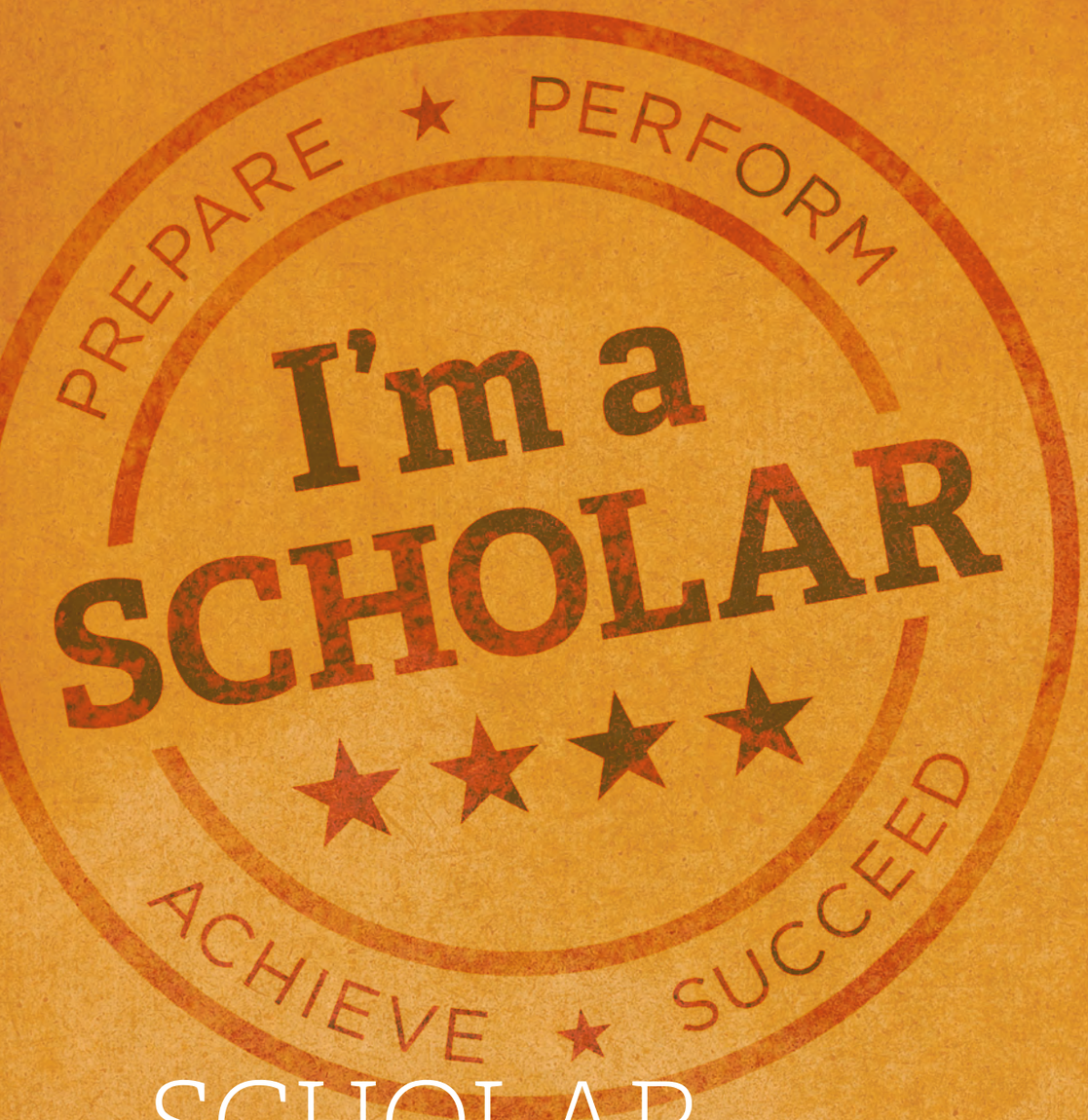


SCHOLAR SUCCESS GUIDE

GRADE 09

A program of the **Indiana Commission for Higher Education**

Watch "Paying for College 101"

Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity

Create a Graduation Plan

09

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

I PLEDGE TO SUCCEED

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

I PLEDGE to graduate with a minimum of a Core 40 diploma from a state-accredited Indiana high school. I will complete the Scholar Success Program that helps me stay on track for college and career success. I will achieve a cumulative high school GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. I will not use illegal drugs or alcohol or commit a crime or delinquent act. I will apply for admission to an eligible Indiana college my senior year and apply on time for student financial aid. I aim **TO SUCCEED.**

EARNINGS OVER THE COURSE OF A **40-YEAR CAREER***

HIGH SCHOOL GRAD

$1,000,000

COLLEGE GRAD

$2,000,000

*usgovinfo.about.

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS AT

Scholars.IN.gov

Record your ScholarTrack information below

USERNAME:

PASSWORD:

SCHOLAR ID #:

Dear Student,

Congratulations! Welcome to your freshman year of high school!

Even if you don't know exactly what career you want to pursue or what type of college you want to attend, it's important to start thinking about it now and make a plan that will help you reach your goals.

As a 9th-grader, you must complete three activities as part of the Scholar Success Program to help you stay on track with your 21st Century Scholarship. You will create a **graduation plan**, **participate in an extracurricular or service activity** and watch **"Paying for College 101."**

And remember: As a 21st Century Scholar, you have committed to the Scholar Pledge, which includes completing the Scholar Success Program, as well as meeting other academic requirements and remaining drug- and crime-free during high school and college.

In addition to these activities, there are other things you can do now to help you prepare:

- ✓ **Work hard in school.** Develop consistent study habits, earn good grades and take those challenging courses that will help prepare you for college.
- ✓ **Get involved outside the classroom.** Did you know colleges look for well-rounded students who demonstrate leadership and are involved in their schools and communities? Stand out by getting involved with extracurricular activities at school and taking advantage of volunteer opportunities. It's also a good way to make friends and explore your interests.
- ✓ **Start saving for college.** It's never too early — or too late — for you and your family to start thinking about saving and paying for college. The 21st Century Scholarship covers up to four years of college tuition, but there are additional expenses — such as books, housing and meal plans — to consider. Do some research to understand what college costs, what financial aid is available and what steps you will need to take to pay for additional expenses.

This guide will help connect you and your family to the resources and information you need to complete your 9th-grade requirements, succeed in school and maintain eligibility for your 21st Century Scholarship.

Take control of your future by making smart choices and staying on track for college and career success.

Have a great school year!

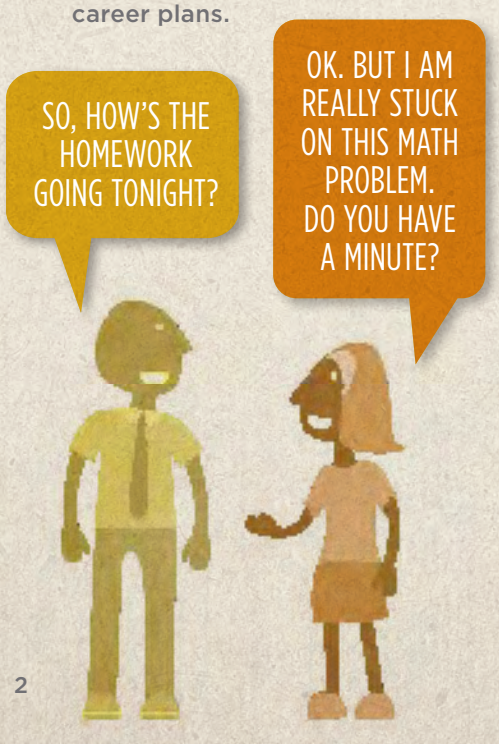
Teresa Lubbers
Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education

PARENTS of Scholars

TIPS TO HELP YOUR STUDENT SUCCEED.

There are many ways you can help your child succeed in high school and prepare for college success:

- Review classwork and homework with him or her nightly.
- Regularly review online grades and progress reports.
- Meet with teachers and counselors to discuss progress or any concerns.
- Identify a quiet place at home to study.
- Develop a daily homework schedule.
- Talk about college and career plans.



High school is a crucial time in your child's education — so your help and support mean a lot. As a 21st Century Scholar, your child must successfully complete the Scholar Success Program.

What is the Scholar Success Program?

The Scholar Success Program helps students prepare for college and career and stay on track to earn the 21st Century Scholarship, which helps pay tuition at Indiana colleges. Each grade level has three activities, outlined in the chart to the right, to complete by June 30 of that school year. This Scholar Success Guide provides information and resources to help students complete the requirements for their grade level. Scholars must complete the specific steps and track their progress online using ScholarTrack.

What is ScholarTrack?

ScholarTrack is an online portal used to track your child's progress through the program. Once your child has created a profile, they'll be able to log in, complete their requirements and see how many tasks they have left.

How can I help my Scholar?

First, read through this guide with your Scholar and help them put a plan together for finishing this year's activities. Then check out Scholars.IN.gov. Here, you'll find information about each grade level, and partners that can help your child succeed. Plus, you can log in to ScholarTrack with your child and check his or her progress together.

21st CENTURY SCHOLAR PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS

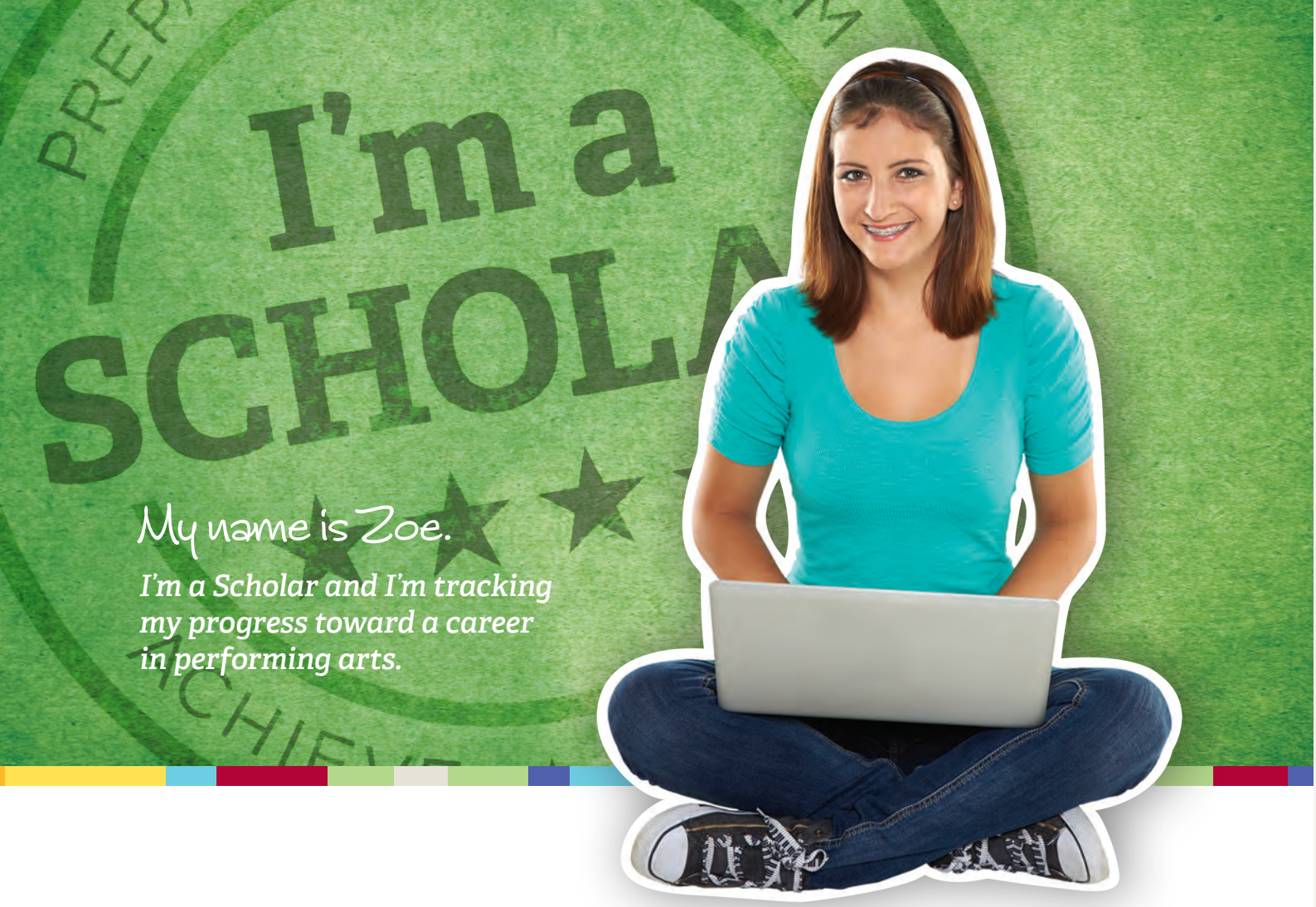
As a 21st Century Scholar, you have taken the Scholar Pledge to meet the following requirements:

- ✓ Complete the Scholar Success Program, which includes activities at each grade level in high school to help you stay on track for college and career success. The chart below shows all 12 activities that you must complete by high school graduation. The following pages provide instructions and resources to help you complete this year's requirements.
- ✓ Graduate from a state-accredited high school with a minimum of a Core 40 diploma and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- ✓ File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 10 as a high school senior and each year thereafter until you graduate from college.
- ✓ Apply to an eligible Indiana college as a high school senior, and enroll in college as a full-time student within one year of high school graduation.
- ✓ Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards established by your college.
- ✓ Complete 30 credit hours each year you are in college to stay on track toward earning your degree on time.
- ✓ Do not use illegal drugs, commit a crime or delinquent act, or consume alcohol before reaching the legal drinking age.

The **Scholar Success Program** includes activities that will help you stay on track for college and career success.

GRADE	REQUIRED ACTIVITIES		
09	Create a Graduation Plan[1]	Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity	Watch "Paying for College 101"
10	Take a Career Interests Assessment	Get Workplace Experience[2]	Estimate the Costs of College
11	Visit a College Campus	Take a College Entrance Exam (ACT or SAT)	Search for Scholarships[3]
12	Submit Your College Application	Watch "College Success 101"	File Your FAFSA

1. Plan should be updated annually to keep students on track for high school graduation and college admission.
2. Includes job shadowing, internship, part-time employment, interviewing a professional or related experience linked to a student's career aspirations.
3. Includes any additional scholarship opportunities beyond the 21st Century Scholarship.



WRITE YOUR SCHOLARTRACK USERNAME AND PASSWORD ON THE BACK OF YOUR SCHOLAR ID CARD AND KEEP IT WITH YOU.

SCHOLARTRACK

Tracking your progress toward earning your 21st Century Scholarship is simple! ScholarTrack is an online tool that will guide you through the Scholar Success Program. You'll be able to manage your progress throughout high school and find many resources to help you complete the requirements. Create a personalized account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** to get started. Grade-level specific activites must be completed by June 30 of each year throughout high school.

Keep your contact information updated

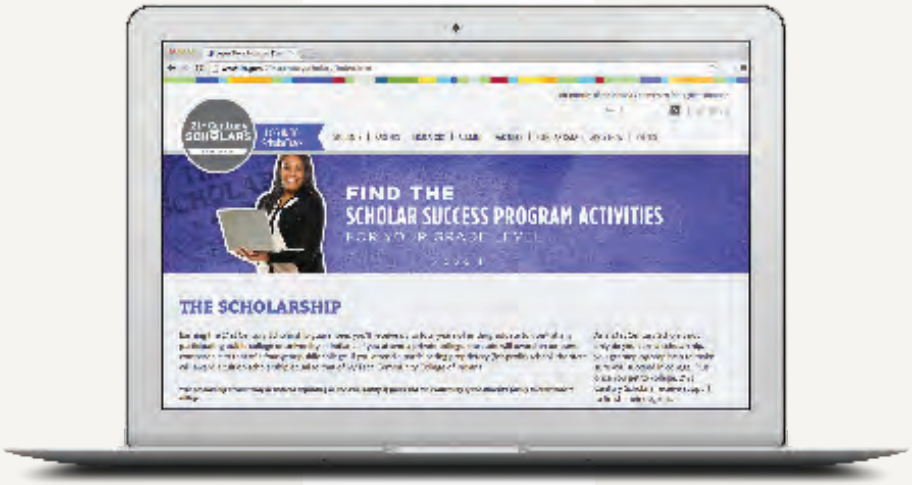
Throughout high school, you will receive information and resources to help you stay on track. Keep your mailing address, email address and phone number up to date to make sure you don't miss anything. If your contact information changes at any point, log in to your ScholarTrack account and make the necessary updates.

Don't have a computer?

If you do not have a computer with Internet access at home, use a computer at school, a public library or a friend's house. Or talk to your school counselor, parents or teachers for help finding a computer with Internet access.

GET STARTED

at Scholars.IN.gov



1 VISIT "SCHOLARTRACK"

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov** and click "LOG IN TO ScholarTrack." Select "New Student Account" and enter your Scholar ID and date of birth. (Follow the link below the Scholar ID field to find your ID.)

2 CREATE A PROFILE

Your profile will help us better understand you and your goals. Fill in the information and follow the steps to complete your profile and create a password.

3 START TRACKING

Use the student dashboard to track your progress as you complete the required Scholar Success Program activities at each grade level throughout high school.

GRADE 9 CHECKLIST

What steps must you take now to achieve your goals?

If you're not sure, that's okay! That's the whole point of the Scholar Success Program: to guide you every step of the way as you stay on track for college and career success.

In 9th grade, your Scholar Success Program requirements will put you on the right track as you create a high school Graduation Plan, participate in an extracurricular or service activity, and watch the "Paying for College 101" video.

On the next few pages, we'll walk you through each of the steps and direct you to the resources you'll need to check them off your list and continue on your way to success!

Create Your Graduation Plan

Based on your college and career plans and the type of Core 40 diploma you plan to pursue, map out a four-year high school plan with your school counselor. See pages 8–9 for more information.

Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity

Choose one or two activities to focus on during high school. These experiences prepare you for college, help you explore your career interests and introduce you to new people. See pages 10–11 for more information.

Watch the "Paying For College 101" Video

Find out what costs are involved in going to college and how to save and manage your money. Your 21st Century Scholarship may cover up to four years of tuition, but you must plan for additional expenses. See pages 12–13 for more information.

I'm a SCHOLAR

My name is Ozzie.

I'm a Scholar and I'm thinking about a career in either audio engineering or graphic design.

Do you have any idea where you may want to go to college? What do you think you might study?

I have visited Ball State a few times to see what a college campus is like. I am interested in either audio engineering or graphic design — something where I can really express myself.

What extracurricular activities do you participate in?

I really enjoy music. I like to DJ and produce music. I am involved in a group called SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) and it has a music program.

How are you preparing for college?

I am really focused now on getting good grades so I can get into college. I am excited about all of the opportunities and taking control of my college path.

09 Start Your Graduation Plan

In 9th grade, you must create a high school Graduation Plan that keeps you on track to earn a Core 40 diploma, meet college admission requirements and achieve your career goals.

What is a Graduation Plan?

A Graduation Plan helps you understand what courses, tests and related steps you need to complete in high school so you have a clear path to graduation and a solid academic foundation to achieve your college and career goals. It also helps you track your test scores, course grades and grade point average (GPA).

Your school counselor can help you develop your Graduation Plan, with input from your parents or guardians. You should start your plan as a freshman and update it throughout high school with your courses, grades and any changes in your career path.

Get started

The easiest way for you to keep your Graduation Plan up to date is by using the Indiana Career Explorer website, a free tool provided by the state of Indiana to help you with college and career planning. Log in to your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack.** Click on the box to create your Graduation Plan and follow the steps to access the Indiana Career Explorer website. Once you're at the Indiana Career Explorer page, click "New Users Register Here" and then follow these steps:

1. **SET UP** a profile and create a username and password.
2. **CLICK** the blue "My Portfolio" tab and then select "Indiana Graduation Plan."
3. **CREATE** your Graduation Plan. Fill out as much as you can and then log back in whenever you have updates.

WATCH AN INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO TO LEARN HOW TO USE THE INDIANA CAREER EXPLORER AT INDIANACAREEREXPLORER.COM.

Download a printer-friendly PDF of the Graduation Plan

You can also start your Graduation Plan on paper. Visit **Scholars.IN.gov/grade-9** to download a printable PDF version of the Graduation Plan. Fill out what you can on your own, and then take it with you to your next school counselor meeting.

If you do not have a computer with Internet access at home, use a computer at school, a public library or a friend's house.

For more information and resources to help you plan for college and career success, visit **LearnMoreIndiana.org/college**.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

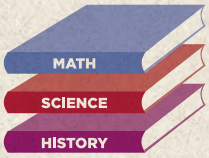
Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions that confirm you've created your Graduation Plan.

MEET WITH YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR REGULARLY TO HELP YOU MAINTAIN YOUR PLAN.

Bring a paper copy of your Graduation Plan with you or ask your school counselor if you can view the online version together using Indiana Career Explorer.

You should meet with your counselor at least twice a year. Each time you meet, be prepared to answer questions about your:

COURSE PLAN



&

TESTING PLAN

&

CAREER PATH

&

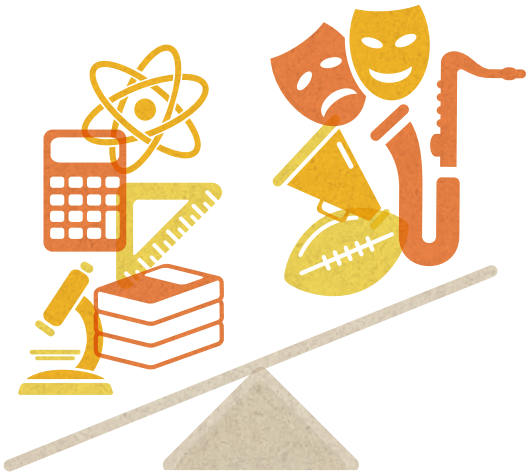
GRADES & GPA

09 Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity

Getting involved in these activities during high school is a great way to prepare for college, explore your interests and make friends.

SCHOOLWORK SHOULD BE YOUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY!

BE SURE TO **BALANCE** YOUR ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR STUDIES.



What are extracurricular and service activities?

Schools typically offer a wide range of activities outside of regular schoolwork, such as band, chorus, athletics, theater, student newspaper, school yearbook, student council and a variety of clubs.

The activity you choose does not have to be school-sponsored. You can also get involved in a variety of service activities — commonly known as "volunteering" or "community service" — through your church, local youth organizations or community centers.

Why do it?

Students who are involved in extracurricular and service activities learn how to prioritize and manage their time. You will gain confidence, build character, and develop leadership and social skills. Showing a commitment to these kinds of activities also demonstrates to others that you are a capable and active member in the community, which will help you stand out on your college applications.

Get started

Log in to your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack**. Click on "Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity" and preview the questions you'll need to answer about your activity.

WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR FREE TIME?
WHAT HOBBIES DO YOU ENJOY?
WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?
WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER INTERESTS?
WHAT SKILLS DO YOU HAVE?
WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?

Choosing an activity

- Consider your interests and skills, as well as causes that are important to you. Select activities that you'll find worthwhile.
- Consider your career interests, too. Explore activities that match up with careers you're thinking about.
- There are plenty of opportunities to get involved. Pay attention to announcements, fliers and websites for information.
- Before you commit, find out what your participation would require. How much time outside of school will it take? Will you need transportation? Discuss the details with your parents or guardians.
- If you aren't sure how to get involved in activities, talk to your school counselor, a teacher, a family member, a mentor or another caring adult for help.
- Don't get over-involved. School work should remain your number one priority. Pick just one or two activities.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions that confirm you've participated in at least one extracurricular or service activity.

SOME VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER:

- Animal shelters or veterinary clinics
- Churches
- Daycare centers
- Environmental organizations
- Food banks or soup kitchens
- Garden centers
- Homeless shelters
- Local hospitals or health care facilities
- Nursing homes or assisted living facilities
- Preschools and elementary schools
- Public libraries
- Summer camps
- Youth-serving organizations

For more information about what you can do to prepare for college and your future career, visit **LearnMoreIndiana.org/career.**

Watch the "Paying For College 101" Video

As a freshman, it's time to think about the costs involved in going to college, as well as how to save and manage your money.

DON'T LET THE COST OF COLLEGE STRESS YOU OUT!

THERE ARE LOTS OF THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE.

You and your family should know exactly what expenses your 21st Century Scholarship does and does not cover so that you can be prepared to pay the additional costs of college.

The more you learn now about the reality of paying for college, the better equipped you will be to start searching for additional scholarships as a junior and navigating the financial aid process as a senior. And developing good spending habits, creating a budget and saving money in a bank account will serve you well now, as a college student and throughout your life.

How much does it cost to go to college?

"Paying for College 101" is a video that helps you and your family understand what you need to know and what you need to do to pay for your college education.

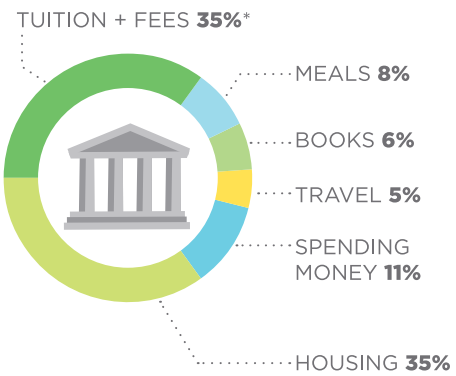
It covers some important topics, such as:

- Why college is important and how to pay for it
- Understanding your 21st Century Scholarship (what it pays for and what it doesn't)
- Your financial aid options and how to apply for financial aid

Get started

Log in to your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and click "Watch 'Paying for College 101'." Follow the link to watch the video. It takes about 15 minutes to complete. If you do not have a computer with Internet access at home, use a computer at school, a public library or a friend's house. Or talk to your school counselor, parents or teachers for help finding a computer with Internet access.

YOUR 21st CENTURY SCHOLARSHIP WILL ONLY COVER TUITION AND REQUIRED FEES, SO YOU SHOULD PLAN TO SAVE FOR ADDITIONAL COSTS.



Other helpful activities

The earlier you start saving for college, the better! In addition to watching "Paying for College 101," consider doing the following:

- **DO YOUR RESEARCH.** Review additional resources and tools at **LearnMoreIndiana.org/cost**.
- **TALK WITH YOUR PARENTS.** Make sure you and your parents both understand the requirements for earning and keeping your 21st Century Scholarship, and what your scholarship does and does not cover. Talk about how you and your family plan to save money for college and budget accordingly.
- **SAVE YOUR PENNIES.** Consider opening a bank account or tax-free Indiana CollegeChoice 529 Direct Savings Plan (**CollegeChoiceDirect.com**). Even a small contribution each month will make a difference.
- **DO THE MATH.** Download the Indiana College Costs Estimator app (for iPhone and Android phones) to calculate your college expenses and learn more about financial resources. For more information, visit **IndianaCollegeCosts.org**.

*Based on estimated college costs for in-state residents at a four-year public university. ABCnews.com via SayStudent.com.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions that confirm you've completed this requirement.

WHAT COLLEGE EXPENSES DO I NEED TO PLAN FOR?

TUITION

+

HOUSING

+

BOOKS

+

MEALS

+

SPENDING MONEY

I'm a SCHOLAR

My name is Janelle.

I'm a Scholar and I'm working toward a career in broadcasting and telecommunications.

Have you decided where you're going to college and what you might study?

Either Indiana University or Ball State. I plan to major in telecommunications. I want to be a news anchor or an entertainment reporter.

How has being a Scholar helped you in high school?

It's provided a lot of opportunities. Teachers and staff look at me as a student leader at school. Academically, I have a 3.9 GPA. I'm proud of myself. Everything I do now is preparing me for what's next. I'm working on something bigger than high school.

What's the biggest benefit of being a 21st Century Scholar?

I realize people are paying tons of money for college. Being in this program is helping me financially and that makes me stress-free. I'm extremely appreciative of everything this program has to offer.

RESOURCES

We know the road to college can be confusing, which is why Indiana has created this guide, as well as many other resources, to help you succeed in high school and prepare for college.

School Counselors

The first people you can turn to for help are your school counselors. They have been through the process before, helped many other students like you and can connect you to the assistance you need.

Scholars.IN.gov

The 21st Century Scholars website is a comprehensive resource for you and the Scholar Success Program. If you need more information about the program requirements discussed in this guide, check out **Scholars.IN.gov/grade-9.**

Student Support Center: 1-888-528-4719

Call the Student Support Center if you have any questions about your scholarship or the 21st Century Scholars program. Or you can email us at **Scholars@che.IN.gov**.

Regional Outreach Coordinators

For answers to your questions contact your regional Outreach Coordinator. To locate your Outreach Coordinator, visit **Scholars.IN.gov/contact-us.**

Learn More Indiana

Learn More Indiana has answers to your questions about planning, preparing and paying for college completion and career success.

Website: **LearnMoreIndiana.org**
Facebook: **Facebook.com/LearnMoreIN**
Twitter: **Twitter.com/LearnMoreIN**

College Success Coalitions

Learn More Indiana has developed a growing network of state and local organizations working to help more Hoosiers access and complete college. These organizations host local events and activities to help students and their families prepare for college.

College Success Coalition member organizations include local government, businesses, colleges, schools, local media, libraries, youth-serving organizations, service clubs, community foundations, faith-based organizations and others.

To find a College Success Coalition near you, visit **LearnMoreIndiana.org/coalitions**.

FAQS

How do I maintain the Scholar Pledge and keep my scholarship?

To maintain eligibility for your scholarship, you must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the Scholar Success Program by high school graduation which includes activities at each grade level in high school to help you plan, prepare and pay for college.
- Graduate from a state-accredited high school with a minimum of a Core 40 diploma and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 10 as a high school senior and each year thereafter until you graduate from college.
- Apply to an eligible Indiana college as a high school senior, and enroll in college as a full-time student within one year of high school graduation.
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards established by your college.
- Complete 30 credit hours each year you are in college to stay on track toward earning your degree on time.
- Do not use illegal drugs, commit a crime or delinquent act, or consume alcohol before reaching the legal drinking age.

What should I do if I change schools or my contact information changes?

It's important that you receive notifications and updates from the 21st Century Scholars program to make sure you're on track to complete the requirements. Update your school and contact information in your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack**. From your dashboard, click "Edit My Profile."

Do I have to file the FAFSA every year in high school?

No. You must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) during the year you graduate high school. This will be your senior year, unless you plan to graduate early.

If I graduate early, can I still use the 21st Century Scholarship?

Yes. If you plan to graduate following your junior year, you need to notify your school counselor so he/she can inform the 21st Century Scholars program of this change. You must also complete the FAFSA by March 10 of your junior year.

Can I use my scholarship to pay for dual-credit classes while in high school?

No. The scholarship is only available once you have graduated high school.

If my GPA falls below 2.5 for a semester, will I lose the scholarship?

You must achieve an overall, cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale upon graduation from high school. A cumulative GPA is the average of all your grades during all your semesters in high school. Even if your cumulative GPA falls below 2.5 some time during your high school career, you are still eligible for your scholarship as long as your GPA is at least 2.5 at the time of graduation.

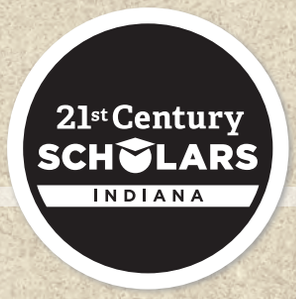
Can I receive the scholarship if I complete a high school equivalency exam (like the GED or TASC) or complete home school?

No. You must graduate with a Core 40 diploma from an eligible high school recognized by the Indiana Department of Education.

What happens if I don't complete my 9th-grade Scholar Success Program activities on time?

You must verify you've completed the three grade-specific activities via ScholarTrack by June 30 of each academic year, or you will be placed on probationary status. You must complete the activities by June 30 of the following year to return to good standing, or you will be at risk of losing the 21st Century Scholarship. You must complete all of the activities by June 30 of your senior year to be eligible to receive the scholarship.

Scholars.IN.gov



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

SEP/2016