Parent Action Plan: 11th Grade

Junior year usually marks a turning point. This is because for most students and families, it's when college planning activities kick into high gear. Here are some things you can do this year to support your child and give him or her the best options.



Summer

- [ ] **Get the facts about what college costs.** You may be surprised by how affordable higher education can be. Start by reading Understanding College Costs.
- [ ] **Explore financial aid options.** These include grants and scholarships, loans, and work-study programs that can help pay for college costs. Find out more about how financial aid can make college affordable.

Fall

- [ ] **Make sure your child meets with the school counselor.** This meeting is especially important this year as your 11th-grader starts to engage in the college application process. Learn more about the counselor's role in applying to college.
- [ ] **Help your child stay organized.** Work with your 11th-grader to make weekly or monthly to-do lists to keep on top of the tasks required to get ready for applying to colleges. For more time-management tips, see 8 Ways to Take Control of Your Time.
- [ ] **Help your junior get ready for the PSAT/NMSQT in October.** This is a preliminary test that helps students practice for the SAT and assess their academic skills. Juniors who score well on the test are also eligible for scholarship opportunities. Find out more about the PSAT/NMSQT.
- [ ] **Encourage your child to set goals for the school year.** Working toward specific goals helps your high school student stay motivated and focused.

Winter

- [ ] **Review PSAT/NMSQT results together** by logging in to the student score reporting portal. Your child's score report shows what they should work on to get ready for college; lists Advanced Placement courses that might be a good match for them; and connects them to free, personalized SAT practice on Khan Academy based on their results.
- [ ] **Help your child prepare for the SAT.** Many juniors take the SAT in the spring so they can get a head start on planning for college. See which other tests your high school junior may need to take.
- [ ] **Discuss taking challenging courses next year.** Taking honors courses or college-level courses like Advanced Placement as a senior can help your child prepare for college work — and these are also the courses that college admission officers like to see. Learn more about advanced classes.
- [ ] **Encourage your junior to consider taking SAT Subject Tests.** Many colleges require or recommend taking these tests to get a sense of your child's skills in a certain academic area. In general, it's best to take a Subject Test right after taking the relevant course. Learn more about SAT Subject Tests.
- [ ] **Encourage your child to take AP Exams.** If your 11th-grader takes AP or other advanced classes, have him or her talk with teachers now about taking these tests in May. Read more about the AP Program.

Spring

- [ ] **Search together for colleges that meet your child's needs.** Once you have an idea of the qualities your child is looking for in a college, help him or her enter these criteria into College Search to create a list of colleges to consider applying to.
- [ ] **Help your child research scholarships.** This form of financial aid provides money for college that doesn't need to be repaid. Learn more through College Board's Scholarship Search.
- [ ] **Attend college fairs and financial aid events.** These events allow you to meet with college representatives and get answers to questions. Your child can ask the school counselor how to find events in your area. Check out the College Fair Checklist for more information.
- [ ] **Help your child make summer plans.** Summer is a great time to explore interests and learn new skills — and colleges look for students who pursue meaningful summer activities. Help your high schooler look into summer learning programs or find a job or internship.
- [ ] **Visit colleges together.** Make plans to check out the campuses of colleges your child is interested in. Use the Campus Visit Checklist to learn how to get the most out of these experiences.

Make and Share Free Checklists
checkli.com