

Career Planning/College Prep Checklist by Grade Level

6th and 7th Grade

- Assessments
 - STAR
 - IOWA/ Cogat
- Community Engagement- volunteer and find what you enjoy
- Develop good study skills

8th Grade

- Assessments
 - PRE-ACT 8/9
- 4 Year Plan/Pre Registration meeting in the spring of your 8th grade year
 - Discuss college prep diploma vs honors diploma
- Community Engagement- be active in both school and your community
- Club/ Sport Involvement- try out different clubs and sports
- Keep developing good study skills

9th Grade

- Assessments
 - PRE-ACT 8/9
 - ACT- Spring (optional)
- Establish a Transcript- High School grades directly affect the college admissions process and scholarship opportunities
 - Take challenging courses that interest you
 - Study and keep your GPA high
- Start a resume/ portfolio (i.e. community service documentation, sports, leadership, ect.)
 - Track awards and involvement by year
 - Explore summer opportunities- job, leadership programs, job shadowing, etc.
- Practice Interview Skills
- Attend local College and Career Fairs, begin visiting colleges or complete virtual tours
- Research and apply for scholarships- the website GoingMerry.com is a good resource
- Review career information in areas that interest you- identify interests and skills
 - Set short and long term goals for you life after high school
 - Job shadow a career you are curious about during school breaks
- Community Engagement- continue volunteering
- Club/ Sport Involvement
- Develop the habit of checking your school email- opportunities will be sent to you through email

10th Grade

- Assessments
 - PSAT (October- Practice)
 - ACT (Optional)
- Consider Dual Enrollment Courses
 - University of Alabama Early College
 - Auburn First Program
 - University of North Alabama Early College
 - Calhoun Community College
- Take an ACT or SAT prep course
- Review Your Transcript- make sure you are completing elective and art courses
 - Continue taking challenging courses
 - Keep GPA high
- Revise and review your resume
- Practice Interview Skills
- Attend College and Career Fairs
 - Look at virtual tours on college websites
 - Visit in person if you can
- Identify colleges you're interested in attending
 - Familiarize yourself with their website
 - Take note of the average GPA and Test scores
- Continue researching majors and requirements for careers you are interested in
- Research and apply for scholarships- Going Merry
- Evaluate family finances for college- calculate Expected Family Contribution
 - A estimate calculator can be found at <https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/>
- Explore Leadership Opportunities- HOBY, Edge leadership, ect.
- Community Engagement- continue volunteering- record hours and activities

11th Grade

Assessments

- PSAT/NMSQT is the test used to qualify students as a National Merit Scholar- this is given in October
 - Take the ACT (go to ACT.org to register)
- Consider Advanced Placement (AP) Courses
 - Take AP Exams in the spring
- Build onto your resume Review and revise regularly.
 - Explore leadership opportunities. (Boys/Girls State, Governor's school, etc.)
 - Get involved in the community. Volunteering feels great and it looks good on college applications and resumes.
 - Participate in extracurricular groups and activities, like sports.
 - Start compiling a reference list of people (teachers, coaches, neighbors, supervisors, ministers, etc.) who would recommend you for scholarships, leadership opportunities, etc. Keep a running list of their names, titles, and contact information.
- Email is your "professional" communication with DHCA faculty, as well as potential colleges and universities. Please check it regularly, stay respectful, respond in a timely manner, and remember to check your grammar and spelling for errors.
- Practice interview skills.
- Stay organized. Learn to use a planner or calendar app to monitor and meet deadlines.
- Take an ACT or SAT prep course.
- High School Tips
 - Challenge yourself to continue developing good study habits
 - Check-ins with your counselor.
 - Am I on track for graduation- review transcripts
 - Do I qualify for a fee waiver?
 - GPA: What is it and how do I calculate mine?
- Planning for Life After High School
 - Continue to think about career choices
 - Research majors related to those fields and job shadow when possible
 - I want to go to college or at least explore the idea!
 - Attend College and Career Fairs. (www.gotocollegefairs.com)
 - Contact admissions departments to ask to be on their mailing lists and inquire about upcoming events.
 - Many Representatives come to DHCA through our Lunch and Learns
 - Familiarize yourself with college websites, especially admissions.
 - Research and apply for admissions and scholarships. Many will not be available till your senior year. Make note of deadlines and put them in your planner or calendar app. Many open early into your senior year and close as early as December
 - Schedule college tours and continue narrowing down your search. Please check on the university's website to schedule.

12th Grade Information

- Assessments
 - Take last national ACT
 - Waiver Request for ACT if you qualify
- Take college tours- narrow down college search
- Apply to Colleges- make sure you keep up with deadlines
- Research and apply for scholarships
- Request letters of recommendation
- Write down in your calendar important dates: senior pictures, graduation, etc.
- Review Your Transcript- know your weighted vs unweighted GPA for scholarship applications
- Create a Parchment Account (needed to send transcripts)- typically do as a class your 11th grade year
- Make sure you are checking your email- colleges and scholarships can contact you this way.
- Revise/Review Resume
- Practice Interview Skills
- Revise and review your portfolio for college and/or scholarship applications (i.e. community service documentation, reference letters for scholarships, essays)
- Attend College and Career Fairs
 - Create account at www.gotocollegefairs.com
- Complete the FAFSA - October or December (this is done annually)
 - Review final financial aid letters from colleges with your parents
 - If you have any questions, please contact the colleges financial aid office
- Community Engagement
- Club Involvement
- Request your final transcripts before graduation through parchment