

Student Milestones for College & Career Readiness

Grade Level	Actions	Knowledge
Grades 5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in a career exposure experience (e.g., a field trip) <input type="checkbox"/> Develop extracurricular interests through participation in school-based clubs, sports, or similar after-school activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that there are many different career options <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that most careers require that I have additional training or education beyond high school <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that career development occurs over time and throughout adulthood
Grades 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with a school counselor to develop a postsecondary plan (i.e., explore pathways for potential careers) and discuss the costs associated with postsecondary education <input type="checkbox"/> Attend an information session and/or shadow a student at local high school option(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Take a career exploration course (online if not offered in school) <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in college and career awareness experiences (e.g., campus visits, hands-on events, or job shadowing) <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in school and student organizations (e.g., clubs, athletics, school newspaper, yearbook, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in summer activities related to an interest, talent, or curiosity (e.g., academic, athletic, artistic, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that different careers require different levels of postsecondary education or training <input type="checkbox"/> I understand how high school will be different from middle school (how GPA, course credits, course selection, early postsecondary opportunities, work-based learning, and school activities lead to college and career readiness) <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that it is important to continue to explore and broaden my academic, career, and personal interests

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Grade 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begin taking aligned courses to a personalized education and career plan (e.g., a focus area or CTE course of study) <input type="checkbox"/> Have a conversation with parents/guardians about the costs of postsecondary and how you will plan for those costs (e.g., creating a savings account) <input type="checkbox"/> Experiment with different organizational and study methods to see what works best for you <input type="checkbox"/> Try something new to expand personal skills or interests (e.g., sport, club, course) <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule an annual meeting with a school counselor to update your postsecondary plan <input type="checkbox"/> Have conversations with teachers, family members, and other adult mentors to talk through your college and career interests <input type="checkbox"/> Become involved with school student organizations, clubs, or teams <input type="checkbox"/> Learn about eligibility criteria for honor societies, special diplomas, certifications, or other merit-awards <input type="checkbox"/> Start a resume to document extra-curricular activities and accomplishments, work experience, and skills <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in college and career exploration experiences (e.g., campus visits, hands-on events, college and career fairs, school-based enterprise, industry specific exposure) <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer in your community and/or in a professional field related to your academic, personal, or career interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the connection between GPA, ACT, or SAT scores and their impact on early postsecondary opportunities and postsecondary admission, scholarships, financial aid, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand how to backwards plan from my career goals to what I should be focusing on in high school <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that it is important to save money for postsecondary expenses (including direct costs like tuition and indirect costs like transportation, supplies, and fees) <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the importance of rigorous coursework in preparing me for success in postsecondary

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Grade 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in college and career exploration experiences (e.g., campus visits, hands-on events, college and career fairs, school-based enterprise, industry specific exposure) <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in a meaningful summer experience such as a job, internship, or early postsecondary preparation (e.g., pre-college summer camp, computer coding camp, apprenticeship related to CTE concentration) <input type="checkbox"/> Continue involvement with school and student organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer in your community or school <input type="checkbox"/> Update your resume to include your work, volunteer experiences, honors, or skills that you've acquired since last school year <input type="checkbox"/> Do a practice job interview with a school counselor or other adult mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Update your postsecondary plan with your counselor and have a conversation about your potential eligibility/competitiveness for admission <input type="checkbox"/> Have conversations with a teacher, family member, or other adult mentor to talk about your college and career interests <input type="checkbox"/> Have a conversation with a counselor and family members about tuition, fees, and other costs of postsecondary, as well as your potential eligibility for need- and merit-based aid <input type="checkbox"/> Research course offerings for your junior year, including early postsecondary opportunities such as advanced placement, dual enrollment and dual credit, or work-based learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the structure and content of ACT or SAT college readiness exams <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the different postsecondary options available to me and the criteria required for admission <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the importance of rigorous coursework and how my current course performance will impact future course opportunities, especially opportunities to earn early postsecondary credit and to qualify for merit-based scholarships (e.g., HOPE Scholarship) <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that I should revisit my postsecondary plan regularly (i.e., each semester) and discuss my plans with a counselor, teacher, advisor, or family member who can help

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Grade 11 (Fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to visit college and career-related campuses or events <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer in your community or school regularly <input type="checkbox"/> Attend THEC “Path to College” College Planning Nights <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare to take the ACT or SAT (e.g., take a preparation course, take a practice test, use free resources online, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Do a practice job interview with a family member, adult mentor, or a professional in your field of interest <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to participate in school and student organizations and take on leadership roles and/or increased responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Organize and lead volunteer activities <input type="checkbox"/> Update your resume to include your work, volunteer experiences, honors, or skills that you’ve acquired since last school year <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a meeting with your school counselor to discuss details of the postsecondary application process, how to choose a program of study, and how to identify postsecondary institutions that could be a “fit” <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to have conversations with trusted teachers, family members, or other adult mentors to talk through your college and career interests <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivate relationships with teachers who may write letters of recommendation for postsecondary, sharing with them your aspirations and asking them for feedback on how to ensure that you are best prepared for postsecondary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the major components of the postsecondary application process including admission, financial aid, and choosing a major, concentration, or certification <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the difference between scholarships, loans, and grant aid <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the importance of rigorous coursework in preparing me for success in postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> I know where the counselor posts scholarship opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> I know how to request a transcript for a summer program, job, internship, or scholarship applications

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Grade 11 (Spring)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete and pass early postsecondary opportunities (Dual Credit, Dual Enrollment, AP, IB, Cambridge) <input type="checkbox"/> Research and apply for postsecondary scholarship opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a list of postsecondary opportunities according to your academic and career interests <input type="checkbox"/> Take the ACT or SAT <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in a meaningful summer experience such as employment, an internship, or postsecondary preparation (e.g., pre-college summer camp, computer coding camp, job related to your CTE concentration) <input type="checkbox"/> Write a draft of a college essay, personal statement, or cover letter, and get feedback from a teacher, counselor, or college access professional <input type="checkbox"/> Identify two or three teachers who you think would write you a letter of recommendation for postsecondary and talk to them before the end of the school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the importance of the ACT or SAT and that I can retake either exam in my senior year <input type="checkbox"/> I understand this is an important summer to get a job or internship, apply for a summer academic program, or explore a passion or interest related to my college and career interests before applying to postsecondary

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Grade 12 (Fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to research and apply for postsecondary scholarship opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize a postsecondary application list with the support of a school counselor, teacher, or college access professional <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the ACT senior retake if you would like to improve your score <input type="checkbox"/> Take rigorous academic coursework that aligns with your college and career plan (exceeding minimum requirements) <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in senior traditions (e.g., honor society inductions, school recognitions, signing ceremony) <input type="checkbox"/> Ask a trusted counselor, teacher, or college access professional to provide feedback on your application documents before submitting <input type="checkbox"/> Complete a Tennessee Promise Application <input type="checkbox"/> Track and celebrate college application submissions and results, industry certification completion(s), scholarship applications, and results <input type="checkbox"/> Complete FAFSA by the Tennessee Promise deadline <input type="checkbox"/> Update your resume to include your work, volunteer experiences, honors, or skills that you've acquired since last school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the postsecondary application process that is aligned to my college and/or career goals <input type="checkbox"/> I know the deadlines for the major components of the postsecondary application process, and I have a plan to ensure that I meet each of them <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that senior year grades still matter for admission and scholarship opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the differences between the postsecondary institutions and how to choose between them <input type="checkbox"/> I understand I should apply to several schools with a range of acceptance requirements based on my GPA and ACT or SAT scores <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the importance of having a teacher or college access professional review my application before submitting <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the requirements and benefits of the Tennessee Promise program <input type="checkbox"/> I understand how to complete the FAFSA, and I know who to go to for help

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Grade 12 (Spring)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete a capstone project or work-based learning practicum <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Tennessee Promise meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with admission officers from the postsecondary institutions to which you applied or have been admitted <input type="checkbox"/> With a counselor or college access professional, review the financial aid options and academic outcome data of the postsecondary institutions to which you were admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Make a financial deposit at your chosen postsecondary institution and attend orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and participate in volunteer opportunities of interest to ensure that you maintain Tennessee Promise eligibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I know what information or data to compare to decide which postsecondary option is the best match for me academically, financially, and with regard to my career goal(s) <input type="checkbox"/> I know who the admissions and/or financial aid officers are and how to contact them for the postsecondary options I am considering <input type="checkbox"/> I know who to contact at the postsecondary level regarding my financial aid, course registration, housing, academic support/advising, and how to make a deposit <input type="checkbox"/> I understand how to evaluate my financial aid awards to determine the net cost of each institution and compare my different options

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Post-secondary Transition (Grades 13-14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a meeting with your postsecondary academic advisor to discuss required coursework for graduation and/or transfer, eligibility for selective opportunities like honor societies or departmental scholarships or grants <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize the academic supports available such as tutoring, writing centers, or office of academic advising and student support <input type="checkbox"/> Update your resume to reflect your career goals and qualifications, and be sure to include your work, volunteer experiences, honors, or skills that you acquire during postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Choose a major or concentration <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor scholarship or program requirements to ensure you maintain eligibility (e.g., GPA requirements for HOPE Scholarship, volunteer requirements for Tennessee Promise) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand how to plan course choices to meet requirements on time and in the proper sequence to earn my intended degree, certification, or diploma <input type="checkbox"/> If attending a community college, I understand the pathways and requirements for transferring to complete a four-year degree <input type="checkbox"/> I know where to find the office of student support <input type="checkbox"/> I know where to go and who to contact for career services related to resume-building, job opportunities, interviewing, networking, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> I know where to go for health and support services such as counseling, wellness, tutoring, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> I know the requirements in order to maintain good standing at my postsecondary institution, in my program in regards to my scholarship or financial aid, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that using support services on campus—such as a writing, tutoring, or counseling center—can help ensure that I stay on track for graduation/completion of my degree