

9th Grade Year

Students:

- ❑ Take challenging **classes**, if possible and appropriate.
- ❑ Get involved in school or community-based **activities** that interest you or let you explore career interests. Consider working/interning, volunteering, and/or participating in academic enrichment programs, summer workshops, and programs with specialty focuses such as music, arts, or STEM. *Remember – it's quality not quantity that counts.*
- ❑ Start keeping up a **resume** with your awards, honors, paid and volunteer work, as well as extracurricular activities. Update it throughout all of high school – you will need it for your college applications/scholarships.
- ❑ Start **researching college** options on Xello.
- ❑ Work with your parents to estimate your **financial aid** needed for college. Be sure to start saving for college and start seriously working on scholarships for college.
- ❑ Start learning about **career planning** by using Xello, and/or California Career Zone.
- ❑ Learn about basic budgeting at **CA Career Zone**:
<https://www.cacareerzone.org/guide/budgetguide/0>
- ❑ Visit with your school counselor for help in all areas above!

Parents:

- ❑ Talk to your student about college plans.
- ❑ Keep an eye on your student's study habits and grades – stay involved and help motivate.
- ❑ Encourage your student to take rigorous classes each year of high school.
- ❑ Add to your student's college savings account regularly; and make sure you are fully aware of the provisions of any account.

10th Grade Year

Students:


- ☐ Make sure your class **schedule** is balanced and includes rigorous classes that will help prepare you for advanced options later.
- ☐ Stay involved in school and community-based **activities**. If you don't see an opportunity, create one by starting a club or looking around. Work towards leadership opportunities.
- ☐ Continue working on your **resume**.
- ☐ Research majors that might be a good fit for your interests and goals based on results from CA Career Zone, and/or Xello activities.
- ☐ Continue to **research college and career options** in Xello. Tour colleges, when possible.
- ☐ Work on **scholarships** and keep saving money.
- ☐ **Plan your summer** wisely! Work, volunteer, do research, or take a summer course.
- ☐ Optional - For U.S. military academies, request a pre-candidate questionnaire.
- ☐ Meet with your **school counselor** to discuss everything on this list.

Parents:

- ☐ Start listening/reading for information about College Fairs, College Information programs, and/or Financial Aid nights and attend them.
- ☐ Help your student develop independence by encouraging them to take responsibility for balancing homework with other activities.
- ☐ Allow your student to self-advocate when they have questions or concerns at school or in activities.
- ☐ Learn about college entrance exams (i.e. ACT or SAT) your student will probably need to take for college admission. (Most students take these in their junior year.)
- ☐ Take your student on college tours or to local programs where the college representatives visit in your area.

11th Grade Year

Students:


- ❑ Continue accessing rigorous courses. AP, IB, and college classes can often lead you to transferrable credits while giving you the boost in your weighted GPA.
- ❑ Build your college list on Xello-Colleges I'm Thinking About. Consider your social and academic preferences, personal qualities and values.
- ❑ Continue to explore careers and financial literacy/planning in California Career Zone: <https://www.cacareerzone.org/>
- ❑ Stay involved in activities on and off campus. Run for leadership positions, when possible.
- ❑ Attend college fairs and meet with college representatives at your school or local events.
- ❑ Future College Athletes: Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center
- ❑ Take the PSAT/NMSQT in October! This will give you access to scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- ❑ *Optional* - Check U.S. military academy and ROTC scholarship timelines online.
- ❑ Early spring - consider taking the SAT and/or ACT. Some colleges require a test for admission - check your colleges' websites. (You should complete at least Integrated Math III first.) *FREE for students who qualify based on household income.*
- ❑ Visit colleges to get a feel for the campus, go on a tour, sit in on a class or two, check out student publications, learn more about the financial aid offered, etc.
- ❑ Learn about deadlines and requirements (i.e. early decision/action, rolling, etc.).
- ❑ Apply for scholarships Use the FAFSA4Caster <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate> to research and plan costs of different programs. Talk to your parents about what your family prefers.
- ❑ Learn how to avoid scholarship scams/identity theft: studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/scams
- ❑ Summer ideas: Begin writing college essays, paid or volunteer work, internships, enrichment programs, explore your interests!
- ❑ Meet with your school counselor to go over this list in more detail and get tips.
- ❑ Check out this guide for articles and videos!  Get Schooled Resource Map: March

Parents:

- ❑ Talk to your student about schools they are considering. Ask why those schools appeal to them and help clarify goals and priorities for their education and career.
- ❑ Attend college fairs with your student. Just listen and let your student do the talking. Consider making a list of questions together, in advance.
- ❑ Continue to visit college campuses, preferably when classes are in session. Let your student take the lead!
- ❑ Support your student as they work on scholarships to help pay for college.
- ❑ Ask your employer whether scholarships are available for employees' children.
- ❑ Get in-depth information on the Federal Student Aid Programs – check this website address for more information: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/types>

12th Grade Year

Students:

- ❑ Work hard all year! **Senior grades** can affect scholarship eligibility and final acceptance to the college.
- ❑ Stay involved in extracurricular **activities** and continue to take on **leadership** positions.
- ❑ Meet with your **school counselor** to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.
- ❑ If required by at least one of your colleges - Finish SAT and/or ACT **testing**. Some colleges prefer no later than Oct, Nov, or Dec.
- ❑ Finalize your **college list on Xello and apply**. *Follow instructions and hard deadlines.*
- ❑ At least three weeks before application deadlines, ask your counselor and/or teachers to submit **required documents** (i.e transcripts, reports, recommendations) to the colleges that require them. Sending a thank you note to teachers/counselor is an excellent idea!
- ❑ Read all communications from colleges and check your **portals** regularly.
- ❑ After you submit the **FAFSA or Dream Act** (October 1-March 2), you should receive your FAFSA Student Summary within one to three business days of the FAFSA processing.
- ❑ Work on **SCHOLARSHIPS!**
- ❑ Check out some helpful articles and videos!  **Get Schooled Resource Map: March**
- ❑ **Visit** the colleges that have accepted you, if possible. Plenty of virtual options too.
- ❑ Review college acceptances and compare their **financial aid offers**. Here is a great website address to help with this process: [Student Aid Article](#)
- ❑ Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you.
- ❑ **May 1:** Notify the school of your **commitment** and submit any **required financial deposit**.
- ❑ **Decline offer(s)** to other colleges that you will not attend so that students on wait lists may hear back sooner.

Parents:

- ❑ Encourage your student to attend workshops at school to complete steps/applications.
- ❑ Attend college information and financial aid programs. Familiarize yourself with all aspects of financial aid: [Article](#)
- ❑ Work with your student on filling out free government financial aid forms (FAFSA or CA Dream Act) for the following school year. Free workshops are available in the community throughout the fall and winter.
- ❑ Remind your student to check their campus' admissions portals and read email communications from the admissions and financial aid offices.

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