

9th–11th 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 to access the complete guide.

Depending on a youth’s goals and when they start preparing for postsecondary education, some of these grade-specific steps may not apply. That’s ok! Meet the student where they are in their academic journey. Even if they are not interested or on track to meet the requirements for a four-year college, there are many great options such as degree and certificate programs at community colleges.

EDUCATION PLANNING



- **Attend an orientation session** at your student’s new school to meet the student’s counselor, learn about school clubs and activities, and pick up the student’s class schedule.
- **Work with the student to identify postsecondary pathways they are interested in based on their interests and career goals.** See Section 3 for more information on the different pathways.
- **If applicable, request or attend Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan meetings to advocate for any needed accommodations for a disability or request a meeting if the current services are no longer meeting the youth’s needs.** 504 Plans and IEPs provide accommodations for students with physical or mental health disabilities to succeed in school, however only certain

classifications of disabilities are eligible for an IEP. For youth age 16 or older, the IEP should include their postsecondary goals and the services needed to transition successfully after high school. Students with disabilities may also be eligible for services through the Department of Rehabilitation. Learn more in Section 10.

- **Add report cards from 9th–11th 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.

IN 11TH GRADE ONLY:

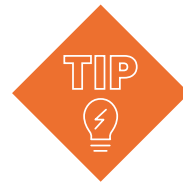
- **For students interested in pursuing a four-year college or university, begin working on the personal statement the spring or summer before senior year** to have adequate time to review and revise as needed. Students planning on applying to a UC can start their application as early as August 1st. Learn more in the 12th grade checklist in Section 8.
- **If the student is interested in applying to a four-year college or university, make a list of three to five colleges that include “reach”, “target” 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 offer the programs the student is interested in.**
- **Schedule tours/informational interviews with colleges to help narrow down choices and get a feel for the institution** (physical environment, types of courses, resources, etc.). Students can inquire about housing options available to them as well.
Schedule a meeting with campus foster youth support program staff to gather more information on available services. Learn more about these programs in Section 10.
- **Encourage your student to create an email address, such as Gmail, that is strictly for college and financial aid application information.** High school emails will often expire.

COURSEWORK



- ❑ **Talk to a school counselor to ensure that your student is enrolled in approved “a-g” coursework if the student may be interested in a four-year college or university.** Learn more about these courses in Section 6 and by visiting calstate.edu/how-to-get-to-calstate or bit.ly/UCOP-AG.
 - *Native speakers of a foreign language may be able to test out of introductory language courses.*
 - *Meet with your student’s high school counselor each semester to assess the student’s overall grade point average (GPA) to make sure your student is satisfying high school graduation and college entrance requirements.*
- ❑ **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.
- ❑ **If applicable, look into AP (Advanced Placement), International Baccalaureate (IB), and honors courses.** Students may need to be recommended by their teachers for advanced courses. If the student is interested, have them speak with their teacher to learn more and to request a recommendation.
- ❑ **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.
- ❑ **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, or continuation school and determine which option is in the student’s best interest.
- ❑ **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 a high school campus, allow students to earn college credit while also satisfying a requirement for high school graduation.

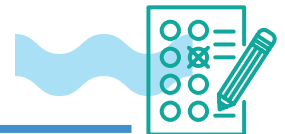
- ❑ **For students who change schools during the school year,** the old school must provide the new school with all records regardless of any outstanding fees. The records must include a list of full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization and other records, and, if applicable, a copy of the 504 plan or IEP.
 - *If the student changed schools mid-semester, 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.*
- ❑ **Work with the student to maintain and update their High School Education Planner at californiacolleges.edu.** This should be updated every semester to reflect the grades earned each semester. If a student applies to a Cal State University (CSU), course information will automatically transfer to their college application.



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 cfyetc.org/resources-publications.

TESTING



- ❑ **If applicable, the student should register to take the Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams in the spring.** Students can work with the academic counselor to access a fee waiver. Most schools don’t offer AP courses in the 9th grade.
- ❑ **11th Grade: Students complete the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics.** Upon completion, students are encouraged to release their results to the Cal State University System to help determine what level of math and English the student should be enrolled in after they have been admitted.

SAT & ACT

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 admission process.

- **10th Grade (optional):** Work with your student to register for the PSAT, a practice exam for the SAT, or the ACT Aspire Test, a practice exam for the ACT, in the fall semester. Ask the school counselor about a fee waiver.
- **11th Grade (optional):** Sign up for the SAT and/or ACT at least two months in advance of the test date. Students can access a fee waiver for the exam from their school counselor. To learn more about when to register for the SAT go to satsuite.collegeboard.org. For the ACT go to act.org. Students can retake the exam if they aren't satisfied with their score up until fall of senior year.
- Check with the school counselor or foster youth district liaison about any SAT or ACT test prep courses available through the school. Check with the social worker/probation officer about any funding available to help pay for these courses.

COLLEGE AND CAREER EXPLORATION



- **EXPLORE INTERESTS.** Encourage your student to take or update a career interest and aptitude assessment. See Section 4 for more information on career exploration resources.
- **DO COLLEGE TOURS.** Schedule a visit to a college campus or attend a college fair. These can be done in person or virtually. Eleventh graders should focus on schools that they may be interested in applying to. Your local Independent Living Program (ILP or ILSP), Foster Youth District Liaison, or high school counselor can be good resources for how to best set up a college visit.
- **GET INVOLVED.** Explore interests by helping your student discover and participate in extracurricular activities such as clubs, sports, or community service projects.

- **ENROLL IN ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS.** Speak to a school counselor or foster youth district liaison to learn about academic enrichment programs offered at your student's school or in your local community. See Section 10 for more information.
- **GET WORK EXPERIENCE.** Explore paid work experience to begin developing job skills and interests. Connect with local workforce development boards to identify youth employment programs. Youth can have a job starting at age 14 if they get a work permit. The student's school or social worker/probation officer can assist in getting a work permit. Visit laoyc.org/guides to learn more.

