

BSGE 9th Grade College Preparation Timeline

November

College Fairs can be a great place to “see” many schools at once. Talk to your college advisor to find fairs near you. Some colleges also offer online tours on their websites. Attend fairs to learn about volunteer opportunities. Participate in extra-curricular activities. Colleges/universities look for highly motivated, well-rounded students. If they haven’t done so already, have your parents put extra money into a college fund (e.g. 529 Savings Plan).

December

While it’s probably too early for an SAT prep class, you may want to do more reading in your free time, take more challenging courses, or practice on old tests. Work on your math. Students who take advanced math in high school are far more likely to attend and graduate from college than those who fail to do so.

January

Look into National Collegiate Athletic Association requirements if you want to participate in sports in college. Consider whether your experience jibes with your college plans: Do schools that interest you field teams in your sport? Do you have a chance of playing on them? Begin researching scholarships and identify college admission requirements for competitive universities. Submit your fall community and service reflection forms with necessary verification letters.

February

Teacher’s pet? Keep it up. Your grades are the single most important facet of the college admissions process. You also need teachers to write your college recommendations.

March

Decide if you want to take an SAT II subject test. It’s often better to take the exam as soon as you’ve completed the relevant class, instead of waiting until later. Consider and apply for summer academic and arts programs on college campuses. It’s never too early to get a feel for college life. Many CUNY, SUNY and competitive private colleges offer partial or full scholarships to these respective programs.

April/May

Talk to your guidance counselor and your parents about whether you should take summer-school classes to improve your grades, fit in a needed course or delve further into a subject you like. Figured out you don't need summer school? Look around for other constructive ways to spend your time off. Apply for volunteer positions and or summer employment at interesting sites. Try an arts or academic camp. If it fits within your family's budget, consider taking a summer pre-college program at a college/university during the summer; some select programs offer college credits. You also get the feel of what it means to study and interact on a college campus. Submit your final community and service reflection forms and other documentation at the end of May. Speak with college admissions officers at spring college fairs about their respective admissions requirements and available financial aid.

June

Take the June SAT IIs, if appropriate. But remember, once you request that your SAT scores be sent to a college, that school will see scores from every SAT II you've previously taken. There is no rush. Visit your local library and/or bookstore in order to identify books you intend to read during the summer for pleasure and to improve your vocabulary—make sure to read at least 7-8 texts during your vacation.

July

Make sure you're engaged weekly in a volunteer program within your local community. Attend an arts and/or academic enrichment summer program. Or participate in a pre-college program on a college campus. Spend some more time researching colleges and universities. Can you begin to narrow down a list of the types of schools that are appealing to you? Urban or rural? Big or small? Public or private? Begin looking at the SAT Reasoning test for content and format. You'll be taking your first PSAT in mid-October.

August

If you're close to a university, consider dropping by and walking around. Even an hour-long visit will give you a feel for a college. You'll also get a sense of your own likes and dislikes. Sign up for fall shadow days and campus tours. Begin to identify and register for SAT and/or ACT preparation programs for fall and spring.