

# Looking Ahead to High School and College

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# When should we begin thinking about college or careers?



# Talent Development Trajectory

Every year of schooling is part of your child's path toward the future.

## Getting Started (Early Talent Development)

- Exploration of interests, discovery of strengths
- Excitement about learning
- Positive risk taking, critical and creative problem-solving
- Foundational skill building

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# Being Prepared and Aware

- Understanding/Recognizing goals
- Being proactive and intentional
- Opportunities present in various ways, a deep dive into everyday experiences or events can engage and teach
- No one way to support your students
- Use your resources to acquire knowledge
- Start collecting evidence/portfolio



# Talent Development Trajectory

## Planning in the Middle Grades: Bringing Interests into Focus

- Begin higher ed and career exploration
  - Interests, strengths: related career options
  - Pathways to careers of interest
  - Honing necessary skills
    - Study habits and focus
    - Communication, critical/creative thinking
    - Relationship building
    - Independence and self-advocacy



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# Grades 6-8

## ***Course Planning and Academic Enrichment***

- Learn more about your strengths
  - Above-grade-level assessment (SAT, ACT)
  - Talk with adults about strengths and courses that are a match
- Take advanced courses—ones that are challenging but not overwhelming
  - Explore your high school's course offerings and start sketching out possible middle and high school course schedules (in school and outside-of-school courses)
  - Use your thoughts about college and career and as a guide for course choices (electives, math sequences, sciences, etc.)
- Take enrichment courses that introduce you to new subject areas or help you accelerate your learning.
  - If possible, attend programs that are held on college campuses

# Grades 6-8

## ***College and Career Exploration***

- Speak with adults who have jobs you find interesting
  - What do they like about their job?
  - What was their pathway to their job?
  - What education and training is required?
  - What are related jobs or areas for continued growth/career development?
- Engage in an extra-curricular activity or two that match your interests and skills
- Start exploring different types of colleges
- Start looking for scholarships
- Start saving money for college, if you haven't begun

# Grades 9-12

## ***Course Planning and Academic Enrichment***

- Take a practice SAT through Khan Academy or the PSAT/NMSQT at your school
- Talk to your school counselor about your college and career ideas and paths to achieve your goals
- Set up a course plan for grades 9-12
- Continue to take challenging core courses (ask about AP, honors, dual enrollment options)
- In the summers, take a course at a college or university and/or work/volunteer

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# Grades 9-12

## ***College and Career Exploration***

- Research majors that might fit well with interests and goals
- Identify schools of interest and their admission requirements; engage in virtual and on-site visits
- Continue to save for college
- Explore scholarship and financial aid options, begin applications; Find out about government financial aid eligibility
- Go to career information events (at school or in the community)
- Continue to engage in extra-curricular activities or find mentorships that match your interests and skills. Pursue leadership roles, if possible
- Explore opportunities to volunteer through leadership and service-learning programs and in your community.

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# Grades 9-12

- College Exploration Resources (free and paid):
  - [Niche.com](#)
  - [Unigo](#)
  - [College Board](#)
- Career Exploration (free and paid):
  - [Career Lifftoff](#)
  - [College Board](#)

# Grade 12

- Continue with advanced courses, including college-level courses through dual enrollment, AP, or college extension offerings
- Maintain your performance in your courses
- Stay involved in extra-curricular activities and/or in internship or mentorship programs
- Submit your FAFSA form
- Apply to colleges and pay attention to deadlines; continue visits
- Submit scholarship applications

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# A Few More Resources

- [Federal Student Aid Checklists](#) – Steps to Take in Preparation for High School and College
- [Federal Student Aid Career Search](#) – Explore possible careers/industries
- [Davidson Institute Blog](#) – Preparing for High School or College
- [CTD Talent Newsletter](#) – Summer 2021
- [College Essay Guy](#) – free and paid service for college applications, scholarship applications, etc.

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# Scholarships



“a grant-in-aid to a student (as by a college or foundation).” (Mirriam Webster)

**Merit Scholarships** – Awarded based on criteria such as academic excellence, athletic prowess, or artistic achievement.

**Need-based Scholarships** – Awarded based on financial or income-based criteria, such as family income.

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# Federal Student Aid [Website](#)

A good place to start for college  
scholarship planning.

Today.

# Paying for Higher Education

Explore how financial aid determinations are made. General information at [Big Future](#) from College Board.



# How do I find scholarships?

Pre-College  
College



# Finding Pre-College Scholarships

- Fewer national opportunities, but check out sites like
  - <https://finaid.org/scholarships/age13/>
  - <https://scholarships360.org/scholarships/scholarships-for-middle-school-students/>
  - <https://www.edvisors.com/scholarships/win-scholarships/free-scholarships/students-under-age-13-scholarships/>
- Check out pre-college programs at area colleges, universities, museums.
- Explore programs of interest for financial aid and scholarships (Teen Life, NAGC Resource Guide).

# Federal Student Aid Website

“...contacting the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend and checking information in a public library or online. But be careful. Make sure scholarship information and offers you receive are legitimate; and remember that *you don't have to pay to find scholarships or other financial aid*. Check out our information on how to [avoid scams](#).”

# Finding College Scholarships

- Start local
  - Talk to your guidance counselor about local scholarships.
  - Ask for a list of scholarships students from your school have won in the past.
  - Use existing community connections: service clubs (e.g., Rotary), houses of worship, local companies, hospitals.
- Explore National Sites
  - Scholarship databases (but check sources!)
    - College Board
    - Fastweb.com
    - Scholarships.com
    - [College Essay Guy](#)
- College and universities of interest