

Getting Ready for College Timeline

8th Grade Year

IN THE SPRING

Schedule your class for next year.

1. English 9
2. Next level math (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
3. Physical Science
4. American History
5. Health & Physical Education (unless waived)
6. Consider Spanish (Most colleges like to see 2-3 years of a foreign language)
7. Consider a fine art (Band, Chorus, Intro to Art/other art)
8. Consider another elective, but 1 study hall is permitted

Freshman Year

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Focus on your grades! Your grades attest to your work ethic and mastery of material.

Start getting involved at school or in your community through extracurricular activities, jobs, or volunteer work.

Start thinking about how your talents and interests could lead to a career. Actively engage in your district Career Advising Program (Ohio Means Jobs). You will do a self-assessment of your abilities and interests.

- You will have access to Ohio Means Jobs anywhere you have access to the internet (all you need is your username and password).

Begin to build your portfolio (include grade cards and awards received)

IN THE SPRING

Schedule your courses for next year

1. English 10
2. Next level math (Geometry, Algebra II, higher level)
3. Biology
4. World History
5. Consider another year of Spanish (Most colleges like to see 2-3 years of a foreign language)
6. Consider another year of fine art (some of these courses come with extracurricular opportunities)
7. Consider taking an agricultural course, or continue with agricultural courses. (They open up more elective options, including the opportunity to participate in the School-To-Work program as a senior)
8. Consider another elective, but 1 study hall is permitted

IN THE SUMMER

Look for summer work and volunteer opportunities. Some scholarships and colleges look for volunteer experience. Volunteer experience shows time management skills and your interest in giving back to society.

Sophomore Year

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

[] Focus on your grades!

[] Stay involved and seek new opportunities. Consider taking up leadership roles in the activities in which you're most invested but don't make it a requirement. Colleges like to see involvement regardless of leadership roles.

[] Start thinking about how your talents and interests could lead to a career. Continue to explore in Ohio Means Jobs outside of class time.

[] Start looking into colleges. Consider factors about what you want in a college (e.g. size, location, reputation, level of selectivity, environment, majors, religious affiliation, sports, activities). Selecting a college is a matching of individual personality with that of a college. Include your parents; they know you best!

[] Continue building your portfolio (grade cards, awards received, newspaper clippings, artwork)

IN THE FALL

[] Attend a College Credit Plus (CCP) Informational meeting (Holgate specific meeting recommended). If interested in pursuing CCP, continue through the remaining steps.

IN THE SPRING

[] Schedule your courses for next year. Consider College Credit Plus, if ready and requirements are met.

1. English 11
2. Next level math (Algebra II, higher level)
3. Anatomy, Chemistry, or both
4. American Government/Macroeconomics
5. Consider another year of Spanish (Most colleges like to see 2-3 years of a foreign language)
6. Consider another year of fine art (some of these courses come with extracurricular opportunities)
7. Consider taking an agricultural course, or continue with agricultural courses. (They open up more elective options, including the opportunity to participate in the School-To-Work program as a senior)
8. Consider another elective, but 1 study hall is permitted

IN THE SUMMER

[] Continue with summer work and volunteer opportunities.

Junior Year

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- Focus on your grades!
- Stay involved and seek new opportunities. Consider taking up leadership roles in the activities in which you're most invested but don't make it a requirement.
- Continue to explore in Ohio Means Jobs outside of class time. Research colleges. Save career and college information in your virtual back pack.
- Continue looking into colleges. Attend college fairs, go to info sessions, and make college visits. Try to visit colleges during college recommended days or during days when class is in session. Call the admissions office a few weeks ahead of your intended visit and schedule a tour. Complete the "College Visitation" paperwork in the guidance office at least one week in advance if you will be missing school to visit.
- Continue building your portfolio (grade cards, awards received, newspaper clippings, artwork)
- Weigh financing options with your parents.

IN THE FALL

- Prepare for the State-funded ACT test. Take the practice tests in Ohio Means Jobs. (There are four practice tests for each subject area and they are scored immediately.)
- Attend a College Credit Plus (CCP) Informational meeting (Holgate specific meeting recommended). If interested in pursuing CCP, continue through the remaining steps.
- Make a preliminary college list.
- Start looking for scholarships you may want to apply for next year.

IN THE SPRING

- Take the State-funded ACT test at your high school.
- Think about which teachers you'll ask for recommendations.
- Consider taking the ACT again this spring through early fall (senior year) if you would like to raise your score. If the colleges you are interested in require the Writing subtest, you will need to test again. If you qualify for free or reduced lunch, you may also qualify for an ACT fee waiver. (See your counselor)
- Schedule your courses for next year. Consider College Credit Plus, if ready and requirements are met.
 1. English 12 or College Composition
 2. Fourth math
 3. Consider a 4th science course (Anatomy, Chemistry, or Physics)
 4. Consider a 4th social studies (current events, CCP General Psychology, etc)
 5. Consider another year of Spanish (If your college requires a foreign language they may waive the requirement if you have had four years in high school.)
 6. Consider another year of fine art (some of these courses come with extracurricular opportunities)
 7. Consider 2 electives, (1 study hall is permitted); Consider participating in the School-To-Work program

IN THE SUMMER

- Continue with summer work and volunteer opportunities.
- Narrow down your college list.
- Draft college application essays.
- Athletes should contact the college coaches for information about intercollegiate and intramural programs. Find out if there are any athletic scholarships available. Ask your coach to write a letter of recommendation.

Senior Year

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

[] Focus on your grades!

[] Stay involved and seek new opportunities. Consider taking up leadership roles in the activities in which you're most invested but don't make it a requirement.

[] Continue building your portfolio (grade cards, awards received, newspaper clippings, artwork)

[] Apply for scholarships as they become available. Check the guidance office and the school website.

IN THE FALL

[] Continue looking into colleges. Attend college fairs, go to info sessions, and make college visits.

[] Attend a Financial Aid Meeting

[] Aspire to apply to at least two colleges by October 1st. Consider applying to a reasonable number of colleges to insure that you will be accepted to a school that is appropriate for your needs, abilities, and interests. As a general guide you should apply to at least:

- One *safety* school (where you are sure of being accepted and where you would like to attend; last year's incoming Freshman class at the college had a GPA and ACT score below your own)
- One to three *possible* (where you have a reasonable chance of being accepted; GPA and ACT scores match your own)
- And perhaps one or more *reaches* (where you dream of going, but perhaps only have a small chance of being accepted; GPA and ACT scores above your own)

[] Be meticulous in completing your applications. Colleges prefer that you apply online. Be absolutely certain that your application is flawless before clicking *SEND*. Your application may be the first, and only impression the admissions office has of you. Get critiques of any essays you write for your applications. Make it your best work! For many colleges this can make the difference in being admitted or not. If you qualify for an ACT fee waiver, you may also qualify for a college application fee waiver.

[] After applying, complete the transcript request form in the guidance office for each application. Submit requests for transcripts at least two weeks before the application deadline (or when you want the admissions office to have your transcript).

[] Ask your teachers for letters of recommendation. Provide them with a list of accomplishments, awards, and involvements and give them *3 weeks*. If possible, give them all your requests together so they can do them at the same time if they wish.

[] Complete the FAFSA.

- Visit pin.ed.gov to get your and your parents FSA ID to apply for federal student aid.
 - Link on guidance page
- After October 1st, complete the FAFSA. You can access the FAFSA online at fafsa.ed.gov. (This is free, do not pay to complete the FAFSA. Some sites will charge you so go to this site).
 - Link on guidance page.

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IN THE SPRING

- [] Carefully compare financial aid packages of schools that have accepted you and make your decision.
- [] Notify colleges of your final decision and make payments as necessary.
- [] Keep your grades up! Colleges may offer more money at the end of the school year for GPA increases, etc.

IN THE SUMMER

- [] Update any email or mailing preferences with the college to make sure you are getting all the important information you need.
- [] Complete any other enrollment paperwork your college sends you.
- [] Research work-study opportunities. Contact the financial aid office to get a work-study job lined up for fall.
- [] Contact your roommate(s). You will usually receive information about housing a few weeks before school starts. Get to know your roommate before school starts.
- [] Go to orientation. Attending orientation is essential in preparing you for the next four years. Depending on the school, there might be one college orientation for all incoming freshmen, or a few separate sessions. Your school will send you the information you need.