

GAcollege411 Site Overview Transcript

College Student – Hey little man.

High School Student – What!!? UGH! Don't call me that! So, home for Spring Break, how's college going?

College Student – Oh, pretty good, it's a lot of work, but my profs are pretty cool.

High School Student – That's good.

College Student – So, actually mom sent me in here to have a little chat with you.

High School Student – Huh! Oh no! Is this about using your headboard for my skate ramp?

College Student – Uh, no, but we'll talk about that later. Anyhow, mom was saying that you haven't picked your courses for next year yet. Any idea what you're going to take?

High School Student – Nah, I don't know, I'm going to wait and see what my friends are taking.

College Student – Hmm. That's an interesting strategy. Move over, I want to show you something.

High School Student – Do I have a choice?

College Student – No. Don't worry; this'll only take a few minutes.

High School Student – What is it?

College Student – GAcollege411.

High School Student – GA college what?

College Student – No, GAcollege411. Here, fill this out. I think you'll find it pretty helpful.

High School Student – What's this?? Career planning, high school planning, college planning, WHAT!!? UGH!! Sounds like work!

College Student – How much time do you spend surfing Facebook doing all those quizzes and games?

High School Student – I don't know, like, an hour a day maybe.

College Student – Well, this is going to take less time and you'll get a lot more out of it. Believe me! Okay, so you've created a portfolio?

High School Student – I guess.

College Student – Great! Now move over and let me drive. Okay, so maybe I should start by asking you if you have any idea what kind of career you want when you get older.

High School Student – What?!! I don't know. I'll figure that out when I graduate from college!

College Student – Well, you realize whatever you take in college is going to impact what kind of job you can get.

High School Student – I guess.

College Student – And the course you want to take in college is going to impact the classes you need to take now, in high school.

High School Student – Yeah - never thought about that.

College Student – So, basically, what I'm saying is you shouldn't take a class just because your friends are taking it.

High School Student – Yeah, but that means I have to figure what I want to be and I don't know. I have no idea.

College Student – Well, in that case, you should start by learning more about yourself. So, look here; you'll find a bunch of assessments to help you identify your interests, your values, your skills.

High School Student – Interests... so you mean that I skateboard and play guitar, but don't like to build kitchen cabinets?

College Student – Exactly, so when you finish an assessment like the 'Interest Profiler' here, you'll receive a list of possible career options that might interest you. Or you can just browse around and explore careers here. You can search alphabetically, by career clusters, career profiles with videos, careers in the military, Georgia's hot careers...

High School Student – Georgia's hot careers? What's a hot career? Firefighting??

College Student – No, they're careers with the fastest growth, lots of openings and above-average wages. Anyhow, look here, you can even compare two career profiles side by side.

High School Student – Why would I want to do that?

College Student – So you can compare their similarities and differences – makes it easier to decide which career you'd rather pursue.

High School Student – Makes sense.

College Student – You can also use the Career Finder to search for careers that match specific criteria like how much money you want to earn and how long you want to be in school for.

High School Student – What's the diff between the 'Career Finder' and 'Career Plan Builder'?

College Student – Well, the 'Career Plan Builder' takes things quite a bit further. Basically, it connects the dots to help you build a plan to achieve your goals. Like it helps you identify the program you need to take to get the job you want and then connects you to schools offering that program.

High School Student – That makes things easy.

College Student – Definitely.

High School Student – I like easy.

College Student – Okay, then over here in ‘Get a Job’, you learn how to create a résumé, write a cover letter, practice for an interview and stuff like that. There are even links to local Georgia job banks.

High School Student – Hmm, interesting but I don’t think rock stars need résumés.

College Student – Ohhhh, so you’ve decided that’s what you’re going to be then, a rock star. Mom will be thrilled.

High School Student – Yeah, I think so. I mean I already have a band. I’m halfway there.

College Student – Yeah, maybe so but a lot of rock stars still need day jobs. And if you want a job, you’re going to need to know how to create a résumé. You’re not going to be able live on your allowance forever.

High School Student – Didn’t mom and dad just pay your cell bill last month?

College Student – That’s different, besides, we’re not talking about me; we’re talking about you. So, tell me, what kind of day job does a rock star have?

High School Student – Don’t know. Probably something to do with music. Maybe they teach music but I’d have to go to college for that, right?

College Student – Sure, but that shouldn’t stop you from trying to gain some experience right now. Even volunteer work often requires a résumé or an interview.

High School Student – Hmm, maybe I should apply for a job at the music store or volunteer to give guitar lessons or something.

College Student – That’s a great idea.

High School Student – Yeah, it could be fun. At least until the band takes off.

College Student – Oh well, naturally.

High School Student – Okay, so now what?

College Student – Okay, well, now let’s check out ‘High School Planning’. So, you want to be a music teacher/rock star?

High School Student – Rock star/Music teacher.

College Student – Yeah, sure, whatever. So, now you need to figure out what courses you should take in high school to achieve your career goal and meet Georgia grad requirements.

High School Student – Yeah, like I'll need to take a music class every year and English every year and, do music teachers need math?

College Student – Yeah.

High School Student – Okay, so I guess I'll take a math class every year too.

College Student – Right.

High School Student – Okay, got it. So, then, what's this high school planning timeline thingy?

College Student – Ah, it's a checklist of stuff you need to do to keep yourself on track.

High School Student – Like mom's honey-do list for dad.

College Student – Yeah, kind of... so, you're in grade 9 which means here's what you should be doing this year.

High School Student – Man! That's a lot of stuff!

College Student – Not really; you've got a whole school year to do it.

High School Student – So, don't neglect your study habits, think about colleges you want to attend, get involved in activities. Okay, yeah, that's pretty basic. I'm doing a lot of that stuff now anyway.

College Student – Exactly.

High School Student – Now what? College planning...whoa! Look at this stuff! This looks like even more work!

College Student – Relax, it's not tons of work, seriously. The 'Getting Ready for College' section just gives you a bunch of useful information to read through. Like Entrance Requirements for colleges in Georgia and other helpful info. Then there's the 'college planning timeline' and this is a lot like the high school planning timeline we just saw; only it reminds you of other things you should be doing to prepare for college. Actually, you'll even notice that some of the items overlap with the other list.

High School Student – All right! Well, that's not too bad. So, next... test prep?

College Student – Yup, again, this is something you can do in your spare time that'll help you identify strengths and weaknesses in different subjects so you can prepare for the SAT, ACT or GRE.

High School Student – I already have enough homework as it is. This kind of sounds like extra work.

College Student – Oh, so you weren't planning on studying for the SAT then?

High School Student – Well, of course I'm going to study for it.

College Student – Well, okay test prep’s a tool to make studying way more effective. Some parents actually dish out big bucks for a program like this but with GAcollege411, it’s all included so that means mom and dad don’t have to shell out for you to get an awesome test score.

High School Student – That’s cool, good thing too because mom and dad need to save their money for your massive phone bill!

College Student – Alright, enough already. Okay, so, moving on...next you’re going to want to explore programs and majors.

High School Student – Okay, so let’s explore music teacher. Where’s ‘music’ on this thing?

College Student – Music teacher would fall beneath ‘Education’. See?

High School Student – Oh okay, so let’s check it out.

College Student – Well, how about you check that out a little later? I’m just giving you an overview right now.

High School Student – But I won’t know how to find it again.

College Student – Sure you will. See? Just click here and we’ll save it to your portfolio.

High School Student – Check to make sure it’s saved.

College Student – Trust me, it’s saved, let’s keep moving.

High School Student – Fine.

College Student – So, now what you can do is explore schools that offer this program in Georgia or you can select another state if you want or you can go here.

High School Student – Hey! Don’t click so fast, I didn’t get to see what schools were listed.

College Student – Later. Look, there’s a bunch of different ways to explore schools. You can search alphabetically, browse by schools offered in Georgia or you can use the ‘School Finder’ to provide a list of schools that match your criteria.

High School Student – Like the Career Finder.

College Student – Right.

High School Student – And I see you can compare schools too, just like with the careers.

College Student – Exactly. Okay, so next we have ‘Applications and Transcripts’. So, what this lets you do is practice filling out your college application and then when you think you’re ready you can actually apply to schools.

High School Student – Practice? I have to practice filling out a college application?

College Student – Well, when you were in Battle of the Bands, you practiced beforehand right?

High School Student – Of course, we wanted to win and we did. Well, almost, we came in second.

College Student – Yeah, right, so instead of Battle of the Bands, think of this as battling for a seat in a great college, only there is no second or third place. Either you're accepted or you're not. You win or you lose.

High School Student – Harsh!

College Student – Well, it's true. So, before you send in your application, you're going to want to practice filling it out to ensure that you're going to put your best foot forward.

High School Student – Got it! And then, what about this? Be a star, get recruited?

College Student – Well, it's not to get recruited by INXS if that's what you're thinking.

High School Student – How can I get excessively recruited?

College Student – Never mind. Anyhow, this gives you the option to select the colleges you like and then it gives those colleges the opportunity to review your portfolio.

High School Student – Kind of like when people post their résumés online.

College Student – Yeah, just like that.

High School Student – You think anyone would want to recruit me?

College Student – Hmm, well, let's see how well you do on your SAT first.

High School Student – Hey! You're supposed to say: Of course! Everyone will want to recruit you!

College Student – If you want a sugar-coated response then go see mom. You're not going to get one from me.

High School Student – Well, at least I can practice for my SAT with the test prep thing, right? Gives me something to aim for: to be recruited.

College Student – Yeah! That's an awesome goal. Okay, ready to move on?

High School Student – Yup.

College Student – Good. So, now we're going to check out 'Financial Aid Planning'.

High School Student – Because school costs money.

College Student – You betcha.... Lots and lots of money. But if you do the legwork beforehand, then you shouldn't have to live off macaroni and hot dogs.

High School Student – I like mac and dogs.

College Student – Oh, you would. Anyhow, all I’m saying is that there are better options than going broke. If you look here you can learn about Georgia’s HOPE Program.

High School Student – HOPE.

College Student – HOPE: Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally. It’s a grant and scholarship program for Georgia students.

High School Student – Ah, okay.

College Student – You’ll also find tons of helpful info in the ‘Financial Aid 101’ section.

High School Student – Yeah, that’s definitely a lot of info.

College Student – It is, but that’s what this handy-dandy search tool is for.

High School Student – Wow! That’s handy and dandy!

College Student – Yeah.... then there are also financial aid calculators to help you figure out how much you need to save.

High School Student – Cool.

College Student – And you’ve got the ‘financial aid planning timeline’.

High School Student – Another checklist, right?

College Student – Right.

High School Student – Some of these things are on the other checklist.

College Student – Yeah and some aren’t. You also have the ‘Financial Aid Wizard’. This is a pretty awesome tool because it helps you calculate how much money you need for the different schools you want to apply to.

High School Student – Is it easy?

College Student – Yeah. That’s why they call it a wizard. It takes you through seven simple steps. And something you’ll also want to check out is the scholarship finder.

High School Student – You got a scholarship, right?

College Student – Yes, I did. But I didn’t have a scholarship finder back then. I had to do tons of research to figure out what scholarships I qualified for. But here you can just search through a huge database either alphabetically or by Georgia scholarships and grants, or better yet, you can even just enter some info about yourself and immediately get a list of scholarships you might be eligible for. It saves you like a million hours of research, believe me.

High School Student – Word.

College Student – Yeah. And then when you’re all done researching everything, you can go here and start applying for your grants and scholarships, financial aid and all kinds of stuff.

High School Student – Cool. Okay, so we done yet?

College Student – Not quite, you wanted to check out your portfolio for that program you saved right?

High School Student – Oh yeah.

College Student – Yeah, so, everything you do in GAcollege411 gets saved in your portfolio and as you move from the 9th grade to the 10th grade and so on, your portfolio saves a snapshot what you've done each year.

High School Student – Okay... and that's helpful because?

College Student – It's helpful because it means that you can keep using the same portfolio right through high school, and then through college and even after you graduate and enter the workforce.

High School Student – Until I'm, like, 80?

College Student – Sure.

High School Student – So then I guess I just keep updating my profile.

College Student – Exactly. Your profile helps you keep track of your goals. So under 'Looking Ahead' you can record everything from your short-term goals right up to your life goals. Then under 'Experiences and Activities' you can record things like awards and networking. You also have a journal that lets you record your thoughts on all the cool stuff you find.

High School Student – Hey, you know what I was thinking, just with all this profile stuff you're showing me? GAcollege411 is kind of like Facebook in a way.

College Student – How's that?

High School Student – Well, like with Facebook, you update your profile or add different apps to kind of express who you are and all that, you list all your interests, your work and school experience and stuff. Seems to me that GAcollege411 does all that stuff too. Only, the assessments are probably more accurate than Facebook quizzes. And, unlike Facebook, which only shows what you've done in the past, this 411 site also shows what your plans are for the future.

College Student – Wow, yeah, that's pretty clever. I'm impressed.

High School Student – I know. I can be pretty clever when I want to be.

College Student – Which is rare.

High School Student – Yeah, anyway, here's a question for you: I see the portfolio is cut up into the same sections as GAcollege411 so is that just to organize how everything's saved?

College Student – Right. So if you want to check out that music teacher program you saved; first we'll go to college planning and then we go to post-secondary plans and when we scroll down, you'll find it right here.

High School Student – So I can just click on there and it'll take me back to the program info?

College Student – Right.

High School Student – Good. That helps. So, okay, um... not to be rude or anything because I know you're really excited about me using this GAcollege411 program but, dude, I got to say, this program has a lot of stuff. I mean, I really don't think I'm going to be able to pull it all together. Like, I have no idea where I would start and, seriously, I'm kind of tripping just thinking about it.

College Student – Yeah, I figured that but, don't worry, I haven't shown you the best part yet.

High School Student – The best part? Saving the best part for last are we?

College Student – Kind of. To help you stay organized, they've included some Milestones and Guideways.

High School Student – Okay.

College Student – So, your planning Milestones are activities that your teachers will want to track; the things you've got to get done. Look here, it says that you've already created a plan of study and saved a program to your portfolio.

High School Student – Oh yeah, cool, I've already checked two off the list.

College Student – Now, your Guideways... these will guide you step by step through the program. That way you're sure to easily complete all the activities you need to every year.

High School Student – Easy, I love easy.

College Student – And finally, I recommend that you send an invite to mom and dad to check out your portfolio.

High School Student – Why?!

College Student – Because they'd appreciate it. They want to be able to check out your plans and see what you're up to. Not to mention, you'd probably be surprised at how helpful they can be.

High School Student – Yeah, but, are they going to mess around with things? Like, change my plan so I'm going to a different college or whatever?

College Student – No, no, they only get to read it. It just lets them get an idea of what you've got planned and if mom or dad have any concerns or suggestions, then they'll talk to you about it.

High School Student – Oh, okay, well that's cool.

College Student – Okay, and I guess that's pretty much it. I mean there are other neat features like email, and uploading documents and keeping track of your activities but I'll let you explore those things for yourself.

High School Student – Thanks, well I'm going to check out that music teacher program now and see what Georgia schools offer it.

College Student – Great idea, but first we need to talk about you dismantling my bed to make a skate ramp.