

# Steps to Your Future

**Austin High School  
Counseling Department  
301 Third Street NW  
Austin, MN 55912  
507-460-1812**

## **Freshman Year**

### **Transition – Building a Solid Foundation/High School Success**

- **Settle in to the routine of high school**
- **Do your best in strong academic courses – balance with new experiences and activities**
- **Use your planner, phone, Office 365 calendar or your own method of keeping organized!**
- **Commit to volunteer projects**
- **Join a club, sport or get involved in the arts**
- **Use MCIS to do surveys and set goals. Work on your Personal Learning Plan during PCR. Complete Learning Styles during PCR.**
- **Take inventory of yourself – what subjects do you like? What do you enjoy doing outside of school? What things would you like to get involved in? Complete Career Interest Profiler in MCIS through PCR.**
- **Explore future options. Talk to people about their careers. Talk to older students who are in college. Ask them what they would have done differently.**
- **Visit nearby college campuses for drama productions, concerts, or sporting events or as part of a family vacation**
- **Have at least one serious talk with your parents about your future, your plans and what expectation they have for you.**
- **Stop in the Counseling Office and meet our staff!**

## **Sophomore Year**

### **Exploration – Learning about Yourself/Career Exploration**

- **Keep your future options open by being successful in core academic courses**
- **Take the PSAT test – as practice**
- **Take a practice ACT on MCIS – get ready for the ACT!**
- **Continue your involvement in clubs, sports, and/or volunteer activities**
- **Use MCIS to explore possible careers and explore a few in depth, both on your own and during PCR. Complete IDEAS on MCIS during PCR.**
- **Complete “Reality Check” during PCR in MCIS.**
- **Use MCIS’ “School Sort” to look at different post-secondary options or “Compare School” to compare several different post-secondary institutions**
- **Consider visiting RCC to research your options for programs in Career & Technical areas!**
- **Check out post-secondary/major resources in the College & Career Center**
- **Continue talking to your parents about post-secondary options and financing your education**

## **Junior Year**

### **Choices – Considering your Options/Post-Secondary Program Selection**

- **Keep your options open by continuing to work hard in core academic courses**
- **Visit with college representatives that visit AHS**
- **Consider attending National College Fair in Minneapolis**
- **Attend Junior Career Day/College Fair at Riverland Community College in the fall**
- **Take the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall**
- **Attend Junior Parent Night in the spring**
- **Use MCIS to complete Personal Learning Plan, “College Search” and “Compare Colleges” looking at post-secondary options during PCR**
- **Complete Career Interest Profiler in MCIS during PCR**
- **Use MCIS to complete “Application Tracker” in MCIS during PCR**
- **Plan college visits during MEA break, winter break, spring break and/or summer**
- **Prepare for ACT with practice ACT or ACT course through MCIS**
- **Take ACT in April at Austin High School**
- **Prepare college essay/scholarship essay/job application essay/cover letter in PCR**

## **Senior Year**

### **Commitment – Taking Action to Make it Happen/Post-Secondary Success**

- **Enroll in solid academic course load – check credits for graduation**
- **Contact teachers in person about requests for letters of recommendation**
- **Complete “Student Brag Sheet” and give to recommenders**
- **Narrow your long list of colleges to those to which you will apply**
- **Submit applications in advance of deadlines – use college electronic version of the college’s application**
- **Request transcripts to be sent using “Parchment”**
- **Let counseling department know if you are using the “Common Application”**
- **Enter college information into MCIS**
- **Visit with college representatives whenever possible**
- **Visit colleges whenever possible**
- **Attend Financial Aid Information in September**
- **Submit FAFSA as soon as you are able after October 1st**
- **Research scholarship opportunities and get on e-mail list from College & Career Center**
- **Consult counselor as admission decisions are received – update status in MCIS**
- **Meet May 1 Candidate’s Reply Date for notifying college of your choice**
- **Complete “Senior Exit Survey” with Counseling Department**
- **Finish Senior year strong!**