

# College Readiness Calendar

## NINTH & TENTH GRADES

*It's never too early to start preparing for college. Early planning and preparation will help you and your student feel more informed and in control of the bright future ahead!*

### NINTH GRADE

#### FALL

September, October, November

- Meet the high school counselor to learn which classes meet A–G college entrance requirements and ensure enrollment in these courses.
- Visit the school—meet your student's teachers and counselor, ask how to best communicate with them (in person, on the phone or email), and let them know you expect your student to be ready for college. Know when report cards come out and ask for updates on grades.
- Create a four-year class schedule that meets both the high school graduation and A–G college entrance requirements. See the EAOP Academic Planner available to all students online at [www.eaop.org/resources](http://www.eaop.org/resources).
- Encourage your student to explore extra-curricular activities—at school or in your community.
- Check the school website for event information, testing dates, attendance reports, and access to your student's grades.
- Some high schools have educational outreach or college readiness programs such as Upward Bound or EAOP. Go to [www.appris.org](http://www.appris.org) to see which programs serve your student's school.

#### WINTER

December, January, February

- Talk to your student about academic strengths and weaknesses. Consider tutoring at the school or in your community to strengthen weaknesses.
- Check in with teachers and counselor; find out how your child is doing academically and socially.
- Encourage your student to take Honors courses in strong subjects the following year.
- Help your student start a college information folder for materials on college-related topics.

#### SPRING

March, April, May

- Explore summer academic enrichment opportunities. Many application deadlines are in March or earlier.
- Look for summer jobs or internships early. Consider those that develop leadership skills or explore an academic interest.

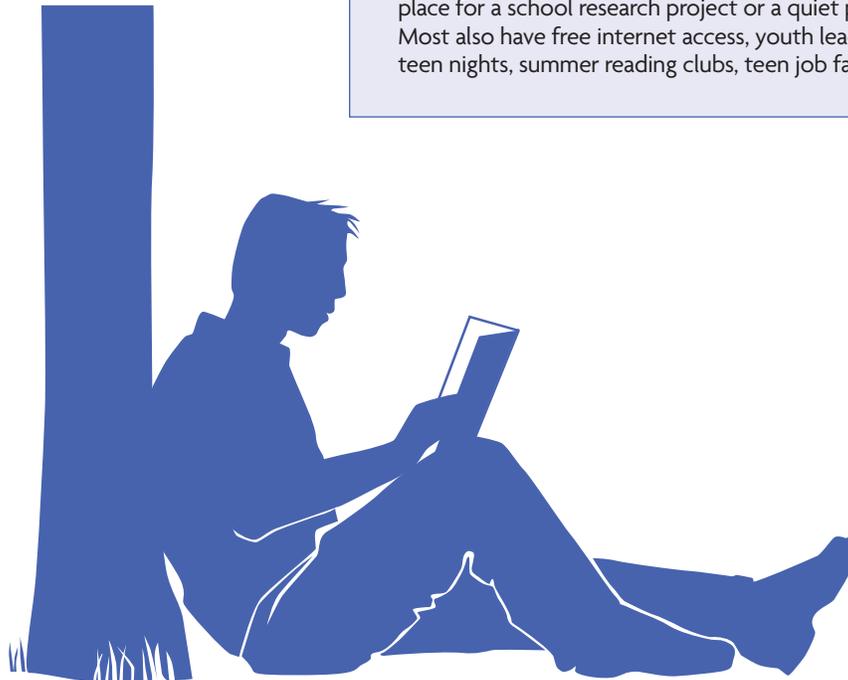
#### SUMMER

June, July, August

- Finalize summer plans.
- Create a summer reading list. Teachers, counselors and the local library will have recommendations.

#### SUPPORT GOOD STUDY HABITS

- Set a regular time for studying each day.
- Designate a quiet, well-lit area as your student's homework zone.
- Limit distractions—no phone calls, radio, video games, internet or television during study time.
- Encourage your student to use the local public library. It's a great place for a school research project or a quiet place to study. Most also have free internet access, youth leadership councils, teen nights, summer reading clubs, teen job fairs, and more.



## TENTH GRADE

### FALL

September, October, November

- Review the four-year academic plan with your student. Your student should talk with his or her counselor about fulfilling college requirements and to ensure enrollment in challenging elective courses.
- Register early for the October PSAT. Find out dates and more information about the PSAT from the school guidance office.
- Meet your student's teachers and counselor.
- Participate in a College Fair, and attend a college financial aid workshop, if offered.
- Advise your student to seek help to improve in challenging subjects.
- Help your student identify extracurricular activities compatible with interests and your family schedule. If your student is already involved with extracurricular activities, encourage him or her to consider leadership positions.

### WINTER

December, January, February

- If your student took the PSAT in October, review the score report and identify challenge areas with him or her. This will help your student prepare for the SAT Reasoning Exam the following year.
- Research colleges and costs of attendance with your student.
- Discuss careers; encourage dialogue with people whose careers are of interest to your student.
- Talk with your student about progress in school. Encourage enrollment in Honors and AP courses in strong subjects.
- With your student, take a tour of a local college or university while classes are in session to get a feel for what the campus is like.
- Have your child set up a separate email account to receive all college-related correspondence.
- Talk to your student about setting up free online accounts with [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu).
  - The College Board account allows students to research colleges nationally, and even helps students prepare for the SAT Reasoning Exam through an email "Question of the Day." Parents can opt to have these emails sent to them as well.
  - CSU Mentor will help your student learn about the CSU system, research CSU campuses, and in the senior year, apply for admission.

### SPRING

March, April, May

- Explore summer jobs, academic enrichment and volunteer opportunities. Be aware of application requirements and deadlines. Counselors may have information about summer programs offered at local college campuses.
- Your student should meet with the counselor to discuss junior year course selection, including AP/Honors courses.
- Consider a summer course at a community college. High school students take courses for free and can potentially earn Honors or college credit on approved courses.

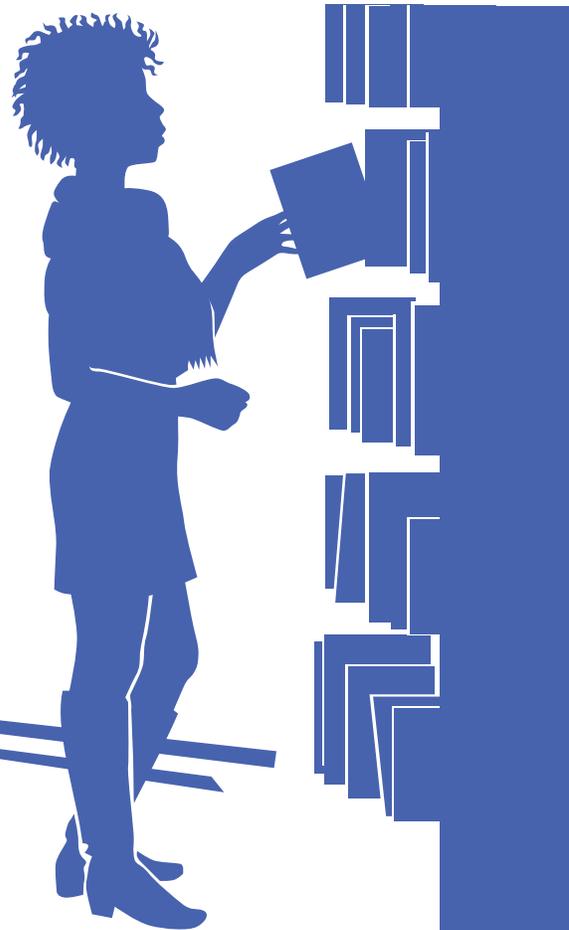
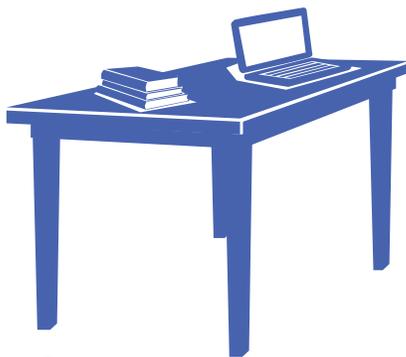
### SUMMER

June, July, August

- Finalize summer plans.
- Make sure your child has a summer reading list and a summer reading goal. Teachers, counselors and the local library will have recommendations.

#### TIP:

*Whether your student is planning on college or unsure of educational plans after high school, encourage him or her to talk to others—teachers, coaches, family members—about the future and how to prepare for it.*

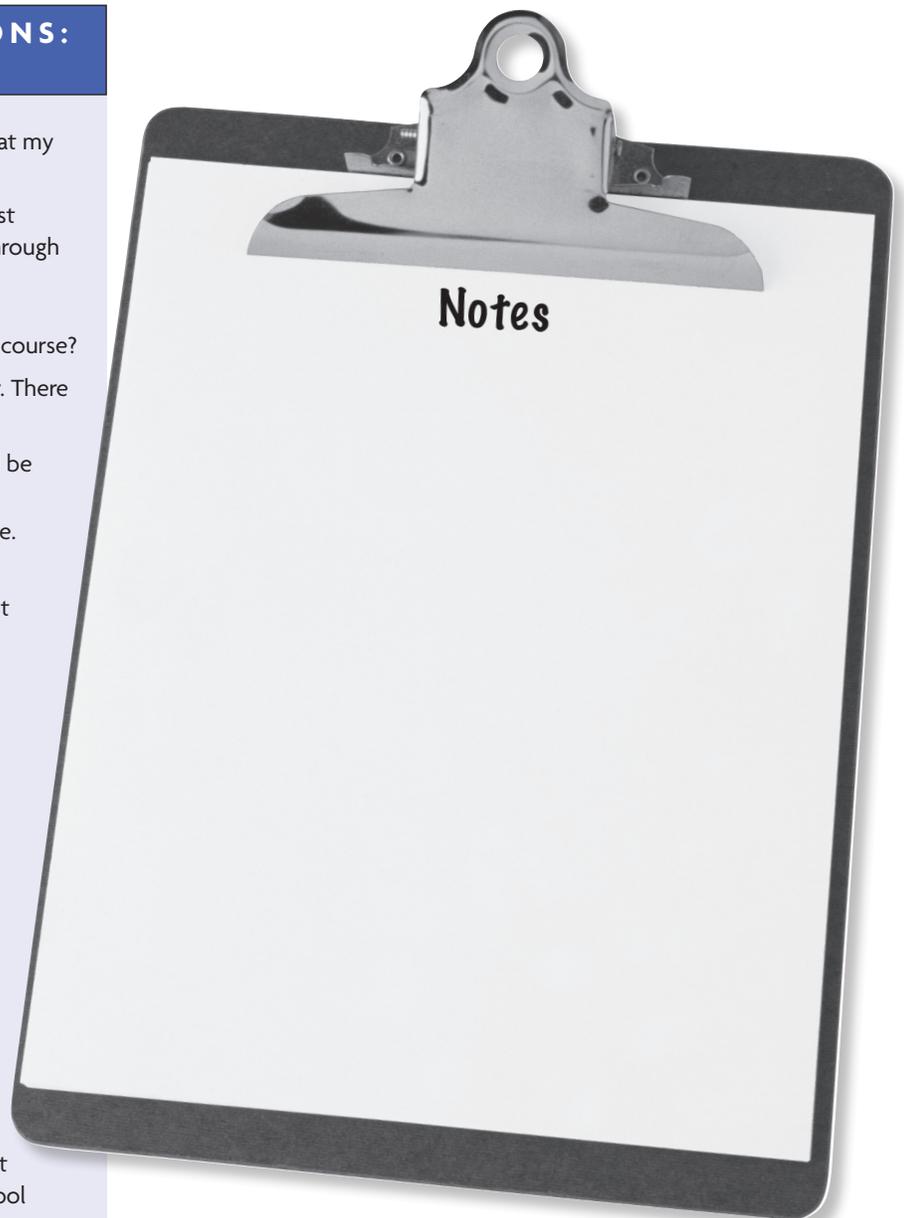


## 10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP SUPPORT YOUR STUDENT ON THE PATH TO HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Let teachers and counselors know that you expect your student to be ready for college.
2. Attend at least one college fair.
3. Tour a college campus.
4. Help your student start a college information folder.
5. Encourage your student to explore careers by participating in job shadowing or internships.
6. Support good study habits.
7. Meet with teachers and counselors every year.
8. Learn about college entrance requirements (A–G, entrance exams, GPA).
9. Start a 529 Savings Plan. Saving, no matter how much, sets the expectation that college is in your student's future.
10. Acknowledge and celebrate your student's good efforts and accomplishments, and maintain high expectations for academic success.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: 9TH AND 10TH GRADE

- Q:** Where can I find out what A–G courses are offered at my student's high school?
- A:** Your student's high school counselor will have the list of A–G courses, or you can link to a complete list through [www.eaop.org/resources](http://www.eaop.org/resources).
- Q:** What if my student receives a D or lower in an A–G course?
- A:** Talk to his or her high school counselor immediately. There will be different options:
- Retaking the course (this is the option that should be taken whenever possible).
  - Taking a comparable course at a community college.
  - Taking an approved online course.
- Your student's counselor will help you make the best decision. The key is addressing this quickly!
- Q:** Why should my student take AP classes?
- A:** AP classes will:
- Expose your student to college-level work.
  - Help develop study skills necessary for more challenging classes.
  - Demonstrate to colleges that your student seeks academic challenges and is prepared for college.
  - Earn college credit with a qualifying grade on an AP exam.
- Q:** My student's school offers limited AP and Honors courses. What should he or she do?
- A:** Take college-level courses at a community college. Students can even earn Honors or AP credit in select approved community college courses. See your school counselor for more information.



**A–G Coursework:** A series of coursework required for admission to the University of California (UC) and to the California State University (CSU). Each high school has an approved list of “Doorways” A–G coursework, which can be found through [www.eaop.org/resources](http://www.eaop.org/resources) or at the high school guidance office.

**Academic Enrichment:** These opportunities reinforce and improve basic academic skills, prepare students for more challenging coursework, and provide academic experiences that go beyond those available through the normal school curriculum.

**ACT Exam:** A 3 ½ hour national college admissions exam that tests your child’s knowledge in English, Math, Reading and Science. The ACT Plus Writing Exam includes a 30-minute Writing Test. Most colleges require that students take the ACT Exam or the SAT Reasoning Exam as a college entrance requirement.

**Advance Placement (AP) Courses:** College-level courses in a variety of subject areas that students can take while in high school. Students can boost their high school GPA by doing well in AP courses because they will earn more grade points in AP classes. When completed, students have the option of taking the corresponding AP Exam and earning college credit.

**College Entrance Requirements:** These include completion of specific academic coursework, entrance exams such as the ACT and SAT, and a scholarship requirement (combination of GPA and standardized test scores). Required coursework and testing may vary at different colleges.

#### *Parent Spotlight: Shagufta Q.*

Shagufta is a busy mom of four talented daughters, ranging in age from 14 to 19. Her eldest daughter is attending college close to home, and her second-oldest daughter just graduated high school.

Shagufta advises other parents not to be dismayed by the high cost of a college education, since financial aid helps make it affordable for families. Shagufta sees a college education as part of the path to gainful employment, and believes that had she attended college, she would have been better able to support her family and help her children with their studies.

Shagufta’s second-oldest daughter will be leaving home and attending UCLA this fall, and the family is preparing for this big transition. Their daughter visited the UCLA campus in her junior year and fell in love with the school, where she plans on following the pre-med course of studies and one day becoming a pediatrician. Shagufta has this advice for parents: “Be supportive of your children, interact with them, ask them about their grades, how their classes are going. Definitely encourage them to participate in academic outreach programs like EAOP, which can offer them support and help them in many ways.”

**Extra-Curricular Activities:** Activities that happen outside of the school day, including jobs (whether paid or unpaid), school-based activities (such as student government, service clubs, yearbook, etc.) or activities affiliated with a community organization or a faith-based community.

**Grade Point Average (GPA):** GPA can range from 0.0 to 4.0 (5.0 for AP or Honors courses), and is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned by total number of credit hours attempted. Grade points are assigned as follows: A (4), B (3), C (2), D (1), F (0). Most year-long high school courses are 3 credit hours. Colleges will look at a student’s GPA in college prep courses as part of the application process.

**High School Graduation Requirements:** Courses and sometimes community service hours required for high school graduation. Note that requirements for high school graduation are not always the same as A–G course requirements. Therefore, a student may meet high school graduation requirements without becoming college-eligible.

**Preliminary SAT (PSAT):** This test measures some skills your student has developed over the course of his or her education. Students usually take the test in the eleventh grade, but benefit from taking the test in the tenth grade or sooner because they will receive personalized feedback on the academic skills needed for college. By taking the test early, students have more time to develop these skills and to begin the college-planning process. The PSAT is a good way to prepare for the SAT.

**SAT Reasoning Exam:** The SAT is a 3 ¾ hour test that measures critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills. Most colleges require that students take this or the ACT as a college entrance requirement.

**SAT Subject Exams:** Many colleges require SAT Subject Exams. UC requires two. Your student should take the exam as soon as possible after completing the corresponding course.

#### **TIP:**

*If your student plans to apply to a highly competitive school within a college, such as engineering, consider using summer breaks to explore these interests. Colleges will see that the student sought out opportunities to gain skills and knowledge in those specific areas.*