

We Are There Every Step of The Way

Make sure you plan for the future so you can achieve success. Take a look at our checklists to see what each grade level needs to do.

9TH GRADE Freshmen

- Ask your guidance counselor or teachers what Dual Credit and Advanced Placement courses are available and how to enroll in them.
- Get involved in school- or community-based activities that interest you or let you explore career interests.
- Create your Raise.Me profile to start earning micro-scholarships. Start a list of your awards, honors, paid and volunteer work, and extracurricular activities. Update it throughout high school. Raise.Me will help generate a resume once you start inputting your information.
- Explore college and career pathways through Xello. Don't be afraid to ask for help from your parents, school counselor, and older students as you prepare.
- Study hard and do well in school. Keep up with your grades and attendance. Your GPA matters!
- Learn how to navigate HAC to check grades and attendance.

10TH GRADE **Sophomore**

- Meet with your school counselor to review GPA, class rank and Dual Credit and Advanced Placement courses that you may be able to enroll in.

- Prepare to take the PSAT in October by studying using Shmoop, College Board or Khan Academy.

- Browse through and apply for scholarships today.

- Plan to use your summer wisely: Work, job shadow, volunteer, or take a summer course.

- Research majors that might be a good fit with your interests and goals based on your results from Xello's career search and interest inventories.

- Learn the differences between grants, loans, work-study, and scholarships.

- Learn about the options available for post-secondary education:
 - Certificates
 - Technical and Skilled Trades
 - Associate Degrees
 - Undergraduate Degrees
 - Graduate Degrees
 - Professional Degrees

- Learn about the local options available for post-secondary education:

Public Schools (Non-Profit)

El Paso Community College

University of Texas at El Paso

Texas Tech University

New Mexico State University

Private Schools (Non-Profit)

Park University (inside of Ft. Bliss)

Private Schools (For-Profit)

Pima Medical Institute – El Paso

Southwest University

Vista College

Western Technical College

11TH GRADE **Junior**

- Qualifying students will re-take the PSAT in October to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Prepare to take the SAT in March by studying using Shmoop, College Board or Khan Academy.
- Register for and take other exams for college admission. The standardized tests that many colleges require are the SAT, ACT and TSI (Texas Institutions). Check with the colleges you are interested in for test requirements.
- Use a free scholarship search to find scholarships. Some deadlines fall in early summer.
- Attend college fairs (TACRAO) and college presentations to learn admission requirements, deadlines and scholarship opportunities.
- Research which federal/state financial aid that you are eligible for. College for all Texans.
- Update Raise.me account with your most up-to-date grades and activities.
- Apply for internships/community service opportunities.

To Do: Summer Before Senior Year

- Begin working on your essays for colleges and scholarships.
- Narrow down the list of colleges you are considering attending. If you can, visit the schools that interest you, many have virtual tours available.
- Contact colleges or check their websites to find information and applications for admission. Ask about financial aid, admission requirements, and deadlines.
- Decide whether you are going to apply for admission under a particular college's early decision, early action, or regular decision program. Be sure to learn about the program deadlines and requirements.

To Do: All Year

- Work hard all the way to graduation—second-semester grades and attendance can affect scholarship eligibility and ranking.

To Do: Fall

- Apply to the colleges you have chosen. Prepare your applications carefully. Follow the instructions, and **PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!**
- Well before your college application deadlines, ask your counselor and teachers to submit the required documents (e.g., transcript, letters of recommendation) to the colleges to which you're applying.
- As you apply to colleges and scholarships, request your transcript to be sent from the campus Registrar for each college and/or scholarship to which you are applying.
- As soon as possible after Oct. 1, complete and submit your FAFSA® or TAFSA form, along with any other financial aid applications your chosen school(s) may require.

- You should submit your FAFSA form by the earliest financial aid deadline of the schools to which you are applying, Texas priority deadline is January 15th.

- CSS Profile needs to be completed for out of state schools.

- After you submit the FAFSA form, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within three days to three weeks. This document lists your answers to the questions on your FAFSA form and gives you some basic information about your aid eligibility. Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.

- PENDING VERIFICATION** – Please upload your FAFSA confirmation email to Xello or turn it in to your Counselor or GO Center Specialist.

- If you haven't done so already, register for and take the standardized tests required for college admission. Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.

- Complete any last scholarship applications.

To Do: Spring

- Visit colleges that have invited you to enroll.
- Review your college acceptances and compare the colleges' financial aid offers.
- Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you. In fact, getting to know your financial aid staff early is a good idea no matter what—they can tell you about deadlines, other aid for which you might wish to apply, and important paperwork you might need to submit.
- When you decide which school you want to attend, notify that school of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Many schools require this notification and deposit by May 1.
- Submit your Financial Aid and Scholarship award letters to your GO Center Specialist as soon as you receive them