Preparing for College and Post-Secondary Success
PARENT & FAMILIES CHECKLIST
Help your student achieve their academic goals!

MAKE a post-high school plan
- Help your student create a list of three careers they are interested in.
- Attend The School District of Palm Beach County Annual College & Career Fair.
- Review post-secondary options and help your student identify selection criteria as well as the costs of each option.
- Reduce the list of possible post-secondary options to the five your student is most interested in and make note of application deadlines.
- Review post-secondary options such as registered apprenticeship opportunities offered through the Florida Department of Education and Florida Department of Labor.

EMPHASIZE the importance of staying on track
- Have your student review their transcript with a school counselor to determine any final classes necessary for graduation and acceptance to preferred colleges or careers.

HELP your student clean up their online act
- Create a professional email address.
- Examine and adjust privacy settings on social media accounts.

EXPLORE ways to pay for a post-secondary education
- Explore financial aid and scholarships, and make a list of application deadlines.
- Create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID so you’ll be ready to apply to FAFSA when it opens Oct. 1st.
- Find out what financial paperwork you will need and get it ready to apply for federal financial aid.

Adapted from “Oregon Goes To College”

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Palm Beach County

United Way of Palm Beach County
SIGN UP for the ACT or SAT

- Have your student sign up for the ACT or SAT if they have not taken it or want to retake it.
- Prepare your student with ACT or SAT free test prep available online through Khan Academy.

LOOK for situations that may be specific to your student

- Interested in the arts, military or playing sports in college? Be aware of deadlines and special requirements for these programs.
- Undocumented? Check eligibility for in-state tuition at public state colleges and universities as well as state financial aid.
- Male? Young men must register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. If they do not register, they will be ineligible for federal financial aid for college.
- Foster child, homeless, a teen parent and/or have a disability? Talk to a mentor, trusted adult or college representative to explore specific resources and support services for your student.

HELP your student prepare for college applications and be career ready

- Have your student document their accomplishments and create a resume.
- Encourage your student to write college and scholarship essays.
- Help your student narrow down post-secondary choices and attend college and career fairs.
- Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application. Attend a workshop for help if needed.
- Help your student determine who to ask for letters of recommendation, allowing plenty of time for their chosen references to write the letters.
- Have your student register and take or retake the SAT or ACT to improve their college eligibility scores if needed.

HELP your student BE READY

- Finalize which post-secondary institutions your student will apply for, and be sure to add them to the FAFSA application. Three to five is a good number.
- Be sure to visit the post-secondary institutions your student is applying for, if you haven’t already.
- Check deadlines and gather all the information needed to apply for colleges, scholarships and FAFSA. Keep track of applications for follow up.
- Make sure that your student’s high school transcript, SAT or ACT test scores, letters of recommendation and other supplemental materials are sent to colleges.