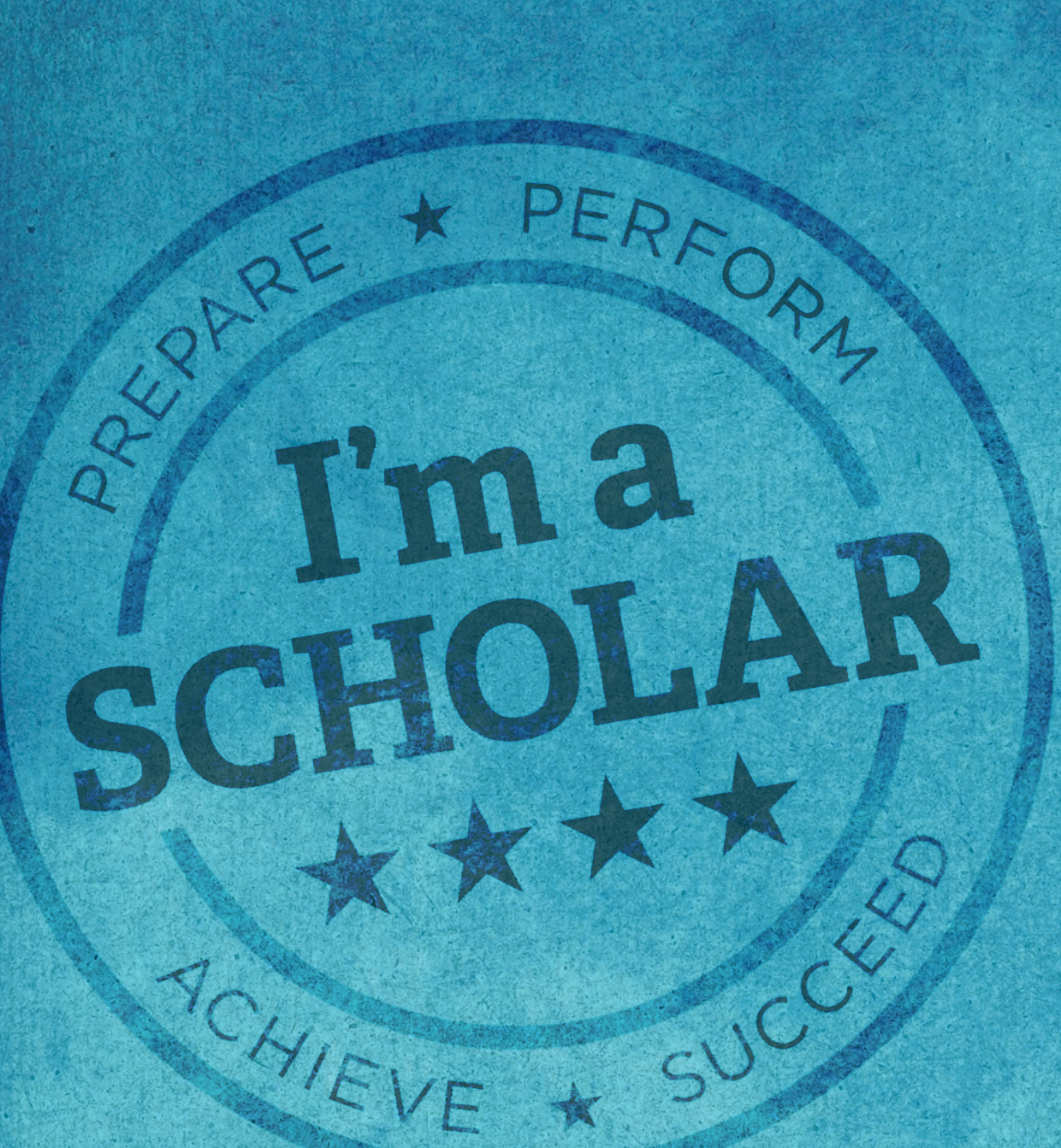


SCHOLAR SUCCESS GUIDE

GRADE 12

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

File Your FAFSA

Watch "College Success 101"

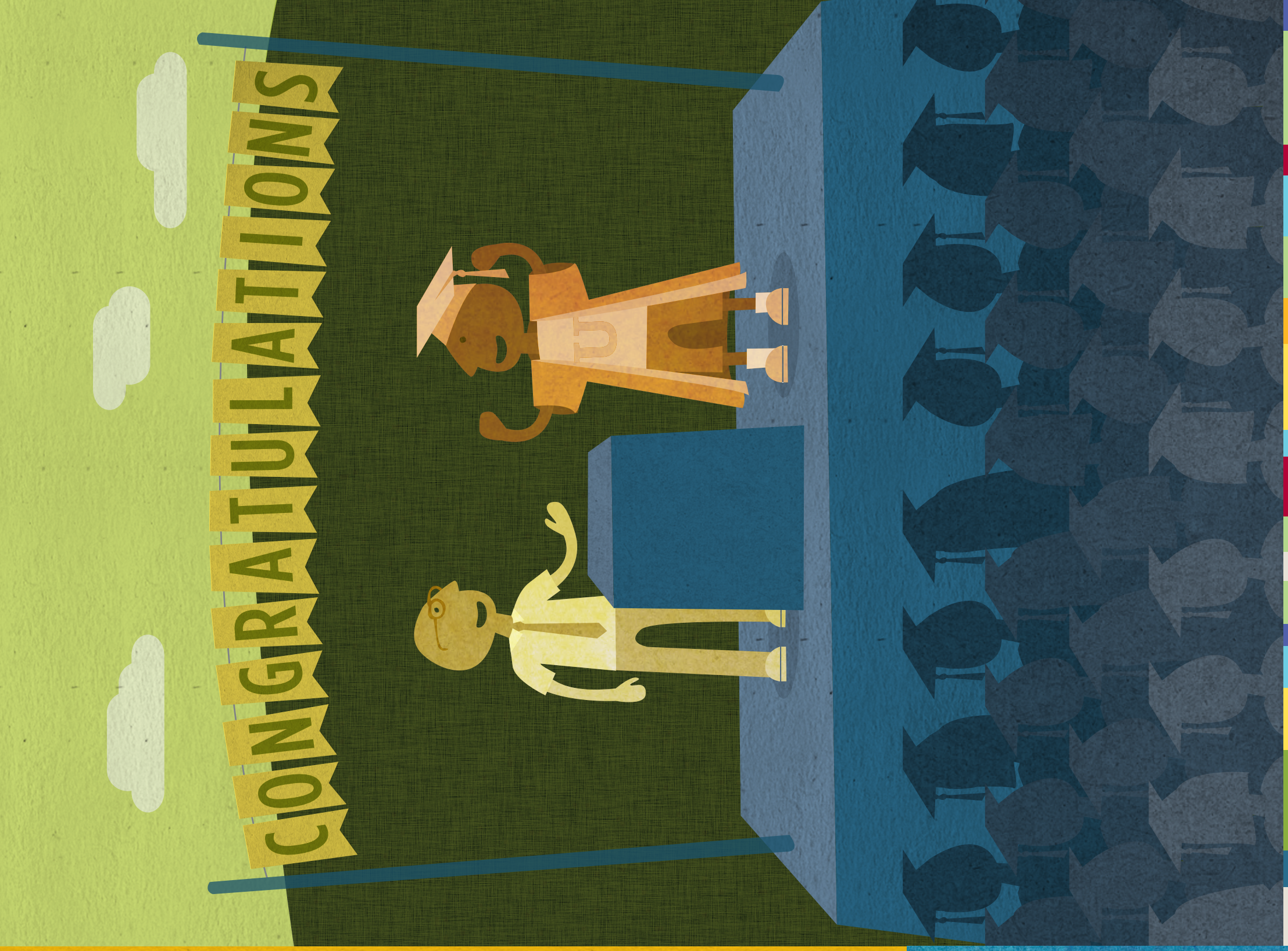
Submit your College Application

12

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

SCHOLAR SUCCESS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

I PLEDGE TO SUCCEED



COLLEGE PACKING: THE BASICS

- Room Supplies & Bedding
- Seasonal Clothes
- Laundry Supplies
- Kitchen Supplies & Snacks
- School Supplies & Tech Devices
- Bathroom Supplies & Toiletries
- Medical Supplies
- Prescriptions

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS AT

Scholars.IN.gov

Record your ScholarTrack information below

SCHOLAR ID#: .....

USERNAME: .....

PASSWORD: .....

Dear Student,

Congratulations! As a senior you're finishing one step, and beginning another. It can be easy to relax in your last year of high school, but it's important not to fall behind. This is the time to stay on top of everything to make sure you're heading where you want to be.

As a 12th-grader, you'll finish your last three **Scholar Success Program** activities. These are all focused on helping you take the steps to go to college next year. You will **submit your college applications**, **watch "College Success 101"** and **file your FAFSA**.

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

- ✓ **Continue to apply for scholarships.** Your 21st Century Scholarship will cover up to full tuition, but additional college expenses — room, board, books and living expenses — add up. Any other scholarships you earn can help pay for these expenses. You began searching for scholarships as a junior, but can continue applying for these throughout your senior year.
- ✓ **Up your scores.** You may wish to add an AP or dual-credit course to your schedule to boost your GPA or earn college credit. Think about taking the ACT or SAT one more time this fall to try and improve your scores.
- ✓ **Take leadership roles.** As a Scholar, you've taken on extracurricular activities and gotten workplace experience. Now that you're a senior, you should start to have more leadership opportunities in clubs, sports or work. Take advantage of these opportunities, and colleges will take notice.

And remember: As a 21st Century Scholar, you have committed to the Scholar Pledge to meet academic requirements, including completing the Scholar Success Program, and to remain drug- and crime-free during high school and college.

This program guide will help you complete your required activities as a senior so that you can stay on track toward graduating high school and succeeding in college and your future career.

Have a great school year!

Teresa Lubbers

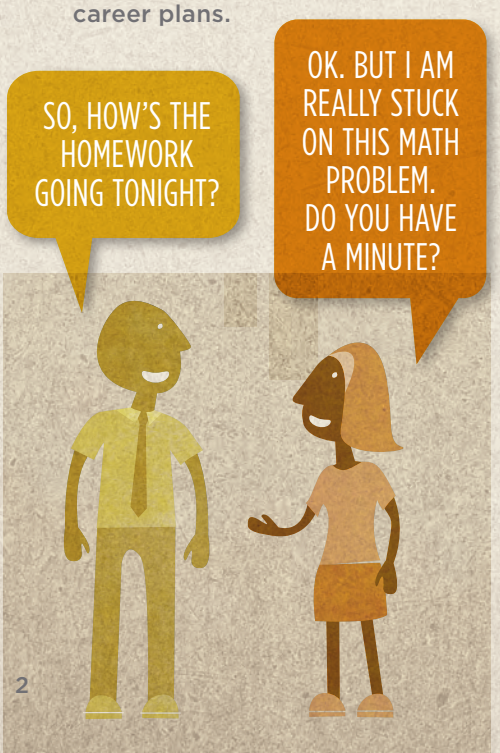
Teresa Lubbers
Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education

12 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 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.

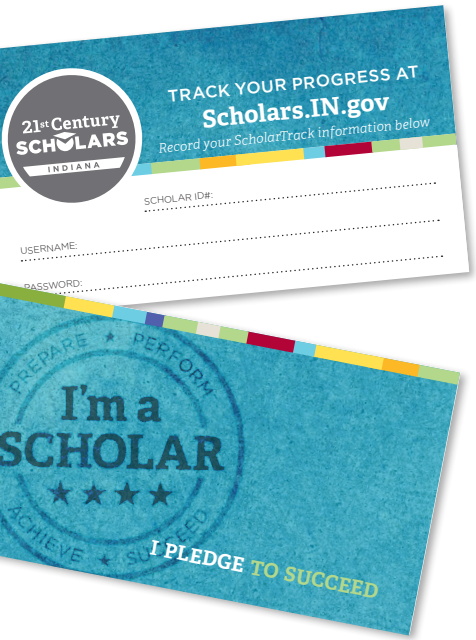
GRADE	REQUIRED ACTIVITIES		
09	Create a Graduation Plan[1]	Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity	Watch "Paying for College 101"
10	Take a Career Interests Assessment	Get Workplace Experience[2]	Estimate the Costs of College
11	Visit a College Campus	Take a College Entrance Exam (ACT/SAT)	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.

My name is Jacqulyn

I'm a Scholar, and I'm tracking my progress toward a career as a kindergarten teacher.

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



TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

As you complete the 12th-grade Scholar Success Program activities, log in to your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** to confirm you've completed the requirements. If you haven't already created your ScholarTrack account and completed your 9th-, 10th- and 11th-grade Scholar Success Program activities, get started now so you don't fall further behind and risk losing your scholarship. All activities must be completed by June 30 of your senior year.

Keep your contact information updated

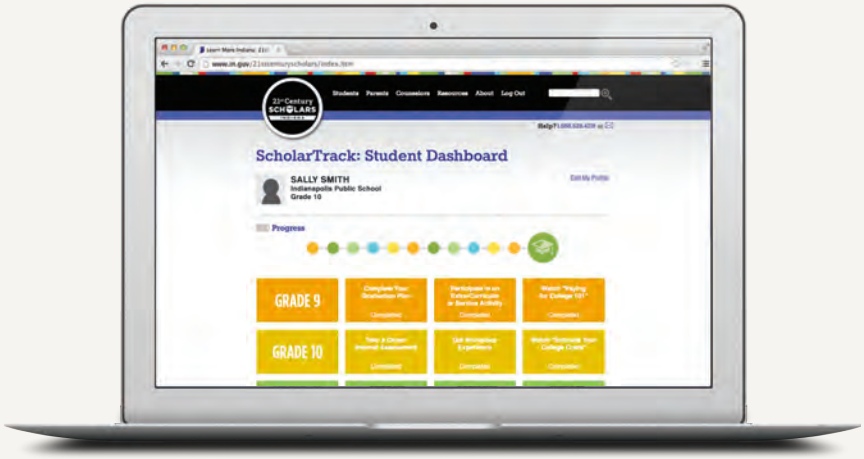
Throughout high school, you will receive information and resources to help you stay on track. Keep your mailing address, email address and phone number up to date to make sure you don't miss anything. You can make any necessary updates through your ScholarTrack account.

Don't have a computer?

If you do not have 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.

DON'T FORGET TO ACTIVATE YOUR SCHOLARSHIP!

Complete all of your Scholar Success Program requirements and log them all in your ScholarTrack account. You must complete all Scholar Success Program activities and maintain your Pledge. It activates your scholarship so you can start being rewarded for all your hard work!



Remember this date!

All Scholar Success Program activities, including the Grade 12 activities outlined in this guide, must be completed by **June 30 of your senior year**.

Where do my scholarship funds go?

Once you have completed all the Scholar Success Program activities and enrolled at an accredited Indiana college, the 21st Century Scholars office will send your name to the college you will attend. The financial aid department will claim the scholarships for each Scholar enrolled, and deposit that money into your student account to be used to pay for your college tuition.

Remember, you must enroll at an Indiana college within one year of high school graduation to remain eligible to receive the 21st Century Scholarship. If you have questions, you can contact your school's financial aid office or the statewide Student Support Center at 1-888-528-4719 or Scholars@che.IN.gov.

FINISH STRONG

1 FILE THE FAFSA BY **MARCH 10** AT FAFSA.GOV.

2 COMPLETE THE SCHOLAR SUCCESS PROGRAM BY **JUNE 30**.

3 **CONFIRM** YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE ACTIVITIES AT SCHOLARS.IN.GOV/SCHOLARTRACK.

4 EARN YOUR CORE 40 DIPLOMA WITH A **MINIMUM 2.5 GPA**.

12

GRADE 12 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 prepare for college and career success.

In 12th grade, your Scholar Success Program requirements will keep you on the right track as you submit your college application, watch a video on how to be successful in college and complete the process of applying for financial aid.

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!

Submit your College Application

This is the big one. You won't be going to college if you don't first apply to attend! Think back to your college visits from Grade 11 (and any others that you liked), pick the colleges you want to apply to, check for any application fees, get everything together and apply! See pages 8–9 for more information.

Watch "College Success 101"

This video is like a cheat sheet to your first year at college. From explaining things like registering for classes and getting your books, to where to eat and how to do laundry, "College Success 101" can help you navigate the questions you have about the college lifestyle. Find out more on pages 10–11.

File Your FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is how the federal government determines how much financial assistance you may be eligible for. You'll need to fill one out to receive any financial aid from a college — even if you won't receive government grants. Learn more on pages 12–13.

My name is Branton.

I'm a Scholar, and I want to study criminal justice and have a career in law enforcement.

How have you and your family started preparing for college?

We're making sure my grades are right and that I stay in AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination). My mom has already started saving money. I am studying a lot more now. I used to not care much about school, but now I do.

How has the 21st Century Scholars program helped you prepare for college?

Knowing that I have some scholarship money waiting for me and knowing I can go to an Indiana school has helped a lot. I don't have to worry about financial aid so I can focus more on school and making sure my grades are where they need to be.

How has being a Scholar helped you in school?

It has helped me not stress on how I'm going to pay for college. This program makes me push a little harder to keep my grades up and to keep my behavior in check.

12 Submit your college application

A college application is a request for admission into a college or university. While your grades are certainly a focus, schools want to learn about your character, your work ethic and how you've prepared for college.

Where should you start?

- Narrow down your list of colleges. Use the summer to plan which colleges you will apply to.
- Find out the deadlines for the colleges you are applying to. Set deadline reminders on your cell phone, in your planner and on a wall calendar at home.
- Meet with your school counselor at the beginning of your senior year. Together, you can make sure you have met — or will meet — all the admissions requirements.
- Make a list of application requirements and documents you'll need to complete the application. Make a timeline of important dates and deadlines for each college.

Ready to apply?

Although college applications vary, most have similar requirements. You'll need to check with the individual colleges you are applying to for their application requirements. These could include:

BASIC INFORMATION. Things like your name, address, phone number, birth date, social security number, parent/guardian information and high school.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT. Request a transcript from your school counselor, or you can send your transcript electronically to colleges for free using Parchment (**exchange.parchment.com**).

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION. These may be from teachers, coaches, mentors and other adults in your life. Be sure to give these individuals plenty of advance notice — at least three weeks.

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES SUCH AS THE ACT AND/OR SAT. Depending on the school you are applying to, you may be asked to submit ACT or SAT scores — or both. Check with your counselor to see about the best way for you to report your scores.

ESSAY, PERSONAL STATEMENT OR WRITING SAMPLE. After drafting your essay, ask your English teacher or another adult to proofread it for content and structure as well as grammar, spelling and punctuation.

LIST OF EXTRACURRICULAR AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC HONORS. Include any scholarships, awards, and other recognitions you have received during your high school years.

FEES. Most schools require a fee to process a student's application. Many Indiana colleges and universities offer automatic fee waivers for 21st Century Scholars. Check colleges' admissions web pages to see if they offer fee waivers.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS. Certain institutions or programs/majors within them may require other application components, such as a music performance piece, art portfolio or an interview. Check with individual schools for additional requirements.

Before you submit an application:

Make sure your application is 100 percent complete before you submit it. Ask a teacher, school counselor or mentor to review your application. Proofread your application thoroughly, especially any writing sections.

After submitting your application:

Contact the schools you've applied to, and make sure all parts of your application were received. Depending on the school, you may also be able to confirm receipt of your application online.

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 activity.

8 TIPS FOR CRAFTING YOUR BEST COLLEGE ESSAY

1. GET STARTED BY BRAINSTORMING. Brainstorming about your personality traits and defining your strengths is a good place to begin.

2. LET YOUR FIRST DRAFT FLOW. Don't worry about making it perfect. Just get your ideas flowing and your thoughts down on paper.

3. DEVELOP THREE ESSAY PARTS. Write an introduction that sets up your essay, a body explaining the main idea with examples, and a conclusion that summarizes everything.

4. BE SPECIFIC. Give your essay focus by figuring out how the question relates to your personal qualities.

5. FIND A CREATIVE ANGLE. Everyone grows up differently, and has individual passions. Show what makes you a great candidate by writing about your unique perspective.

6. BE HONEST. Don't write what you think the admission officers want to hear. Let your true personality show through.

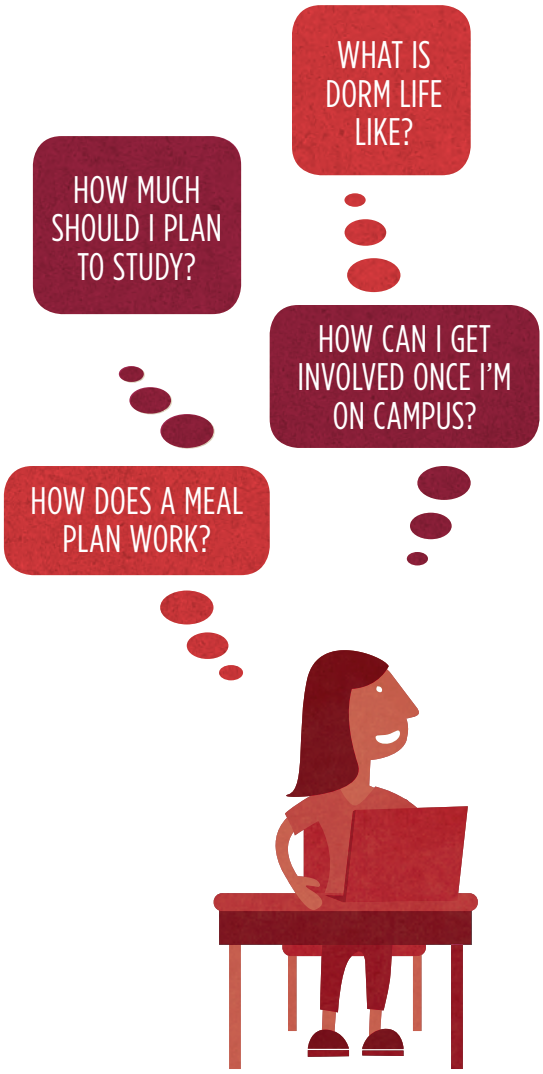
7. GET FEEDBACK. Ask your family, friends or teachers if your essay makes sense. Consider their feedback and make changes, but keep your voice.

8. PROOFREAD AND MAKE CORRECTIONS. Read your essay over carefully to check for errors. Ask someone who hasn't seen it yet to take a look as well.

SOURCE: https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/essays/8-tips-for-crafting-your-best-college-essay

12 Watch College Success 101

The "College Success 101" video prepares you for college — showing how you can succeed academically and get the most out of campus life.



Before you watch the video:

Make a list of questions you have about college — from academics and finances, to housing and student life. Write down your questions before you watch the module. As you watch, jot down any answers you learn, as well as additional questions that come to mind or things you wish to remember.

You'll need Internet access to watch the "College Success 101" video. If you don't have a computer with Internet access at home, use a computer at school, a friend's house or a nearby public library.

While you watch the video:

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov** to watch the video. You can find all the program activities in the Grade 12 section.

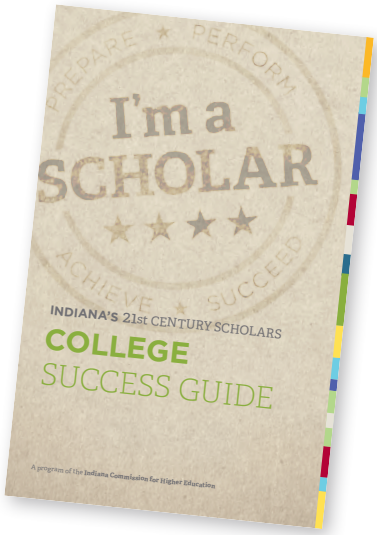
You'll need to log in to ScholarTrack to answer some questions — you may want to do this as you watch the video. Be sure to write down the answers to any of the questions you brainstormed earlier, and any information in the video you find helpful.

After watching the video:

Find the answers to your own questions about the transition to college. You can approach your school counselor, teachers and mentors with questions. Don't hesitate to contact staff at the college or university you plan on attending or the Student Support Center at 1-888-528-4719 or Scholars@che.IN.gov.

YOU SHOULD BE RECEIVING A COLLEGE SUCCESS GUIDE FROM YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR SOMETIME THIS YEAR.

THIS RESOURCE OFFERS ANSWERS TO MANY OF THE QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS YOU MIGHT HAVE AS YOU TRANSITION TO COLLEGE.



Other ways to be successful in college

TAKE A FULL SEMESTER OF CLASSES. You must complete 30 credit hours per year to remain eligible for your scholarship. You can choose to take some classes over the summer.

SEARCH OUT FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS. These are designed to help new students have meaningful college experiences. Be sure to ask about summer bridge programs, orientation weeks, first-year seminar courses and other programs.

THINK ABOUT YOUR MAJOR. You don't have to know your major when you start college, but having an idea of what interests you — such as medicine or business — will help you choose a college that offers degree programs that fit your goals.

GET INVOLVED ON CAMPUS. Joining a club, volunteering, playing sports or finding a work-study job on campus are all ways to meet new people and stay connected.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

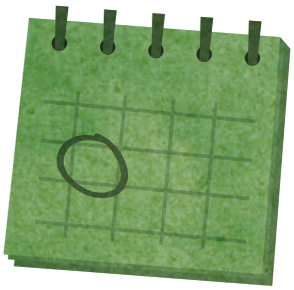
Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions that confirm you've completed this activity.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT DEGREES YOU PLAN TO EARN?

Depending on what you want to do after college, you may need to follow a certain degree path. There are several to choose from. You can get to know more about the types of degrees at **LearnMoreIndiana.org**!

12 File your FAFSA

In Grade 12, you must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be eligible to receive your 21st Century Scholarship and any other state, federal or college aid.



When does the FAFSA need to be completed?

The FAFSA becomes available October 1, and all FAFSA forms must be received by the federal processor by March 10 in order to be eligible for state aid, including your 21st Century Scholarship. May 15 is the deadline by which students must make any necessary corrections. Remember that some colleges set financial aid deadlines earlier than March 10. Be sure to check with the financial aid office at the schools you apply at to learn about their deadlines.

Get everything together.

You'll need the following information to complete your FAFSA:

- Your and your parents' social security number.
- Alien registration numbers or permanent residence cards, if you or your parents are not U.S. citizens.
- Your driver's license number, if you have a driver's license.
- Your and/or your parents' federal tax returns (IRS forms 1040EZ, 1040A, or 1040 and/or W-2s).
- Your and/or your parents' current bank statements, business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock or other investment records, and any other untaxed income information.
- Student and parent FSA IDs (available at **fsaid.ed.gov**), if you plan to complete and submit your FAFSA online.

Getting your FSA ID

In order to sign the FAFSA electronically, you and one of your parents will first need to obtain an FSA ID from the U.S. Department of Education. You and one of your parents can apply for one at **fsaid.ed.gov**. [Note that when using an e-mail address to create an FSA ID, both the student and parent must use different e-mail addresses.] Once verified (1-3 days) you will be able to use your FSA ID to access your personal information on Federal Student Aid websites. Be sure to build this time into your planning to complete the FAFSA by March 10.

When you are ready to file the FAFSA:

The FAFSA is expected to take approximately 30 minutes. Having the information and documents described on page 12 on hand will help make the process as smooth and efficient as possible.

Go to **FAFSA.gov**. You will need to "Start a New FAFSA" and then log in using your name (which must match the name on your Social Security card), Social Security number and date of birth. Next, create a password. The sections of the FAFSA you will need to complete include:

- Student demographic information.
- Selection of up to 10 schools you would like to attend.
- Dependency status.
- Parent demographic information.
- Financial information.
- Sign and submit.

Within a few weeks of submitting your FAFSA, you will receive an email or paper Student Aid Report (SAR) from the U.S. Department of Education. The colleges you selected on your FAFSA will receive your information, review it and use it to determine your eligibility for different types of aid. These colleges will then send you an award letter displaying your financial aid package.

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 activity.

GET HELP FILLING OUT YOUR FAFSA!

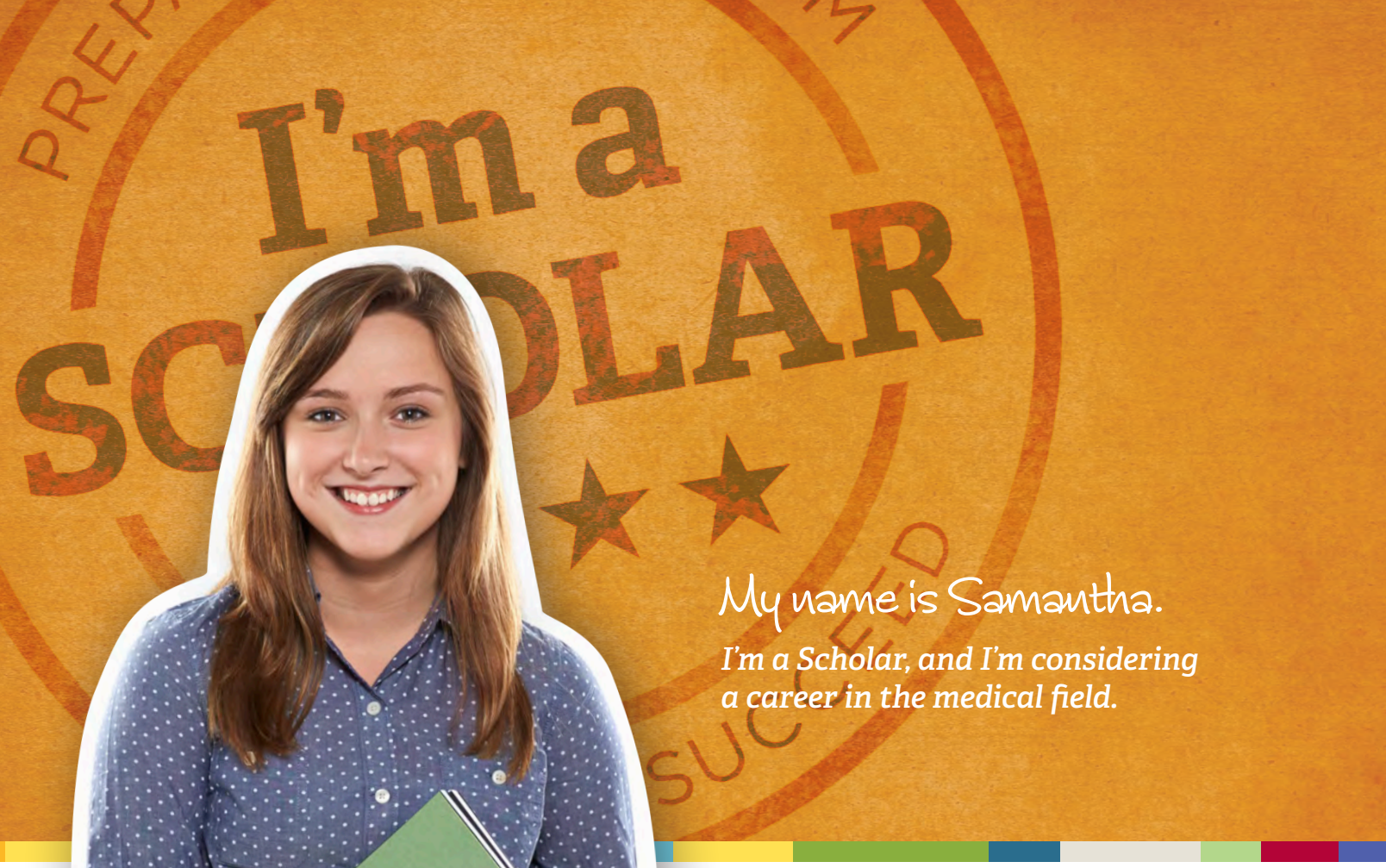
There are lots of free resources designed to help you complete your FAFSA. Check with your school counselor for information about school financial aid nights and other FAFSA events in your area.

COLLEGE GOAL SUNDAY

During this event, financial aid professionals will be on hand to help Indiana seniors and their families complete and file the FAFSA. To find a College Goal Sunday event near you, check with your school counselor or visit **CollegeGoalSunday.org**.

FAFSA ON THE WEB WORKSHEET

The official FAFSA website, **FAFSA.gov**, has lots of help available, including a worksheet that walks you through everything you'll need.



My name is Samantha.

I'm a Scholar, and I'm considering a career in the medical field.

How has the 21st Century Scholars Program helped you prepare for college?

It makes me want to get better grades because of the GPA requirements. This program also motivates me to stay out of trouble so I am making sure I do what I'm supposed to do.

How has being a Scholar helped you in school?

I am constantly monitoring my grades and making sure all of my assignments are done. I didn't do that before. I realize that if I want a better future, I have to work for it. Nothing's going to be handed to me. I've re-focused on my education.

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

It's helping me pay for college. That's the biggest benefit. This is helping me get into college, and I know I have a way to pay for it.

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-12**.

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**
YouTube: **YouTube.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 stay on track for college and career success.
- 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, and don't forget to complete all Scholar Success Program activities.

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 at some point 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 12th-grade Scholar Success Program activities on time?

You must verify you've completed ALL twelve Scholar Success Program activities via ScholarTrack by June 30 of your senior year to be eligible to receive the scholarship. Otherwise, you will be placed on probationary status, and you will be at risk of losing the 21st Century Scholarship.

Scholars.IN.gov

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.**

JULY/2016

INDIANA COMMISSION *for* HIGHER EDUCATION