



# POST- SECONDARY PLANNING: PREPARING THROUGHOUT HIGH SCHOOL

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# WHAT IS THE COLLEGE & CAREER CENTER?

- The College & Career Center is a resource center that provides families help with the following:
  - Post-Secondary Planning
  - Financial Aid Information
  - Military Options
  - Jobs/Gap Year Options
  - Volunteer & Work Options

## 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PLANNING

- **Create a high school plan/Academics-** make sure you are aware of what the graduation requirements are for your state and if you are considering colleges outside of your state, that are public schools, make sure you research their requirements as well. When you meet with your School Counselor ask questions about courses and the amount of work required of them. Consider taking an academy course in an area that interest you most, if it is not offered at your school and available to your grade level
- **Start thinking of what post-secondary plan you want to pursue-** not every student will attend a four-year school so begin with the end in mind. What do you want to do with your life. What kind of career do you want to have.
- **Extra-curricular activities-** get involved with clubs/organizations that interest you. Be it sports, music, public service, etc. get involved. Colleges/Universities like to see students be engaged throughout high school
- **Summer Enrichment programs-** if you have a strong interest in an area, look for summer opportunities to participate to strengthen that interest
- **Scholarships & Saving-** start searching for scholarships NOW! Don't wait. If you have a "job" or get an allowance, start saving a little here and there.
- **College & Career Fair-** plan to attend the one hosted by WSHS
- **Volunteer-** explore opportunities in x2VOL
- **Resume-** start keeping track of your academic, service, and awards received in a resume
- Print off worksheet [here](#)

## 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

- Continue from what you were doing in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and in addition:
- **Academics-** during your academic advising sessions, continue to discuss class options that will help push you to flex your intellectual muscles. Don't be afraid to take an AP or Honors course to challenge yourself. Stay the course of graduation requirements depending on the type of diploma you wish to obtain. Consider Academy courses.
- **PSAT-** prepare to take the PSAT. If you planning to take the SAT, the PSAT is a great option to help prepare you for it. You can take practice test [here](#).
- **Military Service Academy-** start researching what is required for an appointment into one of the academies. You can find more information provided by The White House [here](#).
- **College Tours/Visits-** start looking at visiting local colleges and universities. Some may offer self-guided tours. Go just to see the outline of the campuses
- Financial Aid- start learning about financial aid and what it is comprised of. Check out the U.S. Department of Education Funding Your Education handouts [here](#)
- Print off worksheet [here](#)

# 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

- Continue from what you were doing in 10<sup>th</sup> grade and in addition:
- **College Research/Visits-** conduct a college search in Naviance (SuperMatch), ask family, friends, teachers about their schools attended and their experiences. Attend college visits happening at WSHS
- **College Fairs/Events-** Plan to attend local college fairs in the area and attending sessions hosted by colleges/universities in your area.
- **Testing- Plan to take the PSAT.** Taking this exam can qualify you for scholarship opportunities & prepare you for the actual SAT you may look to take in the Spring
- **Create List-** Create spreadsheet of your schools of interest. Include name, location, COA, testing required. List should be at least 5-10 schools. Should have a community college listed as well.
- **Letters of Recommendation-** start thinking of the teachers you'd like to write you a letter of recommendation. Reach out to them to find out their process of obtaining the letter. Don't wait until the last minute (of your Senior year) to ask. Be prepared to provide them with a resume so it can help them build the best letter that represents you.
- **Coalition/Common App/Black Common App-** Set up your accounts! You can actually set up your Coalition account Freshmen year. Many college and universities use this one-stop-shop to allow students to apply to multiple schools at one time. The Black Common App is specifically for Historically Black Colleges & Universities.
- **Essays-** During the summer of your Junior going into Senior year, start working on your college essay(s). Common App normally releases their essay prompts in May or June of your Junior year.
- **Scholarships-** Apply! Apply! Apply!

# 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

- Continue from what you were doing in 11<sup>th</sup> grade and in addition:
- **Create a Calendar of Events/Deadlines-** create a calendar & spreadsheet of important dates and deadlines (i.e. application deadline dates, transcript request forms due, FAFSA start date, etc.). Apply early! Don't wait until the day of the deadline!
- **College List/Visits/Fairs-** conduct a college search in Naviance (SuperMatch), again, with a narrowed down list. By now you have test scores that will give you a better picture of schools that are the best fit for you. Attend college visits happening at WSHS & local college fairs and events, especially those being hosted by your top choices.
- **Testing- Plan to take the PSAT/ACT/SAT.** Taking this exam can qualify you for scholarship opportunities & prepare you for the actual SAT you may look to take in the Spring or ACT.
- **Final College List-** Update your spreadsheet of your schools of interest. Include name, location, COA, testing required. List should be down to no more than 5 by now.
- **Essay(s)-** Have someone look over it (them) before you submit them!
- **Financial Aid & Scholarships-** Apply! Apply! Apply! The FAFSA opens Oct. 1! There are some select schools that require families to also complete the CSS Profile. More information about it can be found [here](#)
- **Decisions/Visit-** once you have selected the school you plan to attend, you will need to notify the others that you are no longer interested. Conduct a visit, or another if you have already, to your final school of choice.
- **Financing/Scholarships-** be sure each school you plan to apply to is on your FAFSA. Schools cannot give your Financial Aid Offer Letter unless they have access to your FAFSA information. Continue to apply to scholarships throughout the year.



# THINGS TO DO THROUGHOUT HIGH SCHOOL

- Take courses that are going to be most beneficial to your career path, not just to boost your GPA
- Be active in sports, clubs and activities
- Volunteer
- Build your resume every year so you don't have to worry about it your Senior year
- Apply to scholarships every year and take part in Enrichment Programs during the summer if you can



# OTHER OPTIONS OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE

- Gap Year/Working
  - Attend GAP Year Fair. Check out [www.Snagajob.com](http://www.Snagajob.com)
- Military Enlistment
  - Connect with the recruiters when the visit the school
  - Plan to take the ASVAB and find out what score is required for the branch of interest
- Apprenticeships
  - Search for Opportunities <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/become-apprentice>





## LINKS

- 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Grade Planning- [here](#)
- 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Planning- [here](#)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Planning- [here](#)