



# COLLEGE PREP TRAIL GUIDE CHECKLIST

## 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: EXPLORE

- ✓ Research colleges and careers that interest you
- ✓ Take tours of nearby colleges and universities and attend events on campus
- ✓ Research scholarship opportunities (some available at 13 years old)
- ✓ Interview college students and college graduates about their journey
- ✓ Speak with adults who have careers that interest you
- ✓ Make reading and writing a priority – always work to improve your skills
- ✓ Take Algebra I to be able to take advanced math courses in high school

## 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: PLAN

- ✓ Challenging courses – advanced math, English, science, and foreign language
- ✓ Create a plan for the next 4 years
- ✓ Join clubs, sports, and volunteer organizations that interest you
- ✓ Research careers that sound interesting to you and those in emerging markets
- ✓ Begin your high school resume – keep track of all awards, honors, and activities
- ✓ Get good grades – your GPA begins the first day of your freshman year
- ✓ Take the PSAT to get a baseline score (October)

## 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: PREPARE

- ✓ Continue to take challenging courses and achieve high grades
- ✓ Continue to build your high school resume
- ✓ Continue participation in clubs, sports, and volunteer organizations
- ✓ Add 10<sup>th</sup> grade achievements to your high school resume
- ✓ Attend college fairs and encourage your parents to attend them with you
- ✓ Take the PSAT to get a baseline score (October)

## **11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: TEST**

- ✓ Continue to take challenging courses and achieve high grades
- ✓ Continue to build your high school resume
- ✓ Continue participation in clubs, sports, and volunteer organizations – run for leadership positions
- ✓ Add 11<sup>th</sup> grade achievements to your high school resume
- ✓ Take the PSAT to compete for National Merit Scholarship (October)
- ✓ Investigate colleges and determine what characteristics are important to you
- ✓ Research the required ACT and SAT scores for colleges you are interested in
- ✓ Prepare for the SAT and ACT with a professional
- ✓ Take the SAT and ACT multiple times to get your best score (and superscore) – offered fall, winter, and spring
- ✓ Research scholarship opportunities

## **12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: APPLY**

- ✓ Continue to take challenging courses and achieve high grades
- ✓ Continue to build your high school resume
- ✓ Continue participation in clubs, sports, and volunteer organizations – run for leadership positions
- ✓ Add 12<sup>th</sup> grade achievements to your high school resume
- ✓ Make a calendar of scholarship and application deadlines!!
- ✓ Request letters of recommendation
- ✓ Apply for scholarships (begin summer before 12<sup>th</sup> grade year)
- ✓ Apply for admission to your colleges of choice
- ✓ Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- ✓ Make a decision on which college you are going to attend
- ✓ Finalize housing plans and submission materials
- ✓ Graduate high school and get ready for college