



COLLEGE 101

11th Grade College Readiness Information and Timeline



11th Grade Timeline

SEPTEMBER– COLLEGE TYPES & ALTERNATIVES

Narrow down your college/training options and meet with your counselor to review your post-high school plans.

OCTOBER– APPRENTICESHIPS

Learn about your options and alternatives.

NOVEMBER– RESEARCHING COLLEGES

Attend a college and career fair or arrange a college visit to discover your best college fits.

DECEMBER– PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Understand how to pay for college using financial aid and scholarships.

JANUARY– ACCESSING THE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

Completing the requirements so that you can access your scholarship.

FEBRUARY– SCHOLARSHIPS

Learn about types of scholarships and how to apply for them.

MARCH– PARTS OF A COLLEGE APPLICATION

Colleges and certification programs have unique application requirements. Learn about the different parts and what you need to apply.

APRIL– PREPARING FOR YOUR SENIOR YEAR

Determine what you need to do to graduate high school and be college ready.

MAY– ALL ABOUT FAFSA

Learn about FAFSA eligibility and how to apply to help you pay for college.

JUNE– ALL ABOUT WASFA

Learn about WASFA eligibility and how to apply to help you pay for college.

SEPTEMBER: COLLEGE TYPES

The term college includes technical colleges, 2-year community colleges, **vocational** or trade schools and 4-year colleges or universities. It is important to explore your options to find the best fit for you.

WHERE SHOULD I GO FOR COLLEGE?

Public and Private 4-year College/University

- These schools offer bachelor's degrees, usually completed in 4 years of full-time study.
- Private schools typically charge a higher **tuition** but may offer a significant amount of **scholarships** to make attendance affordable

Private 2-year College/ Vocational/ Trade Schools

- Private 2-year, vocational or trade schools provide education for a specific career.

Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs)

- These schools offer **associate's degrees** and **certificates**, including for specific **trades**.
- Washington state has 34 public CTCs.
- Some CTCs now offer **bachelor's degrees**

Make sure to research ANY school's **accreditation** and job placement rates.

Common characteristics for each type of college in Washington state.

	Community and Technical Colleges	Public 4-year Colleges	Private 4-year Colleges
Selectivity All require an application . Those that are moderate and highly selective typically require submission of essays, grades, test scores and other components.	Least selective	Moderate to highly selective	Moderate to highly selective
Campus Size Number of undergraduate students	5,000-30,000	Over 10,000	Less than 5,000
Tuition Tuition per year for full-time enrollment (for local residents)	Low (around \$4,000)	Medium (\$7,000-\$11,000)	High (over \$30,000)
Undergraduate Degrees Offered	Certificates and associate's degrees (AA, AAS)	Bachelor's degrees (BA or BS)	Bachelor's degrees (BA or BS)

OCTOBER: APPRENTICESHIPS

In an apprenticeship, you can **earn money while learning** through a combination of hands-on, **on-the-job training (OJT)** and related academic classes. Apprenticeships are competitive and strict, and are generally more demanding than **internships**.

APPRENTICESHIP

Work + Education → Career

Apprenticeships are offered by employers, **trade unions** and independent programs. **Programs generally last 2-5 years** and are a good way to start a career in a well-paying field. Apprenticeship programs offer certifications, licenses and/or college **degrees**.

WHAT JOB CAN I GET AS AN APPRENTICE?

Apprenticeships are available in a variety of industries, such as **aerospace, advanced manufacturing, construction, energy and marine technology**.

Examples of careers include:

Aircraft mechanic	Electrician
Automotive mechanic	Fire fighter
Bricklayer	Plumber
Carpenter	Truck driver
Cement mason	Welder

HOW MUCH WOULD I GET PAID?

Apprentices earn money while in the program; the pay increases as they progress. Upon graduation, they become “journey-level” workers.

Starting apprentice– minimum \$18/hr + **benefits** (e.g. medical, dental, and vision)

Journey– level worker (apprenticeship graduate)- minimum \$30/hr + benefits (e.g. medical, dental, vision and retirement)

HOW DO I BECOME AN APPRENTICE?

1. Make sure you meet the requirements.

Generally, these include:

- High school **diploma**
- Specified abilities (may require math)
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation

2. Find a program and apply.

- Each program has unique procedures for applying.
- To learn more about the process, talk to your counselor, GEAR UP team or visit Ini.wa.gov

NOVEMBER: RESEARCHING COLLEGES

College search takes time. Schedule a few hours each week to work on researching colleges.

WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER?

Type of college – technical, 2-year, 4-year

Location – distance from home, weather, urban or rural, etc.

Degrees available – **associate's**, **bachelor's**, **certifications** and **apprenticeships**

Programs available – subject areas or **majors** offered

Public vs. private – public colleges are partially funded by government funds and private colleges are not directly publicly funded

Special focus – colleges that focus on a specific interest or student population such as arts, single-sex, religiously affiliated and specialized-mission colleges

Diversity – the types of cultures, languages and demographics represented on campus or in the community

Size – number of students, campus size, class size, city population, etc.

Cost of attendance – in- or out-of-state **tuition**, college **fees**, books, transportation and housing

Selectivity – measured by the percentage of students who get accepted based on admission requirements

Graduation rate – number of students who graduate within 4 or 6 years from that college

HOW DO I RESEARCH COLLEGES?

- Visit: wcan.org/resources/college-map for a list of colleges in Washington state
- View college websites
- Sign up for college mailing lists
- Attend **college fairs**
- Tour colleges

Quick Tips

- *Community colleges offer 2-year degrees with a path to **transfer** to a 4-year school and some offer bachelor degree programs.*

- *Consider the admissions requirements and determine if the school is a **reach**, **solid**, or **safety** for you. It is recommended that you apply to at least one school in each category:*

***Reach** – You might not get in, but it's worth applying to because it's your dream school*

***Solid** – You're a competitive applicant and will likely get accepted*

***Safety** – You'll definitely get accepted, and it's a backup in case the others don't work out*

- ***TALK TO:** your high school counselor, **GEAR UP** team, college **admissions counselors** or representatives who visit your school, family members, teachers, mentors, and community members who have been to college*

DECEMBER: PAYING FOR COLLEGE

The cost of college can be overwhelming, but there are different resources to help you pay for college. People often use various sources of financial aid to pay for college in addition to what they may have saved or earn from their job. Financial Aid resources include any **grant or scholarship, loan, or work study** offered to help you meet your college expenses.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

College costs vary by school. Each college estimates the **Cost of Attendance (COA)** by adding together some or all of the below expenses:

Tuition

Fees

Room and board

Transportation

Books and supplies

Other living expenses

HOW DO I QUALIFY?

Financial Aid

- In order to be considered for financial aid, you need to complete the **FAFSA** or **WASFA** your senior year and every year while in college.
- Each college determines financial aid eligibility for federal, state and institutional types of aid based on awarding policies at that campus.

Scholarships

- There are thousands of scholarships that can help you pay for college. Different scholarships have different application requirements. Most scholarships require that you complete the **FAFSA** or **WASFA**.

TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID:

Scholarships– Money awarded to students based on academic or other achievements to help pay for education expenses. Scholarships generally do not have to be repaid.

Grants– A form of gift aid, usually based on financial need. A grant does not need to be repaid, unless, for example, you withdraw from a school and owe a refund.

Work Study– A financial aid program (federal or state) that allows a student to work on-campus or with approved off-campus employers to earn money to pay for **college expenses**.

Loans– Money you can borrow and repay over time, with interest added in most cases.

Keep In Mind:

Knowing the different types of financial aid is only the first step. You may not need to take out financial aid to cover the full cost of attendance.

JANUARY: ACCESSING THE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

You're about to graduate and go to college. It's time to figure out what you need to do to get your College Bound Scholarship. There are forms to complete and deadlines to meet. It's essential you and your family understand the process.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

1. Meet the College Bound Scholarship pledge requirements
2. File the **FAFSA** or **WASFA**. You may file as early as October 1 of your senior year. Remember, each college has their own financial aid deadlines.
3. Be admitted to and enroll in a college in Washington within one year of high school graduation.
4. Be a U.S. citizen, eligible non-citizen, or meet the program's state residency requirements.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- College Bound will send you a "**match email**" notifying you when your FAFSA or WASFA is matched to your original College Bound application.
- College Bound will automatically identify you as a College Bound student to all of the colleges you listed on the FAFSA or WASFA.

If you don't receive your "**match email**" notifying you that your College Bound application matched with your FAFSA or WASFA, call **888-535-0747** or email collegebound@wsac.wa.gov

WHAT WILL THE COLLEGE DO?

1. **Determine** if your income meets the eligibility guidelines.
2. **Calculate** your financial aid award.
3. **Send** you a financial aid award letter (by mail or email) indicating how much aid you will receive.
4. **Disburse** your **financial aid** to you, including your College Bound Scholarship, before classes begin.

Quick Tips

*-Students would have applied to College Bound in middle school before the end of their 8th grade year and committed to meeting the College Bound Pledge in high school to receive the scholarship. College Bound combines on your award letter with other **state financial aid** to cover **tuition** (at public college rates), some **fees** and a small book allowance.*

FEBRUARY: SCHOLARSHIPS

Money for education expenses based on criteria such as academics, athletics, community service or financial need. Community organizations, colleges, religious institutions and private companies are examples of scholarship providers. **Regardless of your background or immigration status, there is likely a scholarship for you.**

WHAT TYPES OF SCHOLARSHIPS CAN I APPLY FOR?

Academic/Merit: Based on GPA, test scores and/or coursework

Athletic: Based on athletic performance

Creative: Based on talent in art, music, dance

Community service: Based on involvement in your school or community

Diversity: Based on race, ethnicity, family heritage, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

Need: Based on financial need

Other: Leadership, alumni, etc.

DO RESEARCH

Is the scholarship renewable? If yes, learn about the renewal requirements. If it's not, think about how you are going to replace these funds the following year.

Is it portable? Can you take the scholarship with you if you **transfer** schools? Some scholarships are bound to specific colleges.

WHERE CAN I LOOK FOR SCHOLARSHIPS?

Your high school counselor is a good place to start. Here are some places to begin your research:

TheWashBoard.org: thewashboard.org

FastWeb: fastweb.com

Beyond Dreaming Scholarship List: scholarshipjunkies.org/beyond

The colleges you are interested in or local organizations such as Act Six, College Success Foundation, and Washington State Opportunity Scholarship.

You may also be eligible for one of these state programs such as the College Bound Scholarship (Chapter 3) or Passport to Careers.

HOW DO I APPLY?

1. **Research** scholarships you are **eligible** for.
2. **Submit** your **applications**. Make sure you follow instructions carefully!
3. **Complete** the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (**FAFSA**) or Washington Application for State Financial Aid (**WASFA**).

MARCH: PARTS OF A COLLEGE APPLICATION

All colleges have an **application**. Typically, you can submit a vocational, technical, 2-year or 4-year college/university application online and sometimes in person, or by mail.

WHAT DO I NEED TO APPLY TO MOST COLLEGES?

Your **official transcripts** from **high school** and college if you have earned college credit

Your test scores from the **SAT or ACT**

WHAT ADDITIONAL STEPS MIGHT I NEED TO COMPLETE A 4-YEAR COLLEGE APPLICATION?

Personal Statement – a way for the college to get to know you and why you are interested in the school

Short Answer Responses – additional questions that may focus on specific concepts, such as diversity, culture and examples of persistence/overcoming adversities.

Activity Log/Resumé – a list of **extracurricular activities** that can include clubs, sports, jobs, and anything you do outside of school.

Letter of Recommendation – a letter from a teacher, counselor, coach, etc. that can speak to your qualities, characteristics and capabilities.

ANYTHING ELSE?

You may need to pay a fee in order to submit a college application.

However, **you may be eligible to receive a fee waiver:**

- If you are a College Bound Scholarship student
- If you receive free and reduced price lunch
- If you participate in programs like TRiO, Upward Bound, or GEAR UP
- If you are a youth in foster care
- If you took the SAT or ACT with a fee waiver
- Contact your high school counselor, college admissions office, National Association for College Admission Counseling, or The College Board to inquire about fee waivers.

Quick Tips

*-Some programs like **apprenticeships** vocational and technical certifications have a unique application process. Check out ini.wa.gov for more information on apprenticeships or visit sbctc.edu for vocational and technical training programs.*

*- You could be competing against **MANY** other applicants. Make sure your answers are a clear and true representation of who you are and how you have prepared yourself!*

APRIL: PREPARING FOR YOUR SENIOR YEAR

Congratulations! You've almost made it to your last year of high school. Now is **not** the time to get senioritis. You still need to do a number of things to graduate from high school and prepare for college.

WHAT SHOULD I DO THIS SUMMER?

- Register for SAT or ACT tests.** Check with your counselor to see if either test is offered at your school.
- Visit colleges** or attend **college fairs** and talk to college **admissions counselors.**
- Make a calendar** for important dates and deadlines.
- Develop a list** of several college choices (technical, 2-year, 4-year, apprenticeships).
 - Identify your top college choice and request information.
- Search for** and **apply for scholarships.**
- Save money** for college expenses.

WHAT SHOULD I DO MY SENIOR YEAR?

- Schedule an advising appointment** with your counselor or college-access mentor.
- If you are enrolled in dual credit courses, **talk to your teacher and counselor** about taking **AP, IB, or Cambridge exams** to earn college credit.
- Take the SAT or ACT.**
- Complete the FAFSA or WASFA** starting on October 1st of your senior year.
- Discuss a **college budget** with your family
- Work to maintain or **increase your GPA** with senior year grades. Colleges and scholarships require you to send fall AND spring **official transcripts.**

AM I ON TRACK TO GRADUATE?

- ☆ Make sure you have all the credits necessary to graduate.
- ☆ Check in regularly with your teachers about your grades.
- ☆ Continue completing other graduation requirements, such as your High School and Beyond Plan.

DON'T FREAK OUT!

If you have questions, make sure to talk to your GEAR UP team, counselor, teacher, mentor, peer or family member who can help you prepare or refer you to someone who can help.

MAY: ALL ABOUT FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the first step to apply for **financial aid**. **Completing the FAFSA is free and gives you access to the largest source of financial aid** to pay for vocational, technical, 2-year and 4-year colleges. Based on the info you provide, each college will calculate your financial aid **award**.

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?

As early as **October 1** of your senior year.

Make sure you **know the financial aid priority deadlines** for the colleges you are interested in.

You need to **submit the FAFSA every year** while in college.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents should complete the FAFSA. Some undocumented students may be **eligible** for the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (**WASFA**). **Check out the "All about WASFA" handout for more information.**

WHAT INFO DO I NEED TO PROVIDE?

Basic info, such as legal name, birthdate, etc.

Parent and student **tax/income information**

Your **list of colleges**

DO I NEED A FSA ID? (FEDERAL STUDENT AID ID)

An FSA ID gives you access to your FAFSA info and serves as your legal signature. You AND one parent (biological or adoptive) will need to create an FSA ID (username and password). Be sure you and your parent use separate email addresses. If your parent is undocumented they should not create an FSA ID. They will instead print, sign and mail a signature page.

What information do I need I need to create and FSA ID? Basic info, such as social security number (SSN), legal name, birthdate, contact info, etc.

DON'T FORGET:

Be sure to write down the answers to your challenge questions in the application and store them in a safe location with your FSA ID.

HOW DO I COMPLETE IT?

1. Create a Federal Student Aid Identification (FSA ID) at fsaid.ed.gov
2. Use your FSA ID to log in and complete the FAFSA at fafsa.gov
3. **Check for an email** confirming you have successfully submitted the FAFSA.

JUNE: ALL ABOUT WASFA

The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) is the first step to apply for **financial aid** for some undocumented students who live in Washington state. Completing the WASFA is free and gives eligible students access to **state financial aid** to pay for vocational, technical, 2-year and 4-year colleges in Washington. Undocumented students with or without **DACA** should complete the WASFA. **If you are a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, check out the “All About FAFSA” handout and do not complete the WASFA.**

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Eligibility is based on **immigration status**. Students must meet individual program and residency requirements. For specifics, use the eligibility questionnaire at readyssetgrad.org/wasfa

WHEN SHOULD I DO IT?

File as early as **October 1 of your senior year**.

Make sure you **know the financial aid priority deadlines** at the colleges you are interested in. (Often the WASFA deadline is not listed, but it is the same as the FAFSA deadline.)

You need to **submit the WASFA** every year while in college.

HOW DO I COMPLETE IT?

1. Go to readyssetgrad.org/wasfa and click on “Start a New WASFA.”
2. Complete the eligibility questionnaire.
3. Create an account and save your login and password.
4. Complete and submit your application.

What is the parent signature on the WASFA? You will need to send an email invitation to one parent (biological or adoptive) to electronically sign your WASFA. Be sure you and your parent use separate email addresses.

DON'T FORGET: Your parent's signature is needed to complete your application.

Your parent must electronically sign within 72 hour of being invited.

WHAT INFO DO I NEED?

- **Basic information**, such as legal name, birthdate, etc.
- Parent and student **tax/income information**
- Your **list of colleges** (Washington state colleges only)
- Your **DACA number** if you have one

Is my family's information protected?

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and colleges that access your application only use your information to determine eligibility for state financial aid. Campuses are not permitted to use the information for other purposes or share the data with other parties. If you have questions about the WASFA, contact the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) at 1-888-535-0747, option 2 or email wasfa@wsac.wa.gov