

JUNIOR POST-SECONDARY PLANNING TIMELINE

WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING DURING 11TH GRADE TO HELP MYSELF PREPARE FOR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

❑ STAY ACTIVE AND ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES

- ❑ Continue to be involved in extracurricular activities. Start to hold leadership positions, if possible. Remember, everything you are involved in can go on your college application and resume!



❑ DO WELL IN YOUR COURSES

- ❑ Junior year is super important! Take the most challenging courses you are able to handle and do well in those courses. Everything counts so work hard and you won't regret it.

❑ CONTINUE THINKING ABOUT LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

- ❑ By the end of the year you should have a pretty clear idea of what path you will be taking after high school. This is important so that when you return in the fall you can get started right away taking care of things on your to-do list and put your plan in action. Will it be work, military, technical college, community college, an apprenticeship, or 4-year college?

❑ EXPLORE COLLEGE OPTIONS

- ❑ There are a lot of factors to think about when trying to figure out what schools might be a good fit for you. Some things to think about while researching are listed below. Think about these things and how important each factor is to you as you create your long list of schools that will be refined and narrowed down as you research, visit, and learn more.
 - ❑ Technical, community, 4-year
 - ❑ Location (urban, suburban, rural + how far from home do you want to be?)
 - ❑ Size (small, medium, large student body + campus size + class sizes)
 - ❑ Cost (total cost of attendance + school specific scholarships and aid)
 - ❑ Public vs. private
 - ❑ Campus (community, aesthetics, social life)
 - ❑ Programs of study (majors)
 - ❑ Extracurricular (athletics, clubs, activities, intramurals)
 - ❑ Resources (tutoring, special services, career services, internships, study abroad)

❑ ATTEND THE COLLEGE FAIR

- ❑ Simley holds a college fair every fall that includes over 50 schools- 2-year, 4-year, technical, public, private, etc. Take advantage of the opportunity to talk to representatives and gather information!

❑ ATTEND COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE VISITS AT SIMLEY

- ❑ College representatives from all over the area visit Simley every fall (and sometimes spring too!) to share information and answer questions about their school. This is a fantastic way to show demonstrated interest in a school, meet the representative, and get insight on if a school might be a good match for you.

❑ VISIT COLLEGE CAMPUSES

- ❑ Take advantage of MEA break, spring break, family vacation, and any other time you have the opportunity to get on campus. This is the single best way to figure out what you are looking for in a school and if a particular school will be a good fit for you.
- ❑ Stop by the Career Center or click on the college visit tab of the College and Career Center website for a list of questions to ask and things to think about when you go for a visit!



❑ START MAKING A PLAN FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

- ❑ The PSAT is offered in October. The test is optional but is the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship. Consider taking the exam if you do well academically and want to know if the SAT might be the right test for you. See your counselor for more details.
- ❑ All Simley juniors will take the exam at school, for free, in April of their junior year. If planning to attend a 4-year college or university, most students will choose to retake the exam another time or two. All schools will always take your best ACT score and expect to see more than one score. The test is offered seven times a year. Students do not need to register for the exam when they take it at Simley but will need to register at: www.actstudent.org for additional testing.
 - ❑ Please note that students have four spots available to send their scores to colleges for free when they register. It is to your advantage to use these spots as sending official scores later will cost \$13/score report.

❑ EXPLORE POTENTIAL CAREERS



❑ Continue to use the Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) to explore career and college options. Exploration activities will take place throughout the year. You should have a good handle on what your strengths and interests are at this point which will help guide you when researching careers.

❑ Consider taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Test (ASVAB) at Simley in the fall or spring. The test is required for any student planning to enlist in any branch of the military but there is also a great Career Exploration Program that is connected with the exam.

❑ ATTEND YOUR SMALL GROUP MEETING

- ❑ Ms. Kimble, the College and Career Counselor, holds small group post-secondary planning meetings with all juniors in January/February. Be sure to attend your scheduled meeting as a wide-range of important information and resources are shared at this time.

❑ MAKE A 4-YEAR PLAN

- ❑ Refine your academic plan and adjust accordingly based on your strengths, interests, and plans.

❑ TALK ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE

- ❑ Understand the cost of college and options available to pay for your education. Remember, keep all your college options on the table right now- you will have time to compare award letters to see the actual cost after you apply next year, and be able to have more accurate information to make a decision at that time.
- ❑ Use the FAFSA Forecaster (www.fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cform) tool to estimate what kind of financial aid you are eligible for.
- ❑ Start applying for any scholarships you are eligible for.

❑ REGISTER WITH THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

- ❑ If you think you will participate in NCAA Division I or II athletics in college, you need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at: www.eligibilitycenter.org.

❑ MAKE SUMMER COUNT

- ❑ Explore summer opportunities and take advantage of the time! Volunteer, shadow someone in an area of interest, take classes, or get a job.
- ❑ Attend the Summer College Road Trip (for free!) and visit up to eight colleges in a week! Information on the road trip will be out in April.
- ❑ Retake the ACT in June, July, or September, if needed. Register for the exam online at: www.actstudent.org.