What is a graduate?
A graduate is someone who has passed all of the classes needed and satisfied graduation requirements. Graduates earn a "diploma", a piece of paper that verifies that you have finished high school or college.

Just like high school, the first year of college you will be a freshman, the 2nd: a sophomore, the 3rd: a junior, the 4th: a senior.

When you graduate from college you will have earned a degree. This is like a diploma, but there are different degrees that you can earn.

What is an associate’s or bachelor’s degree?

Associate’s Degree: You can receive an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree after completing coursework similar to the first couple of years at a college that gives bachelor degrees. Community colleges offer associate degrees. The Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree is awarded after completing technical or vocation training programs.

Bachelor’s Degree: It takes about four or five years, as a full time college student, to earn a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree at a college or university. Once you earn a Bachelor’s Degree, you are then eligible to apply for a graduate program at a university.

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What Are They Talking About?
Simple meanings to vocabulary about education and how they can help you earn your diploma...
It can be confusing when teachers, principals, and counselors talk about high school and college. You may have questions like some of these:

- "Core Classes"?
- "Electives"?
- What is a GPA?
- Why are 9th graders called "Freshmen" and 10th graders called "Sophomores"?
- What is a "Bachelor's Degree"?

It is important for you and your parents to know what teachers, principals, and counselors mean when they talk about high school and college. So when you get to high school you can be prepared and successful. Then you will be ready to go to technical school, a college or university!

Colleges and universities look for students who are "well rounded" -- students who do lots of different things, besides just study and get good grades. Colleges look at your participation in groups at school and in your community. Being involved in music, sports, family, clubs, church, scouts and jobs can help you get into a college or university. Many other groups that are good to join. You don’t need lots of different activities that you are really in.

What else?

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Why are 9th graders called "Freshmen" and 10th graders called "Sophomores"?

What is a GPA?

What is a "Bachelor's Degree"?

What do these mean?

Education Words...

What do they Mean?

What else?

Financial Aid is available...but you have to apply for it.

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College is expensive, but there are many ways to get money for college. Some are based on how good your grades are, called merit based. Some funds are based on how much you need the money, called need based.

Scholarships are one type of financial aid. You can earn scholarships many different ways, usually by being very good at something: getting good grades, being good in sports, music, theatre, or other school or community activity.

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Besides taking the right kind of classes and the right number of classes, what do colleges look at when they check out what I did during high school?

College Entrance Tests Include...
- Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) for junior and senior high school students. This test can be taken once a year for the PSAT. High school juniors and seniors can take the PSAT as a way for colleges to check your math, science, reading, and writing skills.
- American College Testing (ACT) is another resource for colleges in checking out your skills.

GPA
This is your Grade Point Average. It is a number that comes from how many 'A's, 'B's, 'C's, 'D's, and 'F's that you have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: If you earn two A's, one B, and two C's your total points are 15. Divide 15 by 5 (total number of classes you took) and your GPA is 3.0.

Your GPA is an average of all of your grades. A GPA of 3.5 would mean you get mostly 'A's and 'B's. The higher your GPA, the better. A 4.0 GPA when you graduate means that you have "straight 'A's."

When they say:
"Earning your diploma"
They mean: Graduating high school or college.

Right now you are in middle school. That means that you are in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade. When you get to high school you will be called a freshman. This is just tradition. Check out the names for each grade:
- 9th grade = Freshman
- 10th grade = Sophomore
- 11th grade = Junior
- 12th grade = Senior

Types of Classes
There are different types of classes that you can take in high school. Some classes you MUST take, others you can choose to take.

Core Classes
Include math, science, English, and social studies/history. Many of these you must take to graduate and get your High School Diploma.

Elective Classes
are classes that you choose to take because they interest you or because a college requires them. You may want to choose elective classes based on what kind of job you want after you are out of high school or college.

Required Classes
are classes you must take to graduate from High School. They include core classes and some electives.

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Middle School and High School are helping you prepare for college and earn a living.

After high school graduation, you choose the kind of work training that will most help you.

Plan for it.

“I am going to college.”

This is Important!!

**ALERT:** some classes that are not required for high school graduation are required for setting into a college!

Wanting to go to college means you must take more core classes, language classes, and higher level classes. You have to make sure that you sign-up for the classes you need to accomplish your dreams.

Middle School and High School are helping you prepare for college and earn a living.

After high school graduation, you choose the kind of work training that will most help you.

What is the difference between a college and a university?

**Colleges** are usually smaller than universities. Some colleges provide vocational training and certified work training. Students can earn an associate’s degree at many colleges - Columbia Basin College and Walla Walla Community College are two examples. Whitman College is an example of a college that provides all of the coursework that is required to earn a bachelor’s degree.

**Universities** provide the coursework required to earn a bachelor’s degree and graduate programs. Some examples include: Central Washington University (CSU), Eastern Washington University (EWU), University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU). Graduate degrees are called masters and doctoral degrees. Once a student earns a bachelor’s degree, they are eligible to apply for a graduate program.

Universities can be large with over 20,000 students, but some are smaller with less than 10,000 students.

It’s always good to have good grades.

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