

Strategies to Achieve Your Career Goals

Learning About Yourself

- Take a career interest inventory survey. (7-10)
- Take a learning styles inventory to see how you learn best and work to improve upon your weaknesses. (7-10)
- Talk with family and friends about your career interest and summarize what you heard. (7-12)
- Write an essay about your plans after high school. (7-10)
- Research and list the clubs, organizations and service projects you might like to join. (7-10)
- Add details to your Career Plan about the clubs, organizations and service projects you participated in over the summer or throughout the year.(7-12)
- Start, update or complete a resume using information in your Career Plan. (10-12)
- Review sample college essay questions, then draft an essay about yourself. (11-12)

Becoming a Well Rounded Student

- Join a community service project and use the opportunity to explore possible careers, build your resume and make new friends. (7-12)
- Choose opportunities to show and grow your Leadership Skills. (7-12)
- Select an adult related to your career goals you would like to have as a mentor...and ask them! (8-10)
- Sign up for group assignments and learn to work in teams to achieve a goal. (7-12)
- Choose peers who have similar aspirations and work together to achieve career goals. (8-12)

Taking Ownership of Your Future

- Research information to help you transition from middle to high school (7-8)
- Inquire about ways to earn high school credit (8)
- Assess your attitudes and behaviors. Are you making good decisions about your future? Develop a set of study habits, behaviors and attitudes that show you're serious about your future. (7-12)
- Develop plans for long term projects that lets you practice your research, time-management and communication skills. (7-12)
- Research your school course offerings and select courses that help you learn STEM Skills. (9-12) (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)
- Put your best foot forward and clean up your online image. (7-12)
- Ask for help in deciding which advanced courses to take and discuss with your parents or mentor. This could be school counselor, teachers and peers who have taken the classes. (9-11)
- Request letters of recommendations. Recommended choices include teachers, school counselors, principals, club advisors, coaches, church members, neighbors, community leaders you have volunteered with, employers. Add the letters to your college portfolio. (11-12)
- Research, register and attend summer activities/classes offered at your school, a local college, or in the community. (7-12)
- Review and update goals throughout the year. (9-12)
- Get a part time job practicing your leadership, academic and social skills. Learn to budget your money. (8-12)

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Understanding Academics and Course Planning

- Take advantage of opportunities to learn about high school and college credit. (7-8)
- Develop a 4 year graduation plan and get advice from your school counselor, parents and teachers. (8)
- Study career clusters to see what courses are offered for certain careers. (7-10)
- Decide to make every year count when it comes to class attendance, course selections, credit earned, GPA (grade point average), and rank. Review your report card quarterly and make adjustments to your study habits and work ethic to maintain or improve your results. (9-12)
- Plan your electives carefully and make selections related to your interests and career goals. (8-11)
- Take advantage of opportunities to learn about advanced courses or dual credit courses and talk with your counselor on steps to register for courses related to your career plan. (8-11)
- Narrow the choice of careers that interest you and decide on a postsecondary path. (10-11)
- Learn about various postsecondary options – community colleges, universities and technical schools – and the entrance requirements for each. (8-11)
- Learn about apprenticeships, internships, school to work opportunities, on the job trainings.
- Seniors should continue to focus on academics. You still need to graduate high school. (12)

Planning Your Future

- Talk with your parents about careers that interest you and make a plan together. (7-12)
- Set goals and make plans for this year and beyond. (7-12)
- Evaluate your interests and the courses you enjoy and learn how those might lead to careers (7-10)
- Research different benefits and pathways to earning a postsecondary degree. (9-11)
- Investigate postsecondary trainings and colleges that interest you. Check out catalogs, take virtual tours and attend college and/or career fairs. Rank them and add to your Career Plan. (9-11)
- Seek job shadow opportunities in a career field that interests you. (10-11)
- Participate in a variety of college tours. (10-11)
- Understand terms associated with college admissions. (11-12)

Investigating Required Tests

- Learn about passing standards and strive to do your best on the PSSA Test (7-8)
- Learn about passing standards and strive to do your best on the Keystone Exams (8-11)
- Find out about pre-college admission tests and study guides or classes offered for PSAT, SAT, ACT and other college entrance requirements. (9-11)
- Take advantage of mentors, tutors and extra study sessions (7-12)
- Learn about AP exams now so you can plan ahead. (10-12)
- Research SAT and ACT test dates and locations.
- Register for the SAT and/or ACT before the deadline.

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All Things College

- Create a college application Portfolio. Include high school transcripts and records. (11-12)
- Request your transcript for any applications you will be submitting. (11-12)
- Polish and finalize college application essays. (11-12)
- Complete college applications and submit by deadlines. (11-12)
- Request admission test results be sent to your college choices. (11-12)
- Await admission letters and review when received. If rejected, apply to other colleges.
- Select a college and notify the admissions office by May 1st. Notify the other schools of your decision not to attend there. (12)
- Ask Counselors to send year end reports to selected college. (12)
- Attend Freshman Orientation and schedule your classes.(12)
- Talk to older friends and siblings who went to college about their experiences and how they adjusted to life as a college student. (11-12)
- Make a “to do” list of things you need to do over the summer to prepare for college. (12)

Understanding Finances

- Learn the basics about Financial Aid for College (9-10)
- Work with your parents to learn about financial literacy and smart money ideas and how this can help with future plans (planning ahead, budgeting, needs-vs-wants, wise consumerism, and savings plans).(7-12)
- Get a part time job and save your earnings for college.(8-12)
- Attend college and career fairs (7-12)
- Get familiar with college financial aid terms. (9-10)
- Find out about managing personal finances – especially planning ahead and budgeting (7-9)
- Begin managing your personal finances and understanding banking processes (checking, savings and ATM/debit cards) (10-11)
- Learn about the FAFSA and Use the FAFSA 4Caster to investigate the costs of various postsecondary institutions. (10-11)
- Know the difference between various types of financial aid. (10-11)
- Research scholarships and study the qualifications needed. (11-12)
- Apply for local scholarships and financial aid. (12)
- Attend Financial Aid Workshops in the area. (11-12)
- You and your parent must register for your FAFSA Pins. (12)
- With the help of your parents, complete the FAFSA forms and submit them as early as possible starting in October. Check status often.(12)
- Review your student aid report and correct any errors. (12)
- Check on housing and other required deposits. Ask for advice if waitlisted. (12)
- Apply for work study at college to save money. (12)

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Maximizing your Break (Holiday and Summer)

- Talk to family members, relatives, and trusted adults about their career paths.
- Talk to older friends or siblings about their work and college experiences.
- Volunteer for a school or community service project.
- Attend summer activities/classes offered at your school, college or community.
- Attend Orientations if you are transitioning to a new school, grade or college.
- Get a part time job.
- Schedule a Job Shadow to explore a career you are interested in.
- Schedule and visit a college you are interested in attending.