

Post-Secondary - Action Plan



Students are *strongly encouraged* to use this document as a *guide* through the Post-Secondary Planning Process.

Important Account Login Information

★ Naviance:

○
○
Username: _____

Password: _____

○
○
★ Collegeboard.org:

Username: _____

Password: _____

★ Actstudent.org:

Username: _____

Password: _____

★ Common App:

Username: _____

Password: _____

Goal Setting

Examples:

9th Grade

1. Grades: Get all B's or better in all of my courses
2. Join one club/sport
3. Run for class officer
4. Get recommended for an honors course for next year

10th Grade

1. Take an AP course
2. Participate in the Drama club performance
3. Score a _____ or better on PSAT
4. Be a mentor with Heroes and Cool Kids

GRADE 9: Goals	Resources needed	Target date for completion

GRADE 10: Goals	Resources needed	Target date for completion

GRADE 11: Goals	Resources needed	Target date for completion

GRADE 12: Goals	Resources needed	Target date for completion

POST GRAD: Goals	Resources needed	Target date for completion

Schedule Planning (9th-12th)

9th Grade:

Math:

Science:

English:

Social Studies:

Foreign Language:

Physical Education/Health:

Electives:

10th Grade:

Math:

Science:

English:

Social Studies:

Foreign Language:

Physical Education/Health:

Financial Literacy:

Electives:

11th Grade:

Math:

Science:

English:

Social Studies:

Foreign Language:

Physical Education/Health:

Electives:

12th Grade:

Math:

Science:

English:

Social Studies:

Foreign Language:

Physical Education/Health:

Electives:

College Search

What Do I Want in a College?

- Size:
- Location:
- Cost:
- Activities Offered:
- Majors Offered:
- Competitiveness (Admissions criteria):

College Search Tools:

- Naviance - Supermatch College Search
- Collegeboard: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>

College Entrance Exam Testing

Tests:

- PSATs
- SAT
- SATII
- ACT

My Testing Timeline:

10th Grade:

- Test/Month: PSAT/October

11th Grade:

- Test/Month: PSAT/October
- Test/Month: _____
- Test/Month: _____
- Test/Month: _____
- Test/Month: _____

12th Grade:

- Test/Month: _____
- Test/Month: _____

College Resume/Activities Profile

Academic Honors

- Start by listing the biggest academic honors you've garnered, starting with ninth grade.
- Most colleges are interested in only your four years of high school.
- Include honor-roll recognition, essay-writing awards, science competitions, and the like.

Extra-curricular Activities

- This category includes clubs you've belonged to, class offices you've held, sports, band, yearbook, and all the other nonacademic activities you've done.
- Don't forget non-school-related items such as volunteering at a nursing home and jobs you've worked.
- Include special interests like photography, hiking, writing, and so forth.

Format:

- Contact Information
- Clubs/Activities
- Athletics
- Community Service
- Employment
- Honors/Awards
- Unique Achievements: Arts, Sciences, Athletics, etc.

Who you will request letters of rec from:

- Teachers:
- School Counselors:
- Coaches:
- Club Advisors/Community Service Leaders:
- Employers:

The College Essay/Personal Statement

Choose a Topic That Will Highlight You

Don't focus on the great aspects of a particular college, the amount of dedication it takes to be a doctor or the number of extracurricular activities you took part in during high school.

Do share your personal story and thoughts, take a creative approach and highlight areas that aren't covered in other parts of the application, like your high school records.

Keep Your Focus Narrow and Personal

Don't try to cover too many topics. This will make the essay sound like a résumé that doesn't provide any details about you.

Do focus on one aspect of yourself so the readers can learn more about who you are. Remember that the readers must be able to find your main idea and follow it from beginning to end. Ask a parent or teacher to read just your introduction and tell you what he or she thinks your essay is about.

Show, Don't Tell

Don't simply state a fact to get an idea across, such as "I like to surround myself with people with a variety of backgrounds and interests."

Do include specific details, examples, reasons and so on to develop your ideas. For the example above, describe a situation when you were surrounded by various types of people. What were you doing? Whom did you talk with? What did you take away from the experience?

Use Your Own Voice

Don't rely on phrases or ideas that people have used many times before. These could include statements like, "There is so much suffering in the world that I feel I have to help people." Avoid overly formal or business-like language, and don't use unnecessary words.

Do write in your own voice. For the above example, you could write about a real experience that you had and how it made you feel you had to take action. And note that admission officers will be able to tell if your essay was edited by an adult.

Ask a Teacher or Parent to Proofread

Don't turn your essay in without proofreading it, and don't rely only on your computer's spell check to catch mistakes. A spell-check program will miss typos like these:

- "After I graduate *form* high school, I plan to get a summer job."
- "From that day on, Daniel was my best *fried*."

Do ask a teacher or parent to proofread your essay to catch mistakes. You should also ask the person who proofreads your essay if the writing sounds like you. (collegeboard.org)

Print the college essay requirements of each school you plan to apply to for your portfolio.

Colleges I'm Applying To (Added to Naviance)

Safety Schools (your GPA/SAT scores are above admissions requ's)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Match Schools (your GPA/SAT scores are the same as the admissions requ's)

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Reach Schools (your GPA/SAT scores are slightly below admissions requ's)

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

Please use this chart to help organize your college information:

Questions	Name of College 1:	Name of College 2:
What majors does the college offer that you might be interested?		
What core courses are required in college?		
What programs is the college known for?		
What kinds of campus activities and organizations does the college offer?		
What are the admissions requirements?		
Does the college require ACT or SAT, both, or neither?		
What are the minimal acceptable ACT and SAT scores?		
What high school classes are required for admissions?		
Are there foreign language or other courses required for admissions?		
Does the college accept course substitutions or waive requirements for students with disabilities?		

What are the admissions deadlines?		
Is the campus setting urban, suburban or rural?		
How many students are enrolled in the college?		
How many students with disabilities are on campus?		
What is the average class size?		
How accessible is the campus?		
What is the tuition?		
What are the housing options and their costs?		
Are dormitories available?		
Are there accessible dorm rooms?		
What financial aid programs does the college have?		
What are the course load requirements to maintain eligibility for financial aid?		
Does the college provide classes or workshops in study skills (time management, note taking, reading, writing)?		
Does the college provide free tutoring?		

What accommodations does the college typically provide?		
What additional resources and services are available to all students (counseling, writing centers, health centers, career centers, etc.)?		
What resources or services are available for students with disabilities? Are these free?		
Does the college offer assistive technology to students? If yes, what types and how do students access these technologies?		
What kinds of sports does the college offer?		
What public transportation is available?		
Is ample, accessible parking available on campus?		

The Common Application

Commonapp.org

- On the Common Application website, under login, locate and click the "Never Registered" link
 - Complete the Common Application registration process
 - Under "My Colleges" you will be able to add any Common Application Colleges.
- Which colleges on your "Colleges I'm Applying to List" accept the Common App?
- Which colleges are Common App Exclusive?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

College Interview

Interview Tips:

- *Be Knowledgeable of College.* Do your research!
- *Sample Questions:*
 - Why do you want to attend _____ University?

 - What extra-curricular activities/community service opportunities have you been involved in and how have they contributed to your growth as a student?

 - What was your favorite class in high school and why?

- *Prepare Your Own Questions*
 - Ask questions of the college concerning academic programs, study abroad, club/activities, etc.
 - 1.

 - 2.

 - 3.

College Visit and Tour

College Visit Suggested Questions:

Admissions:

- What aspect of the admissions process is most heavily weighted?
- Require standardized tests?
- Application deadlines? Early Decision? Early Action?
- Interview required? Recommended?
- How to sign up for campus visit
- Accept Common Application?

Financial Aid:

- Cost?
- Financial aid options?
 - Need to apply or automatically considered?
- Scholarships?
- Work study options?

Classes:

- Average class size?
- Student/professor ratio?
- Accessibility of professors?
- Teacher Asst. or Graduate Asst. teaching classes?
- Student services offered? - tutoring, career counseling, study workshops?
- Assigned an academic advisor to help with scheduling classes?
- Honors programs?

Questions about the major I'm thinking about:

- Is my major offered?
- Pre-professional programs offered?
- Accelerated degrees to complete Masters?

Housing:

- Type of housing available?
- Guaranteed all four years?

Student Life:

- Clubs/organizations/ activities?
- Community Service?
- Sororities and fraternities?
- Intramural, club and intercollegiate sports?
- How is the food?
- What are the meal plan options?
- Can I have my car on campus freshman year?
- What are some things students like to do off campus?

Job Placement:

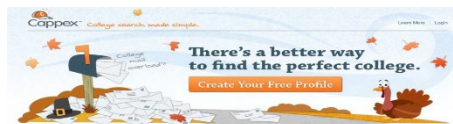
- Internships/Co-ops?
- Job placement after graduation?
- Career development center on campus?

Study Abroad:

- What percentage of students study abroad?
- Where can I go and for how long?
- Does my financial aid/scholarships transfer abroad?
- Will all of my credits transfer from abroad?

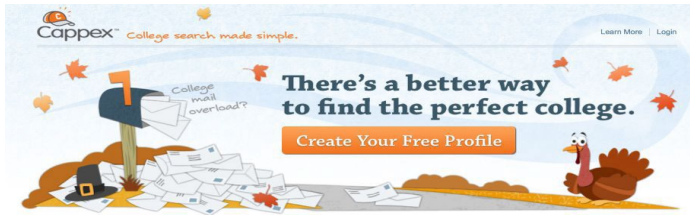
General:

- School size?
- Location: urban, suburban rural?
- What is available off campus?



Go to “Cappex College Visit Planner” on Cappex.com and plan your next visit!

College Social Networks



o **Cappex.com**

o Username: _____

o Password: _____

o **Zinch.com**

o Username: _____

o Password: _____

o **Kaarme.com**

o Username: _____

o Password: _____

Find the colleges of your interest on these websites!

Financial Aid: FAFSA, CSS Profile, Scholarships & EOF

FAFSA:

- This is a FREE Application for Federal Student Aid: **fafsa.gov**
- You should NEVER pay to complete the FAFSA!
- You will register for your PIN and, with your parents help, you will input your family's tax income information.
- Two resources for completing the FAFSA:
 1. HESAA.org
 2. One of the college's you've applied to Financial Aid Office

● **CSS Profile:**

- By filling out one form, you can apply online for nonfederal financial aid from almost 300 colleges and scholarship programs.
- <https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>
- Only specific schools require the CSS Profile. Be sure that the schools you are applying to require the form before you complete and submit it."
- Your profile is a non-federal student aid
- How to Apply and What Documents are needed.
 - Complete application
 - Parents tax returns, W-2, and bank statements
 - ALSO you do not need to complete the application in one sitting

● **Educational Opportunity Fund: EOF**

- <http://www.nj.gov/highereducation/EOF/>
- assists low-income residents who are capable and motivated but lack adequate preparation for college study
- eligibility is based on income and you must be a first generation college student in your family
- Students enrolled in an EOF program receive financial assistance through grants ranging from \$200 to \$2,500.
- These grants are renewable annually based upon continued eligibility.
- Students also receive support services such as counseling, tutoring, and developmental course work.
- There are a limited number of student spaces available at each campus program so it is important to apply early.
- Final determination of eligibility is made by the campus director.
- **Which colleges on your list offer an EOF program:**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Scholarships:

Many scholarships can be found through the internet and on your Naviance accounts!

- www.finaid.org
- www.fastweb.com
- www.connections101.com
- <http://scholarships4students.com/>
- <http://www.scholarshipexperts.com/>

****Ask your Guidance Counselor about Local Scholarships****

Special Programs and Majors

● *Nursing, Engineering, Physical Therapy - GPA/SAT requirements and deadlines may vary

● Fine Arts Majors: Portfolio Requirements

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

● Performing Arts: Audition Dates and Times

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

College Athletics: NCAA

- o Eligibility Center: (fee waivers available)
http://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

- o Transcripts sent at end of Junior Year - Submit a Transcript Request Form to your counselor

- o Talk to your HS coach!

- o Contact College Coaches and send videos, stats and season schedule!

College Application Process

College Application Requirements Checklist:

- o Official High School Transcripts (request from Counselor) - Transcript Request Forms
- o Add Colleges to “Colleges I’m Applying To” on Naviance
- o Specific Program/Major Course Requirements:
 - o Possible Major: _____(list HS course requirements below)
 - _
 - _
 - _
 - _
- o Send Official SAT/SATII/ACT Scores through:
 - o Collegeboard.org (SATs)
 - o ActStudent.org (ACTs)
- o Activities Profile/College Resume Completed
- o College Essay/Personal Statement
- o Letters of Recommendation Requested
- o Application Completed

Application item	Important consideration	College 1	College 2	College 3
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Application deadline	What is the application deadline?			
Application	Did I fill in all of the blanks on my ap			
	Did I have someone proofread my application?			
Transcripts	Did I submit my requests to the guidance office to send my transcripts to the schools where I am applying?			
SAT/ACT scores	Did I request my scores be sent to the college I am applying for? Allow seven to 10 days for delivery if you did not request the scores to be sent.			
Letters of recommendations	Have I asked the individuals well in advance of my application deadlines to write are commendation letter? Allow at least two weeks.			
	Have I gathered all of the information to give to the individual to help them write my recommendation letter? Items such as a stamped, addressed envelope; recommendation form or information requested by the college; and other information that will help the person write the letter. Ask about four weeks in advance.			
	Do I have the number of recommendations requested by the college?			
	Did I send a thank you note to each contact?			
Application item	Important consideration	College 1	College 2	College 3
Essays	Did I check spelling and grammar?			

	Did I have someone proofread my essay?			
Portfolios and work samples	Did I send copies not originals?			
Application fee	Did I write a check or provide credit card information for the application fee?			
Online application submission	Did I meet the application deadline?			
	Did I read over the directions again to make sure I've included all that is required?			
	Did I make a copy of the application?			
	Did I save or print the e-mail or page that confirmed my application was successfully submitted?			
Mailing application	Did I meet the application deadline?			
	Did I read over the directions again to make sure I've included all that is required?			
	Did I double check the mailing address?			
	Did I make sure that the completed application package had correct postage?			

Application Deadline Reference Sheet

Which College Admissions Process Best Suits You?				
Non-Restrictive Application Plans			Restrictive Application Plans	
Regular Decision	Rolling Admissions	Early Action (EA)	Early Decision (ED)	Restrictive Early Action (REA)
Definition:	Definition:	Definition:	Definition:	Definition:
Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.	Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admissions decisions throughout the admission cycle.	Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.	Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.	Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions.
Commitment:	Commitment:	Commitment:	Commitment:	Commitment:
Non-Binding	Non-Binding	Non-Binding	Binding	Non-Binding
Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.				Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions