

WHAT LEVEL ARE YOU ON?

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Start looking at different careers you may want to explore!
- Ask the adults in your life about their careers and what they did to get there.
- Begin working on your academic and career plan portfolio!

9TH GRADE

- Find out about resources at your school. Who's your school counselor? Career counselor? College advisor?
- Work with your counselors, teachers and/or family members to continue revising your Academic and Career Plan.
- Learn about the different types of high school diplomas in VA and which one will help you achieve your goals.
- Join a school club, try out for a sport or find other extracurricular activities outside of school.
- When signing up for sophomore classes, consider taking AP or dual enrollment classes that could help you when you are applying for colleges. Also consider CTE (career and technical education) classes that help you learn a skill and explore different careers.
- Open a bank account if you haven't already.

11TH GRADE

- Check in with your career and academic goals. It's ok to change course if your goals have changed.
- Check in with your counselors and advisors to make sure you are on track to achieve your goals.
- Visit colleges virtually or in person and explore their website to learn about the degrees they offer, cost and financial aid opportunities. Don't limit yourself based on finances! If you're worried you can't afford your dream school, reach out to their admissions and financial aid counselors. They can help you find scholarships and grants you might qualify for and give you guidance on how to stand out in your applications.
- Spend your summer preparing to apply to colleges. Make a list of deadlines for your top schools, FAFSA and other financial aid.

ADULT LEARNER

- Think about your goals. What do you want to get out of furthering your education? Getting that promotion? Pursuing a career change? No matter what your plans are, there is a pathway for you!
- Research programs/institutions that suit your needs.
- Speak with enrollment counselors to determine if you are able to adjust your schedule/course load according to your availability.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Think about jobs you might be interested in, and learn more about them. You can always change your mind!
Think about what your favorite things to do are. Research jobs that let you do those things.
- Try new things! Join a club, play a sport, learn an instrument. You might be surprised what you enjoy.
- Don't worry! You don't need to have your whole life planned out.
- Continue working on your Academic and Career Plan to chart your interests, goals and high school classes.

10TH GRADE

- Volunteer for a cause that's important to you.
- Attend college fairs at your school, in your community or online.
- Talk to your counselor about taking the Pre-SAT (PSAT).
- Start looking at scholarships or grants. Consider what you can do your junior year to help you qualify for more financial aid opportunities.
- Consider how you'll spend your summer. Are there any clubs, organizations, jobs, internships or education activities you'd be interested in? Remember, academics aren't the only thing that can get you scholarships or accepted into colleges. Extracurricular activities, volunteering, jobs and hobbies are a great way to stand out when applying.
- Begin preparing for the SAT or ACT. Talk to your counselor about which test will work best for you. Many schools no longer require these tests, but it may help you stand out in an application.

12TH GRADE

- Create a professional email address.
- Apply, apply, apply! Submit scholarship applications and apply to postsecondary opportunities that are the best match for you!
- If you ever feel stuck, lost or discouraged, reach out to your school counselors, teachers and family for help.
- Keep track of your college and scholarship applications, and remember to check your email frequently in case a school tries to get in contact with you.
- Remember, if you get denied from your dream school or an important scholarship, it's not the end of the world. There are plenty of schools and pathways that will help you reach your goals!