



Wahkiakum High School

11th 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.

11th Grade

Students To Do List:

- Explore careers and their earning potential with the Occupational Outlook handbook search tool at www.bls.gov/oco.
- Learn about choosing a college at **StudentAid.gov/prepare-for-college/choosing-schools.org**.
- Go to college fairs and college-preparation presentations hosted by colleges.

Fall:

- Take the PSAT. You must take the test in 11th grade to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Start developing a resume.
- Begin to prepare for the ACT or SAT. Free test preparation may be available at WHS or LCC; in addition, there are many free resources online.

- Develop a list of colleges that interest you. Make a file for each college as you gather information.
- Begin planning college visits while classes are in session

Spring:

- Register for and take exams for college admission. The tests that many colleges require are the SAT, the SAT subject Tests, and the ACT. Check with the college you are interested in to see what tests they require.
- Use the many free scholarship search tools to find scholarships for which you might want to apply. Some deadlines fall as early as the summer between 11th and 12th grades, so prepare now to submit applications soon.
- Continue planning college visits while classes are in session.
- Continue developing a list of colleges that interest you.
- Make a list of teachers, counselors, coaches, employers, and other adults you might ask to write you a letter of recommendation.

To Explore:

- Visit www.YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid and go to the “Types of Aid” playlist to see how the government can help you pay for college.
- Learn how to avoid scholarship scams and identify theft at **StudentAid.gov/scams**.

Parents To Do List:

- Take another look at your financial situation, and be sure you’re on the right track to pay for college.
- Talk to your child about the schools he/she is considering. Ask why those schools appeal to your child, and help him/her clarify goals and priorities.
- Attend college fairs with your child, but don’t take over the conversation with the college representatives. Just listen; let your child do the talking.
- Take your child to visit college campuses, preferably when classes are in session.
- Attend all financial aid information events at WHS.

To Explore:

- Get in-depth information on federal student aid programs at **StudentAid.gov/types**.
- Learn about student and parent loans:
 - o Federal Student Loans: Basics for Students and Federal Student Loans: Direct Plus Loan Basics for Parents booklets at **StudentAid.gov/resources#loans**.