

A Road Map for the Future

8th graders

Try a new activity: Now is a great time to explore new interests and try something new. It can be a new sport, club, or volunteer work.

Look ahead to college: Talk to people you know who have gone to college, find out what college is like, talk to a current college student, seek out your college counselor to get more information.

Turn your interests in to careers: List your hobbies and talents. Then match them up with interesting careers by taking a survey/inventory on the College Board website!

Think about your course selection for high school: Talk with your school counselor about what courses to take that will help you reach your future goals.

9th graders

Make an appointment: Meet with your school counselor to sign up for the classes you need to graduate and get into college.

Name two or three colleges you've heard of: Start your own college list with a few colleges you'd like to learn more about. Don't worry that this list will grow and change over time! You can add as many as you like and delete those you don't like as you figure out what you're looking for in a college.

Get the facts about paying for college: Go to the College Board website or the HESC (Higher Education Services Corporation) website to learn more about financial aid and paying for college.

Visit an area college: Get a feel for campus life. Visit college websites to learn more about college events that are open to the public. Attend some of those events.

Keep a journal: Keep track of all of those extracurricular activities. Include sports, clubs, hobbies, volunteer work, jobs...anything you do in your spare time. This will help you fill out those college applications later.

Set up an observation/shadowing day: Your school counselor can help you find someone with an occupation of your interest who is willing to let you shadow them for a day. Talk to your school counselor about these opportunities.

Prepare for your finals and Regents exams: They count as much as a quarter grade (1/6th of your final grade) so it is important to be prepared for the exams!

Meet with your school counselor: Talk to your counselor about course selection for the following year. Ask your counselor about the best courses to take to help you prepare for the colleges on that list!

10th graders

Keep writing in that journal: Update your activities so you can keep track of your activities. It will also be helpful when you write your college essays if you take the time to reflect on your activities. What did you enjoy most about them? What do they have in common?

List your favorite things to do and study: You can keep this in your journal as well.

Meet with your college counselor to sign up for the PSAT/NMSQT. When you receive your results, schedule a meeting to go over your results.

Review and add to your list of colleges. Visit college websites. Plan for college visits, Open Houses, and college tours.

Name five ways that college pays: College has many benefits beyond bigger paychecks. Find out what they are.

Visit the College Board website to get ideas for possible careers by thinking about who you are and what you like to do now.

Talk to your school and college counselor about your course selection and sign up for the classes you need to graduate and get into college.

11th grade

Start a college list: What are you looking for in a college? You can use the College Board College Search to look up colleges by type of school, location, cost, size and so much more. Then save them to your favorites.

Set up some of those college visits: Most colleges have Open Houses and offer group tours. Check the college website or stop by your school counselor's office to find out how to make these arrangements.

Get the facts about College Admissions Tests: Find out what schools you are applying to require for standardized tests. Find out how colleges use these admissions tests. Learn how the SAT is scored.

Make a list of all of your activities. Keep reflecting on all of your activities. What do you enjoy most about them? What do they all have in common?

Attend the CASDA college fair at Hudson Valley Community College.

Stop and see your school counselor with any questions you may have. This is a good time to check your credits and make sure you are on track towards meeting graduation requirements and staying competitive in college admissions.

Sign up for the May or June SAT. This is the best time to take the SAT as you will be best prepared after completing your 11th grade courses.

12th grade

Do you need to re-take the SAT to increase your score? If so, you should sign up for the October test first thing!

Update your college list—remove colleges you are no longer interested in and add new ones!

Decide if you would like to apply Early to your chosen colleges. Know the difference between Early Action and Early Decision. Make time to meet with your school counselor if you have any questions about this decision.

Talk to two or three teachers about a letter of recommendation.

Meet with your school counselor to organize your application materials. A lot goes in to an application, and your school counselor can best help you to organize and send all of those required materials! Make sure to meet all of the deadlines.

Check out the scholarship list in the Guidance Office. It is updated weekly and new scholarships are likely to come in around mid-year. Keep updated to try to help offset the cost of higher education!

Talk to your school counselor about the Hudson Valley Community College Instant Admissions Day.

Attend the Financial Aid Night to better understand the Financial Aid process and how to fill out the dreaded FAFSA form required by all colleges and universities in order to receive financial assistance.

Fill out the FAFSA and submit to your colleges of choice.

Keep updated on scholarships in the Guidance Office.

Did you order your cap and gown? Check with your Class Advisor to make sure you were measured and your order is in!

When you receive your Financial Aid award letters, compare and contrast to make sure you are making the best financial decision to support your future educational endeavors!

As always, stop by your school counselor's office if you have any questions.