

9th – 11th Grade Checklist

This checklist includes key steps and important resources to help you graduate from high school and prepare for postsecondary education. If you are not sure which pathway you want, that's ok! You have options.

This checklist references sections found in the *College and Career Bound: A Planning Guide for 9th–11th Grade Students in Foster Care*. Visit jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide to access the complete guide.

TIP



**KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS!**

Learn about all the rights of foster youth and what to do if your rights are violated at: fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/foster-youth-rights/. Share this resource with your caregiver, school counselor, or other trusted adult who can help you advocate for your educational rights.



EDUCATION PLANNING



- When you start 9th grade, attend an orientation** at your new school to meet your school counselor, learn about school clubs and activities, and pick up your class schedule.
- Work with your school counselor, or another trusted adult, to identify which postsecondary pathway is best for your interests.** See Section 5 for more information on the different postsecondary education pathways.
- If you have a disability,** request a copy of your most recent Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan that includes your diagnosis. For youth 16 or older, the IEP should include a plan, along with goals, to support you in the transition to postsecondary. Remember, you may be eligible for services through the Department of Rehabilitation. Learn more in Section 8.
- Create a physical or online folder to store important documents and add report cards from 9th–11th grade along with any certificates or awards earned.** If you transfer to a new school, get a copy of your school record and keep it with other important documents. You can use google.com/drive to store important documents online.

11TH GRADE ONLY

- Create an email address that is only for college and financial aid application information.** Avoid using a high school email address since those often expire once you graduate.
- If you are interested in applying to a four-year college or university, begin working on your personal statement during the spring or summer before senior year.** Take time to review your essay with your school counselor or other trusted adults. UC applications open as early as August 1st. Learn more in the 12th–grade checklist: jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide.

Develop a list of colleges you want to apply to.

- **If you are interested in applying to a four-year college or university** and are taking the courses necessary to apply, work with your school counselor to make a list of three to five colleges that include both colleges that you are likely to be accepted to (“safety schools”) and “reach schools” that have more competitive entrance requirements.
- **If you are interested in community college**, explore which colleges have the programs you are interested in.

Make time to schedule an in-person or virtual visit to a college campus or attend a college fair to explore your college options. Connect with the foster youth support program and ask about housing options. Learn more about foster youth support programs in Section 8.

COURSEWORK



If you are thinking of applying to a four-year college or university, talk to a school counselor to make sure you are enrolled in approved “a–g” courses. Learn more about these courses in Section 2 or 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.

Review your academic record(s) throughout the year and, if you are 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. Your school district must consult with you and your Education Rights Holder (ERH), if you are under the age of 18, to see which option is best for you. Learn more about these options in Section 2.

- **If you change schools during the school year**, your old school must provide the new school with all records, including an IEP or 504 Plan, regardless of any outstanding fees. Work with your school counselor or Foster Youth District Liaison to review your transcript for partial credit options.

If applicable, look into AP (Advanced Placement), International Baccalaureate (IB), and honors courses. If you are interested, speak with your teacher to learn more and, if needed, ask for a recommendation letter.

Talk with your school counselor to see if dual enrollment is right for you. Dual enrollment courses allow students to earn college credit while meeting high school graduation requirements.

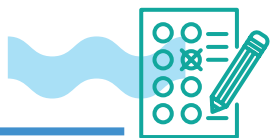
Create an account at californiacolleges.edu and update the High School Education Planner every semester with your grades earned. If you decide to apply to a CSU, course information will automatically transfer to your application.

Request tutoring or other supports as needed. If you struggle with learning, work with a high school counselor, Foster Youth District Liaison, or County Office of Education Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP) to help you get tutoring services.

- **If you have never been diagnosed with a learning need, and want to be assessed**, ask your caregiver or social worker/probation officer to submit a request letter (dredf.org/special-education/sample-letters). Learn more in Section 8.



TESTING



- **If applicable, work with your school counselor to register in the fall to take the Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams in the spring, usually in May.** Work with your school counselor to get a fee waiver.

11TH GRADE ONLY

- **Students complete the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics.** Students will have the option to share the results with the CSU system. Sharing your results will not affect your application for admission. Results are only used to inform which level of math and English you should be enrolled in after you have been admitted into a CSU.

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 school counselor to request a fee waiver 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.
- **11th Grade (optional):** Speak with your school counselor to request a fee waiver and sign up for the SAT and/or ACT at least two months in advance of the test date. To learn more about when to register for the SAT go to satsuite.collegeboard.org. For the ACT go to act.org.
 - Check with your school counselor or foster youth district liaison to find out about SAT or ACT test prep courses available through the school.
 - Check with your social worker/probation officer about any funding available to help pay for these courses.

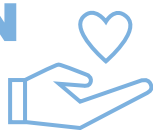
COLLEGE AND CAREER EXPLORATION



- **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 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 a good resource for how to best set up a college visit.
- **Get involved.** Explore your interests by participating in extracurricular activities such as clubs, sports, or community service projects.
- **Explore interests.** Take or update your career interest assessment. See Section 6 for more information on career exploration resources.
- **Enroll in academic enrichment programs.** Speak to a school counselor or Foster Youth District Liaison to learn about academic enrichment programs offered at your school or in your local community. See Section 8 for more information.
- **Get work experience.** Talk to your social worker/probation officer to find out more about local employment programs specifically for foster youth. Your school or social worker/probation officer can assist you in getting a work permit at age 14 or older. Visit laoyc.org/guides to learn more.
- **Students with a documented disability** may be eligible for career services through the Department of Rehabilitation. See Section 8 for more information.



CHILD WELFARE AND PROBATION DEPARTMENT RESOURCES



- Child & Family Team (CFT) Meeting.** This is YOUR meeting. The CFT meeting brings together a group of people, including you, to help make the best plans for your safety, well-being, and future. A meeting should happen at least every six months. You can invite your postsecondary education support person(s), teacher, counselor, coaches, and other trusted adults to your CFT meeting to help you plan for your postsecondary education and career goals.
- Right to Work documents.** Social workers/probation officers can assist you in gathering original Right to Work documents, and should provide copies to all youth 16 or older. Students should upload these documents into a secure electronic storage system such as ifoster.org or google.com/drive. A Social Security Card will also be needed for U.S. citizens to apply for financial aid in the 12th grade.

“Right to Work” Documents Needed for Employment:



- One photo ID, such as a school ID, CA State ID card, CA REAL ID, or driver’s license.
- U.S. Social Security Card or Permanent Resident Card (a.k.a. Green Card) if a non-US citizen.

FOR YOUTH AGE 16 OR ABOVE

- **Transitional Independent Living Plan & Agreement (TILP).** It is important to take part in developing your TILP. The TILP must be completed every six months if you are living in out-of-home foster care and are 16 or older. It should integrate your college and career goals, including who will support you in completing the steps necessary to meet your goals.
- **Postsecondary Education Support Person.** Social workers/probation officers must identify a postsecondary education support person(s) to assist all youth ages 16 or older who express an interest in college with completing their college applications, including career and technical education, as well as their financial aid applications.
- **Independent Living Program (ILP).** Connect with your social worker/probation officer or local ILP to determine your eligibility and to learn more about the resources and activities ILP provides. Each county’s program varies. Find a statewide ILP roster at: jbay.org/resources/ilp-roster.

Looking to prepare for 12th grade?

College and Career Bound: Planning Guide for 12th Grade Students in Foster Care is available at jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide/.



Student Spotlight:

Selecting Your
Postsecondary
Institution

Click here to watch:
youtu.be/S3AexRPSSY0

Scan
here to
watch.

