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# DENTAL HYGIENE ADVISING GUIDE

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HEALTHCARE & BIOSCIENCES ADVISING TEAM  
CLARK COLLEGE ADVISING SERVICES

## USING THIS GUIDE

**Welcome!** Thank you for your interest in the dental hygiene program at Clark! This Dental Hygiene Advising Guide is one of many resources that provide information and answer questions about the program. Your responsibility as a prospective dental hygiene student is to actively seek out, read, learn, and use the program information available to you. The Clark College dental hygiene program is highly competitive. The more you learn, the better prepared you will be!

### 1) Read this Dental Hygiene Advising Guide and Review the Dental Hygiene Website

You will find answers to most dental hygiene-related questions in this guide and on the [dental hygiene website](#). Please carefully and thoroughly review and use all resources. Make note of any additional questions you may have to discuss at a future academic advising appointment.

### 2) Watch the Online Dental Hygiene Information Video

You will find a dental hygiene video on the dental hygiene website that can be accessed at any time. The video provides comprehensive and detailed information. All prospective dental hygiene students should thoroughly review the online dental hygiene information video and dental hygiene website information before meeting with an academic advisor.

### 3) Visit Career Services and Meet with a Career Advisor

As you consider a career in dental hygiene, it is important that you develop a clear understanding of the field of dental hygiene and the various dental career pathways. It is also very important to explore additional career options and develop a parallel plan, as the dental hygiene program is highly competitive and acceptance is not guaranteed. Career Services is open to the public and career advisors can assist with your career exploration and planning.

### 4) Apply to Clark College and Complete the Admissions Process

If you decide to pursue dental hygiene at Clark, you must apply to Clark College. The Welcome Center can assist with the application and admissions process: [start@clark.edu](mailto:start@clark.edu).

**NOTE:** Prospective transfer students who have attended other colleges or universities must apply to Clark College prior to obtaining a transcript evaluation. Please read the *Information for Transfer Students on the dental hygiene website for additional information*.

### 5) Visit Advising Services and Meet with a Healthcare Advisor

After you have completed the Clark College admissions process and reviewed the dental hygiene website, you may meet with a Healthcare Advisor to help you create an individualized academic plan for dental hygiene. At your appointment, we can answer your questions, assist you with class selection and term-by-term planning, and provide guidance and referrals to support your success.

## DISABILITY STATEMENT FOR HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, accommodations for students with disabilities will be considered at the student's request. The student may need to provide documentation of disability to the Disability Support Services Office to support his/her accommodation requests. Documentation guidelines and procedures can be found on the Disability Support Services website. Once the student is qualified by DSS as having a disability, requested accommodations will be considered. Accommodations for the classroom, laboratory, or clinical setting will be evaluated according to reasonableness. Accommodations that compromise patient care, or that fundamentally alter the essential functions of the program or activity, are not considered to be reasonable.

## Table of Contents

USING THIS GUIDE .....	1
DISABILITY STATEMENT FOR HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS .....	1
INFORMATION FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS .....	3
Unofficial Transcript Evaluation – for English & Math Placement and Initial Advising Purposes.....	3
Official Transcript Evaluation – for Clark College Equivalencies and Dental Hygiene Program Eligibility .....	3
DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....	4
DENTAL HYGIENE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS – DENTAL HYGIENE BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE .....	5
PRELIMINARY GENERAL EDUCATION COURSEWORK REQUIRED FOR ACCEPTANCE: .....	5
DENTAL HYGIENE CORE REQUIREMENTS – UPON ACCEPTANCE INTO THE DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM .....	5
POINT SYSTEM FOR DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM SELECTION PROCESS.....	6
DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM POINT CATEGORIES AND POSSIBLE POINT TOTALS .....	6
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE .....	6
FAQS & THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU APPLY .....	7
HOW TO APPLY .....	8
Apply to Clark College .....	8
Apply to the Dental Hygiene Program .....	8
Application Deadline.....	8
AFTER YOU APPLY .....	8
UPON NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE .....	9
Confirmation of Acceptance & Non-Refundable Deposit.....	9
Mandatory Orientation.....	9
Proof of Immunizations.....	9
Criminal Background Check .....	9
Drug Screen .....	9
Health Insurance .....	9
IF YOU ARE NOT ACCEPTED .....	10
DENTAL HYGIENE DEGREE COSTS.....	10

## INFORMATION FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students who have attended other colleges or universities, aside from Clark, must submit **official** transcripts from all colleges or universities attended, regardless of whether previous coursework is applicable to the dental hygiene degree. **Plan at least 3 months in advance to order and submit official transcripts from all other colleges and universities.**

The transfer institution can directly submit official transcripts electronically to [enroll@clark.edu](mailto:enroll@clark.edu) or have them mailed to:  
Clark College Enrollment Services  
Gaiser Hall, Room 128  
1933 Fort Vancouver Way  
Vancouver WA 98663

**NOTE:** *Students must apply to Clark and have a Clark student ID prior to obtaining a transcript evaluation. Transcripts received by Clark are linked to a Clark student ID, so it is strongly advised to be admitted to Clark prior to requesting official transcripts from other colleges or universities.*

### Unofficial Transcript Evaluation – for English & Math Placement and Initial Advising Purposes

- Transfer students are strongly advised to obtain unofficial copies of all transcripts to get started at Clark.  
In addition to submitting official transcripts to Clark College, students are strongly advised to obtain **unofficial** copies of all transcripts that can be emailed to advisors while the official transcript evaluation process is underway.
- Using Your Unofficial Transcripts for English & Math Placement  
Unofficial transcripts can be used to determine English and math placement. Placement is required for all degree-seeking students at Clark College. To use your unofficial transcripts for English and math placement, email your unofficial transcripts to [enroll@clark.edu](mailto:enroll@clark.edu), where they will be reviewed by the Assessment Center. Your English and math placement will then be recorded in your Clark student record.
- Using Your Unofficial Transcripts for Initial Advising Purposes  
Unofficial transcripts can be emailed to a Healthcare Advisor to assist transfer students with initial class selection and preliminary planning, while the official transcript evaluation process is underway. Note that Healthcare Advisors only work with admitted Clark College students. Prospective students are invited to use the dental hygiene website information and connect with the Welcome Center at [start@clark.edu](mailto:start@clark.edu) for assistance in getting started at Clark.

### Official Transcript Evaluation – for Clark College Equivalencies and Dental Hygiene Program Eligibility

- The Credentials Office will evaluate official transcripts on a course-by-course basis to determine course equivalency. Transfer course grades will be factored into the GPA points, as applicable, in the dental hygiene program selection process. Students will receive their official transcript evaluation report directly from the Credentials Office.
- The evaluation of transfer courses may require that students submit a syllabus for specific coursework in question. A syllabus is a detailed outline of a course, usually handed out by the instructor the first day of class. It includes information such as text book, topics covered, class and lab assignments, test and quiz schedules, etc.
- The grades and the unit totals of transferred-in coursework will be used in calculating points in the dental hygiene program selection process, as applicable. In the event that a transfer course has fewer units than its Clark equivalent, students may be required to make up unit deficits through additional coursework.
- Transfer courses may count as repeated courses in the dental hygiene point system, even though course titles and unit totals of the transfer courses may be different from the Clark equivalent courses. This may have implications for points in the Course Repeats category of the point system. Please read the Point System section of this guide for additional information.

## DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Dental hygienists are licensed health care professionals who provide preventive, educational, and therapeutic dental health services directly to patients. They focus on preventing and treating dental diseases to improve oral health in support of the patient's overall health. Dental hygienists must be licensed in each state in which they practice. Licensure requirements vary from state to state. In most states, candidates must graduate from an accredited dental hygiene program, pass a national written board examination, and pass a state or regional clinical board examination. The RDH credential stands for Registered Dental Hygienist and indicates that the dental hygienist is licensed to practice.

The scope of practice for dental hygienists varies from state to state. Most dental hygienists perform oral health assessments; expose, process, and interpret dental radiographs (x-rays); remove plaque, tartar, and stain from the teeth; apply preventive materials including fluoride and sealants; teach patients proper oral hygiene techniques; and counsel patients on maintaining optimal oral health. In some states, dental hygienists can administer local anesthesia and nitrous oxide sedation; prescribe fluoride and antimicrobial agents; and place temporary and permanent restorations.

Clark College Dental Hygiene Program graduates earn a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Dental Hygiene Degree. Our dedicated faculty members and staff are focused on student success. The Dental Hygiene program provides classroom and clinical experiences that successfully prepare students for the national board exam and various clinical licensing exams. Students serve the community by participating in oral health programs in area schools and by caring for patients who are referred by the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington to seek treatment at the Dental Hygiene clinic.

The Clark College Dental Hygiene Program has state-of-the-art facilities with a 30-chair clinic, radiology suite, and a simulation lab with 15 units. The dental hygiene clinic serves area counties providing a diverse patient population. Students are mentored by 5 full-time and 10 part-time faculty members as well as supervising dentists from the community. Students also treat patients at off-campus sites in both Washington and Oregon.

The Clark Dental Hygiene Program has a once-per-year application deadline of January 8<sup>th</sup>. The core requirements (upon acceptance) begin in fall term of every year. There are 25 spaces in the Clark Dental Hygiene Program. The program requires a 40 hour-per-week commitment from students for classes and clinical rotations. Clinical assignments may be offered at times other than traditional clinical hours, such as evenings (other than Monday-Friday, 5:00am-7:00pm) and/or weekends. Reliable transportation is important.

The Clark College Dental Hygiene program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education.

For Financial Aid purposes, the Bachelor of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene is open enrollment which enables all students who wish to pursue this degree to complete the "Dental Hygiene Degree Requirements" (courses in the areas of English, Biological Sciences, Psychology, etc.). The "Dental Hygiene Degree Requirements" provide the foundation for the subsequent "Dental Hygiene Core" classes (classes with "DH" prefix). Due to clinical space limitations, although the program of study for the dental hygiene degree is open enrollment, there is a competitive application process for students to be able to begin the "Dental Hygiene Core" classes. The instructions in the Dental Hygiene Advising Guide explain the Dental Hygiene Degree requirements and the competitive application process to be able to begin the Dental Hygiene Core classes.

## DENTAL HYGIENE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS – DENTAL HYGIENE BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE

### PRELIMINARY GENERAL EDUCATION COURSEWORK REQUIRED FOR ACCEPTANCE:

COURSE	TITLE	UNITS	OFFERED
ENGL& 101	English Composition I	5 units	Every Term
ENGL& 102	English Composition II	5 units	Every Term
MATH (college-level math required)	See Quantitative Skills Distribution List	5 units	Every Term
CMST& 210	Interpersonal Communication	5 units	Every Term
or CMST& 220	Public Speaking		
or CMST& 230	Small Group Communication		
HUMANITIES	See Humanities Distribution List	5 units	Every Term
BIOL& 160	General Biology w Lab	5 units	Every Term
BIOL& 241	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	5 units	Every Term
BIOL& 242	Human Anatomy & Physiology II	5 units	Every Term
BIOL& 260	Microbiology	5 units	Every Term
CHEM& 121	Intro to Chemistry: Pre-Health	5 units	Every Term
CHEM& 131	Intro of Organic/Biochem	5 units	Every Term
NUTR& 101	Nutrition	3 units	Every Term
PSYC& 100	General Psychology	5 units	Every Term
SOC& 101	Introduction to Sociology	5 units	Every Term
PE	See Physical Education Distribution List	1 unit	Every Term
		<b>69 units of preliminary coursework</b>	

- A minimum science GPA and minimum applicable (non-science) GPA of 2.60 is required for all courses listed above.
- A minimum grade of C (2.0) is required for each individual course listed above.
- Clark's three-term series of Anatomy & Physiology is also acceptable, in lieu of the two-term series: BIOL& 251 (Fall Only), BIOL& 252 (Winter Only), BIOL& 253 (Spring Only)
- All science courses must be completed within seven (7) years of dental hygiene program entry (except BIOL& 160). For example, for fall 2024 dental hygiene program entry, science courses must be no older than fall 2017.

**The application and fee payment deadline for Clark College's Dental Hygiene program is January 8th of every year for the following fall term. As of the January 8th deadline, students must have no more than 10 units remaining of required general education coursework to qualify for selection. All preliminary coursework requirements must be completed by the end of spring term.**

### DENTAL HYGIENE CORE REQUIREMENTS – UPON ACCEPTANCE INTO THE DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Upon acceptance into the dental hygiene program, students will complete seven (7) terms, totaling one hundred fifteen (115) units, of dental hygiene core requirements. Dental hygiene core requirements are taught in consecutive terms, beginning fall of each year: fall, winter, spring, summer, fall, winter, spring. Dental hygiene core requirements are taught at the Firstenburg Dental Hygiene Education and Care Center on the main campus of Clark College.

## POINT SYSTEM FOR DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM SELECTION PROCESS

### DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM POINT CATEGORIES AND POSSIBLE POINT TOTALS

Point Categories	Possible Points	Your Points
<b>Science GPA (combined GPA from all science coursework)</b>	20	
<b>Applicable GPA (combined GPA from all non-science AND science coursework)</b> <i>Note that GPA from sciences coursework factors into the Applicable GPA, as well.</i> <i>Grades in science courses are weighted more heavily than grades in non-science coursework.</i> <i>Please review the point system document on the Dental Hygiene website for additional detail.</i>	20	
<b>Community Service/Volunteer Hours</b> 3 points for 20 or more hours 2 points for 10-19 hours 1 point for 1-9 hours	3	
<b>Course Repeats</b> Three (3) points awarded to applicants with three (3) or fewer course repeats from any preliminary coursework requirements. "W" grades and courses over five years old will not count as an attempt.	3	
<b>Clark College Units</b> Three (3) points awarded to applicants with 15 or more units of dental hygiene general education requirements completed at Clark College.	3	
<b>Proctored Essay (administered to top 50 applicants, by invitation only)</b> After calculating points from categories above, the top 50 point earners will be invited to complete the Proctored Essay portion of the Dental Hygiene selection process. After the Proctored Essay portion has been scored, the top 25 point earners will be admitted into the program.	20	
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	69	

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Applicants may earn up to three (3) points for volunteer experience.
- Volunteer Experience must be completed within the past five (5) years.
- Total hours may be earned from multiple organizations or agencies.
- Please use the Volunteer Experience Form to document hours. Use one form per agency.

The purpose of this point is to encourage applicants to gain experience working with diverse, often underrepresented populations within the community. Examples of approved experiences includes, volunteering in homeless shelters, community aid through church services, free health clinics, animal shelters, volunteering with a school nurse in health-related activities, Special Olympics involvement, after-school youth programs, outreach programs or health-related missions. Note: observation hours, internships, and externships do not qualify as community service/volunteer experience.



## FAQS & THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU APPLY

- Completion of the Dental Hygiene General Education Requirements does not guarantee admission into the Dental Hygiene Core Requirements. Although Dental Hygiene General Education Requirements (foundational courses in English, Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, etc.) are open enrollment, Dental Hygiene Core Requirements (courses with DH prefix) are restricted to students who have formally applied to and been accepted into the Clark College Dental Hygiene Program.
- The Dental Hygiene Program is a highly competitive selective admissions program with one application and fee payment deadline each year, on January 8<sup>th</sup>. The Dental Hygiene core requirements (in-program classes) begin fall term of each year.
- Applicants must have no more than 10 units of required general education coursework remaining by the January 8<sup>th</sup> application deadline. All required general education coursework must be completed by the end of spring term.
- There are twenty-five (25) spaces in each dental hygiene program cohort, with an estimated 100 or more applicants each year. Available selection statistics are posted on the dental hygiene website, for informational purposes only.
- Applicants must be 18 years of age by the term of dental hygiene program entry.
- Clark uses a point system for selection, as detailed in this guide. No additional criteria such as testing, interviews, or reference letters, are required for application nor considered in the selection process.
- In order to participate in this program, students must be able to perform standard technical requirements. Students must be able to meet communication, physical and mental requirements necessary to ensure the safe performance of a hygienist's responsibilities. Admission to the program may be contingent upon the applicant verifying his or her ability to perform the established technical standards of the program with or without reasonable accommodation. Please reference the Disability Statement on page 1 of this guide for additional information.
- It is strongly recommended that all applicants observe closely the activities of those practicing in the profession in order to more fully understand the technical requirements of the program.
- The program requires a 40-hour per week commitment from students for classes and clinical rotations. Reliable transportation is an important consideration. Clinical assignments may be offered at times other than traditional clinical hours, such as evenings (other than Monday-Friday, 5:00am-7:00pm) and/or weekends.
- Applicants who have previously failed or been dismissed from a selective entry program will not receive admission into the dental hygiene program/dental hygiene core requirements (courses with DH prefix). Applicants who have previously withdrawn from a program must submit proof that they withdrew from the program while in good academic and clinical standing.
- Students enrolled in clinical courses are required to complete a comprehensive Criminal Background Check. Students should be aware that certain convictions may prevent clinical placement and employment, and that completion of this program does not guarantee certification, licensing or employment.
- **Plan at least 3 months in advance to order and submit official transcripts from all other colleges and universities.**



## HOW TO APPLY

### Apply to Clark College

- Complete the Clark College Application for Admission (if not already an admitted Clark College student).
- The Welcome Center can assist with the application and admissions process: [start@clark.edu](mailto:start@clark.edu).

### Apply to the Dental Hygiene Program

- **REQUIRED:** Submit the “Dental Hygiene Statement of Intent” and pay the \$50 program application fee.
- **REQUIRED:** Submit up-to-date official transcripts from all other colleges and universities currently or previously attended, regardless of whether previous coursework is relevant to the dental hygiene program. Submission of Clark College transcripts is not required.
- **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** Submit the Volunteer Experience Form and any supporting documentation.

### Application Deadline

- Dental Hygiene has a once-per-year application and \$50 application fee payment deadline of January 8<sup>th</sup>. The \$50 Dental Hygiene program application fee is due no later than January 8<sup>th</sup>, along with the application documents.
- Applicants must have no more than 10 units of required general education coursework remaining by the January 8<sup>th</sup> application deadline. All required general education coursework must be completed by the end of spring term.

**NOTE:** *In the case of an incomplete grade in a course or grade change on a transcript, it is the applicant’s responsibility to update their records and provide up-to-date information to the Credentials Office.*

## AFTER YOU APPLY

- If any required general education coursework (no to exceed 10 units) is remaining at the time of application, such coursework must be completed no later than spring term.
- It is the student’s responsibility to submit updated transcripts from schools outside of Clark College immediately after grades post for any remaining coursework taken or completed after the time of application.
- The initial selection process takes an average of 8 to 10 weeks to complete. All applicants will be notified of their admission status by the Selective Admissions Credentials Office. Additional follow-up information about next-steps for selected applicants will be provided at that time.
- After initial review of applications and calculation of points, the top 50 point earners will be invited to participate in the Proctored Essay portion of the selection process. After the Proctored Essay portion has been scored, the top 25 point earners will be selected for admission into the Dental Hygiene Program.

## UPON NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE

### Confirmation of Acceptance & Non-Refundable Deposit

Accepted students must pay a non-refundable \$300 deposit within the designated time period specified in the acceptance letter. If the deposit is not received within the designated time period, it is assumed that the student is no longer interested in entering the Clark College Dental Hygiene Program and the space will be offered to the next eligible alternate student.

### Mandatory Orientation

A mandatory "Applicant Advising Day" will be held for accepted students and invited alternates. If a student does not attend this mandatory event, the next eligible alternate student will be given the assigned space in the dental hygiene program. Students will be informed of the orientation date, time, and location.

### Proof of Immunizations

Accepted students and invited alternates must submit proof of the following immunizations by the deadline stated in the dental hygiene program acceptance letter or their space will be given to the next eligible alternate.

- **Vaccination against COVID-19 is now recommended and not required of Dental Hygiene Students.**
- **FLU** - Incoming students are required to receive the current season flu vaccination before starting clinicals. Continuing students must renew annually in the fall, when the vaccine is available.
- **HEP B** - Series of three (3) doses and proof of immunity (positive titer) or documentation of non-conversion. First two doses of vaccine given at least 28 days apart are required before the start of the program.
- **MMR** - Two (2) doses of MMR (at least 28 days apart) or proof of immunity (positive titer for each component of vaccine: Measles-rubella, Mumps, and Rubella).
- **TB Tuberculosis Skin Testing (PPD/TST)** - A two-step skin test is required upon entry into the program (two tests administered 1-3 weeks apart between step 1 and step 2). Other acceptable screening tests include a blood test (QFT-G or T-spot) or negative chest x-ray.
- **Tdap (Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis-Whooping Cough)** - One-time dose of Tdap; TD booster every ten years.
- **Varicella (Chicken Pox)** - Two (2) doses of the Varicella vaccine or proof of immunity (positive titer).<sup>2</sup>
- **Physical Exam** – A physical exam must be completed within 90 days of the start of the program.

**Any additional vaccines that become mandatory by state or federal law, or that are required by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, will become required by the Clark College Dental Hygiene Program.**

### Criminal Background Check

All accepted students are required to complete and pass the FBI and WSP/OSP (depending on state of residence) criminal background check process. The criminal background check requires a fee and the applicant's social security number. Individuals with a criminal record may not be allowed into a healthcare facility as a student. Because it is not possible to meet the objectives of the program without having clinical experience, anyone with a positive criminal or abuse history may not be eligible for acceptance in the dental hygiene program. In addition, Washington State Health Profession Quality Assurance (HPQA) and the Oregon State Board of Dental hygiene (OSBN) require a criminal background check upon application for licensure. For more information, please review Washington and Oregon license requirements on the respective state department of health websites.

### Drug Screen

Students may be asked to submit to a drug screen, based on the health care facility where clinical rotations are assigned while in the dental hygiene program.

### Health Insurance

All students in the Clark College Dental Hygiene Program are required to have and maintain health insurance.

## IF YOU ARE NOT ACCEPTED

Given the high number of qualified applicants and the limited number of available spaces in the Dental Hygiene Program, many applicants are not accepted. If you are not accepted into the program, the following resources are available:

- **Selective Admissions Credentials**  
For questions about the status of your application, your point totals, or your application documents, please contact the Selective Admissions Credentials team at [selectiveadmissions@clark.edu](mailto:selectiveadmissions@clark.edu).
- **Healthcare Program Advising**  
To discuss strategies for strengthening your application for a future selection cycle, please schedule an appointment with a Healthcare & Bioscience Advisor by using the self-scheduling tool on the Advising homepage.
- **Career Services**  
For support and assistance in researching alternate careers in health-related fields, or exploring other career opportunities in general, please contact Career Services at [careerservices@clark.edu](mailto:careerservices@clark.edu).

## DENTAL HYGIENE DEGREE COSTS

- In compliance with federal regulations, Clark College publishes a cost of attendance, or budget, which reflects the average cost of attending college. The cost of attendance is the basis of establishing a students' financial need, as it set a limit on the total aid that a student may receive. Please connect with the Dental Hygiene Program for specific information about additional dental hygiene program costs.
- Tuition rates are established annually by the Washington State Legislature and may change from year to year. Please refer to the Tuition & Fees chart for current information about tuition costs.
- For **Dental Hygiene General Education Requirements**: Students will pay tuition and fees, the cost of textbooks and supplies, living expenses (housing, food, etc.), transportation expenses, and any additional miscellaneous expenses. Total expenses will vary for individual students.
- For **Dental Hygiene Core Requirements** (upon acceptance into the dental hygiene program): Students will pay all of the expenses listed above and also specific dental hygiene program-related expenses. These expenses include the cost of obtaining immunizations, background checks, drug screens, uniforms and equipment, parking, etc.