

BLUEPRINT for Junior Year

Get Organized

If you are not already serious about your grades and the rigor of your coursework, now is the time to get serious. Grades from sophomore and junior year carry the most weight in the college application process. If you have been serious all along, don't let up now. Take as many honors and AP courses as you can and work hard; these courses can help boost your GPA so that you will stand out among the many other applicants when you begin to apply to colleges next year. Also, you will most likely want to get letters of recommendation from junior year teachers when you apply to colleges next year – now is a good time to get your teachers to know you better.

Junior year is also an excellent time to develop a strategy for scoring competitively on the SAT. The first step is to take the mandatory PSAT in October; this test, which measures critical reading, math problem solving and writing skills, is important because it is excellent preparation for the SATs coming up in May and June. Remember, organization and planning are critical elements of the college application process.

Finally, focus heavily on a smaller number of activities. At this stage of your high school career it is more about quality than quantity, and the level at which you participate – as in leadership – is of particular interest to college admissions officers. You are still, however, in high school so you should make sure you do things that you enjoy and realize that it is possible to be serious and to have fun at the same time.

Throughout the Year

- Continue to strengthen relationships with peers, teachers, counselors, coaches, activity leaders and employers as this will be the source for recommendations later;
- Continue using Naviance to research college majors and careers on the internet and in the Guidance Office;
- Maintain your journal and resume/portfolio;
- Add to your college and career folders;
- Research and consider AP courses to take during senior year;
- Attend as many individual visits to New Egypt High School by college representatives as possible;
- Visit as many college campuses as you can;

- Sign up for the ACT question of the day for ACT Prep via actstudent.org. Create an account with the Kahn Academy, if you have not already done so;

Fall Semester

- Schedule a semi-annual conference with your school counselor;
- Plan to attend the annual field trip to the College Fair sponsored by the National Association of College Admissions Counselors
- Begin to focus on a dozen or so colleges that are a good fit based on your academic and career interests – narrow down a list of schools that are appealing...urban or rural, big or small, public or private;
- Narrow down your interest list of college majors and occupations and review and revise your four-year education plan with these in mind;
- Look into NCAA requirements if you think you may want to participate in sports in college;
- Identify academic and personal/extracurricular goals that you would like to accomplish during the year;
- Seek out leadership roles in clubs, sports and activities;
- Take the PSAT in October; it's great practice for the SATs;
- Take the SAT for the first time in November, December or January depending on your course placements;
- Discuss college financing options with your family – attend Financial Aid Night at New Egypt High School;
- Complete a college search on Naviance to develop a list of schools you are interested in.

Spring Semester

- Schedule a semi-annual conference with your school counselor;
- Attend College Night at New Egypt High School with your parents in April – learn about such things as college admission and testing requirements, the college application process, and choosing a major;

- Read and save “College Application Requirements” which is handed out at College Night and available in the Guidance Office;
- Take the ACT for the first time;
- Take the SAT for the second time in May or June;
- Make plans (in early Spring) for an interesting summer job, internship, educational program, community service or travel experience;
- Consider attending the College Essay class in the summer.