

Four-Year Guide for Students

This document is intended to serve as a guide for students and parents in preparation for life after high school. Please note that all items on this list may not apply to all students. Please use this guide to complete items that apply to you and visit with your school counselor or principal should you have any questions.

7th and 8th Grade

- Review the specialty classes (music, art, business, agriculture, industrial arts, FACS, etc.) you have taken in 7th and 8th grade. Decide which you enjoyed the most in preparation for selecting career preparation courses in high school.
- Participate in an individual career interest consultative review OR take a nine-week career course. The purpose of the review/course is to discuss the results of the career interest inventory, select high school courses appropriate for career interest, and develop individual high school education plans.
- Complete [high school education plan](#).
- Complete [career interest inventory](#).
- Get involved in extra-curricular activities, both in and out of school.
- Volunteer for community groups and events.
- Begin saving for college through a [529 College Save Account](#). If you don't have an account, visit collegesave4u.com and ask an adult family member to open an account for you.

Freshman Year

- Review [high school education plan](#) with your principal/counselor/career advisor.
- Take a variety of career-oriented classes that interest you.
- Complete [career interest inventory](#).
- Begin researching careers you may be interested in.
- Get involved in extra-curricular activities, both in and out of school.
- Start keeping track of awards and activities.
- Volunteer for community groups and events.

Sophomore Year

- Review [high school education plan](#) with your principal/counselor/career advisor.
- Begin to enroll in more classes that specifically relate to your interests and abilities.
- Review course requirements for the [Academic and Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Scholarships](#) to help plan for which courses to take.
- Begin researching careers you may be interested in.
- Review the [CTE Coordinated Plans of Study](#) to see which courses you can take to qualify for the CTE Scholarship.
- Take the [PSAT Test](#) in October to get a feel for the test.
- Complete [career interest inventory](#), if you did not do so during your freshman year.
- Continue to research careers that you may be interested in.
- Get involved in extra-curricular activities both in and out of school, and keep track of awards and activities.
- Volunteer for community groups and events.
- Research colleges that you may be interested in. Focus on how its academic program relates to your career interests, as well as the location, size, and cost of the college.

Junior Year

- Review [high school education plan](#) with your principal/counselor/career advisor.
- Review course requirements for the [Academic and Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Scholarships](#) to help plan for which courses to take. Look over the [CTE Coordinated Plans of Study](#) to see which courses you can take to qualify for the CTE Scholarship.
- Take [Advanced Placement](#) and [dual credit](#) courses to earn college credit
- Review the [ACT calendar](#) and decide when to take the [ACT Test](#). Your school will administer the test to you one time at school at no cost to you.
- Meet with your school counselor to start preparing for college.
- Take [career interest assessments](#) at [ruready.nd.gov](#) .
- Take the [ASVAB Test](#) if you are considering a career in the military .
- Take the [PSAT Test in October](#) to see if you qualify for the [National Merit Scholarship](#).
- Begin researching colleges. Look for information online, or contact the admissions office to ask for a catalog.
- Start looking for scholarships.
- Identify people that would be good references to list on your college application.
- Take the [ACT Test](#) and the [SAT Test](#) if you are considering a school that requires it, then review your [ACT](#) and [SAT](#) scores to determine if you should re-take them to improve your scores.
- Re-take the [ACT](#) and/or [SAT](#) if needed.
- Begin creating a resume of your extracurricular activities, volunteer activities, jobs, and awards.

Senior Year

- Meet with your counselor or career advisor to review [ACT scores](#) and/or [WorkKeys assessment results](#).
- Take the [ACT](#) and/or [SAT](#) if you need to improve your scores.
- Take a [CREAM](#) or [CLEM](#) class if you need remediation prior to entering college.
- Review course requirements for the [Academic and Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Scholarships](#) to help plan for which courses to take. Look over the [CTE Coordinated Plans of Study](#) to see which courses you can take to qualify for the CTE Scholarship.
- Review [high school education plan](#) with your principal/counselor/career advisor.
- Take [Advanced Placement](#) and [dual credit](#) courses to earn college credit.
- If you are considering a career in the military, take the [ASVAB Test](#) if you have not already done so.
- Make campus visits if you have not already done so, and attend college fairs.
- Sign up for a [FAFSA ID](#). You will need one for you and one for your parent/guardian.
- Participate in a [Financial Aid Information Night](#) provided by the [Bank of North Dakota](#).
- Complete the [FAFSA](#) beginning October 1.
- Apply for local scholarships and work on scholarship applications.
- Apply to several colleges that you would like to attend. Request information on housing and meal plans when applying.
- Participate in [College Application Month](#) if an event is held at your school.

First Year Out of High School*

- Determine the number of years of post-secondary education training or job experience you will need.
- Identify similar career opportunities with different or transferrable coursework requirements.
- Begin to implement your plan after high school
 - College: attend summer orientation and work closely with your academic advisor.
 - Career: work closely with your employer to develop skills of your trade
 - Military : work closely with your recruiter and educate yourself on the procedure of the program you have chosen
- Identify career planning services that are available to you.
- Plan for what you need to furnish your dorm room or apartment. If you have a roommate, communicate with him/her to decide what each of you will provide.
- Look for programs, groups, or other social opportunities to get involved in.

*Specific post-secondary plans will vary greatly from one individual to the next.