



Career Preparation

Deciding upon a career requires much time and thoughtful planning. Career paths greatly depend on the decisions made in high school. Understanding the options, matching career goals to interests and skills, and getting the best training possible can feel overwhelming at times; but the time to begin the search is **now**.

Ninth Grade

Success in postsecondary decision-making requires that certain tasks be performed at specific times during the high school years. You can reduce the anxiety associated with these responsibilities and exercise personal control over the entire process by working according to the following timelines.

Freshman courses, grades, and credits become part of the student's transcript. In addition, freshman activities, honors, and awards can be listed on postsecondary and scholarship applications.

- Build strong academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses.
- Study nightly and stay focused. It is critical that you establish good study habits from the beginning. Work hard to get your GPA as high as you can.
- Establish a good attendance record.
- Sometime during the year, make an appointment with your counselor just to meet him/her and let him/her get to know you.
- Seek advice and input from advisor, counselor, teachers, and parents, but do not depend on anyone else to make sure you are in the correct courses required to graduate and meet your personal goals. Take personal responsibility for knowing what the graduation requirements are and making sure you are in the correct courses.
- If you are struggling regarding any issue or problem, seek help!
- Stay balanced! Get involved in several activities. Depth of involvement in any one activity (e.g., four years in band, soccer, art club) is important because it shows focus and commitment.
- Start a portfolio of your high school activities, honors, awards, leadership positions, employment, volunteer work, community activities, etc. Keep a list and include everything! If you have a home computer, start an "Activities and Awards" file and update it once a year. Many software programs are on the market that will help you to organize and manage your portfolio
- During the ninth grade year, attend Ninth Grade Advisement with your parents. At this time you will complete the four-year plan, assess the appropriateness of your curriculum choices, and much more.

- Keep copies of all report cards, transcripts, registration forms, etc.
- Create your MY 411 account at GA College 411.

Tenth Grade

The sophomore year should be a year of personal growth. In addition to working hard in school and being involved in activities, sophomores should be identifying personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests, as well as looking for ways to further develop their talents and skills.

- Continue to concentrate on academic preparation and continue to develop basic skills. At this point, school is your profession!
- Participate in clubs/organizations at school and get involved in some sort of community work. Not only will this be important for your college applications, scholarships, and job applications, but it also helps you identify personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests.
- All sophomores will take the PSAT/NMSQT
- When you get the results from your PSAT in December, go over it carefully, seek parental input, and make an appointment with your counselor to discuss remaining coursework which may be required or beneficial for your post-high school plans.
- Take practice SATs by visiting www.SATonlinecourseschool.com.
- Make an appointment during your lunch to visit the Career Center in the Guidance Department. Familiarize yourself with the www.GAcollege411 and/or Career Cruising; take the skills test and interest inventory. Print the results and let your counselor help you interpret the information and point out some possibilities. The websites contain college, career and scholarship information.
- Keep your GPA as high as possible.
- Make plans to do something over the summer that will enrich you and broaden your horizon. Talk with students who attend various postsecondary institutions and attend available summer programs. Interview individuals who work in vocations of interest to you as you consider a career path.

Eleventh Grade

The postsecondary selection process begins your junior year. This is a very important year; if you follow the timeline below, you will experience less frustration and anxiety your senior year. Frequently students wait until the senior year to start the selection process and consequently feel overwhelmed.

- August** Review transcript for graduation requirements
Continue to take classes to enhance the future
Take practice SATs on www.SATonline
- September** Identify sources of college/technical school information
Use Career Cruising and Gacollege411
Review the PSAT/NMSQT Student Bulletin
- October** Take Georgia High School Graduation Writing Tests
Begin research on colleges and/or technical schools
Attend the college PROBE (a college fair where college representatives have exhibits)
Check with counselors for dates and location
Take PSAT/NMSQT
- November** Review requirements for Joint Enrollment/Accel
Attend meetings with college/technical school representatives
- December** Review PSAT scores with counselors
Obtain testing schedule for SAT I, SAT II, ACT
Consider taking Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) which provides career information
- January** Complete personal assessment on Career Cruising
Think about goals for Postsecondary plans
- February** Begin assembling your list of colleges/technical/specialty schools
Accumulate information about each school
Contact Military Recruiters if appropriate
- March** Take Georgia High School Graduation Test
Register for ACT, SAT I, and/or SAT II
Use Career Cruising and www.Gacollege411 to identify possible financial aid sources
Consider college/technical school visits during spring break
Begin to explore summer programs and/or employment
- April** Begin exploring scholarship possibilities
Discuss and register for senior classes with your counselor
Identify important factors in choosing a college/technical school
- May** Continue to explore summer programs and/or employment opportunities
Take SAT I, ACT or SAT II if needed
Take Advanced Placement exams, if appropriate
Mail NCAA Eligibility, if appropriate
- June** Take SAT I or ACT if you did not take it in May
Take SAT II, if appropriate
Request college/technical school applications
Begin working on college applications during the summer
Make campus visits or employment interview

Twelfth Grade

Fall of Senior Year

Obtain applications from colleges and/or technical schools for which you plan to apply

Give resumes to individuals that you would like to write recommendations

Review your senior class schedule; make sure you are taking correct courses

Explore options in the Career Center

Register for SAT I, ACT or SAT II if you need to

Keep up with school announcements concerning scholarships

File applications early in the Fall

October

Attend PROBE and visit with college//technical school representatives at your school

January

Obtain a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Financial Aid) available in the Guidance Department or over the Internet

Send financial aid applications in early

Spring of Senior Year

Stay focused, study hard, and keep the GPA up

Take AP (Advanced Placement) exams if applicable

Make arrangements for a final transcript to be sent to the school of your choice

Take finals, **GRADUATE AND BE SUCCESSFUL IN PURSUING YOUR GOALS!**

