To best prepare for college, certain steps and procedures must be accomplished prior to enrollment. This is a chronological checklist designed to help assist in being well-organized and as ready as possible for college. The attached College Prep Resources provides additional information.

**9th Grade August through October**
Focus on academics! Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.

- Visit high school counselor for appropriate freshman schedule.
- List the top 6 desired colleges along with the top 4 desired majors.
- Join various school- and community-based activities, clubs, and/or sports.
- A social security number (SSN) is required. Contact local social security office. See College Information: SSN.
- Create an interest and learning style inventory profile; update yearly. See Career: Kuder Navigator.
- Consider taking a concurrent credit or digital learning course. See College Information: SouthArk.

**September through January**
- Attend local college and career fairs in addition to any financial aid seminars.
- Draft a resume including any special awards, honors, and certificates. See College Information: Resume Builder.
- Review websites that help to prepare students and families for college expenses. See Financial Aid FAQ.
- View virtual campus tours, student photos, and degree information on different college websites.

**February through June**
- Stay up-to-date with all required shots and immunizations; retain a copy of shot records.
- Finalize sophomore class schedule by end of May, making sure all classes align with graduation requirements.
- Begin to collect personal milestones for an education portfolio.
- Request college recommendation letters from teachers, coaches, and other mentors for college applications.
- State test(s) must be passed at the end of grade level to advance to the next grade and/or to graduate.

**Summer after Freshman Year**
- Having a summer job will help with saving for college.
- Explore summer volunteer opportunities in the career area of interest.
- Enroll in a summer school class if a required class was not passed during the year.
- Take a college campus tour, if vacationing to a new city or town.
- Register no later than August to take the PSAT in October. See Testing: PSAT.

**10th Grade August through October**
Focus on academics! Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.

- Contact college coaches for possible scouting, if desired.
- Create/update an interest and learning style inventory profile; update yearly. See Career: Kuder Navigator.
- A social security number (SSN) is required. Contact local social security office. See College Information: SSN.
- Join various school- and community-based activities, taking on leadership positions within those groups.
- Create a 4-year calendar, covering the last 3 years of high school and 1st year of college, noting college admission, financial aid application, scholarship, and testing registration deadlines as well as testing dates.
- Schedule to take the PLAN exam only one time during the sophomore year. See counselor or Testing: PLAN.

**September through January**
- Add all volunteer and extra-curricular activities to the resume.
- Visit different college websites to view estimated cost, application process, and enrollment information.
- Attend local college/career fairs and financial aid seminars. See College Information: College Fair.
- Prepare for college expenses by visiting financial aid websites. See Financial Aid FAQ.

**February through June**
- Stay up-to-date with all required shots and immunizations; retain a copy of shot records.
- Finalize junior class schedule by the end of May, making sure all classes align with graduation requirements.
- Consider taking a concurrent credit or digital learning course. See College Information: SouthArk.
- Review scholarship and grant websites, noting application deadlines. See Financial Aid: Scholarships.
- Compare specifics between community colleges and 4-year universities; specifically, programs available, cost, athletics, and which scholarships apply. See College Information: College Searches.

**Summer after Sophomore Year**
- Explore summer volunteer and job opportunities in the career area of interest and to save money for college.
- Enroll in a summer school class if a required class was not passed during the year.
- Review college exam study guides and websites with online tutorials. See Testing: Test Prep.
- Register no later than July to take the SAT in September. See Testing: SAT.
- Register no later than August to take the PSAT in October. See Testing: PSAT.
- Complete the NCAA Clearinghouse application if wanting to play on Division I/II team. See College Info: NCAA.
College Prep Checklist

11th Grade

August through October

- Focus on academics! Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.
- List only 3 colleges of choice with only 2 possible majors.
- Contact the high school counselor if interested in ROTC program.
- Create/update an interest and learning style inventory profile, update yearly. See Career: Kuder Navigator.
- A social security number (SSN) is required. Contact local social security office. See College Information: SSN.
- Take on leadership positions in various school- and community-based activities, clubs, and/or sports.
- Continue to contact college coaches to request possible scouting, if athletics are desired.
- Complete all college campus visits by the end of the junior year. Call ahead for appointments. Request an application, talk with current students, and take a campus tour.
- Create a 3-year calendar, covering the last 2 years of high school and 1st year of college, noting college admission, financial aid application, scholarship, and testing registration deadlines as well as testing dates.
- Register no later than October to take the ACT in December. See Testing: ACT.

November through January

- Use all collected documents and personal milestones to create an education portfolio.
- Visit college websites to view estimated cost, application process, and enrollment information.
- Attend local financial aid seminars in addition to college and career fairs. See College Information: College Fair.
- Keep resume updated with all extra-curricular activities, recognitions, and employment, if any.
- Review websites which assist with applying for college scholarships, grants, and financial aid. Make note of all application deadlines on calendar. See Financial Aid: Scholarships.
- Review college exam study guides and websites with online tutorials. See Testing: Test Prep.
- ASVAB is a military entrance test taken either during the junior or senior year of high school. See Testing: ASVAB. Register one month prior to testing date for the following tests. See Testing: ACT, SAT, and SAT Subject Tests.
  • ACT – February, April, or June
  • SAT – March or May
  • SAT Subject Tests – May/June

February through June

- Stay up-to-date with all required shots and immunizations; retain a copy of shot records.
- Finalize senior class schedule by the end of May, verifying all classes align with graduation requirements.
- Consider taking a concurrent credit or digital learning course. See College Information: SouthArk.
- Request college recommendation letters from teachers, coaches, and other mentors for college applications.
- State test(s) must be passed at the end of grade level to advance to the next grade and/or to graduate.
- Register one month prior to the June or August testing date to take the ACT test. See Testing: ACT.
- SAT Subject Tests and AP Testing are recommended immediately following class completion usually in May/June. See Testing: AP Testing and SAT Subject Tests.

Summer after Junior Year

- Explore summer internships, volunteer opportunities, and/or job shadowing in desired career.
- Enroll in a summer school class if a required class was not passed during the year.
- Prepare for the college application process by reviewing college essay prompts, assembling education portfolios, and gathering recommendation letters. See College Info: Essay Writing Tips.

12th Grade

August through October

- Focus on academics! Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.
- Complete all leadership duties in extra-curricular activities.
- List top 2 choice colleges and top 2 majors. Continue to discuss these colleges and majors with counselor.
- Register with Selective Service if male and at least 18 years old. See College Information: Selective Service.
- Confirm all graduation requirements are met, including one digital learning course. See College Info: SouthArk.
- Register no later than August to take the ACT and/or SAT in October. See Testing: ACT and SAT.
- Create a 2-year calendar, covering the senior year of high school and 1st year of college, noting important dates.
- Make sure resume information is up-to-date. See College Information: Resume Builder.
- Request college recommendation letters from teachers, coaches, and other mentors for college applications.

November through January

- Complete education portfolio of collected documents and personal milestones.
- Most college scholarship deadlines are in November and December. See Financial Aid: Scholarships.
- Send a handwritten thank-you note to every person who wrote a recommendation letter.
- Noting deadline dates, begin completing college applications. Verify all required documentation has been received, including test scores, recommendation letters, and essays. Keep dated copies of all items sent.
- Complete the FAFSA as soon as possible after January. See Financial Aid: FAFSA.

February through June

- Stay up-to-date with all required shots and immunizations; retain a copy of shot records.
- SAT Subject Tests and AP Testing are usually in May/June. See Testing: AP Testing and SAT Subject Tests.
- State test(s) must be passed at the end of grade level to advance to the next grade and/or to graduate.
- Take advantage of any requested college interviews. Schedule them as early as possible.
- Acceptance letters should arrive no later than mid-April. Compare financial aid packages and visit with an advisor at each college prior to making any final decisions.
- Once a college has been decided, notify that college of your commitment. If wait-listed, accept another school’s admission offer while you remain on the waiting list.