

Junior and Senior Year Timeline

Preparing for College and Career

Two-year timeline

JUNIOR YEAR: SEPTEMBER TO JANUARY

WHAT TO DO: Think about your reasons for going to college. What are your goals? What learning opportunities are most important to you? Do your college plans include plans for after college?

HOW TO DO IT: Talk with your college and career mentors (parents, counselors, teachers, friends) and investigate possible career options and the degree levels involved in each.

JUNIOR YEAR: JANUARY TO MARCH

WHAT TO DO: Identify important factors in choosing a college (if that's your chosen path). Two-year or four-year? Location? Cost? Atmosphere? Variety of study programs available? Entrance fee requirement?

HOW TO DO IT: Focus on your goals and career interests. Consult college guidebooks and websites. Set up an ACT Profile account and explore college and careers. Prepare and register for a college readiness assessment.

JUNIOR YEAR: MARCH TO JUNE

WHAT TO DO: List your top colleges and collect information. Have you included all possible choices? What information do you need? How can you get it?

HOW TO DO IT: Attend college fairs and "college night" programs. Go on college visits. Take your college readiness assessment (at least once).

SUMMER BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS

WHAT TO DO: Make your summer count. It can be a real growth and planning opportunity, and it can help focus the planning you'll need to do your senior year.

HOW TO DO IT: Pursue a summer job that corresponds with your career interests ... and earn and save some money for college. Or, look for volunteer or job-shadowing opportunities so you can see your dream career up close or explore ideas of what you might want to do.

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Two-year timeline (cont).

SENIOR YEAR: AUGUST

WHAT TO DO: Compare the colleges on your list. Have you weighed pros and cons carefully? Which colleges meet your needs?

HOW TO DO IT: Continue visiting colleges and college websites. Organize your college choices into a detailed pro/con list. Pay special attention to colleges with the biggest “pros” lists.

SENIOR YEAR: SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER

WHAT TO DO: Apply for admission to your top-choice colleges. Do you have all the necessary forms and information about yourself? Double-check the application deadlines, and put them on your calendar.

HOW TO DO IT: Obtain application forms online, or with the help of your counselor. Observe deadlines. Submit transcripts and test scores (and retest, if necessary, to give you your best score).

SENIOR YEAR: JANUARY TO FEBRUARY

WHAT TO DO: Apply for financial aid. Have you investigated all possible sources of aid? When should you apply?

HOW TO DO IT: Talk to your counselor or your top colleges’ financial aid offices. Get all the financial aid application forms and watch for deadlines. Complete the FAFSA form as soon as possible.

SENIOR YEAR: FEBRUARY TO MAY

WHAT TO DO: Make your final decisions. What additional preparation might be helpful? Should you consider summer school? Do you feel comfortable with your final choice?

HOW TO DO IT: Talk with your mentors about your final choice and ask them to help you confirm your decision. Decline other admission offers—colleges are holding space for you, and your decline could free up room for other students.

CONGRATS, GRADUATE!