

Timeline for College and Career Planning:

Freshman Year
Fall
Schedule an appointment with a school guidance counselor as soon as possible. Learn the requirements for high school graduation and college admission.
Take the most challenging classes you can, and keep at least a “B” average.
Winter
Set up a saving account if you do not already have one. Add to it every month. Ask grandparents and other relatives to contribute to it if they are able.
Join at least one school or community club or sport, or find a volunteer spot in your community.
Spring
Talk to a teacher, counselor, parent, or other trusted adult if you are having any problems in school. Help is available!
Start researching colleges. Look on the websites of schools that interest you. Find out their application process and what you need to do to prepare.
Summer
Make sure your course schedule is on track for the upcoming school year.
Read at least 20 minutes a day – read something of interest to you.

Sophomore Year
<u>Fall</u>
Make sure to take all classes needed for graduation, plus challenging classes.
Register to take PSAT
Talk about careers with staff at your school. Take a career or interest assessment and research careers based on your results.
<u>Winter</u>
Begin to research colleges/universities. Check out the websites of schools that interest you.
Write down questions to ask when you make college visits.
Study for ACT and SAT tests.
<u>Spring</u>
Look into summer jobs, internships, or other career-related programs or experiences.
Register to take the ACT and/or SAT tests.
Check into dual credit classes.
<u>Summer</u>
Gather letters of recommendation from supervisors, mentors, or other contacts from your summer jobs and activities.
Make sure your course schedule for senior year is on track.
Create or update your resume, and think about creating a portfolio.
Junior Year
<u>August</u>
Stay or get involved in school or community clubs or other activities.
Keep track of the number of hours you volunteer. Add these to your college and scholarship applications.
Meet with your counselor and ask about college-related tests, financial aid, and other questions you have about college.
<u>September</u>
Take a career assessment test, then research what experience and education are required for potential careers.
Look online at colleges you are interested in. Ask your parent or guardian to take you to visit campuses.
Attend College Night at your school.
<u>October</u>
Begin to explore scholarship opportunities.
Look for information you may receive in the mail from colleges/universities after your college night. Compare offerings and programs at these schools to make the best choice for you.
Plan for taking ACT and/or SAT tests.
<u>November</u>
Take SAT, ACT, or other tests you have signed up for.
Ask college students or recent graduates you know about their college experiences.
<u>December</u>
Take SAT, ACT, or other tests you have signed up for.
Ask your guidance counselor about college courses that earn both high school and college credit.

Think about taking a summer program or class at a college or university. Prepare to apply and take admissions tests.
January
Check with your guidance counselor regarding your class ranking. Make adjustments as necessary.
Research careers online to help focus your areas of study.
Check into job shadowing opportunities to assist in your decision.
February
Be on the look-out for financial aid workshops. Plan to attend one or more.
Use a free scholarship online search service (such as FastWeb) that matches your personal information with scholarships. The more practice you have the more likely you are to receive funds to help pay for college.
March
If you are taking Advanced Placement classes, ask your teachers about AP exams and how you can best prepare for them.
After Spring Break, remember to focus hard and not let your grades slip at this time. Your GPA will be of benefit to you as you apply to colleges and universities.
Begin to look for a part-time or summer job so that you can add regularly to your college fund.
April
Look into internship programs through community organizations, or consider volunteering in a field of your interest to lessen the likelihood of having to change your major or area of study once you get into college.
If you are taking a summer college course, be sure that all enrollment paperwork and transcripts are delivered to the college by the deadline.
May
Find professionals to interview in a career that intrigues you.
Check your community for teen job fairs to explore careers.
Plan for a summer visit to a college or two to avoid missing your high school days.
Senior Year
August
Request catalogs and admission information from colleges that interest you. Plan to visit if possible.
Schedule a meeting with your guidance counselor or college advisor to talk about plans and make preparations.
September
Download applications or request them from colleges of your choice as well as some “reach” schools.
Attend College Night and financial aid workshops with your parents/guardians.
Plan to retake ACT and/or SAT.
Request letters of recommendation from teachers, counselors, employers, and others.
October
If you are applying for early decision or action, submit your application.
Check into how to get transcripts sent to colleges/universities.
November
Submit college/university applications and essays on time.
Check to see that letters of recommendation have been sent.
Begin actively looking for scholarships.
December

Get a copy of the FAFSA and begin to work on it with your parents.
Make sure colleges/universities have received all your application materials.
<u>January</u>
File the FAFSA as soon as you can after January 1.
Have your counselor send your midyear grades to colleges/universities that require them.
Be aware of the deadline for your Financial Aid Profile if you have not submitted it at this time.
<u>February</u>
If it has been four weeks or more since you submitted a FAFSA and you have not received a Student Aid Report (SAR), contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center.
Attend a financial aid workshop.
<u>March</u>
If you are taking Advanced Placement classes, ask your teachers or counselor about AP exams and how you can best prepare.
Keep searching for scholarships.
Look for admission decisions from colleges/universities. Pay attention to any requests for action or further information.
<u>April</u>
If a college or university has placed you on a waiting list, let it know you are still interested.
Decide which college/university you will attend. Send the enrollment form and a deposit. Pay attention to other deadlines.
<u>May</u>
Take the AP exams you have signed up for. Check to see that your scores are sent to your college/university.
Stay on top of deadlines and paperwork required by your college/university.
Start planning to attend summer orientation at your college/university.
<u>June</u>
Have your counselor send your final transcript to your college/university.
Begin planning your move to college/university.