THE PREPARED CURRICULUM:
FOR POST-SECONDARY AND CAREER READINESS

Ninth Grade Curriculum

Course Overview

Since colleges like to see well-rounded students, your 9th grade year of high school is also the time to start thinking about extracurricular activities and careers. Remember that everything counts in high school. It’s critical to establish your high school grade point average (GPA) and class rank. Your high school discipline and attendance can have a significant impact on you being admitted into your dream college someday. It’s important that you talk with your parents/guardian or a mentor to choose high school activities that you already have a natural interest or ability in such as drama, music, sports, government or community service, etc.

If you have difficulty choosing something and would like to talk with someone other than a parent/guardian or mentor, you can always talk to your school counselor. He or she can suggest activities that will best fit your skillsets and goals. School counselors can also help you choose activities that take into consideration the type of college and career path you may want to follow in a few years.

September

Week 1

- Program walkthrough
- Introduction to 9th grade success: parts 1 and 2
- 9th grade student supply list
- How to research colleges
- The role of your school counselor
- How to work with your school counselor for college planning
- Create your post-secondary list
- Build a strong four-year plan

Week 2

- Building your high school resume
How to research a college major
What’s a high school transcript and why is it important?
What is a GPA and why is it important?
What is class rank and why is it important?
Start with the end goal in mind
How to demonstrate your interest to colleges

Week 3

Build your high school support team
Basic high school graduation requirements vs. college preparation
How to ask for help
Getting organized for 9th grade success
Understanding local and state graduation requirements
What are college entrance requirements?
Paying attention during class
How to learn in a 9th grade classroom
Plan your high school courses wisely
A checklist for making the most out of high school
When should I begin college planning?

Week 4

How to be a good student
Three new criteria for your college list
High school preparation for a specific major
How is college different from high school?
What are 529 college savings plans?
Are 529 plans only for my state’s public colleges?
Better grades or more challenging courses?
How to be consistent with your grades
The path to high school graduation and beyond
The importance of good behavior
Working with others in class
Extracurricular activities for freshmen
How to write a high school brag sheet

October

Week 1
AP classes that count as college credit
Taking college-level classes outside your high school
Preparing for college: freshmen year schedule
How to write a thank you note
How does modern technology affect college readiness?
Valedictorians: who are they and how are they chosen?
How to improve your reading comprehension
How to write effectively
What are different types of college degrees?
The pillars of character
Community service and you
How to research colleges?

Week 2

You’re learning style
Why campus visits are essential for freshmen
Building a positive relationship with your teachers
Extracurricular activities for freshmen
Know the basics for class scheduling in high school
Introduction to college planning
Which college resources do you need?
Extracurricular activities and college admissions

Week 3

Four steps to effective goal setting
Tips for effective studying
The GPA myth
College admissions: do private schools have an advantage? (Part I and II)
What is the PSAT?
What is the Aspire test?
Understanding your first report card
What are College admissions test?
Stress reduction tips

Week 4

Challenging high school courses
Completing homework assignments
Meetings with your school counselor
What is financial aid?
What is career planning?
Being a good leader
Understanding college costs

November

Week 1

Questions to ask your school counselor
Building your first college list
Researching your college options
Handling peer pressure
Starting a new club or activity
What is a college major?
What is a college minor?

Week 2

Tips for researching your college major
Career planning checklist
Important steps for planning your career
Weighing the importance of college vs. today’s economic hardships
What are the most in demand careers? (Parts 1 and 2)

Week 3

9 ways to stop homework distractions
Time management tips
Tips for writing research papers
What’s a good academic record for college?
Important decision-making tips

Week 4

Strengthen your academic skills
5 strategies to solve difficult test questions
Why go to college?
Public speaking tips
**December**

**Week 1**
- College admissions overview
- Types of college admissions
- The benefits available for low-income students
- Are you a first-generation college bound student?
- Tips to increase your vocabulary
- Textbook reading tips
- 6 test-taking errors to avoid

**January**

**Week 2**
- Are you an effective learner?
- Important organizational skills
- Get organized and have good time management skills
- High school classes that colleges and universities look at

**Week 3**
- Long-term planning and timing
- Working out priorities
- Looking back on what you’ve done

**Week 4**
- Seven steps for dealing with problems
- Setting up your study area
- What type of leader are you?

**February**

**Week 1**
- Give a friend a hand
- What is academic integrity?
- Taking responsibility
Week 2

- Developing good writing habits
- How to think critically
- The importance of good study habits

Week 3

- Improve your listening skills
- Tips for foreign language classes
- Reading a highlighted written test

Week 4

- How to answer essay questions
- Prepare for college expenses now
- Sharpen your writing skills
- Sharpen your reading skills

March

Week 1

- 9th grade test-taking tips
- 9th grade note-taking tips
- Note-taking techniques

Week 2

- High school discipline and college admissions
- High school attendance and college admissions
- Test-taking strategies

Week 3

- Multiple choice exam tips
- Important exam hints
- Studying for particular courses such as, biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics

Week 4
Understanding the pros and cons of state universities
Understanding your high school report card
The importance of studying a foreign language

**April**

**Week 1**

- Introduction to college planning: parts 1 and 2
- Make the grade on test day

**Week 2**

- Research college/post-secondary costs
- Identify important factors in choosing a college
- Think about your reasons for going to college

**Week 3**

- College planning when should I start?
- What are college admissions tests?
- Why AP and honor classes matter
- Navigating a college or university website
- Make a college mailing list
- When to start college planning visits

**Week 4**

- Write a letter of interest to colleges
- Types of college admissions
- The more you learn, the more you earn
- Community service and college admissions
- Start thinking about reasons to attend college

**May**

**Week 1**

- How to respect yourself and others
Best places to study
Concentration tips
The importance of college visits
Summer vacations and college admissions

Week 2

- Steps in planning your career
- Jobs and internships: what’s on your resume?
- You can afford to attend college
- Questions to ask and be prepared to answer during a campus visit
- Career planning tips
- Researching planning your top three careers

Week 3

- Researching college scholarships/requirements
- Understanding state residency laws
- Volunteering, community service and college admissions
- Volunteer work: why you should lend a hand
- When to start thinking about financial aid
- Talking with your parents about college expectations
- Decision making and problem solving
- Difference between a weighted and unweighted GPA

Week 4

- Four things to do in the four years before college
- What is a budget?
- Visiting college campuses
- Glossary of important college terms
- What to expect in 10th grade?
- Transition to 10th grade
9th Grade Student Worksheet Samples

- High School Planning Worksheet
- Assignments Worksheet
- Class Schedule
- Course of Study: Four Year Plan
- 4-Year Graduation Plan Worksheet
- Student Activity Sheet
- Volunteering and Community Service Log Worksheet
- Noteworthy Activities Worksheet
- Achievements Worksheet
- High School Course of Study Checklist
- GPA Planning Worksheet
- Post-Secondary Planning Worksheet
- High School Transcript Worksheet
- Mid-Semester Grade/Progress Check
- Setting Smart Goals
- Study Skills Student Inventory
- Student Homework Tracker*
- 20 Memory Techniques
- Time Waster Survey
- College Research Worksheet
- College and University Comparison Worksheet for 9th Graders
- 9th Grade Time Management Student Survey
- Planning Your 168-Hour School and Work Week
- Creating a Seven-Step Study Skills Plan
- Time Management Worksheet
Ninth Grade Parent Curriculum Course Overview

September

Week 1

- Program walkthrough
- Attending new student orientation
- Helping your child choose the best 9th grade schedule
- What parents should expect during 9th grade
- 9th grade year checklist
- How to pay for your child’s college education?
- Helping your child build a strong four-year high school plan
- How to join your child’s school PTA
- 9th grade is critical for future success
- Building a parent success network
- What are GPA and class rank?

Week 2

- Grade 9 curriculum and course information
- Make college an expectation at home
- Social media and college admissions
- 9th grade matters for college admissions
- High school proficiency exams are required
- What will my child learn in 9th grade?
- Understanding your child’s local and state graduation requirements
- Homework tips for your child

Week 3

- What are Pennsylvania 529 plans?
- Select the right 529 plan
- Building your child’s first college list
- How to get a college or university to notice your child
- Get on the mailing list
- Help your 9th grader get organized
- Attendance matters
Week 4

- Help your child identify interests in and outside of class
- Anticipate your child’s tuition costs
- Make sure your child chooses the right courses for college prep
- Plan career goals

October

Week 1

- Help your child build a high school resume
- Help your child become successful inside the classroom
- Help your child become successful outside of the classroom
- Help your child with important organizational skills
- Help your child with time management skills

Week 2

- Understanding your child’s first report card
- The high school counselor’s role
- Sketch out a comprehensive academic program
- Get your child involved in community service

Week 3

- Attend parent teacher conferences
- School discipline and college admissions
- Build a positive relationship with your child’s teachers
- Meet with your child’s school counselor

Week 4

- The path to college and career readiness
- What are study skills?
- Academic planning for high school success
- Reasons your child should consider college
November

Week 1

- College readiness calendar for parents
- Help your child prepare for final exams
- Create a final exam study schedule

Week 2

- Attend parent teacher conferences
- Schedule a campus visit
- College planning glossary
- Mapping out your child’s long-term plan
- 7 things you need to know about financial aid

Week 3

- Keep your child motivated for success
- What is the total cost of education?
- Research the net price of a college or university
- What are college admissions tests?
- What are grants and scholarships?

Week 4

- Prepare your child for the PSAT
- Prepare your child for the Aspire test
- Track your child’s accomplishments
- SAT vs. ACT
- The new SAT
- Find money for college


December

Week 1

- Courses and credit counts
- Homework tips
- Signing the homework contract
- Explore career research

January

Week 2

- The importance of honors and advance placement courses
- Extracurricular activities and your child’s list of classes
- What are colleges?
- What are universities?

Week 3

- What’s a college major?
- What’s a college minor?
- Ask for help for your child
- Plan a setting goals meeting with your 9th grader
- Build a foundation for educational success

Week 4

- Types of college and university admissions options
- Types of programs available at colleges and universities

February

Week 1

- Help your 9th grader research a college major
- Build a college going culture at home
- High school classes that colleges and universities require
Week 2
- Careers vs. jobs
- Saving for college
- Getting your child admitted

Week 3
- Getting the facts on college admissions
- Create a to-do list
- Help your 9th grader follow the road to college
- Set the stage for dreams to become reality

Week 4
- How to pay for college
- Preparing your child for college visits
- Understanding college costs
- Helping your child research careers

March

Week 1
- Preparing your student for college
- What are college entrance exams?
- College-prep or tech-prep classes?

Week 2
- The importance of community service and college admissions
- Parents’ and students’ post-secondary preparation
- Post-secondary planning timeline
- Encourage “soft skills” for college readiness

Week 3
- How to pay for your child’s college education
- Do’s and don’ts of using college rankings
- College rankings aren’t everything
- Help prepare your child for 10th grade
Week 4

- AP/honor classes: an introduction
- What is career awareness?
- Understanding college costs
- Prepare your child for final exams
- Create a final exam study schedule

April

Week 1

- 7 things you need to know about financial aid
- Help your child explore careers that match his or her interests
- College search step-by-step

Week 2

- Learn about your child’s post-secondary options
- Most popular college majors
- Understanding accelerated college degrees
- Rigor and relevance

Week 3

- 5 most secure and lucrative college majors
- Help your child with college prep and planning
- College prep -- your child and extracurricular activities
- College acceptance types

Week 4

- Prepare your child for the campus visit
- Most demanding careers
- The relationship between education and earnings
- Learn about college and make your 9th grade summer count
- Which college admissions test will my child take during 10th grade?
- Help your child stay motivated this summer
- Help your student transition to 10th grade