/12 test	7 SAT Test  WOU Campus Preview Day
8	9	10 OIT Campus Preview Day	11 EOU Campus Preview Day	12	13 SOU Campus Preview Day  WOU Making College Happen	14 PSU Campus Preview Day  OSU Cascades Fall Preview
15	16	17	18 PSU Bridges	19	20	21 OSU Beaver Open House
22	23 College Night in Oregon	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

## DECEMBER SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Dec 5 - SAT test

Dec 12 - ACT test

Dec 15 - SAT registration deadline for 1/23 test

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR DECEMBER

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Register for their FAFSA pin number @ [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov). Remind them that parents and guardians must register separately for their own pin number
- ★ Access the FAFSA form online. If there are questions students are unable to answer, have them call the financial aid office of the local community college
- ★ Remind them to attend any financial aid nights held at their school or the local community college
- ★ Encourage them to attend an OSAC Finding \$\$\$ for Oregon Students if it is available at their school.
- ★ Start working on the OSAC scholarship application and essays
- ★ Fill out the OSAC Activities Chart
- ★ Continue to monitor deadlines and check on current admissions requirements

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Review the results of PSAT
- ★ Put together a resume. Include classes taken, activities such as clubs, sports, volunteerism, jobs held, and any awards received
- ★ Encourage them to attend their school's financial aid night, with a parent or guardian if possible

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Start gathering information on college costs and financial planning
- ★ Encourage them, during winter break, to do some volunteering in the community



# DECEMBER 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 SAT Test
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 ACT Test
13	14	15 SAT registration deadline for 1/23 test	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## JANUARY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Jan 5 - ACT registration deadline for 2/6 test

Jan 15 & 16 – SOU Campus Preview Days

Jan 23 - SAT test

Jan 23 – WOU Campus Preview Day

Jan 30 – College Goal Oregon

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR JANUARY

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Remind them to proofread, and have someone else proofread, their completed FAFSA
- ★ Submit completed FAFSA online as soon after Jan. 1 as possible
- ★ Remind them to attend a College Goal Oregon event if they need help with their FAFSA. For more information go to [www.CollegeGoalOregon.org](http://www.CollegeGoalOregon.org)
- ★ Check for student aid report on the FAFSA website several days after filing FAFSA
- ★ Proofread their scholarship applications and essays. Encourage them to have someone else proofread them as well.
- ★ Register for SAT subject tests if required
- ★ Request their mid-year transcripts be sent to colleges applied to
- ★ Request transcripts needed for OSAC scholarship application
- ★ Remind them to check mail for decision letters and info from schools applied to
- ★ Remind them to send thank-you notes to those who wrote recommendation letters
- ★ Encourage them to keep grades up; colleges pay close attention to the second half of the senior year!

### HELP JUNIORS

- ★ Make a list of the different colleges they would like to explore
- ★ Find out dates of campus preview days and plan some visits
- ★ Encourage them to visit as many campuses as possible
- ★ Encourage them, if possible, to meet with an admissions representative and a financial aid officer during their campus visits to find out what types of aid are available

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Explore the CIS website (if available) to explore career possibilities and scholarship database
- ★ Encourage them to take challenging courses. Colleges take a close look at course rigor when evaluating an application



# JANUARY 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 ACT registration deadline for 2/6 test	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 SOU Campus Preview Day	16 SOU Campus Preview Day
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 SAT Test WOU Campus Preview Day
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30 College Goal Oregon

## FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Feb 4 - SAT registration deadline for 3/13 test

Feb 5 & 6 – SOU Campus Preview Days

Feb 6 - ACT test

Feb 13 – WOU Campus Preview Day

Feb 15 – EOU Campus Preview Day

Feb 15 – OIT Campus Preview Day

Feb 15 – OSU Spring Visit

Feb 15 – PSU Viking Visitation Day

Feb 16 - OSAC Early Bird Scholarship Application Date

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR FEBRUARY

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Check with colleges applied to for verification they have received all necessary documents. Continue to monitor the status of submitted applications
- ★ Notify colleges if they have received any new honors or accomplishments
- ★ Check to see if their mid-year transcripts have been sent to the schools they have applied to
- ★ Wrap up any scholarship essays. Be sure to proofread them before students submit their application
- ★ Stay on track to complete and submit OSAC eApp, essays, and activities chart on time
- ★ Encourage them to submit OSAC eApp by Early Bird deadline

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Start seriously investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs
- ★ Find information on federal student aid @ [StudentAid.ed.gov](http://StudentAid.ed.gov)
- ★ Make a list of state, school, and local level scholarships they would like to apply for next year
- ★ Register for March SAT
- ★ Prepare for the SAT and ACT. Sample questions can be found at:  
[collegeboard.com/sat/prep/index.jsp](http://collegeboard.com/sat/prep/index.jsp)  
[act.org/aap/](http://act.org/aap/)

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Update student portfolio with any new activities, honors, or achievements
- ★ Encourage them to try something new in their school, e.g., a walk-a-thon, a part in a school play, a new sport



# FEBRUARY 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 SAT registration deadline for 3/13 test	5 SOU Campus Preview Day	6 SOU Campus Preview Day  ACT Test
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 WOU Campus Preview Day
14	15 EOU Campus Preview Day OIT Campus Preview Day OSU Spring Visit PSU Viking Visitatin Day	16 OSAC Early Bird deadline	17	18	19	20
21/28	22	23	24	25	26	27

## MARCH SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Mar 1 – OSAC Scholarship Application final deadline
- Mar 3 - WOU Criminal Justice Careers Day
- Mar 5 – ACT registration deadline for 4/10 test
- Mar 7 - Portland Spring College Fair  
University of Portland Chiles Center  
Noon - 3 p.m.
- Mar 11 – U of O Duck Day
- Mar 13 - SAT Test
- Mar 13 - OIT Campus Preview Day
- Mar 18 - U of O Duck Day
- Mar 20 - Boise Spring College Fair  
Boise State University Student Union Building  
Noon – 3 p.m..
- Mar 20 - EOU Campus Preview Day
- Mar 22 - PSU Viking Visitation Day
- Mar 25 - SAT registration deadline for 5/1 test
- Mar 25 – WOU Spring Break Visit
- Mar 26 - OSU Spring Visit

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR MARCH

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Submit tax forms to colleges' financial aid offices if requested. Find out what else they might need to do in order to establish and maintain their eligibility for financial aid
- ★ Check out tools for evaluating and comparing colleges and their financial aid offers in the Students and Families section of [AspireOregon.org](http://AspireOregon.org)

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Continue investigating outside funding sources
- ★ Register and study for April ACT and/or May SAT
- ★ Continue researching careers and determining areas of interest on CIS, if available
- ★ Ask them to consider taking the ASVAB aptitude test

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Review PSAT testing materials at [CollegeBoard.com](http://CollegeBoard.com)
- ★ Review next year's course choices. Remind them of the importance of taking challenging courses and full course loads
- ★ Tell them to keep in mind admission requirements of any schools they may eventually wish to attend



# MARCH 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 OSAC Scholarship eApp final deadline	2	3 WOU Criminal Justice Careers Day	4	5 ACT registration deadline for 4/10 test	6
7 Portland Spring College Fair	8	9	10	11 U of O Duck Day	12	13 SAT Test  OIT Campus Preview Day
14	15	16	17	18 U of O Duck Day	19	20 Boise Spring College Fair  EOU Campus Preview Day
21	22 PSU Viking Visitation Day	23	24	25 SAT registration deadline for 5/1 test  WOU Spring Break Visit	26 OSU Spring Visit	27
28	29	30	31			

## APRIL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Apr 1 - U of O Duck Day

Apr 2 - OSU Spring Visit

Apr 5 - OSU Spring Visit

Apr 9 – EOU Campus Preview Day

Apr 9 - SOU Campus Preview Day

Apr 10 - ACT test

Apr 10 – OSU Cascades Spring Preview Day

Apr 15 – U of O Duck Day

Apr 17 – OIT Campus Preview Day

Apr 17 - WOU Campus Preview Day

Apr 22 – U of O Duck Day

Apr 29 – SAT registration deadline for 6/10 test

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR APRIL

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Decide which school's offer is best for intended major or career interest area, and for their personal preferences for location, size, etc.
- ★ Notify each college of decision, including colleges student will not be attending
- ★ Review financial aid award letter. Student should call the school's financial aid office if they are unsure of what is being offered
- ★ Consult the Loan Comparison Chart in the Students and Families section of [AspireOregon.org](http://AspireOregon.org) for information on different types of student loans
- ★ Remind them, if they have been waitlisted by a college, to contact that school's admissions office to let them know they are still interested in attending

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Register for the ACT test
- ★ Register for June SAT
- ★ Encourage them to take an SAT prep course to help prepare for the upcoming exam
- ★ Ask them to consider taking the Advanced Placement (AP) exams while information is fresh in their minds
- ★ Select challenging courses for senior year
- ★ Continue researching colleges and evaluating programs of interest

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Check out upcoming events in school and in the community and encourage them to get involved



# APRIL 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 U of O Duck Day	2 OSU Spring Visit	3
4	5 OSU Spring Visit	6	7	8	9 EOU Campus Preview Day SOU Campus Preview Day	10 ACT Test OSU Cascades Spring Preview Day
11	12	13	14	15 U of O Duck Day	16	17 OIT Campus Preview Day WOU Campus Preview Day
18	19	20	21	22 U of O Duck Day	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 SAT registration deadline for 6/10 test	30	

## MAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

May 1 - SAT test

May 3 – OIT Campus Preview Day

May 7 - ACT registration deadline for 6/12 test

May 7 – PSU Viking Visitation Day

May 13 – EOU Discover Your Future

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR MAY

### HELP SENIORS:

- ★ Let them know they can log on to their OSAC eStudent Profile at [GetCollegeFunds.org](http://GetCollegeFunds.org) to check the status of OSAC scholarships they have applied for
- ★ Be mindful of deadlines for accepting financial aid awards. Also remind them that many awards will require a certain cumulative GPA to be maintained throughout college
- ★ Go over sample student budgets
- ★ Finalize summer school or summer job plans

### HELP JUNIORS:

- ★ Register for June ACT
- ★ Review testing materials for SAT and/or ACT
- ★ Prepare for AP exams. These are given in high schools from early to mid-May
- ★ Ask them to think about which teachers to ask recommendation letters of next fall
- ★ Be aware of the test dates and registration deadlines for the remaining SAT and SAT subject tests exams. They may take them during their senior year if necessary

### HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:

- ★ Choose volunteer and community service opportunities to participate in this summer
- ★ (Sophomores) Contact professionals in community about job-shadowing opportunities in career interest area
- ★ Make plans to visit at least one college during the summer
- ★ Encourage them to meet with their counselor to be sure courses next year will be challenging and helpful in moving toward career and education goals
- ★ Encourage them to find a summer job and set aside some earnings in a savings account



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 SAT Test
2	3 OIT Campus Preview Day	4	5	6	7 ACT registration deadline for 6/12 test  PSU Viking Visitation Day	8
9	10	11	12	13 EOU Discover Your Future	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## JUNE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

June 5 - SAT test

June 12 - ACT test

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR JUNE

### **HELP SENIORS:**

- ★ Remind them to request that their final transcript be sent to the school they will be attending in the fall
- ★ If they have been awarded scholarships, by reminding them to send a thank-you note to the awarding scholarship donor or committee

### **HELP JUNIORS:**

- ★ Remind them to take as rigorous a course load as possible when registering for next year's classes
- ★ Remind them to keep track of hours spent volunteering, working, and/or participating in community activities over the summer. Hours spent on each activity will need to be listed on scholarship and college applications
- ★ Encourage them to visit college campuses this summer, especially if they plan to do any traveling
- ★ Ask them to consider taking a summer job and putting some of the earnings away for college
- ★ Ask them to consider sampling the college scene by taking a community college course
- ★ Remind them to read a variety of books and magazines, and to review their math skills over the summer

### **HELP SOPHOMORES and FRESHMEN:**

- ★ Remind them that when registering for next year's classes, they should take as rigorous a course load as possible
- ★ Remind them to keep track of hours spent volunteering, working, and/or participating in community activities. Eventually, hours spent on each activity will be listed on scholarship and college applications
- ★ Encourage them to visit college campuses over the summer
- ★ Encourage them to read a variety of books and magazines, and to review their math over the summer



# JUNE 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 SAT Test
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 ACT Test
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			