

Sycamore High School



Postsecondary and Career Expectations

Each student should have an individualized learning plan to help make decisions about career and postsecondary (PS) education or training, to plan a course of study, and to make financial aid assessments with family members.



By the end of 9th grade	By the end of 10th grade	By the end of 11th grade	By the end of 12th grade
A Student Should Be Supported to: ● Understand the high school credit system, GPA calculation, and graduation requirements ● Develop an initial 4-year course plan aligned to potential career interests ● Complete learning and productivity assessment to discover sensory and mindset preferences ● Identify a support network of adults (e.g., family members, educators, mentors) ● Identify required education, skills, and training for careers of interest (possible pathway opportunities) ● Learn about workplace expectations, skills, and employability traits ● Take the PreACT 9 Secure and explore how to prepare and improve test scores ● Complete career interest survey ● Explore a range of postsecondary options (2-year, 4-year, trade, military, workforce) ● Develop a plan for participating in community service and extracurricular activities ● Use career search tools to explore salary and estimated preparation costs for postsecondary careers and training	A Student Should Be Supported to: ● Refine 4-year course plan, considering options connect to potential career paths ● Assess readiness for college-level coursework ● Access and utilize test preparation resources ● Track progress to graduation/career requirements and community service hours ● Take the PreACT Secure and connect to benefits for future coursework, college, and career opportunities ● Begin career exploration through experiences (e.g., fairs, speakers, visits) ● Begin developing a resume by tracking activities and experiences and start identifying transferable job skills ● Further evaluate career interests, values, and postsecondary options ● Complete a career interest survey. Identify at least 2 career pathways/opportunities of interest. ● Explore opportunities to visit and enroll in Career Tech Education (CTE) programs for junior/senior years ● Explore options to earn college credit while in high school	A Student Should Be Supported to: ● Narrow and refine postsecondary and career interests ● Ensure senior course selection aligns with postsecondary goals ● Create a plan to meet graduation requirements ● Take a college entrance or other standardized exam (e.g., ACT, SAT, ASVAB) ● Continue career exploration through experiences (e.g., fairs, speakers, visits, job shadowing, trades expo) ● Revisit career interest survey and complete other applicable surveys to explore strengths, personality, and skills ● Understand the general process for applying to colleges (deadline and application types) and send required documents (transcripts, letters of rec) ● Attend a presentation for postsecondary planning ● Make plans for a college visit, along with resources and tools to evaluate the visit ● Continue to develop a resume by updating new experiences and activities. ● Begin understanding the scholarship application and financial aid process	A Student Should Be Supported to: ● Complete applications to postsecondary college institutions by the set deadline ● Request letters of recommendation, transcripts, and test scores for postsecondary institutions ● Write college admission or scholarship essays ● Ensure completion of all graduation requirements (including coursework, testing, FAFSA, etc.) ● Finalize and execute postsecondary plan for trades programs, apprenticeships, military, or employment ● Finalize a resume ● Create an FSA ID ● Know how to help a parent create an FSA ID and connect to the FAFSA form ● Complete the FAFSA, alternative financial aid application, or FAFSA waiver ● Apply for scholarships and understand financial aid packages if attending postsecondary training/education ● Develop financial literacy, including understanding budgeting, loans/debt, and school/work/lifestyle costs ● Attend financial aid session and/or FAFSA information/completion event
A Student Should Know: ● How to access digital resources available to them through Sycamore High School ● The relationship between high school coursework, attendance, and grades and their postsecondary plan ● Importance of community service and extracurricular activities to postsecondary and career plans ● Available career clusters with one or two clusters identified for further exploration ● General salary range of possible career pathways	A Student Should Know: ● Two future career options and skills related to career interests ● Timing and options to take postsecondary entrance exams (college, trades, military) ● Different types of postsecondary credentials and institutions ● Educational requirements, cost of preparation, and expected salary for occupations in selected career paths ● Financial benefits of earning college credits while in high school	A Student Should Know: ● A list of match, safe, and reach schools for postsecondary programs of study. ● The importance of being on track to achieve graduation requirements and postsecondary goals ● Application deadlines, test timing, cost, and preparation for industry-based certification for career paths of interest ● Entrance requirements and application process for expected post-graduation programs of study ● Basic understanding of the financial aid deadline for chosen postsecondary options.	A Student Should Know: ● Available community resources during the next steps of their postsecondary plans ● How career path courses and practical experiences align with postsecondary options. ● Estimated cost of chosen postsecondary options. ● Affordability of postsecondary options in relation to expected entry-level career salary and anticipated debt. ● Difference between scholarships, grants, and loans
Career Exploration and Development	Postsecondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection		Financial Aid and Literacy