

Juniors

Goals for the year:

This year's academic record will go a long way toward either helping or hurting your chances of gaining admission to your schools of choice. You can make up ground if you have been slacking and you can keep up the hard work you have already exhibited. This is the LAST full set of grades a college will see while deciding on your future. Make it a good one.

- Take the PSAT in October (this one is to qualify for National Merit Scholarship Competition).
- Take the ACT and/or SAT during the **spring** semester. That way you will have at least one score going into your senior year. This also puts you on the mailing list and gives significant information to the schools you are considering.
- Research possible colleges and request information from them
- Visit college campuses (campus tour, visit with advisors/faculty, pick up admission packet)
- Take solid elective courses (extra math, science, foreign language, Arts or computers, etc.)
- Talk to friends and family to gather ideas on colleges
- Take on leadership positions in the organizations you are involved in
- Ask your school counselor for suggestions as to colleges you should consider but might not have thought of on your own (based on major, scholarships, location, etc.)
- Continue to explore careers and job opportunities

As a junior, there are important steps you can take now to get ready for college.

Planning for college may seem overwhelming at times, but it doesn't have to be hard if you take it one step at a time.

Fall

- Get serious about your schoolwork if you haven't already; junior-year grades are extremely important.
- Sign up early to take the PSAT in October.
- Explore your college options. Start with you: Make lists of your abilities, preferences, and personal qualities. You should have learned a lot of this already with your guidance counselor.
- Talk to your parents about any limits — geographic or financial — they may set on where you attend college. It may affect your decision on where to apply.
- List things you may want to study and do in college. Jumpstart your college planning by reading about majors and careers.
- Use a college search engine or guidebook in the guidance library to find colleges with the right characteristics for you to be successful.
- Start thinking about financial aid. Talk to your counselor about your college plans and attend college night and financial aid night with your parents. Use financial aid calculators to estimate your aid eligibility and college costs.

Winter

- Plan your spring testing schedule. You can take either the SAT Reasoning Test -or- up to three SAT Subject Tests on one test day. Plan your testing schedule carefully if you want to take both types of SAT. See the SAT schedule of test dates and register online for the SAT.
- Review your PSAT results with your counselor and decide whether you'd benefit from an SAT prep course or test-prep software. You can also improve your scores by practicing on previously administered exams. Your PSAT/NMSQT Score Report arrives in December. Use it to improve your skills and prepare for the SAT. [Practice here.](#)

Spring

- Get ready for the SAT. Visit the SAT Preparation Center™ to take a free full-length official practice test and get a score and skills report. You can even sign up for the SAT Question of the Day for daily practice.
- Explore colleges. Start visiting local colleges: large, small, public, and private. Get a feel for what feels right for you. Develop a list of 15–20 colleges that interest you and discuss them with your parents and your counselor.
- Prepare for AP Exams. Do well on AP Exams and you will receive credit or placement at most colleges.
- Review next year's schedule requests with your counselor. Challenge yourself with honors and AP classes and stick with sequences you've begun, in the languages, for example.
- Plan summer activities early. Enrich yourself by volunteering, getting an interesting job or internship, or signing up for special summer learning programs.

Summer

- Keep your momentum up this summer. Visit colleges. Take campus tours and, at colleges you are serious about, schedule interviews with admissions counselors.
- Request applications from colleges to which you will apply. Check important dates; some universities have early dates or rolling admissions. Find out important Financial Aid application timelines or you may be sorry.