

TIMELINE FOR POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING

Grades 7-8

- Take interest inventories (try those offered by the MN Statewide Testing Program (<http://oms.umn.edu/oms/index.php?select=mstp>)).
- Search the library or internet to learn more about jobs and careers.
- Begin thinking about high school course selection.
- Attend college fairs to find out what college is all about. The YEAH college fair is a great one to start: www.ouryeah.org.
- Explore career possibilities by studying different subjects, by volunteering by joining clubs and/or by participating in sports.

Grade 9

- Continue the activities above
- Consider interviewing or “shadowing” a person in your field of interest.
- Investigate options such as PSEO, AP, and CLEP
- Start and continue a file or portfolio of your best high school work (such as essays, reports, projects and art), awards, letters of recommendation and/or commendation. Add a list of activities that includes any volunteering, club work, sports involvement, travel, missions, employment, etc. Ask for letters of recommendation and/or certificates of participation for your file from supervisors and leaders of these activities. All this in one place will help the filling out of job and college applications!

Grade 10

- Continue the activities above.
- Take advantage of websites that allow you to search for colleges based on your preferences (some are: www.collegeboard.com, www.petersons.com, <http://www.iseek.org/education/educationSearch>, <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>)
- If you desire to enroll in the Post Secondary Enrollment Option program (PSEO or dual enrollment) as a junior, explore colleges of interest in the fall. In the spring begin the application process for PSEO.
- Consider taking these pre-college and college tests:
 - **PLAN** (Homeschool code: 979-999)– take this test for the career and educational planning component and to practice for the ACT. This test, normed for the 10th grader, also gives students a predicted ACT score. The results can help students work on weak areas. Students will receive the actual test booklet; the scoring sheet will list both the student responses and the correct responses.

- **PSAT/NMSQT** (MN Homeschool code: 992499) – some recommend taking in this year for practice. Like with the PLAN, students will receive the actual test booklet (You probably will have to pick up the test booklet from the school yourself. It is available once the score report has been received.) The scoring sheet will list both the student responses and the correct responses.
- **ACT** (Homeschool code: 969-999), **SAT** (Homeschool code: 970000) – some recommend taking these two college tests in the sophomore year for practice. Either can also be used as the required standardized test to qualify for PSEO (most colleges will allow the PLAN or PSAT). Another way to practice these tests in a “safe” way is to take advantage of the free test given by all the test preparation companies (such as Kaplan, Princeton Review and Sylvan Learning Centers).

Grade 11

- Continue the activities above.
- Attend college fairs and ask very specific questions regarding costs, financial aid/scholarships, environment, etc. Some possibilities: National College Fair: www.nacac.com, Christian College Fair: www.naccap.org/fairs, YEAH Home Educator’s College Fair: www.ouryeah.org, Minnesota College Fairs (usually held at community colleges): http://www.mn-acac.org/?s=fairs_mef&print=true
- Begin looking at specific colleges by viewing their materials, exploring their websites, and visiting their campuses.
- Start looking for scholarship opportunities.
- Prepare your job résumé
- Begin an activities résumé.
- Research military, apprenticeship or other services opportunities.
- Begin application process for PSEO, if desire to enroll as a senior in this program.
- Consider these taking pre-college and college tests:

PSAT/NMSQT – gives a predicted SAT score and is the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test when taken in your junior year.

ACT, SAT – The recommended time to take one or both of these tests is in the summer. Choose which test to take depending on which test the college(s) that you are interested in requires; take both if unsure and then you submit the higher score to the college.

Take SAT subject tests if required by college.

Grade 12

- Continue the above activities
- Take advantage of day-long and over-night events at colleges.
- Take the ACT or SAT – register for fall testing, if needed and especially if last score was low (Both the SAT and ACT will now allow you to choose which test results to send to colleges).
- Take SAT subject tests if required by college.
- Complete your college visits – take a serious look at colleges and consider an overnight stay.
- Start requesting letters of recommendation from teachers and others who can speak to academics, achievements, leadership and/or character.
- Finalize your activities résumé if you want to send one with your college application.
- Narrow the college choices and submit applications for acceptance to the college and for scholarships.
- Watch deadlines! Often scholarships from colleges have an earlier deadline than the admission deadline.
- Get registered for Financial Aid (FAFSA) and complete the forms as early as possible (late January or early February). You will need parents' income tax information to complete.
- Finalize your job résumé.
- Begin your job search if going into the workforce after graduation.
- Begin the application for an apprenticeship if this is your goal after graduation.

Remember that in the state of Minnesota, the term “college” refers to most all post high-school institutions, including technical colleges, community colleges, and four year colleges. Students who want to attend a community or technical colleges, which are open enrollment, must apply. Instead of a submitting a college test score like the ACT or SAT, students will have to take a placement test (usually the Accuplacer).

For more information on the Accuplacer and to take a practice test, go to:
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/index.html>

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