

# Post-Secondary Planning Guide

## Plan for College

### Freshman Year

You have arrived! High school is going to be a fun and important four years. Now is the time to **IMMERSE YOURSELF** into all it offers.

- Understand graduation requirements and create a way to keep track.
- Enroll in courses that allow for challenging curriculum and exploration (electives!) and keep the progression plan in mind.
- Get involved on campus (athletics, clubs, events, activities).
- Introduce yourself to your school counselor and create connections with teachers.
- Take a career quiz. Collegeboard.org has a good one (search College Board Career Quiz). Explore careers using the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website. Take a survey to match your abilities and interests to potential careers at bls.gov.
- Research the cost of attending the colleges you are interested in attending.
- Research scholarships. Create profile on fastweb.com. Check the College & Career Advisor Schoology group for updated information on scholarships.
- Start a folder with all your accomplishments, such as awards, certificates, community service logs, job shadowing, and internship letters of participation.

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## Sophomore Year

You are in a groove and feeling confident at high school. Take some risks! Go for something outside your comfort zone. **EXPLORE and CHALLENGE**

- Enroll in challenging courses. Most selective colleges want to see that you have taken honors and AP courses on your transcript. Create a course load you can be proud of.
- Take the PSAT and keep your College Board account information somewhere safe.
- Connect your College Board account with Khan Academy if you still need to. Khan Academy will use your previous SAT, PSAT/NMSQT®, PSAT 10, or PSAT 8/9 scores to create personalized practice recommendations for you. You can take practice tests as well.
- Continue to build relationships with your teachers. Relationship building is essential for letters of recommendation.
- Seek out possible leadership positions in clubs, athletics, and other opportunities.
- Begin accruing community service hours.
- Revisit graduation requirements AND any additional requirements colleges may look for on a transcript (such as world language).
- Take a career quiz. Collegeboard.org has a good one (search College Board Career Quiz).
- Start a college list based on your research. Visit one or two college campuses.
- Research scholarships. Create profile on fastweb.com. Check the College & Career Advisor Schoology group for updated information on scholarships.
- Add any new accomplishments, such as awards, certificates, community service logs, job shadowing, and internship letters of participation to the folder you started in your freshman year. If you don't have a folder started, gather all this information from your freshman and sophomore years and put it in a folder.

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## Junior Year

You are an upperclassman, and it is time to shine! After setting a foundation, let's **RESEARCH** what makes sense for YOU after graduation. Time to **GATHER** all the info.

- Take the SAT and the ACT by *preparing* for the exams and sign up on their websites (find out if LRHS offers these tests and when). Neither test is more difficult than the other, but you may do better on one of them due to their structure.
- Connect your College Board account with Khan Academy if you still need to. Khan Academy will use your previous SAT, PSAT/NMSQT®, PSAT 10, or PSAT 8/9 scores to create personalized practice recommendations for you. You can take practice tests as well.
- Focus on your academics. This is the year to solidify your GPA and make the most of your courses.
- Create a resume using the information you put in the folder you created during your freshman year. Include work and community service experience, clubs and leadership roles, honors, awards, accomplishments, and any special skills you have such as speaking multiple languages. If you don't have a folder started, start one and include this information from your freshman, sophomore, and junior years.
- Research career possibilities. Take a career quiz. Collegeboard.org has a good one (search College Board Career Quiz).
- Make a list! *Research* schools, including location, deadlines, programs, finances, and how to apply. If you have the time, visit these schools. 3-10 schools are plenty!
- Get organized. Keep your research, data, school info, and plans in a safe place.
- Meet with your school counselor and the college/career advisor (if your school has one).
- Attend college fairs.
- Create your FSA and FFAA IDs to prepare to complete the FAFSA.
- Continue to build relationships with your teachers. Relationship building is important for letters of recommendation.
- Research and start applying for scholarships. Create profile on fastweb.com. Check the College & Career Advisor Schoology group for updated information on scholarships.

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## Senior Year

How did you get here so fast? You are in the final stretch, and it is all so exciting. This is the year to **DECIDE and ENJOY**.

- Choose classes that continue to make you a strong post-secondary candidate. It is not time to go easy on yourself, but courses can still be fun.
- Finish community service hours.
- Stay involved in campus activities, athletics, clubs, and leadership positions. GO to events!
- Stay apprised of all the senior announcements. Your Senior Class Schoology group will keep you up to date on senior pictures, senior events, graduation ceremony information, yearbooks, and more. The College & Career Advisor group will update you on college, scholarship, and career opportunities.
- Retake the SAT and ACT. Many Florida universities will "Superscore" your scores by using your best scores from each section. You can only do this if you take the tests more than once. Others will consider your highest score on a single test date.
- Narrow down and solidify your college list. Remember to apply to schools that make sense for the student YOU are, and that will serve you best.
- Apply! Make a note of deadlines and get your process started. The sooner, the better. Use the Common App. Learn how to request transcripts. Request letters of recommendation, giving your recommenders at least two weeks to complete their letters. Also, give your recommenders a copy of your resume or a list of accomplishments.
- Meet with your school counselor and share your post-secondary plan's details.
- Research and create a list of scholarship opportunities. Check the College & Career Advisor Schoology group for updated information on scholarships.
- Complete the FAFSA and the FFAA once they become available. EVERY college student should fill these out, no matter their financial status.
- Make a decision! Once acceptances come in, have conversations with your family. Revisit the schools if you can. Dive deeper into what the schools offer regarding housing, activities, and academics. Make a pros/cons list.
- Enjoy your senior year! This is an exciting time. You earned it.