



COLLEGE PLANNING

11TH GRADE

Junior year is a pivotal time for college preparation. At SPIRE Academy, we offer essential guidance to help students and parents navigate this critical period effectively. These tips cover important aspects such as maintaining strong academic performance, preparing for standardized tests, getting involved in extracurricular activities and starting the college search process. Additionally, understanding financial aid and scholarship opportunities is crucial for planning. Utilize these resources to stay organized and proactive throughout the year. Remember, your SPIRE College Counselor is available to support and assist you every step of the way.

JUNIOR YEAR – 11TH GRADE

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- › Academics: Your junior year grades are crucial for college admissions. Keep up with your coursework and seek help if you're struggling in any subjects.
- › Challenge Yourself: Colleges look for students who challenge themselves academically. Take honors or AP courses if available and appropriate for your abilities and interests.
- › Test Prep: Start preparing for the SAT or ACT early. Take practice tests, consider enrolling in a prep course or use online resources to improve your scores.
- › Involvement: Colleges appreciate well-rounded students. Get involved in student clubs and activities, leadership and volunteer opportunities.
- › Relationship Building: Letters of recommendation are crucial to college admissions. Engage with your school staff, coaches, teachers and administrators, participate in class discussions and ask for help when needed.
- › Start Researching Colleges: Begin exploring colleges and universities that interest you. Consider factors like location, size, majors offered, sport, campus culture and financial aid options.
- › Attend college fairs and visit a few nearby college campuses for big picture ideas of what different campus types offer, ask questions about academic programs, student life and admission requirements.
- › Start looking into scholarship opportunities and financial aid options. Understanding the costs associated with college and how to finance your education is essential.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- › Offer your child encouragement and emotional support as they navigate the challenges of junior year. Let them know that you believe in their abilities and are there to support them every step of the way.
- › Familiarize yourself with the college application process and important deadlines. Stay informed about standardized testing requirements, financial aid options and scholarship opportunities.
- › Begin exploring college costs and financial aid options early. Research scholarships, grants, and student loans to help cover the cost of tuition, room and board and other expenses as needed.

- › Encourage your child to take ownership of their college preparation journey. Help them develop important skills like time management, organization and decision-making.
- › Support your child as they prepare for standardized tests like the SAT or ACT. Encourage them to take practice tests, consider enrolling in a test prep course or use online resources to improve their scores.
- › Stay in communication with your child's school counselor to stay informed about academic progress, college planning workshops and resources available to support college-bound students.
- › The college application process can be stressful for both parents and students. Stay calm and supportive, and reassure your child that their worth is not defined by college admissions outcomes.

TIPS FOR THE SUMMER

- › Put finishing touches on college list using the reach, target and safety schools.
 - › Complete your activity record or student resume to make for an easier college application process.
 - › Research Early Decision/Early Action/Rolling Admission options.
 - › Begin brainstorming ideas for your personal essay (required by most colleges).
 - › Plan fall campus visits.
 - › Note that some college applications may be submitted as early as August.
 - › Attend exposure events for your sport.
 - › Attend college visits.
 - › Begin working on your personal statement (required by most college applicants).
 - › Finalize your list of college choices.
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