



Junior Year Checklist – College Preparation

Use this checklist to make sure you are doing everything necessary to apply to college and make the most of your junior year.

Fall

- Review your schedule** – Consult with your counselor to make sure that you are taking the right classes to apply to college. Continue to challenge yourself and take academic courses and get all the extra help you need to succeed.
- PSAT** – Sign up to take the Preliminary SAT (*PSAT*) exam in October. This is the practice exam for regular SAT test you may have to take in order to apply to college. Taking the test will prepare you for the SAT and allow you to be considered for national scholarships.
- College fairs** – Attend the National College Fair in Seattle in November. Visit www.nacacnet.org to learn more about the details. You can learn about hundreds of colleges in one place.

Winter

- Stay focused** – Continue to do well in your courses. Junior year grades are the most important grades and colleges strongly consider your performance this year. Get any extra help that you might need in your courses, continue to talk with your mentors and your counselors, and remember your goal of going to college.
- Standardized tests** - Sign up to take the SAT or the ACT + Writing at the end of your junior year. You can take standardized tests multiple times. Talk with your high school counselor if you need a fee waiver. SAT – www.collegeboard.com
ACT – www.act.org.
- Scholarships** – Start learning how to apply for college scholarships. Visit www.thewashboard.org, www.fastweb.com, and www.finaid.org. These sites will connect you with scholarships and help you pay for college. You can apply to scholarships any time in high school, but it is especially important during your junior and senior year.

Spring

- AP/IB/Running Start** – Think about taking International Baccalaureate (*IB*), Advanced Placement (*AP*), or Running Start classes during your senior year. This will help you prepare for college and can allow you to earn college credit while in high school. It will also show colleges that you are challenging yourself by taking advanced courses.

- ❑ **Senior schedule** – Make sure that you continue to challenge yourself and take the necessary academic courses. Senior year is the last chance you have to meet college entrance requirements, so triple check that you will meet them. Remember that college entrance requirements do not necessarily correspond with high school graduation requirements.
- ❑ **AP/IB Tests** – Register to take any AP or IB tests that you are prepared for during the school year. Talk with your high school counselor if you want more information about what tests are available and how to prepare.

Summer (after junior year)

- ❑ **Visit Colleges** – Explore your college options and visit the ones you think you might want to attend. Take a campus tour, visit with the admissions office, and talk with current students – make the most of your time.
- ❑ **Narrow down your choices** – Continue to think about which colleges you want attend and continue to ask yourself important questions about why you want to apply to specific schools. Work to have at least five colleges on your “will apply to” list.
- ❑ **Start thinking about college essays** – Most colleges will require you to write a personal essay with your college applications. Begin to brainstorm ideas. Think of impactful experiences you have had, reflect upon the challenges you have faced, and look forward to your future during and after college.
- ❑ **Engage yourself in meaningful experiences** – Summer is a great opportunity to volunteer, do community service, travel, or work so that you will be a competitive college applicant.