



WHITE PASS GEAR UP NEWSLETTER

High School & Beyond Planning — News & Information

GEAR UP Advisor Maureen Foley mfoley@whitepass.k12.wa.us

WELCOME TO JUNIOR YEAR!

Junior year is significant because most students and families begin planning for life after high school.

This fall, your child can prepare for education beyond high school by taking the PSAT. It is a good idea for students to take it even if they're not sure they want to attend a four-year college. The PSAT assesses academic skills and allows students to practice for the SAT. PSAT scores can qualify students for the National Merit Scholarship competition.

Your child's path after high school could include a four-year college, a two-year college, a CTE (technical college), the military, or entering the workforce. Your teen should prepare to take an entrance exam to pursue those options. No matter your child's path, it will likely require at least one entrance exam. Talk to the guidance counselor to learn more about which test your child should take, when, and how to get a fee waiver if necessary.

The SAT and ACT are the main entrance exams for four-year colleges. The PSAT is the practice test for the SAT. Students will begin

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Choosing a college is a complex and often confusing process that requires students and families to know about the different types of schools, admission requirements, financial aid, and more.

When choosing a college, you often hear the term "fit" tossed around. You're told to find a college that is a good "fit," but what does that mean?

There are many colleges, programs, and degrees to choose from. Juniors have spent some time thinking about different types of careers and exploring what sort of education beyond high school is necessary for that path. That exploration will help them figure out what school is the best fit.

The better the school matches your teen's interests and needs, the likelier your child will stay and complete school successfully.

It's also important to consider other factors that can influence your child's experience, like the school size or the distance from home.

What's Important

- Available academic programs & majors in the field of interest
- Available support services
- Campus atmosphere
- Distance from home
- Diversity of students
- Extracurricular activities
- Financial aid offered
- Graduation & employment rate
- Housing options
- Location
- Size of school & class size

What's Not

- Best friend is going
- Boyfriend or girlfriend is going
- Good sports teams (for non-athletes)
- It's closest to home
- School colors
- The sticker price of that program

registering for and taking other postsecondary exams in their junior year. Depending on their post-high school path, juniors may take other postsecondary exams.

Free test preparation is available on each of the tests' websites. Test fees may be waived for students who meet income eligibility guidelines. Talk to a school counselor to see if your junior is eligible for fee waivers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- *National GEAR UP Week: September 22-26*

After School Tutoring begins Tuesday 7th and will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays 3-4:30pm with transportation and snack available



DID YOU KNOW?

Research indicates that “hope is a better predictor of college success and graduation than GPA and test scores.”

High School & Beyond Planning

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COLLEGE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Washington State has 34 community and technical (two-year) colleges and six public four-year colleges and universities. There’s a program for every interest!

Students who want to attend a public baccalaureate college must meet specific minimum standards beyond what it may take to graduate from high school. A school district’s requirements may be higher than the state minimums.

Degree	High School Graduation & Community Colleges	4-Year Public Universities in Washington	Selective 4-Year Private Colleges & Universities
# of Credits	4 English 3 Math (Algebra 1 & above) 3 Science (2 lab) 3 Social Science 2 Arts 2 Health & Fitness 1 CTE 2 World Language 4 Electives	4 English 3 Math (Algebra 1 & above plus senior year math-based quantitative course) 3 Science (2 labs) 3 Social Science 2 World Language 1 Arts	4 English 3-4 Math (Algebra 1 & above to pre-calculus or statistics) 3-4 Science (labs recommended) 3-4 Social Science (including U.S. History) 3-4 World Language + Arts & Challenging Electives
Required	High School and Beyond Plan Complete a Grad Pathway Earn HS Credits	High school graduation or equivalency Minimum 2.75-3.00 GPA No D's or F's in classes SAT or ACT	High school graduation or equivalency Competitive GPA Mostly A's and B's SAT, ACT, or portfolio of work (usually)
Recommended		Additional coursework and other factors may increase the likelihood of admission.	Honors, AP, IB, or college credit courses when available Extracurriculars or special achievement

NOTE: Districts may have local requirements. Students and parents should check with school counselors for additional graduation requirements.

STUDENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Make sure you take rigorous classes like Algebra II, a foreign language, dual-credit, and honors courses. Start your year by talking with your school counselor about the year ahead.
- ☐ Start developing a résumé—a record of your accomplishments, activities, and work experiences. This will be an essential part of your college application.
- ☐ If you haven’t participated in many activities outside of class, now is the time to sign up. Consider clubs at schools, team sports, leadership roles, or involvement in your religious or civic community group.
- ☐ Take the PSAT. The fall of 11th grade is your last chance to take the PSAT/NMSQT, which will help you prepare for the SAT. It could also qualify you for the National Merit Scholarship Competition.
- ☐ Begin to prepare for the ACT or SAT. Free test prep may be available at your school, local community colleges, and community-based programs.
- ☐ Create a list of potential post-high school options. Explore websites that can help narrow the search.
- ☐ Attend college fairs and sessions with college representatives.

MYTHBUSTER

MYTH: All that my child has to do is meet the minimum requirements to get into college.

REALITY: Many colleges and universities use a “comprehensive review.” Some factors include:

- Academic rigor or challenging coursework
- Quality of senior year courses
- Grade trends
- Extracurricular activities
- Ability to enhance the diversity of the school (racial, cultural, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic, family educational

FAMILY CHECKLIST

- ☐ Make sure your child meets with the school counselor. Encourage your child to set goals for the school year. Working toward specific goals helps your high schooler stay motivated and focused.
- ☐ Help your child stay organized.
- ☐ Help your child develop a résumé. Help your teen think about accomplishments, activities, and work experiences.
- ☐ Encourage your teen to participate in after-school activities. Consider clubs at schools, team sports, leadership roles, or involvement in your religious or civic community group.
- ☐ Help your child prepare for the PSAT.
- ☐ Attend college fairs with your child. Encourage your teen to ask questions and talk with the college representatives.
- ☐ If possible, take your child to visit college campuses, preferably during classes. You can also encourage your child to participate in school field trips to campuses.

history)

- Academic performance compared to opportunities available at your high school.

Some schools offer different opportunities like Advanced Placement and honors classes, and some schools do not offer those programs. Colleges will take this into account. Did you take advantage of the opportunities available to you?

