

HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING

JUNIORS

Summer:

- Get the facts about what college costs. You may be surprised by how affordable higher education can be.
- Explore financial aid options. These include grants and scholarships, loans, and work-study programs that can help pay for college.

Fall:

- Meet with your School Counselor. Make sure you are on track for graduation. This meeting is especially important as you start to engage in the college application process.
- Stay organized. Meet with your parents and/or School Counselor weekly or monthly to make to-do lists to keep on top of the tasks required to get ready for applying to colleges.
- If interested, take the PSAT/NMSQT in October. This is a preliminary test that helps students practice for the SAT and assess their academic skills. Juniors who score well on this test are also eligible for scholarship opportunities.
- Set goals for the school year. Working towards specific goals helps you stay motivated and focused.
- Get involved in clubs and other groups! Keep a list of all of the activities and volunteer work you participate in.

Winter:

- If you took the PSAT/NMSQT, review your results with your parent and School Counselor. The score report shows what you should work on to get ready for college and will connect you with free, personalized SAT practice on Khan Academy based on your results.
- Prepare for the SAT. Juniors take the SAT in the spring so they can get a head start on planning for college. In addition to the SAT, juniors also take ACT WorkKeys and M-STEP in April.
- Discuss taking challenging courses next year with your parents and School Counselor. Taking honors courses or college-level courses with AP as a senior can help your child prepare for college work – and these are also courses that college admissions officers like to see.
- Consider taking SAT Subject Tests. Many colleges require or recommend taking these tests to get a sense of your skills in a certain academic area. In general, it's best to take a Subject Test right after taking the relevant course.
- If you are taking AP classes, take the course AP test in May.

Spring:

- Meet with your School Counselor to discuss re-enrolling at the Career-Tech Center to complete a 2nd year of your program you are currently in. Turn in your Career-Tech Center Student Data Form in April.

Spring continued:

- Search for colleges that meet your needs. Once you have an idea of the qualities you are looking for in a college, enter the criteria into Big Future college search to create a list of colleges to consider applying to.
- Take the SAT. Send score reports to schools of your choice; up to four scores are sent for free. If you are interested in playing college-level athletics, send your score to NCAA Eligibility Center using code 9999.
- Research scholarships. This form of financial aid provides money for college that doesn't need to be repaid! Search your school website for local scholarships.
- Attend college fairs and financial aid events. These events allow you and your parents to meet with college representatives and get answers to questions. Ask your School Counselor how to find events in your area.
- At the end of the year, ask your School Counselor to upload your official transcript to NCAA Eligibility Center.
- 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. Look into summer learning programs or find a job or internship.
- Visit colleges, formally. Make plans to check out the campuses of colleges you are interested in. Use a Campus Visit Checklist to learn how to get the most out of these experiences.