

## 9th Grade

Do your best in all of your classes!

- When it comes to college planning, the most important focus of the 9th grade year should be doing as well as you can academically.
- Grades from the 9th grade year will be on your transcript and they are also included in your cumulative GPA.

Build relationships.

- Develop strong relationships with teachers and counselors by participating in class, modeling positive behavior, and asking questions when you need help.
- Learn to advocate for yourself.
- 9th grade is the perfect time to build your independence and speak up for yourself. If you are struggling in a class, ask the teacher for help. If you need help with a problem, go to the counseling office and make an appointment with your counselor. The more you can learn to advocate for yourself now, the easier navigating the college admissions process will be.

Get involved.

- Pursue your interests by getting involved in clubs and activities.
- Be sure to join activities that interest you. Don't join a club or activity just because you think it will impress a college. It's important to have passion and interest in what you're doing. Being passionate about your activities increases the likelihood that you will stick with it throughout high school and become deeply involved through leadership opportunities (which is what schools are looking for!).
- There are many ways to be involved including:
  - Volunteer work
  - School sponsored clubs
  - Athletics
  - Community organizations
  - Private dance and music lessons
  - Part-time job

## 10th Grade

Continue a strong academic record.

- Continue to do as well as you can in your classes.

- Take the most appropriate and challenging courses that you can handle. This doesn't mean loading up on every honors level course you can take. Rather, if you feel you're ready to take on honors courses, then choose one or two that you feel fit your academic strengths.

#### Take the PSAT

- The PSAT is given in October during the school day to all sophomores and juniors. This will give you a feel for what the SAT will be like, as well as where your strengths and weaknesses lie in terms of the SAT.
- Use your PSAT scores to figure out what subject areas you need to improve on. Explore your options for the future.  
Attend power lunches to gain a better understanding of specific careers.  
Take your career interview experience seriously! Interview someone in the field that you are considering pursuing, and don't be afraid to get your questions answered!

#### Be involved.

- Find ways to make an impact in your community and extracurricular activities. Don't just attend meetings. Find ways to be actively involved and consider taking on a leadership role.
- Explore enrichment opportunities.
- There are many enrichment programs and opportunities to get involved in, either during the school year or during the summer. Several of these programs are listed in Naviance in the Colleges section.

#### Begin your research.

- Start researching universities and colleges you might be interested in attending. Find out what programs they offer, admission requirements, and cost.

### **11th Grade**

#### Do your best in all of your classes!

- Your academic performance during the junior year is critical. Be sure to put forth your best effort in all of your classes to maintain a strong cumulative GPA.

#### Be involved.

- Continue your involvement in extracurricular activities.

- No single activity looks better on a college application than the other. Dedication to an activity, and leadership within that activity, can have a bigger impact than the activity itself.

Explore and narrow your options for the future.

- Attend power lunches to solidify career choices, or open your mind to new possibilities.
- Take your career shadow experience seriously. Find someone to shadow in a field that you are considering. Don't be afraid to ask questions!
- Take the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) to explore which occupations may be a good fit for you.

Do your research!

- Take tours of the colleges/universities/trade schools to which you are considering applying.
- Sign up in Naviance to meet with admissions representatives that come to South Fayette.
- Participate in regional college fairs.
- Research admission requirements for schools you're interested in. Are they looking for a specific GPA, SAT score, SAT subject test, etc.?

Take the SAT/ACT.

- If you are planning on applying to a college/university that requires an SAT/ACT score, take the exam this year.
- Many students take these exams for the first time in the spring of their junior year. However, students who have successfully passed Algebra 2 may be ready to take the exam sooner.
- Before registering for an official test, take practice exams for both the ACT/SAT online on their respective websites. Use this score and experience to determine which exam you want to take officially.
- Don't forget about SAT Subject tests! Find out if the schools you're considering require or recommend a subject test for admission.
- Both the SAT/ACT offer free online practice on their respective websites. Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- If you are a student athlete planning to play a Division I or Division II level sport in college, you MUST register with the NCAA eligibility center. Instructional packets can be found in the Counseling Office.

- You should also meet with Mrs. Sharro and your school counselor to make sure you are meeting NCAA requirements.

Meet with Mrs. Sharro.

- Set up a meeting with Mrs. Sharro to discuss your post-secondary plans, options, and any questions you have.