OCTOBER 2026

College and Career Bound: A Planning Guide *for* 9th–11th Grade Students *in* Foster Care



Be Anything! The Future Is Yours!

JBAY JOHN BURTON Advocates *for* Youth

CALIFORNIA ★ COLLEGE PATHWAYS

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SECTION 1

Becoming Your Best Self-Advocate

Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself to get to the future that YOU want. Some tools to help you do this can be found at imdetermined.org/youth.

Ask for what you need.

While asking for help may be hard, staying silent can make your goals harder to accomplish. Use the **Child and Family Team (CFT) Meeting** to get the help you need. **You deserve it.** Not sure what a CFT Meeting is? See the Child Welfare and Probation Department Resources in Section 8.

Know your education rights

Go to **fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/foster-youth-rights** to learn more and advocate for yourself as needed. Some examples of your rights in high school include:

- The right to remain at your current school, even if you move out of the district.
- The right to receive partial credits if you move mid-semester.
- The right to enroll in a new school immediately, even if some of your paperwork isn't yet available.
- The right to an Education Rights Holder (ERH), if you're under the age of 18, to make education decisions in your best interest.

Be aware of your thoughts.

Negative thoughts can limit our willingness to try new things or ask for help. A way to challenge negative thoughts is to adopt a **growth mindset**—*an understanding that mistakes are part of the learning process and help us grow.* Talk to a trusted adult if you struggle with negative thoughts.

If negative thoughts are saying...	Talk back! Work to reframe your thoughts with a growth mindset.
This is too hard. I can't do this.	**I deserve to be patient with myself.** Even if I do not understand this subject/class yet, that does not mean I will never understand it. Let me ask my friend/ teacher for help.
Maybe I am not cut out for school/ college.	**Just because I did not succeed in this project/test/class does not mean I cannot succeed in school.** I will talk to my counselor/teacher to work through what I can do differently next time.



SECTION 2

Things to Know About High School

What are my high school options?

Students may be able to choose between their traditional home school and options including magnet schools, charter schools, and even private schools. You also have the right to transition to the same high school as your classmates when you are leaving middle school. Visit the following sites to learn more:

- **MAGNET SCHOOLS**
  cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/mt/
- **CHARTER SCHOOLS**
  cde.ca.gov/ds/si/cs/
- **PRIVATE SCHOOLS**
  cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ps/
- **HOME SCHOOLING**
  cde.ca.gov/sp/ps/homeschool.asp

What classes do I need to take in high school?

- Graduation requirements to earn a high school diploma can vary from one school to another.
- If you are interested in attending a four-year university (e.g., a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC), you must complete ***"a-g" courses*** with a grade of C or higher. These classes may be different from the classes that you need to take to graduate high school. For more information, talk to your school counselor and visit calstate.edu/how-to-get-to-calstate or bit.ly/UCOP-AG.
- If you are interested in attending a four-year university but have not taken all the "a-g" courses, you can enroll in a community college and then transfer to a university.

Overview of "a-g" requirements

High School Subject Area	UC and CSU Requirements for Freshman Admissions (15 Courses)
A History and Social Science	2 Years
B English	4 Years
C Math	3 years required, 4 recommended
D Science	2 years required, 3 recommended
E Foreign Language	2 years in the same language required, 3 years recommended
F Visual and Performing Arts	1 year
G Electives	1 year

Student Spotlight:
Tips to Doing Well in High School

Click here to watch:
youtu.be/grwwQ5vmNy4

Scan here to watch.

Why do grades matter?

- Every grade you get in high school goes into your academic transcript, also called your permanent record. Each grade is worth points that are calculated to create a ***Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)***, the average of all the grades you receive in your high school classes.
- Not sure about your Cumulative GPA? Ask your school counselors.

DID YOU KNOW?

If you have a cumulative 3.0 GPA (a B average), you improve your chances of receiving scholarships and being admitted to a wide range of colleges including CSUs, UCs, and private colleges.

What is credit recovery?

- If you received a grade lower than a C in a course or want to make up units, you may consider one of these options:



Student Spotlight: Credit Recovery

Click here to watch: youtu.be/rrPFcQvekpo

Scan here to watch.

Options available to students interested in

MAKING UP CREDITS OR IMPROVING GRADES

SUMMER SCHOOL

Take or retake classes.

ADULT SCHOOL

Take classes at night after your school day or on weekends.

CONTINUATION SCHOOL

Attend an alternative school setting if you are behind in credits and at risk of not graduating to complete work at your own pace. Students cannot be forced to attend continuation school just because they have bad grades, except in rare circumstances.

FIFTH YEAR of HIGH SCHOOL

Stay in school for a 5th year to complete your school district graduation requirements, even if you are over 18.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON GRADUATION EXEMPTIONS FOR FOSTER YOUTH, and other foster youth education rights, see the **California Foster Youth Education Law Fact Sheets** under the Resources tab at **cfyetf.org/resources-publications** or talk with a school counselor.

What are my options for completing high school?

- There are several options for completing high school, but your choices can impact your future college and career goals. Be sure to talk to your school counselor to learn more.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Available to students who have completed graduation course requirements set by their local district.

- ✓ **Accepted** for federal and state financial aid, admission into college, employment, and the military.

GRADUATION EXCEPTIONS FOR FOSTER YOUTH

(also known as AB 167/216)

May be available to foster youth who change schools after the 10th grade and are behind in credits. This option allows students to receive their high school diploma by completing minimum state graduation requirements instead of the local requirements set by their district.

- ✓ **Accepted** for federal and state financial aid, employment, and the military.
- ☒ **Not accepted** for admission into the CSUs, UCs, and most selective four-year private or out-of-state colleges since students will not complete the required "a-g" courses.

DID YOU KNOW?

Students need to earn a high school diploma to be eligible for a CSU, UC, and some private colleges. California Community Colleges do not require students to have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED/HiSET), however, a diploma or equivalent is required to access most state and federal financial aid.

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE) CERTIFICATES

Available to students who are 18 years and older and have passed the GED or HiSET test.

- ✓ **Accepted** for federal and state financial aid, the military, and most employers.
- ☒ **Not accepted** for admission into the CSUs, UCs, and most selective four-year private or out-of-state colleges.

HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Available to students, typically those with disabilities, who have completed high school but were unable to meet all the requirements for graduation.

- ☒ **Not accepted** for most federal and state financial aid, admission into college, and the military.
- — **May be accepted** by employers.



SECTION 3

What is Postsecondary Education?

"Postsecondary education" includes any education following high school graduation that can lead to certification, licensing or a postsecondary degree such as an associate or bachelor's degree.

*In this guide, terms like **"postsecondary education"** and **"college"** are used to mean the same thing.*

Postsecondary education can make a BIG difference in your life! With a postsecondary education you can:

MAKE MORE MONEY: You could earn **$1 million** or more in extra earnings in your lifetime with a four-year degree!

STRESS LESS WITH MORE JOB SECURITY: You are much more likely to find a job with a four-year degree than with just a high school diploma!

ENJOY MORE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES: Over 70% of all jobs require some form of postsecondary education. Getting a degree or certificate can help you land your dream job.

College is different from high school in lots of good ways.

Make your own schedule: Pick from morning or evening classes, in-person or online. You do not have to go to school Monday through Friday.

Pick your classes: Work with a counselor to pick your major (i.e., your area of study) or program, and take the classes that will help you reach your career goals.

Build a community: Meet people like you who are looking for opportunities to succeed.

Have fun! Get involved with activities—sports, clubs, performances, and more—to have fun while you go to school.



SECTION 4

College IS Possible

There are a lot of myths about college. Make sure you know the facts.

No money? No problem!

Most current and former foster youth are eligible for a LOT of financial aid, such as:

- **FREE tuition (i.e., the cost of classes)** at the California Community Colleges, Cal State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) colleges.
- **Approximately $20,000 – $30,000 in FREE grant aid** if attending full-time (12 or more units). A ***grant*** is free money that you do not need to pay back. You can use it for things like rent, books, and food.
- **In addition to free tuition, a sample financial aid package might include the following:**

Federal Pell Grant for low-income students	$ 7,395
Cal Grant for foster youth in care on or **after age 13**	$ 6,000
Chafee Grant for foster youth in care on or **after age 16**	$ 4,500
Student Success Completion Grant for *community college students* in foster care on or **after age 13**	$10,500
TOTAL	**$28,395**

- **Get $15,000 per year in addition to financial aid for foster youth who are eligible for Extended Foster Care** (EFC or AB 12). EFC allows youth in care at the age of 18 to extend services to age 21.

LEARN MORE about the types of financial aid, who is eligible, and how to apply by downloading the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth at jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide.



Student Spotlight: Paying for Postsecondary Education

Click here to watch: youtu.be/PiidwC9snOc

Scan here to watch.

Most colleges offer a Foster Youth Support Program: Programs like NextUp and Guardian Scholars offer assistance like book grants, meal cards, gas or Uber cards, on top of academic counseling, a friendly face to talk to, and a community for students with experience in foster care.

TIP

Find the foster youth support contact at colleges you're thinking about attending at: **cacollegepathways.org**.



Student Spotlight: Connecting to Campus Resources

Click here to watch: youtu.be/aYWqOBBEqj8

Scan here to watch.

College IS possible, regardless of your high school grades: There is no minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) requirement to go to a California Community College. Visit Section 2 to learn more about GPA.

Students of ALL abilities can succeed in postsecondary education: Students with disabilities, including physical, mental, and learning disabilities, can receive extra support in college to help them succeed. This support could include a notetaker for class, extended time to take tests, audio textbooks, and more! See Section 8 for more information.

- For tips on how to advocate for your learning needs, visit **imdetermined.org/youth**.

TIP

If you experience anxiety or depression, ask your doctor or therapist for a letter verifying your diagnosis to access support services from your college's accessibility center. Your mental health matters!

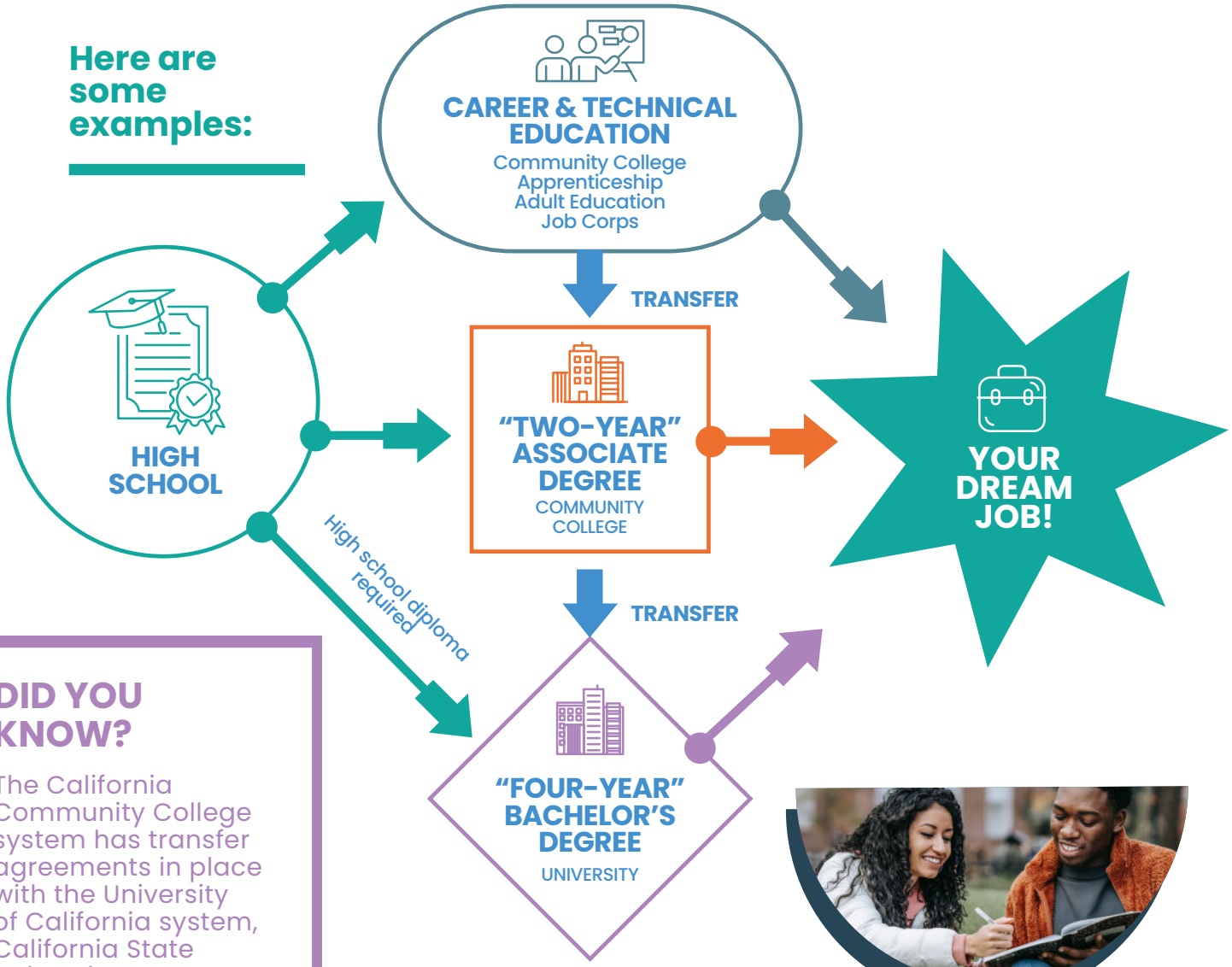
SECTION 5

Understanding Your Postsecondary Options

Postsecondary Education Pathways

There is no *"right"* way to access postsecondary education. It's about finding the best fit for you based on your interests, strengths, and long-term career goals.

Here are some examples:



DID YOU KNOW?

The California Community College system has transfer agreements in place with the University of California system, California State University system, and 39 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)!

Learn more at californiacommunity-collegehbcutransfer.com.

Student Spotlight: Impact of Postsecondary Education

Click here to watch: youtu.be/KaoPvGbTlyc

Scan here to watch.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING!

There are age and time limits for financial aid and foster youth benefits. Don't lose out! Make the most of these benefits by enrolling in postsecondary education after high school. Check out the **Foster Youth Benefits Eligibility** chart to learn more: jbay.org/resources/foster-youth-benefits-eligibility/ .

The "four-year" degree pathway

offers a bachelor's degree (B.A. or B.S.) at a college or university. To earn a degree in four years, students need to enroll full-time-- typically to 15 units per term, depending on the school-- n courses that fulfill their major requirements. On average, most students take about four and a half years to complete a bachelor's degree.

The "two-year" degree pathway,

also known as a community college, offers an associate degree (A.A. or A.S.) or an associate degree for transfer to a four-year college or university. To complete an associate degree in two years, students need to enroll full-time, taking 15 units per semester or attend year round (including summers).

Overview and eligibility requirements of two-year and four-year degree options

	California Community College (CCC) System	California State University (CSU) System	University of California (UC) System	Non-Profit Private Colleges and Universities	Out-of-State Colleges and Universities
Type of Institution	Public two-year college	Public four-year university	Public four-year university	Private four-year and/or two-year college (e.g., USC, University of San Diego)	Public and private four-year and/or two-year colleges
Eligibility Requirements	• Open access with no minimum GPA, essays, or testing required • High school diploma or equivalent recommended*	• 2.0+ GPA • "a-g" courses** • High school diploma • No essay required • No SAT/ACT required	• 3.0+ GPA • "a-g" courses** • High school diploma required • Essay required • No SAT/ACT required	• Vary by college • Essays and minimum GPA typically required • SAT/ACT may be required	• Vary by college • Essays and minimum GPA typically required • SAT/ACT may be required
Application Timeline	Open application, but early spring of senior year is encouraged	Priority application filing period: October 1st – November 30th of senior year	August 1st – November 30th of senior year	Application timelines vary, but typically begin in October	Application timelines vary, but typically begin in October
Additional Information	To learn more, visit **cccapply.org**	To learn more, visit: **calstate.edu/apply**	To learn more, visit: **admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/**	To learn more, visit: **commonapp.org**	

* A high school diploma or equivalent (i.e., GED/HiSET) is generally required to access most federal and state financial aid.
** Learn more about "a-g" course in Section 2.

The career and technical education (CTE) pathway

also known as a vocational school or trade school, offers certificates in hundreds of fields such as auto repair, carpentry, cosmetology, graphic design, health care careers, and more.



Overview of colleges and programs that offer career and technical education pathways

	California Community College (CCC) Career Education	Adult Education Career Technical Programs	Apprenticeship Programs	Job Corps (i.e., career residential program)
Program Description	Offers a wide variety of career education programs. Most foster youth qualify for free tuition, support programs, and up to $20,000 in grant aid if attending full time.	Offers a wide variety of career education programs. Students who apply for financial aid are ***only eligible for federal financial aid (e.g., Pell Grant).***	Offers 800 occupations. Students earn income working full-time under a skilled worker while completing evening courses.	Job Corps is a FREE education and vocational training program that provides FREE dorm-style housing, food, school supplies, and more.
Eligibility Requirements	• Open access with no minimum GPA • High school diploma or equivalent recommended*	• No minimum GPA • High school diploma or equivalent required	• No minimum GPA • High school diploma or equivalent required for most programs • Entrance exams and driver's license may be required • Minimum age requirement may vary	• No minimum GPA • No high school diploma or equivalent required • Must be between ages 16-24 years old • Must be eligible to work in the United States
Average Length of Program	3-24 months (if full-time)	12-18 months	3-6 years	12-24 months
Additional Information	**CCCMyPath.org** or **icangotocollege.com/career-ed-certificate**. Apply at **CCCapply.org**.	**caladulted.org/FindASchool**	**dir.ca.gov/das/**	**jobcorps.gov**

* A high school diploma or equivalent (i.e., GED/HiSET) is required to access most federal and state financial aid.

WARNING
Avoid "for-profit" or "proprietary" vocational colleges

They typically cost more than similar programs offered at a community college, forcing students to take out loans that can lead to owing thousands of dollars whether or not they finish the program. Also, units earned at these colleges rarely transfer.

SECTION 6

Exploring Your College and Career Options

Explore the following online tools to learn more about postsecondary education and career pathways that may be right for you!



- **California Career Zone | cacareerzone.org** offers many tools, like the Interest Profiler, that suggest potential careers and postsecondary education pathways based on your interest or personality.
- **Gladeo | gladeo.org** helps you uncover your personal interests and how they match up with different careers. Youth in Los Angeles can also check out career opportunities at **losangeles.gladeo.org**.
- **My Path | CCCMyPath.org** offers a career assessment to learn more about career pathways and how much you can earn when you complete a degree or certificate at a California Community College.
- **Living Wage Calculator | Livingwage.mit.edu** helps you learn how much money you have to earn to afford a home in the city and state you choose.

CHECK THIS OUT

Fostering Careers - A Roadmap to Your First Job to learn more about how to prepare for employment. Visit **laoyc.org/library/#guides**

SECTION 7

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.

CLICK jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-youth-checklists/ OR SCAN the QR code to download the 9th–11th Grade Checklist Handout!

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. This platform will also be used in the future to offer automatic admission to CSUs for qualified high school seniors.
- ❑ **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/library/#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.

SECTION 8

Resources

CLICK jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-youth-checklists/ OR SCAN the QR code to download the Resources Handout!

K-12 Academic Enrichment Programs

Academic enrichment programs support students with school and planning for postsecondary education. Talk to a school counselor, County Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program, or Foster Youth District Liaison to learn about programs available in your community. In some counties, programs exist just for foster youth. Below are a few common programs that might be offered in your community:

- **GEAR UP |** www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html
- **Federal TRIO Programs, like Talent Search and Upward Bound |** ope.ed.gov/programs/trio
- **Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) |** eaop.universityofcalifornia.edu
- **Puente |** thepuenteproject.org
- **Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) |** mesa.ucop.edu
- **Boys and Girls Clubs academic success programs |** bgca.org.

K-12 Resources

- **CaliforniaColleges.edu |** Provides information on the college application process, financial aid, and career pathways. Learn more at californiacolleges.edu.
- **County Office of Education (COE) Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP) |** FYSCPs can help students get their health and school records, and can coordinate services such as tutoring, financial aid application assistance, and college and career planning. Contact information for each county can be found at cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy.
- **Foster Youth District Liaison (AB 490 Liaison) |** Found in each school district, the foster youth liaison can help collect transcripts from schools, help obtain partial credits to stay on track for graduation, identify tutoring resources, and assist with graduation requirements. Contact information for these liaisons can be found at cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/ab490contacts.asp.
- **Learn to Be Tutoring |** Provides free one-on-one, online tutoring to underserved youth. Learntobe.org
- **UPchieve Tutoring |** Provides free online tutoring and college counseling: upchieve.org/students

Students With Learning Needs

- **California Department of Education Special Needs Section |** Provides information and resources to serve the educational needs of persons with disabilities. cde.ca.gov/sp/se/
- **Department of Rehabilitation (DoR) |** Offers student support services for 16- to 21-year-olds enrolled in school. Students must have a 504 Plan, IEP, or believe to have a disability (even if not formally diagnosed) to receive services. Go to dor.ca.gov and search for Student Services.

Child Welfare and Probation Department Resources

- **California Family Urgent Response System (FURS) |** A safe, judgment-free 24/7 hotline for current and former foster youth and their caregivers to get immediate help for any issues, big or small. **Cal-FURS.org**

- **California Foster Youth Ombudsperson's Office |** A neutral office that provides information about the rights of foster youth and helps resolve complaints about the care they receive. This office can also provide former foster youth with a dependency/ward of the court verification letter which is often required to access benefits in college such as priority registration or campus support programs. Go to **fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov** or call **877-846-1602.**

- **Independent Living Program (ILSP or ILP) |** A voluntary program for students who were in care at least one day after their 16th birthday offered through the child welfare and probation departments that provides services and benefits to assist foster youth until their 21st birthday in achieving self-sufficiency. Some Kin-GAP youth are also eligible. Contact your social worker/probation officer for more information and/or view this ILP roster: **jbay.org/resources/ilp-roster/**.

Other Resources

- **CalFresh |** California's food stamps (SNAP) program, provides free money for low-income individuals. **Getcalfresh.org**

- **iFoster |** Provides free resources to foster youth such as cell phones, tutoring services, and a digital locker to safely store important documents. Become a member for free at: **ifoster.org**

- **Medi-Cal Health Insurance |** Available for young people in care on or after their 18th birthday through age 26. Insurance includes coverage for mental health services. **www.childrennow.org/child-welfare/coveredtil26/**

Financial Aid Resources

- **Application Fee Waiver |** Most foster youth qualify for an application fee waiver for up to four CSUs, four UCs, and all applications submitted through the Common Application (private universities based on their income.

- **California College Promise Grant |** Allows low-income students at California Community Colleges to have enrollment fees (the cost of classes) waived. Foster youth can maintain this benefit regardless of academic performance once in college. To apply, complete a FAFSA (**fafsa.gov**) or CADAA (**dream.csac.ca.gov**.

- **California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) |** Provides information on state financial aid resources, like the Cal Grant, Chafee Grant, and California Dream Act Application. It also includes a list of Cal Grant-eligible institutions. **csac.ca.gov** or **www.csac.ca.gov/foster-youth.**

- **Federal Student Aid |** Provides information about different types of federal financial aid, how to submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), how aid is calculated, and how to manage loans. **studentaid.gov**

- **John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) |** Provides everything you need to know about financial aid for California foster youth, Financial Aid Guide for California Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth with embedded scholarship resources, and step-by-step visual guides, and scholarship resources. **jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/**



California Community College Programs and Benefits

Programs vary by campus. Contact your campus to learn more.

- **Basic Needs Centers |** Provide access to food, housing, mental health resources, and more.
- **California College Promise Program |** Assists full-time eligible students with free college tuition and support services.
- **Campus Support Programs (CSP) for Foster Youth |** Support current and former foster youth with a variety of services such as admissions, financial aid, academic counseling, and tutoring. All CA community colleges have NextUp (see eligibility below), and many others have additional foster youth programs that serve students who don't meet NextUp eligibility. **cacollegepathways.org/search-foster-youth-programs/**

  NextUp Eligibility: Serves current and former foster youth who were in care on or after their 13th birthday and under the age of 26 at the time of program entry. Provides special assistance, including one-on-one support, book vouchers, and additional financial resources. Learn more at icangotocollege.com/financial-aid/foster-youth-support.
- **Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) and CalWORKs |** Assist students with dependents who are eligible for county cash aid.
- **Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)/Student Accessibility Services (SAS) |** Provides assistance and accommodations, including note-taking assistance and longer test-taking time, for students with physical, mental, and/or learning disabilities.
- **Dream Resource Center |** Assists undocumented students with academic, career, and referral services.
- **Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) |** Provides admission, academic counseling, and financial support services to historically underserved and low-income students.
- **LGBTQ+ Services |** Create a safe and welcoming space for members of the LGBTQ+ community. **jbay.org/resources/ccc-lgbtq-resource-guide/**
- **Physical and Mental Health Services |** Offer access to medical and mental health services including vaccinations, physicals, and counseling.
- **Priority Registration |** Allows youth who were in foster care at least one day after the age of 13 and are under the age of 26 to register for classes before the general population. Application deadlines vary by campus.
- **Puente Project |** A program geared toward Hispanic/Latino students that provides academic support, counseling, and mentoring.
- **Rising Scholars |** Supports students who were involved with the justice system with academic, counseling, and referral services. **risingscholarsnetwork.org**
- **Student Success Completion Grant |** A community college financial aid program that provides a grant of $5,250 per semester to students who were in foster care on or after the age of 13, receive the Cal Grant B or C and enroll in 12 or more units.
- **Umoja Community |** A community dedicated to enhancing the cultural and educational experience of African American and other students. **umojacommunity.org**

CSU and UC Programs and Benefits

Programs vary at each campus. Contact campuses to learn more.

More information about services at the CSUs is available at **calstate.edu/attend/student-services.**

More information about services at the UCs is available at **tinyurl.com/UCStudentServices.**

- **Basic Needs Centers |** Provide access to food, housing, mental health resources, and more.
- **Campus Support Programs (CSP) for Foster Youth |** All CSU and UC campuses have programs that support current and former foster youth with a variety of services such as assistance with admissions, financial aid, academic counseling, and tutoring. To qualify, students must be in foster care at least one day. Program names and eligibility services vary by campus. **cacollegepathways.org/search-foster-youth-programs/.**
- **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) |** Provides assistance with admissions, academic, and financial support services to historically underserved and low-income students. They also advocate to accept some students who don't meet regular university admission criteria! Students must apply when completing their undergraduate application.
- **Justice System Involved Students |** Many campuses have programs for students with prior involvement with juvenile and adult criminal justice systems such as the UC's Underground Scholars.
- **Priority Housing |** Foster youth can receive priority status for on-campus housing, and some students can stay on campus year-round including holiday breaks. Contact your college to learn more.
- **Priority Registration for Foster Youth |** Current and former foster youth in California receive priority course registration at all CSU and most UC campuses. This benefit makes it much easier to enroll in competitive classes. At the CSUs, this benefit is for youth who were in foster care at least one day after the age of 13 and are under the age of 26. Eligibility varies across the UCs.
- **Resources for Undocumented Students |** Often referred to as Dream Centers, offered at many CSUs and UCs.
- **Students with Disabilities Services |** Provide assistance and accommodations for students with physical, mental, and/or learning disabilities, including note-taking and special test-taking conditions.
- **TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) |** Serve first-generation, low-income students, and individuals with disabilities in their academic, personal, and professional growth.

Student Spotlight:
Benefits of Priority Registration

Click here to watch: youtu.be/Nb-K2VABvHY

Scan here to watch.

California College Pathways | Provides information and resources about postsecondary education for foster youth including resources for understanding and getting help with financial aid, finding scholarships, and accessing foster youth support programs on college and university campuses. **cacollegepathways.org**

SECTION 9

Common Education Terms

ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT is an official academic record with details of subjects studied along with grades received in each subject.

"A-G" COURSES are a series of high school classes that students are required to complete with a grade of C or better to be eligible for admission to the California State University and the University of California systems along with some private colleges.

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS offer free to low-cost classes for adults 18 and older to earn a high school diploma, obtain a high school equivalency certificate, or complete courses for career certification.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS combine paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction to prepare workers for highly skilled and in-demand careers.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by a community college which typically takes two or more years depending on the major and enrollment status (full-time or part-time).

BACHELOR'S DEGREE is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study typically lasting four to five years (depending on the course of study).

CALIFORNIA DREAM ACT APPLICATION (CADAA) allows eligible undocumented students interested in attending California colleges and career education programs to apply for state financial aid and in-state tuition.

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM consists of 116 public colleges throughout the state offering a range of certificates, associate degrees, transfer pathways and limited bachelor's degree programs.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM is a public university system with 23 campuses throughout the state that offer bachelor's degrees and advanced degrees.

CAMPUS FOSTER YOUTH SUPPORT PROGRAM, often known as Guardian Scholars or NextUp, offers support and services to eligible current and former foster youth attending college that may include help with academic counseling, books and supplies, tutoring, and emergency support.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, also known as a trade school or vocational school, is a program of study that offers a certificate in a specialized career (e.g., graphic design, respiratory therapy, dental hygiene). These programs are typically short-term.

CHAFEE GRANT is money for California's foster youth who were in care on or after their 16th birthday to help pay for college or career and technical training.

CONTINUATION SCHOOL is an alternative high school diploma program for students who are 16 years of age or older, have not graduated from high school, and who are at risk of not graduating.

CUMULATIVE ACADEMIC GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) is the overall GPA of all grades a student has earned in all semesters and all courses.

DEGREE is an academic title earned after a student completes a series of classes focused on a particular area of study.

DUAL ENROLLMENT, also known as concurrent enrollment, allows high school students to take college courses, taught by college professors, at their high school campus or community college.

FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY offers a variety of degree programs for students to earn their bachelor's degree (Bachelor of Arts or Science).

FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) is an application that helps determine what federal and state aid a student may qualify for including federal grants, work-study, and loans.

FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT is when a student enrolls in a minimum of 12 units per semester during fall and spring terms.

GRANT is a form of financial aid that does not have to be repaid.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION EXEMPTIONS FOR FOSTER YOUTH (AKA AB 167/216) allow eligible foster youth who change schools after their second year of high school and who are behind in credits to receive their high school diploma by completing the minimum state graduation requirements instead of any additional local graduation requirements set by their district.

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM (ILP OR ILSP) is a voluntary program offered through the child welfare and probation department that provides services and resources to eligible foster youth up until the age of 21.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) is a plan developed to make sure that a child with a disability who is attending K-12th grade receives specialized services and supports to do well in their classes.

JOB CORPS is a free education and career training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor for young people between the ages of 16-24 that also provides free housing.

MAJOR is the subject that is the main focus of your degree, such as a bachelor's or associate degree. For example, someone may choose to major in Psychology, Engineering, Business, or Criminal Justice Studies.

NEXTUP is the name of a foster youth support program for current and former foster youth found at each community college in California that provides services and supports to help students succeed in college.

PELL GRANT is free federal financial aid available to low-income students who are attending a qualified postsecondary education program.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION includes any education following high school graduation that can lead to certification, licensing, or a postsecondary degree such as a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's degree.

SCHOLARSHIP is money awarded to a student based on academic achievement, financial need, or other criteria to assist with the cost of their education that does not need to be repaid.

TUITION is the cost of classes at a college or university.

TWO-YEAR COLLEGE is often a community college that offers programs through which students can earn an associate degree in two years (if enrolled in 15 units each term or attending year-round, including summers) or a certification in one year or less.

UNIT represents how much time a student will need to dedicate to a class (or course) at a college or university. Typically, one unit equals about one hour of time spent in a class per week and two hours of study time outside of class.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SYSTEM is a public university system with 10 universities throughout the state that offer bachelor's degrees and advanced degrees.

504 PLAN is a plan to identify accommodations to support a student's learning, and is available to students with a disability who may not qualify for an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

College and Career Bound:
A Planning Guide
for 9th - 11th Grade Students in Foster Care

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CALIFORNIA COLLEGE PATHWAYS

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