

## Career Planning

High School is an important chapter in your life. You will find that you will be expected to take more responsibility for your own decisions, schoolwork, and actions. One of the most important responsibilities in high school will be to choose and take the courses that will prepare you for the future. Remember, your high school program and your success in it will affect what you may do after you graduate.

You do not have to make a final decision now about your plans after high school. But, you have to start preparing for what you think those plans are going to be. You have to plan a high school program of study, enrolling in the courses that will give you the best foundation and preparation for entering the world of work, community college, technical training, or a four-year college.

Many sources of information exist that can help you gather career info and can advise you in developing a high school plan. Your parents know your personality and abilities. They know your interests and your strengths. They can also talk about what they learned from their education and experiences. Your counselor can help by providing information about your interests and aptitudes. They can also advise you about course content, college requirements, and occupational trends. Your teachers can give you ideas about a program of study or careers options based on your work in their class. They can also tell you about their school experiences and what they learned. The librarian has a wide variety of career resources that can provide info about careers, employment outlook, and some of the classes you could take to help you get prepared. Professionals who work in the career(s) in which you are interested are a valuable source of information. Contact them and ask questions or ask if you can visit them at their work place.

Ultimately, you are responsible for developing your future – not anyone else. Some of the latest data indicates that half of you will spend a large amount of your working years in jobs that do not exist today. If you are going to be ready for that challenge, your choices and your performance while in high school will play a large part.

Will you be ready?

1. Develop an appropriate four-year plan of high school courses, to be reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary. [Spring of eighth grade]
2. Complete the career planning survey. [Spring of eighth grade]
3. Strive for maximum performance on eighth grade TAKS. [Spring of eighth grade]
4. Concentrate on grades and study skills during ninth grade and subsequent years.
5. Produce maximum performance on Exit-Level TAKS, aiming for TASP exemption levels. [Spring of tenth grade]
6. Continue college entrance test preparation and qualify for National Merit Scholarships by taking the PSAT. [October of tenth grade and/or especially October of eleventh grade]
7. Be careful about working too many hours on a part-time job while in school. [20 hours per week should be the maximum during the school year.]
8. Secure information regarding further education/training beyond high school. [On-going process during grades 9-12]
9. Complete ACT and/or SAT college entrance exams. [Spring of eleventh grade]
10. Apply for admission/housing to school(s) matching your plans/needs. [Fall of senior year – major/selective universities] [Spring of senior year – four-year colleges/community colleges/trade schools]

11. Develop your plan for financing further education. Be alert for scholarship opportunities throughout your high school years, but especially during your senior year. Apply for financial aid through the FAFSA form or website after January 1 of your senior year.
12. Prepare for and take the TASP if necessary. [No later than senior year; earlier if you plan to take college classes while in high school]
13. Earn college credit by exam through AP, CLEP, SAT-II, SAT, ACT, departmental exams, or other tests. [Spring of junior and/or senior year]
14. Make final decisions and plans for further education/training. [Senior year]

Special Notes for Success in School and College:

- go to class and do the work!
- meet all deadlines!
- read! read! read!
- your counselor in high school or college can assist you with information and planning.

Ask for help when you need it!