

Tips for High School Juniors – Podcast Transcript

Opening:

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Younger from the Oregon Student Assistance Commission, also called OSAC for short.

Today, I am going to talk to you about tips that will help high school juniors prepare for the process of applying for college.

Body:

The first month you are in school during your junior year, make sure you are on-track to graduate your senior year. Look at your high school's graduation requirements and compare your credits. If you need to, talk to a school guidance counselor to discuss what courses you need to take in order to graduate on time or if you need to consider taking summer school.

In October of your junior year, take the PSAT test. This test is a great opportunity to practice taking admissions tests and to establish your eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Program, the National Hispanic Recognition Program, and additional scholarship programs. In addition, start looking into colleges that interest you and make a list of entrance requirements. Look up admissions requirements such as grade point average, high school subject credits, and standardized test scores. Also, meet with your school's guidance counselor after you receive your PSAT results. Begin researching private scholarship and grant opportunities that involve academics, career goals, skills, or demographics. This will help you determine with the counselor if your list of colleges is reasonable or needs to be adjusted.

When you are in the second half of your junior year, start planning to visit the colleges that interest you during spring or summer break with your family. Call the admissions office in advance to learn what times they conduct regular tours. If you are still not quite sure of what colleges you are interested in, attend a college fair where you can learn more about different colleges and the programs they offer. Consider taking the SAT and/or the ACT in May or June. Also, begin to contact the colleges that interest you and request admissions procedures and financial aid information.

In the summer before your senior year, begin investigating careers of interest. Consider subjects you do well in and enjoy. Talk to parents, guidance counselors, and other adults about the careers that interest you. It is okay if you are undecided about a career because college is a great place to explore career options. If you do know of a career you are interested in, approach professionals with questions about that career. You could even approach the professional with the possibility of job shadowing them for a day in their career, then you would have the opportunity to experience a day in that profession. When narrowing down your college choices, make a list of important factors. Some

factors to consider are programs offered, school size, class size, support programs, the city or neighborhood, campus culture, distance from home, extracurricular activities, cost of attendance, financial aid options, and outside learning options such as study abroad or internships. Begin visiting colleges with your family and deciding whether it is the right fit. College visits can be a deciding factor in whether or not the college will work for you.

Conclusion:

Your junior year is an important one. If you research different colleges, keep your grades up, consider possible careers and begin to look into scholarship opportunities, then you will be prepared for your senior year.

Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important topic. For more podcast topics, please visit our website at www.OregonStudentAid.gov . From all of us here at the Oregon Student Assistance Commission, this is Elizabeth Younger. We look forward to helping you again soon.