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|  | | Ninth Grade |Spring Edition | | | | | | |  | |
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|  | NEWSLETTER TEMPLATEHigh School & Beyond Planning — News & Information | | | | | | | | |  |
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| *Replace with School Contact Info* | | | | | | | | | | |
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| EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES MATTER  Getting involved in clubs, sports, work, or other pursuits outside the classroom can give your teen new skills, help build self-confidence and self-esteem, and be fun!  In addition, extracurricular activities can play a role in college admission and scholarship applications. Most college applications ask about activities. That is because what a student does outside the classroom shows their passion. Colleges want to know more about students than what their grades and test scores can tell them. What a child does in their free time can showcase critical personal qualities. For example:   * Serving in student government shows leadership skills. * Being on the track team through high school shows long-term commitment. * Volunteering at a hospital shows dedication to helping others. * Working part-time or caring for a relative while keeping grades up shows responsibility and time management.   The number one rule for students is to follow their interests if possible. Freshmen and sophomores should try out many different activities to get a taste of what they enjoy and then focus on a few key activities (perhaps even taking a leadership role) during the rest of high school. | | |  |  | MAJORS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  A major is a specialized area of study or program at a college or university. Some majors, like graphic design or criminal justice, are directly connected to a career path. Other majors might prepare your child with essential job skills like communication, interpersonal relationships, organization, and problem-solving. | Here are some common questions and answers that your child might have:   * **I have no idea what I want to study. How do I choose a major?** Many students begin college without a clear choice of major. You don't have to choose a major at many colleges until the end of your sophomore year. Until then, you can take courses in a variety of fields. You’ll earn general education credits that count toward your degree, no matter your major. You’ll probably find a subject area you love as you take different classes. Academic advisors and professors can also help you consider your interests and review your options. * **Can I change my major?** Yes! Even students who enter college having chosen a major are likely to change their minds at some point. * **Does my major dictate my career options?** In most cases, there is not one specific major required to enter a career field.  Employers hiring graduating seniors seek well-rounded individuals with good transferrable skills and relevant experience.  Some professional fields have qualifying or licensing requirements; a student may have to select a specific major. Examples include nursing, accounting, and teaching. | | | | |
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| UPCOMING EVENTS  Click here to enter text. |  |  | Graduation cap with solid fill  DID YOU KNOW?  Students taking challenging or rigorous high school courses are more likely to succeed in college. | | |

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| High School & Beyond Planning  Ninth Grade | Spring Edition | gearup.wa.gov | | | | | |
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| WHAT IT TAKES TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL  Getting into college starts with graduating from high school. However, depending on the type of school your child wants to attend, it’s essential to know what classes to take, the grades necessary, and any other requirements beyond what’s required for high school graduation. Here is what it takes: |  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Degree Type | High School Graduation & Community Colleges | 4-Year Public Universities in Washington | Selective 4-Year Private Colleges & Universities | | # of Credits | 4 English  3 Math (Algebra 1 & above)  3 Science (2 lab)  3 Social Science  2 Arts  2 Health & Fitness  1 CTE  2 World Language  4 Electives | 4 English  3 Math (Algebra 1 & above plus senior year math-based quantitative course)  3 Science (2 labs)  3 Social Science  2 World Language  1 Arts | 4 English  3-4 Math (Algebra 1 & above to pre-calculus or statistics)  3-4 Science (labs recommended)  3-4 Social Science (including U.S. History)  3-4 World Language  + Arts & Challenging Electives | | Required | High School and Beyond Plan  Complete a Grad Pathway  Earn HS Credits | High school graduation or equivalency  Minimum 2.75-3.00 GPA  No D’s or F’s in classes  SAT or ACT | High school graduation or equivalency  Competitive GPA  Mostly A’s and B’s  SAT, ACT, or portfolio of work (usually) | | Recommended |  | Additional coursework and other factors may increase the likelihood of admission. | Honors, AP, IB, or college credit courses when available  Extracurriculars or special achievement |   **NOTE:** Districts may have local requirements. Students and parents should check with school counselors for additional graduation requirements. | | | |
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| STUDENT CHECKLIST   * Review academic progress toward graduation and update your High School and Beyond Plan. * Ask your counselor or teachers what dual credit courses are available, whether you are eligible, and how to enroll in them. * Plan and register for next year’s courses. * Explore interests. It doesn’t have to be sports or an academically related club. Consider potential careers and find activities related to fields that interest you. Activities can be outside of school as well, like in the community. Remember! It’s quality over quantity. * Explore careers and interests, as well as majors. Complete the career interest inventory. * Identify and research 5 to 10 postsecondary options. Explore careers, colleges, or programs. | | |  |  | MYTHBUSTER  **MYTH:** Taking the easiest courses the high school offers will boost your teen’s GPA and help them get into college.  **REALITY:** College admissions officers understand the difference between an A in an easy class and a B in a more challenging class.  Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes are typically the most rigorous or challenging courses at a typical high school. Generally, taking advanced courses and working hard is better than taking easy classes and putting in little effort.  It is important to note that there is a big difference between meeting high school graduation requirements and taking classes that colleges expect to see on a student’s transcript. Check out the colleges' websites you are considering learning about their requirements. |
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| FAMILY CHECKLIST   * Talk to your teen about coursework and activities for next year. * Review your child’s schedule and course selections. Ensure they are on track to graduate from high school and have the appropriate classes for the type of college they want. Encourage your teen to enroll in AP or dual credit options. * Explore interests with your child and encourage involvement. Talk to your student about the kinds of activities she is interested in. Help your child get involved in school or the community. * Help your teen explore careers and interests. | | |