



NATIVE PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE

This is the time to get serious and stick to your schedule. Keep up in your classes and plan out the next two years strategically. The college search is about exploring who you are and what you want, then finding colleges that will meet your goals and interests.

11th grade checklist

Questions to Ask

- What is the difference between a community college and a four-year college? What is a tribal college and how are they different from other colleges?
- How much homework can I expect as a student preparing for college?
- What do different colleges require in terms of high school grades and SAT or ACT scores?
- Are there classes that I need to take in anticipation of my college choices or potential scholarships, i.e. language courses for tribal scholarships?

Take on a leadership position. Colleges seek out applicants who demonstrate leadership and involvement. Consider how to apply your interests in the sport, club, or organization you associate with, in order to leave an impression.

Semester Checklist

Fall | Sept - Nov

- List your abilities, personal qualities and any interests that you may want to study in college. Narrow your college list to 5 - 10 schools. Look at their websites and find colleges at bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search.
- Talk to your counselor, teachers, or coaches to find out about college night events for students and families in the area. Mark them on your calendar.
- If your interests involve majoring in the arts or playing sports while in college. Consider documenting and cataloging your achievements in a portfolio or file, in order to be considered during college admissions.

Winter | Nov - Jan

- Sign up for the SAT or ACT in the spring by registering online or through your school. Ask your counselor about fee waivers for the test and any additional resources to help you prepare and practice.
- Once you have considered colleges who meet your academic and life interests, consider the financial aspect of those choices. Estimate your financial aid need. Use the College Board's Getting Financial Aid and the financial aid calculator at bigfuture.org to estimate how much aid you might receive.
- Compare the cost of colleges on your list. Is there financial assistance that you may qualify for at each school?
- Format a résumé by first listing your academic accomplishments, extracurricular activities, volunteer positions, work experiences, and your general interests since you started high school.

Spring | Jan - May

- Reach out to teachers, coaches or mentors now about recommendation letters or reference checks. They may be able to give you advice about your college choice and the college process. For each recommendation, provide a stamped, addressed envelope and any college forms required.

Summer

- In order to fill out your FAFSA, you will need to get a username and password (also known as an FSA ID). Start to gather information for financial aid in order to familiarize you and your family with the process. Get your Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application at pin.ed.gov.
- Consider getting full-time or part-time job. You can also participate in a summer camp or a volunteer activity.
- Begin researching scholarships. Consider researching scholarships or grants in the local area for graduating seniors.
- Narrow your college list to 3 or 4. Download their applications and mark application and financial aid deadlines in your calendar.

College Visits

- Visit colleges in order to explore what they offer. If possible, visit a range of local colleges—large, small, public, private, tribal—and decide what fits your needs.
- Talk to key staff members such as the professors, students, the Native American Center, or the Multicultural Center.
- Contact the Admissions office to set up a tour or inquire about the interview process and schedule the interview.
- If one or both of your parents did not attend college, you could be eligible for first generation services like TRiO or Upward Bound. They are designed to assist in your transition to college and some programs offer financial assistance.
- Get connected with the Native American or Multicultural Center. They may offer services or programs that are specific to your identity and will most likely connect you to scholarships.

For more guidance to prepare for a campus visit:

- Campus Tips & Tricks - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvHePH1aubs&feature=youtu.be>
- bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide/campus-visit-checklist

Testing

- Prepare for the SAT and ACT exams. Seek out study materials and practice exams.
- Ask your counselor about taking the PSAT/NMSQT or PLAN in your junior year as a practice for the actual SAT.
- Plan out the dates and consider the fees and registration deadlines. Ask your counselor about any fee waivers for which you may qualify.
- When choosing a test date, allow for enough time to study beforehand, consider extracurricular activities, major assignments or family gatherings.
- If you take them early enough, you can have multiple attempts to improve your scores. Ideally, take the test in May or June of your Junior year.

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Call - 1.877.557.3863

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