



Wahkiakum High School 9th Grade College Preparation Checklist



Every Year in High School

Students To Do List:

- Work with your parent/s to estimate your potential financial aid using FAFSA4caster at fafsa.gov, and continue to save for college.
- Take challenging classes in core academic subjects. Most colleges require 4 years of English, at least 3 years of social studies (history, civics, etc.), 3 years of math, and 3 years of science. Many colleges require 2 years of foreign language (occasionally 3). It's important to research college admission requirements early.
- Stay involved in school and/or community based activities that interest you or let you explore career interests. Consider working or volunteering.
- Talk to your school counselor and other mentors about education after high school. Your counselor can answer questions about what classes to take in high school, how to sign-up for standardized tests, and where to get money for college.

To Explore:

- Check out KnowHow2Go: The Four Steps to College, at www.knowhow2go.org for more advice on actions you can take as you start thinking about education beyond high school.
- Get answers to common questions about college by watching videos on the "Prepare for College" playlist at www.YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid.
- Learn about managing your money in the "High School Youth" section of www.mymoney.gov/Pages/for-youth.aspx.

Parent/s To Do List:

- Continue to talk to your child about college plans as if he or she will definitely go to college.
- Keep an eye on your child's study habits and grades – Stay involved!
- Encourage your child to take Honors & Advancement Placement courses.
- Add to your child's college savings account regularly

To Explore:

- Explore **StudentAid.gov/parent** for information on saving for college, borrowing for college, applying for financial aid, getting tax benefits to help make college affordable, and more.

9th Grade

Students To Do List:

- Talk to your school counselor or teachers about Honors & AP courses and if you are eligible to enroll in them.
- Use the career search at **StudentAid.gov/careersearch** to research your career options.
- Make a list of your awards, honors, extracurricular activities, and paid and volunteer work (FACT sheet). Consider participating in academic enrichment programs, summer workshops, and camps with specialty focuses such as music, arts, or science.

To Explore:

- Visit **StudentAid.gov/whycollege** for a quick rundown on why deciding to attend college is a no-brainer.
- Find ways to get help preparing for college at **StudentAid.gov/prepare-for-college/help**.

Parents To Do List:

- Review with your student his/her academic schedule and help them with time management between school, sports, and community involvement.
- Make sure you are fully aware of the provisions of any college savings accounts you have opened for your child.

To Explore:

- Learn about the tax benefits of cashing in savings bonds to pay for your child's education; search "Publication 970" at www.irs.gov.