



**Parent Action Plan:
Helping Your Child
Navigate High School While
Preparing for College**

Parent Action Plan: 9th Grade

The beginning of High School is an exciting time. Your child is adjusting to a new school, making new friends, and becoming more independent. But your child still needs your help and involvement. Here are some things you can do together to succeed this year.

Summer before High School

- Visit a college campus together. It's a great way to get your child excited about college. Learn more about how you and your child can prepare for a campus visit.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/know-yourself/6-steps-to-get-the-most-out-of-a-campus-visit>
- Get the facts about what college costs. You may be surprised at how affordable higher education can be. Start by reading Understanding College Costs.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/college-costs/understanding-college-costs>

Fall

- Help your child set goals for the school year. Working toward specific goals helps your child stay motivated and focused.
- Meet your child's teachers and learn about their expectations in the classroom.
- Make a plan to check in regularly about schoolwork. If you keep up with your child's tests, papers, and homework assignments, you can celebrate successes and head off problems as a team. Get homework tips for your child with the link below!
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/inside-the-classroom/take-control-of-homework>
- Talk about extracurricular activities. Getting involved in clubs and other groups is a great way for your child to identify their interests and feel more engaged in school. Read more about the benefits of extracurricular activities in High School.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/outside-the-classroom/extracurriculars-matter-to-you-and-to-colleges>
- Encourage your child to do their best on the PSAT. This is a practice test for Freshmen to help them prepare to take the SAT in their Junior year.

Winter

- Talk with your child about their appointment with their School Counselor. These appointments usually take place in January and February. Their Counselor will schedule an individual appointment time to meet with them and discuss their academic goals and college plans. Your child's Counselor will also provide them with resources to help them navigate High School and plan for college. Learn more about the high school counselor's role.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/building-a-support-network/working-with-your-high-school-counselor-for-college-success>
- Start thinking about financial aid. It's not too early to look into types of aid that could help you cover college costs. Start by reading 7 Things You Need to Know about Financial Aid.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid-101/7-things-you-need-to-know-about-financial-aid>

Spring

- Discuss next year's classes. Our course catalog is available in late March/ early April. An appointment will be scheduled with them to discuss their course requests at the end of the school year. Make sure your child is challenging him- or herself — and taking the courses college admission officers expect to see. Learn more about the high school classes that colleges look for.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/your-high-school-record/high-school-classes-colleges-look-for>
- Help your child start a college list. Visit College Search Step-by-Step together to get tips on starting a college search and figuring out what matters most to your child when choosing a college.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/how-to-find-your-college-fit/college-search-step-by-step>
- See how much you need to save for college. Use the College Savings Calculator to get an idea of where you are compared with your savings goal.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/paying-your-share/college-savings-calculator>
- Help your child make summer plans. Summer is a great time to explore interests and learn new skills — and colleges look for students who pursue meaningful summer activities. Find out ways your child can stay motivated this summer.
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/outside-the-classroom/5-ways-to-stay-on-track-in-summer>