

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Pick the right mix of classes.**
Make sure you are enrolled in the appropriate college-prep or tech-prep classes and that you're taking key core requirements, such as English, math, science, history, and a foreign language.
- Make the grade.**
Get off to a good start with your grades because they impact your GPA and class rank. These may influence college admissions and scholarships.
- Save and file important documents.**
Remember to keep report cards, awards, honors, and any documents reflecting activities in which you are involved.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Take the PSAT.**
Taking the test is a good way to practice for the SAT. In addition, taking it during your **junior** year qualifies you for the National Merit Scholarship program, which means you could earn money for college.
- Get involved.**
Get and/or stay involved with extra curricular activities and work towards leadership positions in the activities you like best.
- Stay on track with your classes and grades.**
Even if your grades haven't been stellar so far, it's never too late to improve. Colleges like to see improve and an upward trend.

JUNIOR YEAR

- Evaluate your education options.**
Now is the time to follow a more specific path. Decide whether you want to pursue full-time employment right after high school, further education or training, or a military career. (If you are interested in attending a military academy, talk to your counselor and start the application process now.)
- Make a college list.**
Use MichiganCAP and other websites to help you decide which colleges meet your specific criteria (size, location, cost, special programs, etc.). Weigh each factor according to its importance to you and begin to develop a preliminary ranking of the schools on your list.
- Organize a testing plan.**
Figure out when you'll be taking tests like the PSAT, ACT, and SAT. Mark the dates on your calendar. Begin preparing ahead of time so you are ready.
- Make sure you're meeting any special requirements.**
If you want to play Division I or II sports in college start the certification process and check with your counselor to make sure you are meeting all requirement.
- Start a scholarship search.**
There are many scholarships out there but it takes time and effort to find them. Check with your guidance counselor for local scholarships.
- Visit colleges.**
Take a tour and speak with admissions and financial aid staff. If you have a chance, talk with students you meet while on campus. If you have an interview with admissions, be sure to send a thank-you letter to the interviewer once you return home.