

Junior Year Roadmap

If you have an academic or career interest, junior year is a great time to explore it more deeply through classes, activities, jobs, volunteering, projects + other experiences. For example, if you're interested in business, look for opportunities to explore that interest **in + outside of school**.

Not sure what you want to study yet? That's okay!
Use this year to explore your interests + discover what excites you.

Big Picture Mindset

Build relationships with teachers + admissions officers

Explore professional interests through classes, mentors, and activities

Strategize your college search + your vision of college fit

Set academic + personal goals for each semester. Block out time for prep work

August + September

	Continue challenging yourself with AP + Honors courses (academic rigor matters). Balance your school rigor with your interests + capacity.
	Focus on executive functioning skills (time management, organization)
	Meet with your school counselor to discuss college goals, testing plans + any college-specific questions. • Aim for 5 core academic classes (English, Math, Science, Social Studies + World Language). • Electives should demonstrate your curiosity, and support your interests + strengths.
	Decide if you are going to focus on the ACT or SAT. Then, create an initial testing timeline for winter or early spring.
	Start discussing potential college visits with your family. Visit campuses while classes are in session when possible; register early for tours in the fall!
	Focus on 2–3 core activities. Look for ways to deepen your involvement, responsibility + impact.
	Reflect on your strengths, interests, and favorite classes. Consider taking a <u>career interest assessment</u> online.
	Start your preliminary college list (10–15). Use apps like: <u>Niche.com</u> , <u>Scoir.com</u> , <u>Corsava.com</u> , <u>College Board</u> Visit college websites, request materials, and take virtual tours. Resources: <i>Fiske Guide to Colleges 2026</i> + <i>Princeton Review</i> .
	Attend 2–3 early fall college fairs or virtual info sessions.

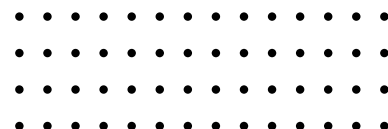


October

	Take the PSAT in October for National Merit consideration.
	Maintain or improve your GPA — junior-year grades are especially important!
	Join the mailing lists for colleges you're interested in. Create a simple college tracker for exploring schools + take notes on what you like/dislike.
	Continue regular ACT/SAT prep + register for a winter or spring exam.
	Visit a local college campus or two. Don't forget to take notes!
	Update your brag sheet / résumé with all new fall activities. Include roles, hours, accomplishments, and other key details.
	Start a running list of scholarship opportunities + deadlines. Some are open to juniors!

November

	Attend college rep visits at your school + ask thoughtful questions.
	Map out any college visits over winter break.
	Review academic performance. Set goals before finals!
	Athletes: • Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and/or NAIA Eligibility Center. • Confirm your intended courses meet NCAA Clearinghouse requirements. • Complete recruiting questionnaires on college athletic websites. • Create or update your sports résumé + highlight video. • Reach out to coaches with short, consistent check-ins
	Fine + Performing Arts Students: • Attend any school visits + schedule performing arts / visual arts fairs. • Create a spreadsheet of program portfolio or audition requirements. • Begin preparing portfolios or audition materials + select pieces for review.



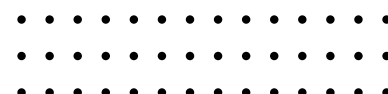


December – February

	If you haven't already, register for your first ACT or SAT between January + May.
	Decide if additional standardized test prep is needed.
	Create a study plan for AP exams in May.
	Save strong academic work in a personal Google Drive for future reference. (your school email will disappear after graduation).
	Continue attending college fairs + admissions rep visits.
	Research programs for the summer (most deadlines are before March 1).
	Research college majors + minors. What excites you? Take a career or personality assessment (StrengthsFinder, MBTI).
	Over break, update your brag sheet / résumé with all winter activities.
	Talk with your family about college budget + financial expectations.
	Build relationships with junior-year teachers who may write your recommendations.
	Plan a rigorous + intentional senior-year course schedule. Rigor matters!

March – April

	Update your brag sheet / résumé with all spring activities.
	Continue refining your college list. For top schools, consider emailing your regional admissions rep with 1–2 thoughtful questions.
	Athletes: Send your updated sports résumé + highlight video to coaches.
	Fine + Performing Arts: Review audition/portfolio timelines + continue preparing materials.
	Plan spring + summer college visits. Take detailed notes about what stands out – they may be useful for essays later.
	Identify 1–2 junior-year teachers for letters of recommendation + ask before school ends.
	Plan meaningful summer experiences: work, internships, job shadowing, volunteering, programs or a self-designed project.
	Use college Net Price Calculators to begin evaluating financial fit.





May

Download/print your transcript to use when working on your résumé + Activities List this summer.

Take the AP exams in May.

Continue refining your college list based on academics, interests/major + financial fit.

Review ACT/SAT results + decide whether you'll retest over the summer/early fall.

Plan to schedule one-hour time blocks over the summer for test prep + college work.

If you haven't yet, now is the time to create a master spreadsheet that includes all of the colleges you plan to apply to. Keep everything in one place so you can evaluate your college list + see how you "fit" with the most recently admitted class.

Use the most recent Common Data Set for the school to collect this information.

- Middle 50% test scores
- GPA profile
- Is Class Rank important? If so, be sure you know yours + make the note.
- Is Demonstrated Interest tracked?
- Admissions Rep name + email (on school admissions page)
- Acceptance rate
 - Remember the acceptance rate for out-of-state students and/or for specific schools will likely be lower.
- Early + Regular Decision deadlines
- Other items of interest: Graduation Rates + Financial Aid info (section H)

Reach out to Sarah for a template to get you started!