



School Counseling

Medford High and Vocational Technical High School Junior Year College and Career Planning Checklist

You are now one more year closer to graduating! Junior year is a very important year for getting ready for life after high school. The guidance department is here to guide you and give you information, but you are ultimately the one who can meet your goals and make your dreams come true. Work hard this year and remember to be proactive! Good luck! The following is a to-do list to help you stay on track.

FALL

- Challenge yourself academically. If you are thinking about college, please know that schools will put a strong focus on your grades this year.
- Keep learning about your likes, wants, talents, goals, etc. so you can continue discovering what you want out of a future career
- Visit college websites and sign up to have them send you information (start binder as a way of organizing all the information you will collect from colleges).
- When planning for your career, collect information from technical programs, internship programs, gap year programs, volunteer corps, military programs, etc.
 - If applicable, talk to your shop teachers about what kind of preparation you may need for your career. Think about co-op if you have not done so already.
- As much as is possible right now, stay involved in school and in the community through school clubs, sports, activities, community service, and or internships. This gives you real world experience and looks good on college applications.
- If college is part of your post secondary plan, make sure you familiarize yourself with www.collegeboard.com.
- Attend the college fair happening at the high school on Wednesday, October 20th
- Attend a Financial Aid Webinar: <https://www.mefa.org/events>

WINTER

- If you are taking the SAT, ACT, or SAT II. Sign up to take these tests either in January or in the Spring. Register at www.collegeboard.com or ACT.org.
- Ask guidance for fee waiver if your family qualifies for free/reduced lunch. This allows you to take SAT two times for free.
- If you haven't done so yet, begin learning about and speaking to your parents/guardians about financial aid.
- Register for AP exams if applicable.

SPRING

- ❑ Visit colleges during February and April vacation if possible. If not, learn more through virtual tours.
- ❑ If you are interested in the ROTC or military academy, look into special procedures and deadlines now.
- ❑ Gather information and begin working on the college “brag sheet” in order to help your teachers and guidance counselor write your letters of recommendation. You can download the brag sheet here : <http://www.medfordhighguidance.com/college-information/medford-high-school-brag-sheet-form/>
- ❑ Consider which people you will ask for letters of recommendation. Two teachers and one guidance counselor letter of recommendation is usually required. Give these teachers advanced notice as some prefer to write these over the summer. Remember to have parent/guardian complete their section of brag sheet and complete the teacher supplement.
- ❑ Explore a variety of college majors/careers if you haven’t done so already. Think about matching current subject interests with future goals. It is OK if you do not know what career you want, and often times your ideas will change, but exploring this will help you discover your options. You can learn more about majors/careers: here: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers#>

SUMMER

- ❑ Take time to write sample drafts of essays that might be refined later in the Fall to use as application essays. You can check individual college websites for essay questions and/or review the common application website for college essay questions, www.commonapp.org.
- ❑ Work on developing a resume, which includes your activities, accomplishments, and awards.
- ❑ By the end of the summer you should have your colleges narrowed down, preferably with 2-3 “safety schools”, 2-3 “match schools”, and 1-2 “reach schools”. This requires researching college admission requirements and making sure your GPA/Test Scores/Extracurricular activities/personal interests match that of the institution.