



# 11TH GRADE COLLEGE PREP CHECKLIST

As you continue to move through high school, make sure to take advantage of all the opportunities offered and consistently work with your school counselor to ensure you meet your goals.

Use this checklist to stay on track.

## FALL SEMESTER:

- Use Your Resources
  - Talk with your school counselor about your options and plans for life after high school. They can help you be strategic — connecting you to the right coursework, scholarship opportunities, work-based learning and volunteer experiences— to make you marketable for the future.
- Prepare, Register and Take the ACT
  - Research **pre-college testing** to determine which test(s) you plan to take. Pre-college tests may be important to college admissions and are required for certain scholarship opportunities.
  - Find test dates for the **ACT** and/or **SAT** test dates and register up to six weeks ahead!
  - Explore **ACT prep** and/or **SAT prep** courses or investigate self-guided study plans. The self-paced **Methodize ACT Prep** is available at no cost to all South Dakota Students in grades 9-12 on SDMyLife.com.
  - Consider whether you'd like to take the **PSAT** in October. A high score on the PSAT could qualify you for the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- **Explore Colleges** and Academic Programs
  - Consider how college programs of study align with your interests and familiarize yourself with college admissions requirements.
  - Begin **planning college visits**. These visits are a great way to get a feel for the schools — fall and winter break are good times to go!
  - Attend **college fairs** in your region to learn as much as you can about the colleges that interest you.
  - Talk to college admissions representatives who come to your high school. Admissions representatives are great at taking your career interests and other college search criteria and then pointing you in the right direction.
- Consider Coursework Opportunities
  - Visit with your school counselor on coursework opportunities that save you time and money in college and prepare you for potential career plans. A tougher course load may pay off with scholarships and help you get admitted to the college of your choice.
  - Stay on track to qualify for the **South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship** by making sure you are taking the right coursework.
  - Look into **High School Dual Credit** courses for the spring semester. See the dual credit advisory tools and certificate opportunities on ourdakotadreams.com to help you consider the types of courses that would most benefit you based on your interests.

- Understand **Fast Track Admission**
  - Fast Track Admission is a new pilot program in South Dakota that lets high school seniors from participating districts bypass the college application process for participating universities based on their academic achievements.
  - Fill out your Fast Track Activation Form found in the *Junior's Guide to College Prep* booklet scheduled to arrive in your home mailbox and email this November! Completing the Fast Track Admission Form will do two things:
    - Give your high school permission to share an academic transcript with the South Dakota Board of Regents for the purpose of Fast Track Admission.
    - Help participating Fast Track Admission universities better understand your needs.

## SPRING SEMESTER:

- Prepare, Register and Take (or Re-Take) the **ACT** and/or **SAT**, if you haven't already.
- Develop your senior schedule.
  - Organize your **personal learning plan**.
  - Make sure you're on track by reviewing your **high school curriculum requirements**, and talk to your school counselor if you have questions.
  - Keep the following coursework opportunities in mind:
    - **South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship**
    - **High School Dual Credit**
    - **Year-Long College Algebra Course**
- South Dakota English Language Arts, Math and Science Assessments
  - Work hard on your **state assessments** — Your scores may come in handy with college admissions.
- Take Advantage of Work-Based Learning Opportunities
  - Participate in **South Dakota's Week of Work** to explore, experience, and engage in work-based learning opportunities!
  - Consider a summer job or internship. These experiences provide valuable information about work while earning money.
  - **Contact SD Department of Labor & Regulation** and ask about the Work Experience program through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). If you qualify, you could be eligible for a paid internship while building your resume, [sdjobs.org](http://sdjobs.org).
- Learn About **Paying for College**
  - Investigate opportunities for **financial aid**.
  - Get an estimate of how much federal student aid you may be eligible to receive through the **Federal Student Aid Estimator**.
- Prepare to Apply for Scholarships
  - Research scholarship opportunities on the **Statewide Scholarship Bulletin Board** and use a spreadsheet to **track important deadlines** so you can be ready to start applying early in your senior year.

## SUMMER:

- Take (or Re-Take) the **ACT** and/or **SAT**, if you haven't already.