

Navigator



STUDENT & FAMILY TO-DO LIST

What do you need to do to prepare for life after high school? Here's a quick to-do list of the major things you should do in grades 6-12. Keep this list handy and check off how you're doing each year.

Grades 6-8

Middle school is important because it's your foundation for high school. During grades 6-8, you should:

- Join an activity.** This could be sports or music, student government or the yearbook. Getting involved is the best way to get to know teachers and other students.
- Participate in class.** Make sure you prepare for every class. Do your homework and turn it in on time. Pay attention and ask questions during class. Show that you're serious about your studies!
- Take challenging classes.** Do your best to get ready for high school by taking challenging classes during middle school. Find out if you can start studying a foreign language. See if you can take pre-algebra during 7th grade and algebra during 8th grade.
- Explore your interests.** Find out if you can take an interest assessment to learn what types of careers might be most appealing to you.

GRADES 9-10

Starting high school can be difficult. But if you start with a plan for all four years you'll have be much better prepared to know what you want and need. During grades 9-10, you should:

- Join an activity and volunteer.** Make sure you get involved in sports or a club at school. In addition, find out if you can participate in volunteer service at school or in your neighborhood.
- Research career options.** Find out if you can take an interest assessment and explore careers that sound interesting to you. Research the postsecondary (after high school) education you'll need for different careers.
- Develop a four-year course plan.** Find out what courses you need to graduate—and what courses you'll need for your career goals. Then work with your advisor or counselor to develop a plan for each year of high school. Take the most challenging courses possible.
- Start preparing for college.** Learn what different colleges (two-year and four-year) require you to do during high school. Take the PSAT in 10th grade to start the college application planning process.
- Begin planning for financial aid.** Paying for college can be difficult, but it's not impossible. Try the [FAFSA 4caster](#) to explore financial aid options.

Volume 1, Issue 2

April 2012

Joining a school sport or club is one of the best ways to stay engaged and do well in school.

Get a strong start in high school. Make sure you plan for all four years and take challenging classes.

Inside this issue:

Student & Family To-Do List (continued) **2**

The High School & Beyond Plan: What Is It? **3-4**

STUDENT & FAMILY TO-DO LIST (continued)

GRADES 11-12

By the time you're a junior, you need to get serious about your plans for life after high school. Here are a few suggestions:

- ❑ **Take on leadership roles.** Make sure you get involved in school activities and volunteer your time at school or in the community. As one of the older students in the school, take a leadership role in your activities.
- ❑ **Register for advanced courses.** Learn which courses you need to graduate and to apply to college or technical training. Then challenge yourself by taking advanced courses, such as advanced math or science, AP courses, or CTE program offerings.
- ❑ **Identify postsecondary options.** Do your research to identify five to ten postsecondary programs that will help you meet your career goals. These might be two-year or four-year colleges, technical colleges, or apprenticeships.
- ❑ **Take college entrance exams.** Take the PSAT as a junior and the SAT and/or ACT as a senior. Take the ASVAB if you are interested in a military career or want to know more about your potential! And take AP exams for any AP courses you complete.
- ❑ **Learn the application schedule and requirements for your postsecondary choices.** Make yourself a calendar of what you need to do to apply to each of your choices. Find out which exams are needed, when the application form is due, how many recommendations you'll need, and whether

you'll need to write a personal essay. Keep track of your applications.

- ❑ **Continue to research financial aid.** By the middle of your senior year, you and your family will need to complete a [FAFSA](#) form to apply for financial aid. In addition, work with your school counselor to identify other scholarships and aid.
- ❑ **Don't slow down!** Even after you make your decision about what you're doing after high school, don't slow down. Continue to take challenging courses and continue to work hard until graduation. Colleges will notice if you suddenly stop working, or take an easier course load during the second semester of senior year.

COLLEGE & CAREER RESOURCES

Here are a few resources to help you navigate the next few years: ***Talk with your school counselor to make sure you understand how to apply for your college choices.***

Navigation 101—www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/default.aspx

Paying for College—www.hecb.wa.gov/Paying/index.asp

ACT—<http://act.org/>

Check out a College—<http://checkoutacollege.com/>

College Board—Tests, college search www.collegeboard.com

Technical & Community Colleges—www.sbctc.ctc.edu/



THE HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND PLAN: WHAT IS IT?

Each student graduating from high school in Washington State must complete a High School & Beyond Plan. The Plan is a state graduation requirement; however, the contents of that plan are up to the individual school district.

Navigation 101 helps students make clear, careful, and creative plans for life beyond high school. As a result, Navigation 101 will help you meet this requirement before you graduate.

Students work on their High School & Beyond Plans each year as part of Navigation, starting in 6th grade.

What's in a High School & Beyond Plan? Your Plan will show what you have accomplished in school and what you want to do after you graduate. Here's what you'll put in it:

- ◆ **Your goals** for middle school and high school;
- ◆ Information about the **courses** you are taking and why you are taking them (how they relate to your plans for postsecondary);
- ◆ **Your grades**—and why you did well (or how you can improve);
- ◆ Your **career interests**;
- ◆ Your **plans for postsecondary**; and
- ◆ Your **financial plan** to pay for postsecondary and to earn money as an adult.

Before you graduate, you'll collect all this information into your final High School & Beyond Plan. It will include:

- An **ESSAY** summarizing what you accomplished during high school and what you hope to do after gradua-

tion— including your plans for postsecondary and your career dreams. How did you make high school work for you?

- A **CHECKLIST** showing the classes and the steps you've taken to prepare for postsecondary (entrance exams, applications, letters of recommendation, etc.) How prepared are you for college and career?
- A **TRANSCRIPT** showing all your courses from high school and your grades. Your High School & Beyond Plan essay should explain how these courses all fit together to help you reach your goals.
- A **FINANCIAL PLAN** to show how you will pay for postsecondary and/or earn the money you need to live on your own.

Navigation 101 helps students make clear, careful, and creative plans for life beyond high school.

HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND PLAN CHECKLIST

GRADES 6-8

Middle school is important because it's your foundation for high school. How are you preparing for high school—and for life after high school?

- Join an activity. What activities have you joined during middle school? What are you planning to do in high school? Join a sports team, play music, run for student government, or start a club.
- Explore your interests. What do you like to do? Your advisor or school counselor can help you take an interest survey to see how your interests and skills relate to career possibilities.
- Take challenging classes. Get ready for high school by taking challenging classes that relate to your interests. Study a foreign language, take algebra or pre-algebra. Talk with your advisor for ideas.
- Think about the future. Start learning about postsecondary programs— community college, 4-year college, apprenticeships, technical school... what type of postsecondary education do you need to achieve your dreams?

THE HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND PLAN: WHAT IS IT? (continued)

GRADES 9-10

The first two years of high school are a great time to plot a course toward your life after graduation. Here are some tips:

- Join an activity and volunteer. Continue your involvement in school by joining sports or a club. Volunteer your time in the community.
- Explore career interests. Take an interest assessment and learn more about careers that sound interesting. Research the postsecondary education you'll need for different careers.
- Develop a four-year course plan. Find out what courses you need to graduate—and what courses you'll need for your career goals. Then develop a plan for each year of school. Take the most challenging courses that will help you meet your goals.
- Research postsecondary programs. Learn about different colleges and programs, including 2-year, 4-year, technical school, apprenticeships, and certificate programs. What type of education do you need for your career dreams?
- Learn about using money. Earning a living or paying for college can be difficult unless you are careful with your money. Your counselor can help you learn about saving and budgeting money, using credit, and applying for financial aid. What do you need to do to prepare for life after high school? Here's a handy checklist to keep you on track. Think about these points carefully and you'll soon be ready for life after high school!

GRADES 11-12

As a junior and senior, it's time to take the final steps to be ready for your life after high school.

Here's a checklist:

- Identify a career cluster and a career of interest. What's your top choice for a career? Why? How does it build on your strengths and interests?
 - Continue your career research. Learn more about careers that interest you.
- In addition:
- ⇒ Register for CTE courses in your career area;
 - ⇒ Update your resume for summer jobs or internships;
 - ⇒ Interview an adult in your career area;
 - ⇒ Complete a job shadow; and
 - ⇒ Look for a summer job or internship in your career area.
- Plan your high school courses. Continue to take the most challenging courses you can. Make sure your courses will meet your school's graduation requirements and the admission requirements of your top choice postsecondary program. How will your high school courses prepare you for the future?
 - Research postsecondary programs. Decide how much and what type of education you need after high school: no more education, an apprenticeship, a 1-year certificate program, a 2-year degree, a 4-year degree, or a post-graduate degree.
 - Find out about programs that offer the credentials you need.

- Prepare for postsecondary applications. Once you've identified postsecondary programs, make sure you complete the following steps:
 - ⇒ Visit postsecondary programs or meet with an admissions officer
 - ⇒ Take the PSAT or PLAN (for 4-year college)
 - ⇒ Take the SAT, SAT Subject Tests and/or ACT (for 4-year college)
 - ⇒ Take the ASSET, ACCUPLACER and/or COMPASS (for community, technical colleges)
 - ⇒ Take the ASVAB (for military or general self-knowledge)
 - ⇒ Research entrance requirements for your top choices
- Prepare financially. Make sure you're ready for the cost of college or of living on your own:
 - ⇒ Complete the FAFSA or CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE (College Board) to apply for financial aid
 - ⇒ Research scholarship opportunities
 - ⇒ Research tuition and living expenses at postsecondary programs
 - ⇒ Start a savings or checking account
 - ⇒ Research car and health insurance for when you turn 18
- Stay involved in the community. It's important to show that you are engaged and involved in school, and even more important to demonstrate that you are involved and a leader in your community. Participate in volunteer service projects in the community—make a difference!

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We're on the Web at
**[http://www.k12.wa.us/
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CareerCollegeReadiness/
default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/SecondaryEducation/CareerCollegeReadiness/default.aspx)**

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is the lead education agency in the state for K-12 education. The current Superintendent of Public Instruction is Randy Dorn. The agency was formed by the territorial government in the 1870s.

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