

JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

FALL – WINTER

- Investigate careers of interest.**
Consider subjects you do well in and enjoy. Talk to your parents, school counselor, and other adults about the careers that interest you. The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/ooh) can also help you identify careers of interest. It's OK if you are undecided about a career. College is a great place to explore career options.
- Approach professionals and tradespeople with questions.**
Find some family friends, friends of friends, friends of teachers, and leaders in the community who work in the careers that interest you. Ask them about their work. You will learn a lot about the careers that would best suit you.
- Make a list of important factors.**
Using the worksheet on page 5, think about what factors are the most important to you when considering your future college.
- Research colleges.**
Based on what you've learned about careers and your own interests, look for colleges with programs that can help you achieve your goals. Search for your program interests using online resources. Take note of which colleges offer the kinds of programs you want. Also, your high school counselor's office, teachers, library, and the public library will have materials to help you.
- Make a list of prospective colleges.**
Use the worksheet on page 5 to help identify prospective colleges.
- Request materials.**
Go online or call the colleges to request catalogs and financial aid materials.
- Attend college and/or career fairs.**
Seek out the colleges that interest you and ask about the programs you've identified to determine if the college will help you achieve your goals.
- Financial fit.**
If cost will be a factor in selecting your future college, get estimates of the net prices for the schools on your list using the schools' net price calculators. Also, go to www.collegeabacus.org to compare the net prices of up to three schools at a time.
- Narrow your list.**
Based on what you've learned, narrow your list of schools using the worksheet on page 5. If possible, rank your colleges in order of preference.
- Complete the FAFSA4caster. (See page 12 for details.)**
- Ensure that you will graduate.**
Look at your high school's graduation requirements and compare your credits. Make sure you will graduate on time.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT or PLAN Test.**
Take these tests to practice taking college admissions tests. The PSAT/NMSQT also establishes your eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Program, the National Hispanic Recognition Program, and additional scholarship programs.
- Make a list of entrance requirements.**
Look up the minimum acceptance requirements for entering freshmen at your top colleges, such as grade point average, high school subject credits, and standardized test scores.
- Meet with your school counselor.**
After your PSAT/NMSQT or PLAN scores come in, schedule a meeting. Bring your list of entrance requirements. Determine with the counselor if your list of colleges is reasonable or needs to be adjusted, and if your current and future high school classes are appropriate.
- Visit colleges.**
Planning to travel during spring break or summer vacation? Many families visit college campuses on their vacation trips. Call the admissions office in advance to learn what times they conduct regular tours. Then, use these visits to compare campuses and help narrow your selection.

SPRING

- Plan to attend financial aid and college nights in your community.**
These are meetings held in many communities to help you understand the admissions and financial aid process and may provide assistance with filing the FAFSA. Find out when these events are held by checking with your counselor or a local college.
- As you learn more, narrow your list.**
Continue to attend college fairs and, if possible, schedule individual sessions with representatives from your top colleges to learn more about their programs.
- Take the SAT, SAT subject tests, and/or ACT.**
If these tests are required for your list of colleges, register and take them.

- Start preparing portfolios, audition materials, writing samples, or other evidence of talent and look for volunteer service opportunities.**

If these are required for admission to your programs or scholarships, begin working on these now.

- Request information.**

Contact the colleges that interest you and request admissions procedures and financial aid information.

- Research scholarship and grant opportunities.**

This information is available at your high school counseling office, local public library, and civic and professional organizations. Also, look online for scholarships that might apply to your career goals, skills, or demographics.

- Talk with your parents about your college plans and finances.**

Become more specific about how you can finance your plans.

- Ask about scholarships when attending college fairs.**

Talk to college admissions representatives about scholarship programs for which you may qualify.

- Look for summer jobs to help with college costs.**

SUMMER

- Talk to coaches.**

If you are interested in an athletic scholarship, contact the appropriate coaches at your colleges and send a resume of your accomplishments. Let your high school coach know about your interests.

- Request private scholarship applications.**

Request application information from any private scholarship sources you have identified.

- Investigate financial aid.**

Start investigating federal, state, college, and local financial aid opportunities, including scholarship and grant opportunities.

- Begin to prepare for the FAFSA.**

Download the FAFSA on the WebSM Worksheet to preview the questions you may be asked on the online FAFSA. If you do not plan to file the FAFSA online, download the PDF FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov/options.htm or call 1.800.4.FED.AID to obtain a paper FAFSA. You cannot submit your FAFSA until October 1 of your senior year.