GAcollege411
Expand Your Opportunities

High School Planning Timeline

7TH GRADE

All 7th grade planning steps are shown.
High School Planning steps are highlighted.

Work at developing good study habits.	Successful Study Techniques
Maintain good grades.	
Start saving for postsecondary education.	
Talk to people who have attended college to learn about their experiences.	
Start thinking about which jobs interest you. What kinds of work would suit your interests, abilities, aptitudes, values and learning styles?	Career FinderCareer Cluster SurveyInterest Profiler
Get involved in extracurricular activities like clubs, student organizations, sports and volunteer work.	
If you're given opportunities to pursue academic subjects and extracurricular activities that are new to you, take them! It will help you to expand your outlook.	
Look into additional academic options that may be available in your area, such as magnet programs and school enrichment programs.	
Check out summer programs available in your community.	
Practice your time management skills. Learning to make the most efficient use of your time can help prevent you from getting overwhelmed.	Time Management 101
Improve your reading, writing and math skills. These basic skills will serve you well in both college and career.	How to Improve Your Reading ComprehensionHow to Write Effectively

8TH GRADE

All 8th grade planning steps are shown.
High School Planning steps are highlighted.

Counselors, teachers, parents and friends are all good sources of information. Ask them any questions you have about college, in addition to doing research on your own.	
Study hard! Make sure you use good study habits and keep your grades up.	Successful Study Techniques
Start saving for college. You might want to consider signing up for a college savings account.	College Savings Calculator
Start thinking about the courses you'll take in 9th grade and select a Peach State Pathway program of study.	Your Plan of Study
Explore career interests, then link to post-high school options including technical college, military, apprenticeship, and two-year and four-year colleges.	
Be aware of transitional programs planned at the local high school and middle school to **help you navigate from middle school to high school**. **This is a critical step** and you will need information to make good decisions.	
Find out about academic enrichment programs, including summer and weekend programs, available through your school or local colleges.	
Don't forget about extracurricular activities like sports, performing arts, volunteer work or other activities that interest you.	
Investigate Advanced Placement (AP) and other honors-level courses you can take in high school to **help you prepare for college or earn college credit**. Explore post-secondary credit opportunities including college, technical schools, special purpose schools, apprenticeships, and the military related to your selected career interest.	
Check your CRCT scores to evaluate your skills in English, math, reading and science reasoning. It's good practice.	Getting Ready for College

9TH GRADE

All 9th grade planning steps are shown.
High School Planning steps are highlighted.

Now that you're in 9th grade, it's time to evaluate your career plans. By starting early, you'll be better prepared.	Revisit the Interest Profiler
Don't neglect your study habits! Keep up the good work, and continue to improve your study skills.	Successful Study Techniques
Continue to explore post-secondary credit opportunities including college, technical schools, special purpose schools, apprenticeships, and the military related to your selected career interest.	
If you don't have one, sign up for a college savings account. If you have an existing account, be sure to add to your savings regularly.	College Savings Calculator
Talk to your guidance counselors, advisor, teachers, family members or trusted adults about your plans for college. If you're not sure if college is the best option for you, talk to your counselor.	
Use Your Plan of Study to keep track of your courses and grades. Invite your counselor or advisor to view your POS.	Revisit Your Plan of Study
Find out about college entrance requirements for the schools you're interested in. Explore all your options.	College Matching Assistant
Create a file of the following documents and notes: report cards, lists of awards and honors, school and community activities, and volunteer work.	
Start thinking about the colleges you want to attend. (Hint: Use our Explore Schools section to help look for schools.)	Explore Schools
Find out about AP and other honors-level courses you can take in high school to **help you prepare for college or earn college credit**. Explore post-secondary credit opportunities including college, technical schools, special purpose schools, apprenticeships, and the military related to your selected career interest.	
Continue to get involved in campus and community activities.	
Take the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT), if offered in your school, to evaluate your skills in English, math, reading and science reasoning. It's good practice and your scores won't count towards your college application.	Getting Ready for College
How are you spending your summer? Volunteering and educational programs can help give you a better idea about what kind of training or career would be right for you.	Explore Schools
Consider a youth apprenticeship, internship or other work-based learning programs.	
Change can be difficult — you're on your own! Try taking some small steps towards independence this year, perhaps with more responsibility around your house.	

10TH GRADE

All 10th grade planning steps are shown.
High School Planning steps are highlighted.

Keep those grades up! You might have a lot going on this year, but it's important to stay focused on your schoolwork. Calculate your GPA and see if you need to brush up on any subjects.	Successful Study Techniques
Sign up for a college savings account or continue to add money to an existing account. Talk to your parents about financial aid options. It's a good idea to start talking about how you're going to pay for college.	College Savings CalculatorFind Scholarships
Continue your conversations with your guidance counselors, teachers, family members or trusted adults about your plans to meet your education and career plans.	
Find out about AP and other honors-level courses for junior year. These can **help you prepare for college or earn college credit**. Explore post-secondary credit opportunities including college, technical schools, special purpose schools, apprenticeships, and the military related to your selected career interest.	
Update your college planning file — or start one, if you haven't already.	
Continue extracurricular activities. Remember, many admissions officers look for well-rounded students who participate in the world around them.	Your Portfolio - High School Planning
If you have room in your schedule, consider a part-time job or volunteer position.	
Look into participating in academic enrichment programs, summer workshops and camps with specialty focuses such as music, arts and sciences.	
Check into work-based learning experiences such as career-related field trips, job shadowing, entrepreneurial ventures, internships, cooperative education and youth apprenticeships.	
Take the PSAT in October. The scores will not count for National Merit Scholar consideration this year, but it is good practice for taking the PSAT in your junior year (when the scores will count).	Getting Ready for College Glossary
It's not too early to start studying for standardized tests like the ACT and SAT. A great place to start is with the Test Prep section.	Test Prep
Investigate your options for participating in post-secondary credit course enrollment next year. This allows juniors and seniors to enroll in college courses if they meet certain requirements. Examples include the Accel program, dual enrollment and articulated credit.	Accel Program
Make a list of reasons why you like different post-secondary institutions - programs, location, cost and so on. Visit college campuses and "tour" colleges in the Explore Schools section.	Explore SchoolsCollege Matching Assistant
Start thinking about what factors are important to you in choosing a college: size, location, availability of extracurricular activities, for example.	College Matching Assistant
Meet with your school counselor and talk with your parents and teachers to discuss future post-secondary plans: explore all your opportunities.	
Keep reading! Expanding your vocabulary and learning new things will help with many things over the next few years.	

11TH GRADE

All 11th grade planning steps are shown.
High School Planning steps are highlighted.

Fall Semester

☐ **Maintaining your grades during your junior year is important!** Colleges put a lot of weight on your marks for this year.	Successful Study Techniques
☐ **Make sure you're challenging yourself academically.** Colleges will consider how difficult your courses are.	
☐ **Now is the time to really focus your post-secondary research.**	Career FinderCollege Matching Assistant
☐ **As you research education and career options, share your discoveries with your family.** You'll be working together a lot over the next couple of years as you leave high school and enter college or pursue another path.	
☐ **If your schedule permits, stay involved in school and community activities.**	
☐ **Talk to your guidance counselor or advisor about the following:**	
☐ Availability of and enrollment in AP classes	
☐ The possibility of post-secondary credit: taking college-level courses before you graduate from high school.	
☐ Schedules for the PSAT, SAT I and SAT Subject Test, ACT and AP exams	
☐ Why you should take these exams and how they could benefit you	Getting Ready for College
☐ Which of these exams would be the best fit for you — and then sign up for those tests. Remember, you can always change your mind	Getting Ready for College
☐ How to start getting ready for the exams!	Test PrepGetting Ready for College What it Takes to Ace the SATs
☐ Your academic record. Review it with your counselor and talk about ways to improve	Your Plan of Study
☐ The admissions requirements for the colleges you're interested in. Do your research, and be sure to find out about any additional requirements on top of GPA and test scores	College Matching Assistant

August:

☐ **Obtain schedules and forms for the SAT I, SAT Subject Test, ACT and AP exams.**	
☐ **Review transcript for graduation requirements according to your Peach State Pathways Program of Study.**	
☐ **Continue to take classes to enhance your career choice.**	
☐ **Update your personal information** in your profile.	
☐ **Continue to research career options** in your selected pathway.	

September:	
☐ **Register for the PSAT exam offered in October.** Remember that when you take the PSAT in your junior year, the scores will count towards the National Achievement Program (and it is good practice for the SAT I).	
☐ Identify sources of post-secondary information.	
☐ **Utilize the Financial Aid Planning** tab for information including a follow-up on previously discovered scholarship opportunities.	
☐ **Obtain and read the PSAT/NMSQT Student Bulletin.**	
☐ Continue to revisit career options.	
☐ **Start a paper file for college catalogs and other admissions information.**	
☐ **Watch for college nights at any schools in your area you may want to attend.**	
October:	
☐ **Take the PSAT. Many Merit Scholarships and the Governor's Honors Program require a Junior year score;** see the PSAT bulletin for more information.	Test Prep
☐ Continue to research post-secondary training and education.	
☐ **Attend College PROBE Fair** (check with your counselor/advisor for dates).	
☐ **Narrow your list of colleges to include a few colleges with requirements at your current GPA, a few with requirements above your current GPA, and at least one with requirements below your GPA.**	College Matching Assistant
☐ **Begin scheduling interviews with admissions representatives.**	
☐ **If possible, schedule tours of the school grounds on the same days.** You and your parent(s) may want to visit the colleges and universities during spring break and summer vacation so you don't have to miss school.	Explore Schools
November:	
☐ **Review requirements for post-secondary credit opportunities like dual enrollment for your Senior year and Youth Apprenticeship opportunities.**	
☐ **Attend meetings with post-secondary representatives.**	
December:	
☐ **You will receive your scores from the October PSAT if you took it that month. Review your scores with your counselor/advisor and parents.** Depending on the results, you may want to consider signing up for free online SAT prep.	Test Prep
☐ **Obtain testing schedule for ASSET, SAT I, ACT and SAT Subject Test.**	
☐ **Research military option**s, if appropriate.	
Spring Semester	
☐ **If you're choosing your senior year classes, look for classes that will give you a strong transcript.**	Your Plan of Study

You'll also want to look for classes that will fit your college study plans.	
☐ **Consider looking for a summer job or internship.** Not only can you earn money for college, you can also learn valuable skills.	
January:	
☐ **Continue with your campus tours online or in person.** You want to be narrowing down your list of potential colleges.	Explore Schools
☐ **Take an interest assessment** in the Career Planning section and compare to previous assessments; record your findings.	
☐ **Take ASVAB** (provides career information and military assessment).	
☐ **Meet with post-secondary recruiters**, if appropriate.	
☐ **Meet with military recruiters**, if appropriate.	
February:	
☐ **Register for the March SAT or the April ACT, or both.** Research the requirements of the colleges you're interested in to learn about admission deadlines and which tests to take.	Getting Ready for College
☐ **Update your personal information** in your profile.	
☐ **Begin assembling your list of post-secondary opportunities that reflect your career selection needs.**	
☐ **Begin to accumulate information about post-secondary institutions.**	
March:	
☐ **Take the March SAT I exam if you registered to take it this month.**	What it Takes to Ace the SATsTest Prep
☐ **Register for ACT, SAT I, SAT Subject Test** (if you plan to attend a two-year or four-year college or university).	
☐ **Register for the ASSET** (if you plan to attend a technical college in Georgia).	
☐ **Use Financial Aid Planning tab to identify possible financial aid sources.**	
☐ **Consider post-secondary school visits during spring break.**	
☐ **Begin to explore summer programs and employment.**	
☐ **If you are interested in taking an AP exam, you should sign up now.** If your school does not offer the AP exams, check with your guidance counselor to find schools in the area that do administer the exams, as well as the dates and times they're offered.	
April:	
☐ **Take the April ACT test if you registered for this month.**	Test Prep
May:	

☐ **Take the AP, ASSET, SAT I and SAT Subject Test exams.**	What it Takes to Ace the SATsTest Prep
☐ **Mail NCAA eligibility, if appropriate.**	
☐ **Talk to teachers about writing letters of recommendation for you.** Think about what you would like to include in these and politely ask your teachers if they can help.	
June:	
☐ **Add any new report cards, test scores, honors or awards from the year to your file.**	
☐ **Continue with your college visits. Call ahead for appointments with the financial aid, admissions and academic advisors at the colleges in which you are most interested.**	Explore Schools
☐ **If you go on interviews or visits, don't forget to send thank-you notes.**	
☐ **Take the SAT I, SAT Subject Test and the ACT tests if you're registered**	What it Takes to Ace the SATsTest Prep
☐ **Take post-secondary admissions test** if you did not take it in May.	
Summer Between Junior and Senior Years	
☐ **Continue to work on your application essays and review the application procedures for the colleges you plan to apply to.**	College Application Essay Tips
☐ **Decide if you are going to apply under any early decision or early action programs.** This requires you to submit your applications early, typically between October and December of your senior year.	
☐ **Read your college mail and send reply cards to your schools of interest.**	

12TH GRADE

All 12th grade planning steps are shown.
High School Planning steps are highlighted.

Fall Semester	
Keep studying! **You want to avoid "senioritis" - a drop in motivation and, consequently, grades, that is sometimes experienced by seniors.**	
Talk to your counselor about possibilities for concurrent enrollment (taking college-credit courses while you're still in high school).	
Save your money! It's a good idea to start planning for those unexpected costs of college.	College Savings Calculator
Some colleges require the CSS/PROFILE, a supplemental financial aid form, in addition to the FAFSA. Find out if your schools will need this.	
August:	
Review GRADUATION status according to your Peach State Pathway program of study.	
Check schedule for appropriate classes. Continue to take appropriate classes to enhance your next step after graduation.	
Gather or request post-secondary or specialty school information.	
Make military contacts (check your selective service status for financial aid purposes).	
September:	
Check your transcripts to make sure you have all the credits you need to get into the schools that interest you. Find out from the colleges whether or not they need official copies of your transcripts (these are sent directly from your school).	
Continue to **save money**.	
Become familiar with **job search skills and application process**.	
Register for the October/November SAT I, SAT Subject Test and ACT tests if you plan to take them. **Register to take ASSET if you plan to attend TCSG.**	
Take another look at your list of colleges, and make sure they still satisfy your requirements. It's not uncommon for students' goals to change.	
Make sure you meet the requirements (including any transcript requirements) for all the colleges to which you want to apply. Double-check the deadlines.	
Become familiar with the application process for your schools of choice.	
Give any recommendation forms to the appropriate teachers or counselors with stamped, college-addressed envelopes, making certain that your portions of the forms are filled out completely and accurately.	
Most early decision and early action applications are due between October 1 and	

November 1. Keep this in mind if you intend to take advantage of these options, and remember to request that your high school send your official transcripts to the college on time.	
October:	
Make a final list of schools that interest you and keep a file of deadlines and required admission items for each school. Many students like to have a "dream school" and a "safety school" as well as two or three others.	Your Portfolio - Postsecondary Plans
Take the SAT or ACT tests. Have the official scores sent by the testing agency to the colleges or universities that have made your final list of schools. Register for December or January SAT I or SAT Subject Tests, if necessary.	
Get started on any essays to be included with your applications. Give your essays to others (teachers, parents, friends) for feedback.	College Application Essay Tips
Attend PROBE and NSSFNS College Fairs if available.	
Pinpoint your career options.	
Complete the Georgia Work Ready assessment and earn your Work Ready Certification.	Georgia Work Ready
Begin a JOB search, if appropriate.	
Become familiar with the job interviewing process.	
Maintain contact with military recruiter, if appropriate.	
November:	
Submit your college admission applications. Be sure to check them over thoroughly! Having someone else review your application with you can help you catch any errors.	
Continue with post-secondary planning. Review and follow significant deadlines.	
Distribute teacher/counselor recommendation forms, if required.	
Be sure to consult with your school counselor about scholarship opportunities. Not all scholarships are for top students and athletes. There may be a perfect scholarship for you — it's worth doing a little research.	Scholarship Finder
Work on your scholarship applications, and mail according to deadlines.	
Check with the financial aid office of schools you are applying to for specific information on scholarships and costs for tuition, fees, room and board, and any additional financial aid info they require.	
December:	
Watch your mailbox if you submitted an early decision application. Early decision replies usually arrive between December 1 and 31. If you do get an acceptance, you should withdraw any other applications.	
If you haven't already done so, make sure your official test scores are being sent to the colleges to which you are applying.	

Schedule any remaining required interviews.	
Take SAT Subject Test, if required for admissions to post-secondary school.	
Submit all applications with January 1 deadline.	
Become familiar with resume writing.	
Start thinking about how you're going to spend your summer. Summer is a great time to earn extra money and gain work experience. Ask your counselor about internships, and start researching the summer job market in your area.	
Re-check your graduation status.	
Spring Semester	
January:	
Complete and submit your college financial aid application and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) between January 1 and February 15. Go to the FAFSA on the Web form at: www.fafsa.ed.gov.	
Check for other financial aid options. In order to be considered for financial aid, you will need to submit a FAFSA, even if you have not yet been notified of your acceptance to the college(s) to which you applied.	
Observe deadlines for admissions, financial aid, testing and housing deposits.	
If you don't already have a good computer, investigate purchasing one for college. You or your parents can subsidize the cost of a computer for college in your student loans.	
Request that your high school send your official transcripts to the colleges to which you are applying.	
Make sure your parents have completed their income tax forms in anticipation of the financial aid applications. If you have to file taxes this year, do it as soon as possible. You'll need to do this for any financial aid forms.	
Contact the admissions office of the colleges to which you have applied to make sure that your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.	
Keep an eye out for financial aid workshops and seminars, for both you and your parents. There is a lot of help out there when you're looking for info on financial aid.	Financial Aid Wizard
Begin to organize your job search, if appropriate.	
February:	
If you completed the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks. Make the necessary corrections and return it to the FAFSA processor.	
Complete your scholarship applications.	
Contact the financial aid office of the colleges to which you have applied to make sure your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.	

Observe deposit deadlines for post-secondary schools.	
Maintain good grades.	
Check your selective service status for financial aid purposes.	
March - April:	
You will probably hear from the colleges as to whether or not you are accepted by April 15.	
Continue to **seek scholarships**.	
Compare your acceptance letters, financial aid and scholarship offers. These are all important things to consider when choosing a college.	How to Select a College or University
When you choose a college that has accepted you, you will be required to pay a non-refundable deposit for freshman tuition. This should ensure your place in the entering freshman class.	
Prepare **cover letter and resume** for selected occupations, if appropriate.	
Begin the job application process, if appropriate.	
Finalize your post-secondary enrollment.	
Keep counselor/advisor informed about job status (employment, military and apprenticeship).	
May:	
Take AP exams for any AP subjects you studied in high school.	
Decision time! You should decide on a college by May 1. Notify that school by mailing your commitment deposit check. Many schools require that your notification letter be postmarked by this date.	How to Select a College or University
If you were placed on a waiting list for a particular college and have decided to wait for an opening, contact that college and let them know you are still very interested.	
June:	
Have your school send your final transcripts to the college you will be attending.	
Contact your college to determine when fees for tuition, room and board are due, and how much they will cost.	
Summer After Senior Year	
Participate in any summer orientation programs for incoming freshmen.	Explore Schools
Now that you know you will be attending college in the fall, it is a good idea to make sure you have student health insurance in case of any emergencies.	