

# 12th Grade CHECKLIST

This checklist references sections found in the *Postsecondary Education Planning Guide for Adults Supporting California's Foster Youth*. Visit [jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide](http://jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide) to access the complete guide.

Depending on a youth's goals and when they start preparing for postsecondary education, some of these steps may not apply. The checklist below includes the steps for all different types of postsecondary education: career and technical education programs, community colleges, and four-year universities. Use the links above to download standalone checklists for individual postsecondary pathways.

## EDUCATION PLANNING



- **Continue to work with the student to identify which postsecondary pathways they are interested in based on their interests and career goals.** It's not too late to schedule a visit in-person or virtually to a college campus or attend a college fair to explore options.
- **Students with an IEP and/or 504 Plan:** Make sure your student is provided a copy of their most recent Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan with their diagnosis to help access learning accommodations in college. If they aren't sure if they have had an IEP in the past, reach out to your local Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program to verify. For youth 16 or older, the

IEP should include a statement of needed transition services and appropriate measurable postsecondary goals. Students may be eligible for services through the Department of Rehabilitation. Learn more in Section 10.

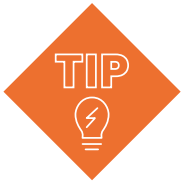
- **Add report cards from 12th grade into the student's online or physical documents folder along with any certificates or awards earned for the year.** If the student transfers to a new school, obtain a copy of their school record and keep it with other important documents.
- **Help students develop a system to safely store all login usernames and passwords.** Students will need to create a number of new accounts in the college application process. Accounts may include applications for financial aid, WebGrants 4 Students, and college applications.
- **Help students obtain an email address that is strictly for college and financial aid application information.** Avoid using a high school email address, since those often expire.
- **If the student is interested in applying to four-year college or university, and has taken the courses necessary to apply, help them make a list of three to five colleges they are interested in.** If they have taken the courses necessary to apply to a four-year university this can include "reach school(s)," "target schools" and "safety schools." These are terms to describe the likelihood of being admitted based on factors such as a school's acceptance rate or average GPA. For example, at a "safety school" the student would most likely be accepted and at a "reach school" there is a lower chance of acceptance. **If the student is interested in community college, explore which colleges have the programs the student is interested in.**
  - Schedule tours/informational interviews to help narrow down choices and get a feel for the institution (physical environment, types of courses, resources, etc.). Students should consider housing options available to them as well.
  - Schedule a meeting with campus foster youth support program staff to gather more information on available services. See Section 10 of the guide for more information.

# CAREER EXPLORATION AND PREPARATION



- ❑ **EXPLORE INTERESTS.** Encourage your student to participate in extracurriculars or take or update a career interest and aptitude assessment. See Section 4 for career exploration resources.
- ❑ **GET WORK EXPERIENCE.** Explore paid work experience to develop job skills and explore interests. Youth under the age of 18 will need a work permit if still enrolled in high school. The student's school or social worker/probation officer can assist in getting a work permit. Contact the local workforce development board to identify any youth employment programs. Visit [laoyc.org/guides](http://laoyc.org/guides) to learn more.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!



Additional information about the educational rights of foster youth can be found in the California Foster Youth Education Law Fact Sheets located at [cfyef.org/publications.html](http://cfyef.org/publications.html).

# HIGH SCHOOL COURSEWORK AND GRADUATION



- ❑ **Talk to a school counselor to ensure that your student is continuing to enroll in approved "a-g" coursework if on track to qualify for a four-year college or university.** Learn more about these courses in Section 6 and by visiting [calstate.edu/how-to-get-to-calstate](http://calstate.edu/how-to-get-to-calstate) or [ucop.edu/agguide](http://ucop.edu/agguide).
- ❑ **Regularly check the student's school work online.** Many schools use websites like Canvas or School Loop for parents and caregivers to track a student's grades, homework and important deadlines.

- ❑ **Request tutoring as needed.** The high school counselor, Foster Youth District Liaison, or County Office of Education Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP) can be great resources. Learn more in Section 10.
- ❑ **Speak with the school counselor to determine if your student is a good candidate for dual enrollment.** Dual enrollment courses, which may be offered at a local community college or on the high school campus, allow students to earn college credit while also satisfying a requirement for high school graduation.
- ❑ **Work with the student to maintain and update the student's High School Education Planner at [californiacolleges.edu](http://californiacolleges.edu).** This should be updated every semester to reflect the grades earned each semester. If the student decides to apply to a CSU, course information will automatically transfer to their college application.
- ❑ **For students who change schools during the school year,** the old school must provide the new school with all records regardless of any outstanding fees. The records must include a list of full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization and other records, and, if applicable, a copy of the 504 plan or IEP.
  - Connect with the foster youth district liaison or your local County Office of Education Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP) to review the student's transcript for partial credit options.
- ❑ **Review the student's academic record(s) throughout the year and, if a student is behind in credits, identify opportunities for credit recovery** such as summer school, adult school, continuation school, or remaining in high school for a fifth year. Help youth determine which option is in their best interest. For students not on track to graduate high school, explore options such as Graduation Exemptions for Foster Youth or getting a high school equivalency certificate (i.e., GED or HiSET). Learn more about these options in Section 6.



**Student  
Spotlight:**  
Credit  
Recovery



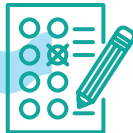
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## TESTING



- ❑ **OPTIONAL (fall semester only): Sign up to take or retake the SAT and/or ACT. Encourage students to register for earlier test dates so they have a chance to retake the exam later in the fall semester if desired.**

Students can access a fee waiver for the exam from their high school counselor. To learn more about when to register for the SAT go to [satsuite.collegeboard.org](http://satsuite.collegeboard.org). For the ACT go to [act.org](http://act.org). The SAT and ACT are no longer required for admission to the CSUs or UCs, however some private universities and out-of-state colleges still require the exam(s) as part of their admissions process. If accepted to a CSU campus, ACT or SAT test scores can be used as one of the measures to place students in the appropriate mathematics or English (written communication) courses.

- Check with the school counselor or foster youth district liaison about any test prep courses available through the school.
- Check with the social worker/probation officer about any funding available to help pay for these courses.

- ❑ **If applicable, register to take the Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams for 12th grade courses in the spring (March).** Ask an academic counselor about AP/IB exam fee waivers. Students will need to list the institutions where they want their scores sent.

## CHILD WELFARE AND PROBATION RESOURCES



- ❑ **TRANSITIONAL INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN & AGREEMENT (TILP).** Ensure that youth are engaged in developing their Transitional Independent Living Plan & Agreement (TILP). The TILP must be completed every six months for youth in out-of-home foster care age 16 and above. It should integrate the youth's college and career goals, including who will support the student in completing the steps necessary to meet their goals.
- ❑ **POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SUPPORT PERSON.** Social workers/probation officers must identify a postsecondary education support person(s) to assist all youth ages 16 and older who express an interest in college with completing their college applications, including career and technical education, as well as their financial aid applications. This must be documented in the TILP as well as the case plan ([ACL 18-104](#)).
- ❑ **CHILD & FAMILY TEAM (CFT) MEETING.** Use the Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting to identify the postsecondary education support person(s) for all youth ages 16 and older, as well as a plan for supporting the youth's overall postsecondary education and career goals. Education partners should be invited and encouraged to attend these meetings ([ACIN 1-71-18](#)).

- INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM (ILP).** Ensure that eligible youth are referred to the Independent Living Program (ILP or ILSP). Each county’s program varies. Talk to the social worker/probation officer or local ILP for more information about the resources and activities they provide, like financial aid workshops or college tours. Find a statewide ILP roster at: [jbay.org/resources/ilp-roster](http://jbay.org/resources/ilp-roster).
- VITAL DOCUMENTS.** Social workers/probation officers can assist youth in gathering original vital documents, and should provide copies to all youth age 16 and older. Students should upload them into a secure electronic storage system such as [ifoster.org](http://ifoster.org) or [Google.com/drive](https://www.google.com/drive).
- HOUSING OPTIONS.** Collaborate with the social worker/probation officer to explore housing options that align with the youth’s postsecondary educational plans. Securing housing can often take time—so start early. Don’t wait until the youth’s 90-day transition plan meeting, as it often doesn’t align with college timelines and start dates. Eligible youth who opt into Extended Foster Care (EFC) may have multiple options.

### Important vital documents for adulthood



- One photo ID, such as a CA State ID, CA REAL ID, or driver’s license
- U.S. Social Security Card or Permanent Resident Card (aka Green Card) if a non-US Citizen
- Original birth certificate
- Verification letter (dependent/ward of the court letter) to access foster youth benefits in college. See the “Applying for Financial Aid” section for more information.

## APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID



Get the comprehensive Financial Aid Guide for California Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and companion Step-by-Step Visual Guide at [jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide](http://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide) for in-depth instructions and information on financial aid. The checklist below provides a brief overview:

- **Determine whether your student should complete either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov) or CA Dream Act Application (CADAA) at [dream.csac.ca.gov](http://dream.csac.ca.gov) to apply for financial aid.**
- **Gather documents and information necessary to complete the FAFSA or CADAA:**

  - Name and social security number, exactly as it appears on the student’s Social Security Card, or Alien Registration Number [FAFSA applicants only].
  - Statewide Student Identifier number (SSID) OR Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) [CADAA only].
  - Email address that a student checks often (avoid high school emails that often expire).
  - List of up to 20 colleges that the student plans to apply to. At least one must be listed.
  - Information about the student’s current assets, such as the total of checking and savings accounts. Students who receive certain federal benefits, such as CalFresh or Medi-Cal, are exempt from having to provide information on current assets. All students completing the FAFSA must now provide consent to allow the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to share federal tax information, even if no tax return was filed. In some limited cases, certain tax information may need to be input manually.

**Students must first create an FSA-ID if completing the FAFSA online. A student will need to provide their name (exactly as it appears on their social security card), date of birth, social security number and an email address. It is recommended that students create an FSA ID 3-7 days in advance of completing the FAFSA to allow for processing time at [studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch](http://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch).**

- ❑ **Ensure students are connected to individual support to complete the FAFSA or CADAA by the March 2nd priority deadline.** Students can start applying as early as October 1st for the following fall term. Students attending four-year institutions must complete their applications before March 2nd to receive institution-based aid and Cal Grant awards. Students attending a California Community College can submit a FAFSA or CADAA until September 2nd to be considered for the Cal Grant program. Students can apply after these deadlines but will receive less aid.
- ❑ **Make sure eligible students receive “Independent Status” on the FAFSA or CADAA.** Youth in legal guardianship or foster youth who were in out-of-home foster care placement at least one day after the age of 13 can complete the FAFSA or CADAA as an “Independent student.” This means they do not need to report any financial information about their biological parents, foster parents, or adoptive parents on the FAFSA or CADAA, and may qualify for more money.
- ❑ **Complete the Chafee Grant application at [chafee.csac.ca.gov](http://chafee.csac.ca.gov).** Eligible foster youth (in out-of-home foster care placement at least one day between ages 16 to 18) can receive up to \$5,000 per academic year for up to five years (whether or not consecutive) up until age 26.
- ❑ **Create a Webgrants 4 Students account at [mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov](http://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov) once the FAFSA or CADAA is processed** in order to manage state aid like the Cal Grant, Chafee Grant, and Middle Class Scholarship online. This includes checking for errors, indicating their planned school of attendance and self-certifying their high school graduation. It can take one to two weeks for the FAFSA to process before an account can be created.
- ❑ **Verify that the student’s high school GPA has been received and matched to their account to receive the Cal Grant.** Students can get this information by logging into their WebGrants account or reaching out to their local FYSCP.

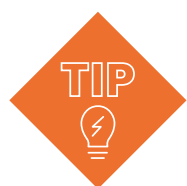
- ❑ **Help your student research and apply for additional private scholarships for which they may be eligible.** For information about scholarships, see the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: [jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/](http://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/).
- ❑ **Obtain a dependency or ward of the court letter to verify that your student was in foster care.** This letter may be requested to access certain benefits only available to foster youth, including financial aid. Help students securely upload a digital copy for easy access in the future.
  - Current foster youth can obtain this letter from their social worker/probation officer or Independent Living Program (ILP or ILSP) Coordinator.
  - Former foster youth can obtain this by calling the California Foster Care Ombudsperson’s office at 877-846-1602 or by visiting [fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov](http://fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov).
- ❑ **Encourage students to check their email weekly and respond promptly to any requests for additional verification in order to receive financial aid.**



# COMMUNITY COLLEGE, INCLUDING CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE): APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT



- ❑ **SELECT A PATHWAY AND THEN A COLLEGE.** First, help students determine which degree or certificate program is the best fit for their career goals and interests. Next, find out which programs are offered at the community colleges by going to [cccmypath.org](http://cccmypath.org). Students can attend community college without a high school diploma or GED, however it is required to receive most financial aid, like the Pell Grant.



## CTE & APPRENTICESHIP OPTIONS!

Remember that while the community colleges offer a wide range of CTE programs and supports, there are also options through Adult Education Career Technical Programs, Job Corps, or the state's Apprenticeship Program. Learn more and how to apply in Section 3.

- ❑ **REQUEST TRANSCRIPTS.** Request two copies of your student's official high school transcript once fall grades have been posted and once they graduate. They will need one to meet with their college academic counselor to create their education plan at community college. Make sure your student keeps the extra copy handy for scholarship applications or other needs.
- ❑ **APPLY.** Complete the free application at [cccapply.org](http://cccapply.org) and make sure the student identifies as a foster youth on the application to access all the benefits for which they may be eligible. Application deadlines vary. Students should apply by spring, however many colleges now open their application period as early as the fall term during the student's senior year. All

first-time students who apply are eligible to attend a community college.

**NOTE:** Students who submit an application to take classes during the summer after graduation will also need to submit a separate application for fall term.

- ❑ **CONNECT TO SUPPORT.** Help connect your student to on-campus support programs (i.e., NextUp, Disabled Students Programs & Services, etc.), ideally before they graduate high school. Many programs can assist students before they start classes. To learn more about the various programs, see Section 10 and visit [cacollegepathways.org](http://cacollegepathways.org).
  - Assist students who may benefit from Disabled Students' Programs & Services (also known as Student Accessibility Services) in contacting the office. Students can submit their latest Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan with their diagnosis or ask their program office about the assessment process. Start the process as soon as possible to get accommodations in place before they start their fall semester. This process takes time.
- ❑ **ATTEND ORIENTATION.** Once students apply and receive their college student ID number in their admissions email, schedule an appointment to complete the online or in-person new student orientation. The orientation will provide the student with information about the campus, next steps for enrolling in classes, and resources available.
- ❑ **COMPLETE COURSE PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT.** Students will need to report the grades they received in the last English and math course completed in high school to determine which math and English courses they will need for their degree or certificate goal. If a student completes the admissions application in the fall term of their senior year, they will report grades from spring/summer semester of their junior year.

**NOTE:** Placement assessments no longer require an exam.

❑ **CREATE AN EDUCATION PLAN.** After the student completes the orientation and placement assessment, help them schedule an appointment with an academic counselor to create an education plan based on their educational goal. If the student is enrolled in EOPS or NextUp, they should meet with a counselor from that program rather than a general counselor.

■ If the student is interested in transferring to a four-year college from community college, they can visit the transfer center on their campus. Visit [calstate.edu/transfer/](http://calstate.edu/transfer/) or [admission.universityofcalifornia.edu](http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu) for information on the CSUs or UCs.

❑ **EXPLORE HOUSING OPTIONS.** With the social worker/probation officer and ILP Coordinator, explore housing options that are near the student's top three college choices and align with the start of their college's fall term. Start early. Most community colleges do not offer on-campus housing.

❑ **REGISTER FOR CLASSES.** Foster youth who were in care at least one day after age 13 should take advantage of priority registration to register for classes before their peers. Classes fill up quickly, and getting into the classes they want is important to stay on track for their education plan as well as financial aid. Registration deadlines vary by campus but are typically in spring of the student's senior year. Students must first complete orientation, assessment, and an education plan to qualify to register. Students may be requested to provide a dependent or ward of the court letter as proof of foster care status. See Section 9 for *Tips for Registering and Succeeding in College Classes*.

❑ **PAY FEES.** Once a student registers for courses, they will see enrollment fees appear in their student portal. In most cases, enrollment fees do not need to be paid until after their financial aid has been processed. If this is a point of concern, reach out to the foster youth liaison and/or campus support program to determine how best to pay for enrollment fees and any health and/or student activity fees.

■ Most foster youth will qualify for the California College Promise Grant (CCPG) to waive course tuition fees when they complete the FAFSA or CADAA.

■ Some fees, such as health and student activity fees, may not be covered by the CCPG.

