



**NATIVE PATHWAYS
TO COLLEGE**

College will offer many possibilities for you to develop a vision for your future, acquire knowledge and skills, apply that knowledge towards a career, provide a better future for you and your community, and to be a role model for your future generations in your tribe.

Here is a guide that will help you start thinking about college early.

9th grade tips

Get good grades

Do well in your classes and know the importance of maintaining a good Grade Point Average or GPA.

Create a plan

What do you want to accomplish in the next four years? Start developing a vision for your life after school including jobs and careers. Identify your interests, what is important to you?

Create a vision board to understand yourself, interests and future aspirations. These ideas are not concrete and can change over time, but it's good to start thinking about possibilities and identify what drives you in life.

Meet with your counselor

Let this person know that you intend to go to college and they will recommend courses for you in order to make your high school plan.

Questions to Ask

- What academic courses do you recommend I take to prep for college?
- How many years of each academic subject does the high school require for graduation?
- What elective courses do you recommend I take?
- Is there any help or tutoring available to me?
- What activities can I do at home and over the summers to prepare me for college?

Talk to people

People who have gone to college such as your teachers, elders, older relatives, professionals in your community, etc. may lead you to careers you find interesting. What does a leader look like to you?

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1.877.557.3863 | nativepathways@collegefund.org | collegefund.org/nativepathways



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10th grade tips

Create a plan

It's important that you do well in school, but extracurricular activities are important to colleges. Joining a sport or club will show your interests and involvement.

Tech Savvy

Be comfortable with computers, smartphones or tablets. Developing this skill will help you explore many resources of information such as writing and research skills. Discover helpful apps, podcasts, videos for instruction and general knowledge.

Follow us on social media!
We have videos, helpful links,
and follow our stories.

@NativeCollegePathways on 
@NativePathways on   

Seek Guidance

The exchange and open communication that you are establishing with your counselor is important in setting up your future. What courses are you taking this year that will set you up for success during your junior and senior year?

Questions to Ask

- What leadership skills or qualities are colleges looking for? How can I develop these talents?
- What classes will prepare me for the ACTs and SATs?
- What are AP courses and what does my school offer?
- What is dual enrollment?

PSAT or PLAN

Set yourself up for success by taking this practice test in preparation for the ACTs or SATs the following year

Taking college level courses will prepare you and potentially grant you credit in college if you do well in the course and exam.

AP classes

Compile a list

Attend college fairs and begin requesting information from schools on your list. If you can, try visiting colleges in your area to get an idea of what to look for in a college. Tour a college on your family vacation. Your entire family can share in the experience and learn about the college process.

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NATIVE PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE

This is the time to get serious and stick to your schedule. Keep up in your classes and plan out the next two years strategically. The college search is about exploring who you are and what you want, then finding colleges that will meet your goals and interests.

11th grade checklist

Questions to Ask

- What is the difference between a community college and a four-year college? What is a tribal college and how are they different from other colleges?
- How much homework can I expect as a student preparing for college?
- What do different colleges require in terms of high school grades and SAT or ACT scores?
- Are there classes that I need to take in anticipation of my college choices or potential scholarships, i.e. language courses for tribal scholarships?

Take on a leadership position. Colleges seek out applicants who demonstrate leadership and involvement. Consider how to apply your interests in the sport, club, or organization you associate with, in order to leave an impression.

Semester Checklist

Fall | Sept - Nov

- List your abilities, personal qualities and any interests that you may want to study in college. Narrow your college list to 5 - 10 schools. Look at their websites and find colleges at bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search.
- Talk to your counselor, teachers, or coaches to find out about college night events for students and families in the area. Mark them on your calendar.
- If your interests involve majoring in the arts or playing sports while in college. Consider documenting and cataloging your achievements in a portfolio or file, in order to be considered during college admissions.

Winter | Nov - Jan

- Sign up for the SAT or ACT in the spring by registering online or through your school. Ask your counselor about fee waivers for the test and any additional resources to help you prepare and practice.
- Once you have considered colleges who meet your academic and life interests, consider the financial aspect of those choices. Estimate your financial aid need. Use the College Board's Getting Financial Aid and the financial aid calculator at bigfuture.org to estimate how much aid you might receive.
- Compare the cost of colleges on your list. Is there financial assistance that you may qualify for at each school?
- Format a résumé by first listing your academic accomplishments, extracurricular activities, volunteer positions, work experiences, and your general interests since you started high school.

Spring | Jan - May

- Reach out to teachers, coaches or mentors now about recommendation letters or reference checks. They may be able to give you advice about your college choice and the college process. For each recommendation, provide a stamped, addressed envelope and any college forms required.

Summer

- In order to fill out your FAFSA, you will need to get a username and password (also known as an FSA ID). Start to gather information for financial aid in order to familiarize you and your family with the process. Get your Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application at pin.ed.gov.
- Consider getting full-time or part-time job. You can also participate in a summer camp or a volunteer activity.
- Begin researching scholarships. Consider researching scholarships or grants in the local area for graduating seniors.
- Narrow your college list to 3 or 4. Download their applications and mark application and financial aid deadlines in your calendar.

College Visits

- Visit colleges in order to explore what they offer. If possible, visit a range of local colleges—large, small, public, private, tribal—and decide what fits your needs.
- Talk to key staff members such as the professors, students, the Native American Center, or the Multicultural Center.
- Contact the Admissions office to set up a tour or inquire about the interview process and schedule the interview.
- If one or both of your parents did not attend college, you could be eligible for first generation services like TRiO or Upward Bound. They are designed to assist in your transition to college and some programs offer financial assistance.
- Get connected with the Native American or Multicultural Center. They may offer services or programs that are specific to your identity and will most likely connect you to scholarships.

For more guidance to prepare for a campus visit:

- Campus Tips & Tricks - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvHePH1aubs&feature=youtu.be>
- bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide/campus-visit-checklist

Testing

- Prepare for the SAT and ACT exams. Seek out study materials and practice exams.
- Ask your counselor about taking the PSAT/NMSQT or PLAN in your junior year as a practice for the actual SAT.
- Plan out the dates and consider the fees and registration deadlines. Ask your counselor about any fee waivers for which you may qualify.
- When choosing a test date, allow for enough time to study beforehand, consider extracurricular activities, major assignments or family gatherings.
- If you take them early enough, you can have multiple attempts to improve your scores. Ideally, take the test in May or June of your Junior year.

Connect with us!

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12th grade checklist

Check-in w/ Counselor

- Update them on your college application process and ask about any fee waivers or programs that can help with testing or college applications.
- Notify them of any major deadlines with scholarships and applications.
- Give them a copy of your resume with any additional accomplishments over the summer.

Stay Organized

- Keep copies of everything you submit, be prepared to resend any missing information to organizations, individuals and colleges.
- Make sure you are aware of deadlines

Semester Checklist

Fall | Sept - Jan

- Check in with your teachers or people writing letters of recommendation. Make sure they are aware of deadlines for your materials.
- Prepare and your college applications. When writing your essays, be sure to proofread your work. Use your resources and seek out a teacher to review your essays before submitting them.
- Search and apply for scholarships from a variety of sources, including your college(s) of choice.
- The FAFSA application opens on October 1st.** Ask schools if they require additional information for your financial aid package.
- Early decision/early action: Nov. 1-15 (Ask your counselor for details)
- Complete at least one college application by Thanksgiving. Don't forget to submit transcript requests with your schools for college and scholarships. Be sure to send your test scores as well!
- Before the Holiday Break in December - all college applications need to be submitted.

Spring | Jan - May

- Start researching housing on campus at the schools of your choice. Consider living at home as an option, living off campus, or a deposit for residence hall is needed. Housing fills up fast!
- Keep active in school and keep your grades up. If schools are debating to take you, they will follow-up to see if you are keeping up in classes and staying involved.
- If possible, visit the college before accepting and inquire about any concerns such as housing.
- Mid-April - Compare financial aid packages** at the schools who have accepted you.
 - > Sit down with your family and understand what each grant or scholarship will pay for and consider any additional funding that may be needed through loans.
 - > Consider any funding needed for future years and what action may be needed from year to year.
 - > Consider the best option along with your academic and social needs.
- Accept your school by May 1st and submit a deposit to the college of your choice. If you cannot pay the deposit, communicate with the Financial Aid office on waiver or deferment options. Ask your high school to send in a final transcript to your school. Be sure to follow up with other schools about your final decision.

Communication is important

- Email etiquette is important when communicating with your teachers, counselors, and college representatives
- Use complete words - no OMG or BTW
- Title your emails, use a salutation and use closings
- CHECK YOUR EMAIL - there is important information being sent to you, but this is great practice for college

Congrats!

You're going to college!

- Enroll in classes and attend orientation for new students.**
- Look over the syllabus for each course. The syllabus is the outline and summary of topics that will be covered in the course. The syllabus should also note what books are required for the class.**
- Start buying required books. Used books cost less, but make sure they are the edition required in class.**
- Study the map of the campus and visit each classroom. This way, you won't feel so rushed on the first day of classes.**
- Buy the supplies you'll need (backpack, pens, notebooks or folders, and so on). Supplies are likely to cost less off campus.**

College Visits

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