

Laurel Highlands School District

High School Post-Secondary Planning Checklist

9TH GRADE – FRESHMAN YEAR CHECKLIST

- Make the most of 9th grade as your credits and GPA begin counting towards graduation
- Use the district's grading portal to track your academic progress
- Take every course seriously in order to be prepared for your future
- Get to know your guidance counselor and teachers; don't be afraid to ask for help
- Take your career portfolio seriously in the planning process so it guides your thinking
- Start thinking about possible careers or life after high school
- Participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, etc. as it will benefit your future (employers and postsecondary institutions want well rounded students)
- Get involved in the community as employers and postsecondary institutions look for students who get involved
- Remember your actions in and out of school can affect your future including NHS, colleges, careers, etc.

10TH GRADE – SOPHOMORE YEAR CHECKLIST

- Continue to take course work, studying, and grades seriously in order to be effectively prepared for your future
- Are the courses challenging that you are signing up for?
- Update your career portfolio as your interests and planning changes
- Consider careers based on interest and the need for employees/open positions
- When considering careers evaluate the amount of money needed for training compared to amount of salary you can expect and the time line to be debt free
- LHSD is paying for every sophomore to take the PSAT in October. The PSAT will prepare you for taking the SAT and standardized tests. The PSAT provides students with areas of strengths and weaknesses
- Continue participating in extracurricular activities, clubs, etc.
- Take advantage of career field trips offered by the school
- Consider taking dual enrollment or college in high school courses next year (Taking these courses in high school can significantly reduce your total postsecondary costs.)
- Talk to your guidance counselors if you have any questions.
- Continue using district's grading portal to track your academic progress

11TH GRADE – JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

- Continue 9th and 10th grade checklist items
- Review the steps for applying for any postsecondary institution
- Obtain schedules and forms for SAT, ACT, and AP Exams (some postsecondary institutions require the SAT, some ACT, and some other entrance exams)
- Sign up for SAT prep courses to better prepare you for the exams. The prep course is usually offered in math and Reading weeks before each scheduled exam.

- Review document for taking AP Exams
- Continue to consider taking dual enrollment or college in high school courses
- Begin touring postsecondary schools or training centers
- Update your career portfolio
- Begin to talk to teachers about writing you letters of recommendations (Many students ask teachers to write letters of recommendations, so the earlier you can approach a staff member the better prepared they can be to handle those requests.)
- 11th grade is typically your last chance to build up your GPA in order to be reflected on your transcript as well as for grant opportunities
- If you are considering an athletic scholarship, check the courses you have taken to match your school's list of NCAA courses

SUMMER BETWEEN YOUR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS

- Give serious consideration to specific majors and discuss which postsecondary institutions will provide you the best and most affordable training
- Complete any postsecondary institutions reply cards showing interest for additional information to be mailed to you
- Begin to search for scholarships (Apply for all scholarships because you never know. Attaining one \$500 scholarship, prevents you from borrowing another \$500 and paying interest for 30 years) Scholarships are not only based on GPA.
- Begin to write essays for both scholarships and postsecondary applications. Many of the same essays can be saved and tweaked to fit various needs.
- Prepare your academic resume (list items that you have done to make you stand out)
- Begin thinking about who to ask for letters of recommendations
- Continue taking dual enrollment courses

12TH GRADE – SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

- Request official transcripts (LH online: Parchment.com) to send to postsecondary institutions
- Retake SAT if you feel you need a better score
- Double-check the requirements and deadlines for postsecondary schools and apply
- Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form for financial aid to be submitted in January
- Ensure that all fees, fines, etc are paid in full to the school district
- Don't let your senior high school year be a blow off as it is the best transition year into your future so continue preparation
- Plan/prepare for upcoming exams like: AP Exams, college-level examination (CLEP), National Occupational Competency Testing Institute exam (NOCTI), Career Interviews/Entry Exams, Military Entrance, etc.