At this very moment, you are less than 7 MONTHS away from applying to college, and 9 MONTHS away from your applications being due! Don't be fooled - these months will pass quicker than you can imagine. Before you know it, the November 30, 2014 due date will be here!

For the past eleven-and-a-half years, you have been working hard to prepare yourself academically for this life-changing milestone. And while that journey continues through and beyond your high-school graduation in fifteen months, now is the time to begin researching prospective college choices. To do this, you will be completing a college research project that will involve four primary components:

1. A research paper in which you research your personal "top 10."
2. A researched financial plan - how are you going to pay for this?
3. A detailed, three-sided display board to illustrate the findings of your research on one of your ten selected colleges.
   - One student per school; random order of selection.
4. A summary handout/flier - to be distributed at the April 25th "college fair."

Unlike most of our previous collaborative AVID Challenges, choosing the college that is right for YOU requires an individual effort. While there is nothing wrong with employing the help of others to evaluate, critique, and proof-read your work, the final product must be YOURS AND YOURS ALONE! Also unlike many of our previous AVID Challenges, this project is NOT a competition. Everyone can earn an A if they do an outstanding job!

All work on this project must be word-processed! Your research, however, is not to be presented in just narrative form. While you will, undoubtedly, be writing some prose, many of the topics you will be researching may also be best represented by charts, lists, graphs, or simple mathematical expressions. This is about gathering information in order to make an informed decision that is best for YOU!

Use College Board, My Road, CSU Mentor, California Colleges, and other college search engines to do as much personal “matching” as you can, to research the schools that spark your interest. Do not just choose a school because you think it would be “cool” to attend, or because a friend has chosen it. This will not help you learn which schools are best suited for you. Don't waste your research hours on schools you have no intention of applying to next year.
Parts 1 and 2 of the project will be turned-in inside a research report folder, in the following order:

**Cover Sheet:** Must include the following:
- Your name
- A list of your top three choices for a "program of study"
- A list of your top five requirements for a university.

**Table of Contents:** Listed in a ranked "top ten" order; must include pg numbers.
- At least two of these must be UC schools*.
- At least two of these must be CSU schools*.
- At least one of these must be a private school.
- At least one of these must be an out-of-state school.

* For Jr. Trip participants, at least one must be a Jr Trip campus**.

**Research:** For each school you will create a 1-2 page report - presented in ranked order. Your research must include the following information:

- **Location:** not just where it is...describe the setting!
- **Student Body:** size, demographics, freshmen vs. transfers rates, etc..
- **Admissions:** GPA range, SAT range, ACT range, Acceptance rates
- **Academic Programs:** Must be in-line with your "programs of study."
- **Food/Board:** freshman requirements, on/off-campus housing costs
- **Financials:** tuition, financial aid, etc.
- **Perception vs. Reality:** What are people saying online about the school?
- **Justification:** Why is this school a good fit for you? Your justification must relate to the top five requirements you identified for yourself.

**DUE DATES:**
- Research report: Wednesday, April 23rd
- Display board: Friday, April 25th

* Our "college fair" will be held in the Commons that day.

**FINAL THOUGHTS:**

- If you are absent on either due date, it is your responsibility to ensure that your work is still turned in. Absolutely no late work will be accepted!

- Incomplete reports will automatically earn a grade of zero.

- You may, and are encouraged to, work with others on your research. But do not rely on your friend’s research. Choose colleges that meet YOUR needs.

- Grading: organization, neatness, completion, and validity of chosen colleges.

- This assignment should be interesting and fun. It's not about earning points. More importantly, it's about investing time and energy today so that tomorrow you can make educated and informed decisions about **YOUR FUTURE**!