

Review the 9th, 10th & 11th Grade Checklists.

ALL Seniors planning on going to college should review the:

- How to Pay for College Checklist – It’s important to become familiar with the financial aid process at the beginning of your senior year so you don’t overlook or miss important deadlines!

Achieve

- Finish Strong!!! Maintain grades, school attendance, and continue to take rigorous courses through your senior year
 - Admissions acceptance is often conditional and can be rescinded if you do not continue academic excellence
- Organization will keep you sane your senior year!
 - Use a calendar (physical or digital calendar) to stay on top of application and scholarship deadlines, assignments, events, work, activities, etc.
 - Give important deadlines digital reminders (by phone or in calendar app)
 - Create a physical file system to keep your college planning documents in one place – keep a copy or digital copy of everything
 - Create a digital file system to keep your copies of your applications and essays.
 - Create a file for every school application and scholarship you apply to
 - Keep all versions of your essays – you may be able to “reduce, reuse, recycle” them for other application prompts
- Take Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams

Explore

- Career exploration is an ongoing process. If you are unsure of a future career focus, you will get to use your college courses to continue to explore your interests. Many students change their academic programs multiple times in college due to the additional exposure to new ideas and fields of study. Your future career will be an extension of the skills and knowledge you gain in college. Don’t stress if you don’t know what you want to do yet.
- Continue to finalize your college search by using [Oregon Goes to College](#) sites to explore your college options
- Look for additional opportunities to continue to build your resume and leadership skills

Engage

- Review your transcript and college plans with your high school counselor, ASPIRE Mentor, and family members
- Get to know and regularly visit your ASPIRE/College Coordinator – don't be afraid to ask questions or ask for assistance with applications, scholarships, financial aid, etc.
- Ask teachers, coaches, and/or community leaders for required or optional letters of recommendation. Make sure to provide your Recommendation Form and give recommenders 2-4 weeks to complete

Prepare

- Create a professional email to use on ALL college and employment applications - Make a habit of checking email at least 1-2 times per week this is how admissions officers and scholarship committees will contact you. Be ready.
- Take time and care writing your admissions and scholarship essays. Make sure you answer all parts of the prompts, and make your essay engaging and personal. This is your opportunity to show your personality, passions, and strengths and separate yourself from other applicants For more assistance: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/plan-for-college/your-college-application/write-your-essay>
- Complete your financial aid application (FAFSA or ORSAA) – Follow critical steps in the How to Pay for College Checklist
- Search and apply for scholarships throughout the year – spend time and care on your applications
 - [OSAC Scholarship opens November 1](#)
 - Look for other scholarships: At the colleges you intend to apply to, talk with your ASPIRE/College Coordinator/HS Counselor for scholarships specifically for students who attend your HS or are in your local community.
 - Continue look for other region, state & national scholarships using [Oregon CIS](#), [JLV Counseling](#), [FastWeb](#), or [other national scholarship search platforms](#)
- Consider your College Fit and make your final list of colleges and universities to apply to
 - Choose 5-8 schools if planning to apply to a 4-year university, include at least 1 Oregon Community College
 - Research specific admissions requirements to make sure you are on track.
 - Identify what applications you will need to complete ([Common App](#), college specific application, etc.)
 - Note the cost of attendance (COE) and search for scholarships,

- academic programs of interest (do they require a separate application), student club/activities, etc.
- Begin comparing/ranking colleges based on what you consider most important
- Register and take or re-take your college entrance exams in the fall: [SAT/ACT](#)
- Finalize portfolios, audition materials or writing samples if required as part of the application
- Request feedback from teacher, ASPIRE mentor, college advisor on application and scholarship essays
- Check email regularly for additional information colleges/scholarship committees may request
- Request and send mid-year transcripts to colleges that request them
- Compare your Financial Aid Award Offers
- If there is a gap in your financial aid award – consider other ways to Make College Affordable

Plan

- Mark your calendars: Attend career and college events, workshops and special programs at your HS or in your community
- Finalize and submit your college admissions and scholarship applications by required deadlines
- Follow-up to make sure colleges have received all required application information including transcripts, resumes, recommendations (if required)
- Apply for the [Oregon Promise](#) (GPA 2.0+) – whether community college is your 1st choice college plan, or a back-up plan, all seniors should complete this application
- Make your college choice. If you plan to attend a four-year college, notify and place a deposit at the college of your choice by National College Decision Day - May 1
- Request final transcript from your HS registrar to be sent to the college you have chosen to attend
- Request AP and IB Test scores be sent to your final college choice
- Ask if the college will require other academic placement tests (English, Math, foreign language)
- Send personal notes/letters of gratitude to those who helped you plan and prepare for college – teachers, counselors, ASPIRE mentor, college advisor, and those who wrote your recommendation letters
- Check your college/university student portal on a regular basis so you don't miss important updates
- Register and attend summer and/or fall orientation if required – registration for fall courses usually happen at these events
- Consider your budget and housing options – if living on campus complete required roommate surveys, the residence life contract, and submit a housing

- deposit to secure your room
- Submit college's health forms – may include required immunizations or vaccines (including Covid-19 vaccine/boosters)
- Create a Budget – work with your parents/family to financially plan for your future
- Make travel arrangements to attend orientation and fall move-in/new student week. Consider affordable plane, train, or bus tickets. Make hotel reservations for family if they will be traveling with you for orientation/drop-off
- Get a job to save for college while continuing to build your resume
- If you will be living on campus – find and refer to your school's college checklist as you pack
- Spend quality time with your family and friends over the summer – it is important to set expectations on how and when you will communicate while you are away at college
- Thank your family, parents, guardians, an/or supportive adults in your life