STARTING ON THE RIGHT FOOT

FALL
Starting high school is a big change, but there’s no need to stress. Your main job is to get used to high school and start to form a plan with your counselor for your next four years. Work hard to build good habits and don’t lose track of your goals with all the social distractions that come with high school. Check out this website for more planning resources: bigfuture.collegeboard.org.

- Begin researching what colleges you might be interested in and develop a plan to meet your a-g requirements for college admission with your counselor. Figure out which of these requirements you can fulfill your freshman year.
- If you want to focus on a specific career, talk to your counselor about career training opportunities like academies and pathways. If you’re not sure what you want to do, ask the counselor for help exploring career options.
- It’s not too early to start attending college and career fairs at your school.
- Explore sports, clubs, and activities that interest you.

WINTER
- Review coursework from your first semester and ask teachers what you can do to improve in the second semester. This is good to do every year!
- Santa Rosa Junior College classes are FREE to high school students.
- Join clubs, play sports, or volunteer and try to stick with your commitments! Colleges and employers look for students to have a good work ethic AND be well-rounded.
- Explore your options: Attend a college/career fair at your school, visit colleges, or shadow someone on a job that interests you.

SPRING
- Research majors and visit colleges for inspiration.
- Consider signing up for the SAT/ACT for practice.
- Think about signing up for a summer program at a local college.

JUNIOR
AN IMPORTANT ACADEMIC YEAR

FALL
- Colleges DO look at sophomore year; so make the most of it! Be sure you are taking at least 4-5 solid academic classes if you’re planning to attend college, and make sure your course selections are keeping you on track toward your goals.
- Sign up for the Preliminary SAT (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship and Pre-ACT exams, which check your college readiness.

WINTER
- Review PSAT scores and work on skills that need practicing before taking the SAT or ACT.
- Review coursework from your first semester and ask teachers what you can do to improve in the second semester. Keep this up each year!

SPRING
- Attend the Spring College Fair at Sonoma State University.
- Be prepared for the CAAAPP tests for English and Math. CSUs and community colleges use results to determine Early Assessment Program (EAP) status.
- Plan your senior year! Work with a counselor to make sure your courses match entrance requirements of your college choices.

SUMMER
- Visit campuses. Try to choose your top six. Bookmark their online applications.
- Build your resume and experience through a summer bridge program, volunteering, or part-time job.
- Continue looking for and applying for scholarships.
- Start thinking about your college essays/ personal statements.
senior applications & preparation

fall

- Work with counselors to create a college application game plan.
  - Visit your college/career center.
  - Meet with college reps.
  - Narrow down your college choice list.
  - Write down important application deadlines.
  - Start or continue personal statements/college essays.
  - Get necessary recommendations.
  - Make sure you have completed your a-g requirements, if needed.
- Review your CAASPP test scores with a counselor to see if you will need to take extra courses this year in order to be prepared for college.
- Registration for the SAT/ACT is in September/October. November is the last opportunity. Consider doing optional writing section, which is required by UC schools.
- Attend any financial aid events your school offers.
- Set a grade-point average (GPA) goal.
- Begin early decision applications no later than October. Applications are due in November.
- FAFSA application opens October 1.
- If you're considering the military, sign up for the ASVAB test.
- If you think college athletics might be in your future, talk to your counselor about becoming NCAA certified.

fall (continued)

- Look for private scholarships and apply early.
- If you're planning to attend SRJC:
  - Begin SRJC application process in October, especially for JumpStart program.
  - Take the SRJC placement tests to see how you're doing in English and math.
  - Apply for the Doyle Scholarship now to make the first December Doyle Scholarship deadline.
  - Sign up for a spring introduction to college class if your high school offers it. This will give you an idea of the courses you will be taking at SRJC in the fall.
  - Meet with your high school counselor/ SRJC counselor for admissions information and to learn about earning an SRJC certificate if you are interested in a trade/specialized skill career.

winter

- Complete online applications for colleges, trade schools, and apprenticeships. Keep a copy of all information submitted.
- See a counselor to review graduation requirements.
- Set up a WebGrants account: webgrants4students.org.
- Attend a College for Workshops: calgrants.org.
- File for FAFSA, California Dream Act, and Cal Grants by March 2.
- Have first semester grades sent to any colleges that ask for them.
- If qualified, register for AP exams: collegeboard.org.
- Apply for local and national scholarships: fastweb.com.
- If you haven't already, sign up to meet with a community college counselor for admissions information.
- Sign up for English and math placement tests for CSU and/or SRJC.

spring

- Consider college acceptances and weigh costs in making your decision.
- Send deposit by deadline.
- If you're planning to attend SRJC:
  - Consider taking SRJC placement test to see if your English/math scores improved.
  - The Doyle Scholarship is open for applications if you missed the fall deadline.

summer

- Request that final transcripts be sent to your college. NCAA athletes must also send transcripts to NCAA: ncaacollegeguides.org.

prepare an electronic portfolio of all high school and community activities and awards.

your guide to college and career

As you make your way through high school, you will face lots of deadlines, responsibilities, and decisions. Don’t worry! By planning ahead, you can make the transition from high school to college and careers a lot smoother. Picking up this guide and using it to form a plan is a great first step.

Graduate Profile

Laura Calleja
GPA 2.3
College/Career Track: Spent 3.5 years at Santa Rosa Junior College majoring in American Sign Language with a minor in criminal justice but did not graduate. Now enlisted in the Air Force. Career field is security forces.

“In high school, I really didn’t think that school ‘was my thing.’ It wasn’t until I joined the military that I gained the confidence in myself. You are always going to hit a few road blocks throughout life. At every age and every stage. Don’t let it detour you away from your goals and what is important to you.”

“Never doubt what you’re capable of.” — Amber Oughin-Doll, Sonoma County grad getting master’s in anthropology from Humboldt State

This college advisement guide was developed by students at Windsor High School’s Nueva School for the Performing Arts and the Sonoma County Office of Education to support you and your future.