

Junior Checklist

Fall (September-November)

- Make a list of academic and personal goals:** It is important to always have goals; they give you direction and help you create success. Create an academic and a personal goal at the beginning of the school year and discuss these with your guidance counselor.
- Register for the PSAT:** This year counts for the National Merit Scholarship. Check the Daily Announcements for more information.
- Practice ACT Writing essay:** Create a draft of the ACT writing essay before you take the ACT in the spring. Review what the requirements are for the essay in order to earn different point amounts. Find a sample prompt here <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/>.
- College Criteria:** What are your top criteria when looking for a college? What are your parents'/guardians' criteria? Do they match? Follow the link for a list of college criteria to consider. <http://www.actstudent.org/college/factors.html>
- Practice ACT:** Complete a practice ACT test and meet with your school counselor to create an ACT study plan for the school year. Find a full test here <http://www.act.org/aap/pdf/Preparing-for-the-ACT.pdf> or log-in to your MCIS account for ACT practice course.
- Start to learn about your personality:** By getting to know yourself you will be able to start matching yourself to careers.

Winter (December-February)

- Review your 4-year academic course schedule:** Courses recommended to be successful in college: 4 yrs. of English, 4 yrs. of social studies, 4 yrs. of math, 3 yrs. of science, 2 yrs. of the same world language, 1-2 yrs. Art, and 1 yr. computer. Review how your CaSH, PSEO, or AP classes transfer to colleges you are interested in. Create an account at <https://www.transferology.com/>
- Career Research:** Complete a job shadow or job interview over winter break. Select a career that interests you.
- End of marking period reflection:** This is something that should be done after each trimester/semester. Reflecting on your progress helps to focus on your goals
- It's time to review your SMART goals and set new goals for the rest of the school year.** Meet with your advisor and re-evaluate the goals you made at the beginning of the year. Set new goals to focus on for the rest of the year.
- College Application:** Practicing filling out a college application is very helpful. Knowing what information is needed on college applications is important to prepare you for applying in the fall.
- Start to learn about your financial aid options:** Review the types of financial aid available at college.

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Spring (March-May)

- ACT test preparation:** Review your ACT study plan. Now that the ACT test is a few months away, create a new study plan. Do you have enough hours set aside to achieve the goal you want?
- Compile a portfolio/resume.** Some colleges and scholarships require a portfolio/resume in their application process, as well as writing samples and auditions/interview. Create your resume. If you are interested in art, start to put together your art portfolio. If you are interested in music, think about creating an audition tape.
- End of marking period reflection.** How did your first semester go? What are things you could improve on?
- Net Price Calculator.** The Net Price Calculator is a tool used to estimate the amount of financial aid you will receive at an individual institution.
- Scholarship Search:** Start looking for scholarships. Create a profile on a scholarship website and see if there are scholarships you can apply to over the next year. Write a scholarship essay.
- College comparison:** How do your top 5 colleges compare with cost, acceptance, and other factors?

On Going

- Maintain your Grades/GPA.** It is really important that you maintain good grades throughout your high school career. Good grades will look better when applying to colleges, and it will open up a lot more opportunities for scholarships.
- Network with people.** The more people you know the better. You will eventually have to ask teachers, coaches, counselors, and/or your employer for a letter of recommendation when applying to schools
- Keep your Portfolio Organized:** It is important to keep all of your papers, grades, awards, etc. anything you find important in a file to be use and compile later for your resume.
- Talk with your parent(s).** It is important to talk with your parents about college finances. Whatever the amount is, it is not a problem as long as you start planning ahead.
- College Exploration:** Attend at least one college visit. You may attend as many as you want while abiding to your school policy. Consider attending a college fair. This is a chance to talk to multiple college representatives at once! Visit the SHS website for a list of college fairs in the area.