

Valley Center High School
Senior College Planning Guide



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Counseling Office**

VCHS Website
www.hs.usd262.net

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Welcome!

Welcome to your senior year! Many of you have questions about preparing for college. It can seem like a daunting task, but in the end, it's not too crazy! This booklet will provide you with important instructions to prepare for college. Please share it with your parents and keep it as a resource to use throughout the year.

It is highly important that you discuss your college plans with your parents, teachers, and your school counselor. Communicate with your counselor so he/she can help you through this process.

Counselors:

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During your senior year, it is imperative if you are applying to college that your grades remain as strong as possible. Most colleges will request grades at semester and then again at the end of the year. Grades can determine how much financial aid a college will grant you - if you receive any financial aid, you may have to maintain a certain GPA throughout your college years as well.

Please pay close attention to college deadlines.

The colleges, school counseling office, and other organizations to which you may be submitting documents expect you to meet their deadlines.

Make sure to join the Senior Class Google Classroom page to see all announcements for seniors! Email Mr. Couvelha for the code.

Senior Year Schedule

Quite possibly one of the most important things as you go into senior year is your schedule. What classes are you taking in order to prepare you for life after high school? The courses you **MUST** take as a senior are: an English credit (college credit or regular Senior English, Applied Senior English, or AP Literature) and government. You'll need to check with your counselor to ensure you have the other required credits, adding up to 26 by graduation.

****If you plan on going straight to a 4-year university in the state of Kansas, it is recommended (but not required) to have taken and passed Algebra II and Chemistry I OR Physics.**

The Common 15

Thinking about taking dual credit courses your senior year? This is a great way to save some money and get ahead on college classes. If you're planning on college after high school, the following courses are required in almost all majors (but check your major out before taking courses you may not need):

- **Psychology or Sociology**
- **College Algebra (or Pre-Calculus)**
- **English Comp I (first semester Senior English College Credit)**
- **English Comp II (second semester Senior English College Credit)**
- **Public Speaking (College Credit Speech)**

****Please note that dual credit math and English courses require certain prerequisites to enroll. See the [curriculum guide](#) for prereqs.**

If majoring in health science or going into medicine, consider taking one or two of the following:

- **AP Chemistry**
- **Chemistry II**
- **Human Anatomy & Physiology**
- **Biology II**

The benefits of taking these courses while at VCHS include:

- Pricing (\$80/hour plus fees instead of hundreds an hour)
 - Teacher/Student relationship and class size
- Not having to take them your freshman year of college!

Click on your school of interest to see what your dual credit courses will transfer as:

[KU](#)
[K-State](#)
[Pitt State](#)

[WSU](#)
[Emporia](#)
[FHSU](#)

SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

Keep a planner or calendar handy and write down deadlines for:

- Completing applications
- College entrance exams (ACT/SAT)
 - Transcript requests
 - Recommendation requests
 - Writing essays
- Interviews or auditions, if applicable to you
 - Scholarship applications
- Financial aid workshop and applying for financial aid
- Completing NCAA Clearinghouse forms (for athletes)
 - Visiting colleges
- Any other important deadlines - check the admissions page of your college

Summer before senior year

- If you are involved in sports and want to participate in athletics at a Division I or II college, you should register with the NCAA Clearinghouse after completing the 11th grade. Registration is available at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net
- Check your school social media and email accounts to stay informed of events
 - Follow us @vchscounseling on Twitter
 - Like our Facebook page: VCHS Counseling Office
- Register for the ACT **early!** Hopefully you took this as a junior at least once. Make sure test scores are sent to VCHS and the schools you are interested in!
 - Register at www.act.org
- Take the SAT if planning on one of [these](#) schools
- Begin applying to colleges, especially if going to a four-year school. Make sure to apply to more than one school.
 - You can [apply to college](#) online at each college's website
 - Don't know what you want to do? That's okay! Apply to a few schools that interest you. Many college freshmen have not yet declared a major.
- Apply for [scholarships](#). Never pay to apply for a scholarship! Those are usually scams. Make copies of everything you send (applications, scholarships, etc) or save copies on your computer if possible.

August-September

- Enroll in any dual credit classes you are interested in. Do this **before** the schedule change deadline!
- Stay involved in school activities! Join at least one organization or activity at the Shindig/Hornet Palooza! Activities look great on applications and letters of recommendation.

- ❑ Volunteer for leadership positions and help your resume for college/career applications and scholarships
- ❑ Volunteer in the community and at school throughout the year
- ❑ Make a list of colleges/tech schools you want to visit that match your interests and skills. Save them to Xello.
 - ❑ Arrange for campus visits. These are listed on each college's website, or you can schedule a private visit by calling the admissions office.
 - ❑ During your visit, talk with Financial Aid, Admissions, and Academic Advisors in the majors you are interested in.
- ❑ Continue applying for [scholarships](#)
- ❑ Apply for colleges if you have not done so already.
- ❑ Meet with your counselor and update your post-graduation plan, review transcripts and credits.
- ❑ Be at school *every day* and maintain your grades.
- ❑ Take interest inventories and skills assessments in Xello
- ❑ Update your resume in Xello
- ❑ Order your cap and gown
- ❑ Attend the FAFSA/financial aid informational night with your parents

October

- ❑ Attend Financial Aid Night at VCHS. Date TBD each year.
- ❑ Take the ASVAB (those interested in military) if you have not already. Sign up in the counseling office.
- ❑ Fill out the FAFSA on or after **October 1** of your senior year at www.fafsa.ed.gov (You may choose to wait to fill this out until after Financial Aid Night)
 - ❑ Financial aid is done on a first-come first-served basis, so do it early!
 - ❑ The deadline for filling out the FAFSA differs by school. Check with your school to see when it is due.
- ❑ If planning on attending WSU next fall, apply by Oct. 15 to be eligible for their large [DSI scholarships](#).
- ❑ Ask for letters of recommendation if needed
- ❑ Scholarship applications via your school of interest are usually **due Nov. 1**, so make sure to fill that out! This usually is done at the same time you apply for school (for example, when you apply to Wichita State, they use your main application as your application for scholarships through their school), so you may have already done this. All college applications should be done by Nov. 1 if you hope to receive financial aid.
- ❑ Take ACT/SAT again if necessary
- ❑ Have counselors or Mrs. Gibson send your transcript to colleges. You will do this again in May after you graduate. You can do this on the VCHS counseling website (see front page).
 - ❑ If you have taken dual credit courses, you will need to request those transcripts from WSU Tech on your own. This can be done on their website by clicking the

“Academics” tab and “Order Transcript.” You can wait until May to do this if you plan on taking more classes in the spring.

- ❑ Listen to announcements and collect information that counselors provide about scholarships and college visits in a folder. Check back often!
- ❑ Check grades in Parent Portal often and turn in assignments on time. You can make up SOME ground if you need to raise your GPA this year.

November

- ❑ **College applications done by Nov. 1** for those planning on receiving financial aid and attending a four-year school
- ❑ Continue to research careers that are interesting to you and in high demand
- ❑ Continue adding to your file folder of documents that will help you your senior year (transcripts, awards/honors, school and community activities, recommendation letters from teachers/community members, dates of volunteer service, college/career correspondence, etc.)
- ❑ Talk to business professionals and ask questions about what they had to do to get where they are.
 - ❑ Participate in a job shadow! See your counselor, Mrs. Allen, or Mrs. Sirignano.
- ❑ Clean up your social media accounts and refrain from posting, liking, or sharing inappropriate pictures, content, and language.

December

- ❑ Prepare for finals! :)
- ❑ Send transcripts to colleges after grades are finalized
- ❑ Continue to track important dates and deadlines on your calendar.
- ❑ You will likely begin receiving acceptance letters. Follow the directions in your letter to move on to the next step. This is usually creating an online account and an email address with your college of choice.
- ❑ If you are denied admission to your school of choice, you can send a letter of appeal. However, be looking at other schools that you hopefully already applied to.
- ❑ Check your high school and college email DAILY!

January

- ❑ Fill out and submit any other college forms that come your way (housing/dorm applications, roommate requests, etc). Colleges do these at different times throughout the year, so be on the lookout all semester.
- ❑ Continue seeking financial aid and scholarships.

February-March

- ❑ Continue to study and maintain your grades
- ❑ Discuss any remaining financial needs with your college financial aid office

- Continue to track important financial aid deadlines (scholarship deadlines vary throughout the university, i.e. College of Education may take scholarship applications through April 1, while the College of Architecture may only take them through March 1).
- Respond quickly to any continuing requests for information from your college

April

- Make your final college decision if you have not already done so
- Mark your calendar to attend orientation at your college
- This should have been in your acceptance packet or should have come to you via email or another letter.
- Check your SAR (student aid report) on your FAFSA account to see what you have been awarded. Remember, loans must be paid back, while grants do not. Only accept the amount of loans you'll need to get you through the school year. It is not wise to accept more than what you'll need, unless you plan to pay it back immediately once all college costs are covered.
- Send a thank you to the colleges to which you were accepted, but have decided not to attend, so they can give your spot to a student on the waiting list.

May

- Send all transcripts to your college of choice after grades are finalized
- Send transcripts from WSU Tech if you took dual credit courses. This can be done on their website.
- Notify your financial aid office of any outside scholarships or aid that you plan to use to pay for college. Ensure this money has made it to your college of choice.
- Evaluate your student loan lender and take time to understand student loans. Learn about borrowing responsibly, interest, default, and deferment.
- Graduation! :)
- Ensure all documentation has been sent to your college of choice.

If you're unsure about college, there are still many options for you:

- Talk to a counselor about applying for college just in case! It is free to apply to most community colleges and tech colleges, so you might do that as a back-up plan.
- Make sure that what you want to do doesn't require a degree
- Think about going to trade school, technical college, or getting a certificate
 - See above for applying for financial aid
- Talk to a counselor, Mrs. Allen, or Mrs. Sirignano about finding a job shadow in a place you're interested in.
- Find a full-time job that gives you opportunities to move up.
 - Remember that moving up in a job can take a long time, sometimes years! **Stick with it and work hard!**

Choosing a College

Remember to apply to more colleges than just the one you are hoping to get into. It is beneficial to apply to two or three at a minimum; this way, you have other options if for some reason you are denied admission to your school of choice. You don't want to be scrambling last minute to apply to other schools.

You can use college search engines like Big Future at College Board's website (www.collegeboard.org) and click on "College Search" under "Access". You can also view a lot of information about each college on your Xello account.

If you'd like to visit different colleges, most colleges offer [open houses](#) for juniors and seniors. These days are great opportunities to see what the college has to offer and to meet other students your age who are interested in that college. You may also contact the college's admissions office to request a private tour. We recommend going on a weekday so you have the opportunity to walk through open classrooms or possibly meet professors in your area of interest. See the VCHS Counseling website for more info on college visits. Some colleges also offer virtual tours.

Take advantage of college visit days at VCHS. If you go to the VCHS Counseling website (see front page), you can see which colleges are coming to visit when, and you can sign up to go talk to them during activity period.

Maybe you don't want to go straight to a 4-year college, and that is okay! Make sure to check out community colleges in the Wichita area. Many of these colleges offer pathway programs to 4-year universities, meaning the transition of courses is almost seamless.

Pathway Programs

A pathway program is a program where a community college is "linked" with a 4-year university in order to finish a bachelor's degree. One example might be Butler County Community College's [BEST Program](#), which partners with Emporia State to allow students to earn a 4-year teaching degree.

Athletes

If you are planning on participating in Division I or Division II sports in college, you will need to register with the NCAA at www.eligibilitycenter.org. You also may have to take special courses to qualify, so see your counselor if you have questions about qualifying courses. You can check out required courses for Division I and II schools on the NCAA website as well at:

<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/educational-resources>

What Should I Consider When Choosing A College?

- Does the college offer your program of study? (i.e. K-State does not offer nursing)
- Do I like the location?
- Is this school too big or too small?
- What kinds of extracurricular activities can I participate in?
- What is the housing like?
- Is the school in a safe area?
- What counseling and health services are available to me?
- How much does it cost?
- Is there a lot of technology available to me? What kinds of technology are available at this school?
- Is religious affiliation important to me?
- Are graduates of this school able to find jobs?
- Other considerations:
 - Do I want to study abroad?
 - Do I need any special accommodations in class?
 - Is there an honors program?
 - Is there tutoring available?

Helpful Hints When Choosing a College

- 1. Visit the School:** It is important to plan visits to the colleges in which you are interested. You can see a list of college visit days on the VCHS Counseling website. There are different types of visit days. You can plan a private visit by going to your school of interest's website (usually the admissions page), or you can see if the school has any visit days that pertain to you, such as Junior or Senior Days. These days are more structured and students get to meet other students of their age who are also interested in that school.
- 2. Look At Actual Cost:** Make sure when looking at how much school will cost to take into account how much financial aid you might get. You can see how much your degree might cost you [here](#). You also need to look at what's included in the cost. For example, if the cost includes the price of living on campus, but you plan to live at home, you can subtract that from your cost.
- 3. The Degree:** Remember, although it is important to go to a school you love, also keep your mind on the future and your possible future financial situation. Will you make enough money in your career to pay off your student loans? For example, if you choose a school that is \$50,000 a year, and you don't receive much aid, and you get a job where you earn \$40,000 a year, you will be paying those loans off for quite some time. Look at the same degree at a school that costs \$10,000-\$15,000 a year. Essentially, you are leaving with the same degree, one just cost you more. :)

Use the College Comparison Worksheet on the next page to help you narrow down your choices.

Choosing Your School

Take this sheet with you on any campus visits so you can ask about each throughout the day.

Category	Description	Choice #1	Choice #2	Choice #3	Choice #4	Choice #5
Location:						
Enrollment Size:						
Environment	(2 year/4 year, rural, urban, suburban, religious affiliation, co-ed, male/female dorms, etc.)					
Admission Requirements	What is needed to get in? (Deadlines Tests required Average test scores GPA Rank in class)					
Academics	(Majors offered, class sizes, etc.)					
Cost	(Tuition, room & board, fees, deposits)					
Financial Aid	What is available? (scholarships, loans, grants, % of students needs met, work study)					
Housing	Dorms or off-campus housing? Food plan?					
Facilities	Academic buildings, gyms/rec?					
Activities	Clubs, Greek life, athletics/intra murals					

The SAT

Most four-year colleges require either the ACT or SAT. For the state of Kansas, most students will take the ACT. If you are looking at going out-of-state, you may need to take the SAT. Schools that REQUIRE the SAT:

- California Institute of Technology
- Cooper Union Engineering
- Cornell University
- Georgetown University (not required, but strongly recommended)
- Harvey Mudd College
- MIT
- McGill University
- Rice University
- Tufts University
- Webb Institute

Many other colleges highly recommend the SAT, especially the Ivy League schools and those in California. See your counselor with any questions.

The ACT

If you are planning on attending a four-year college in Kansas, you will need to take the ACT. This is given at VCHS on the dates shown on the ACT website. You can register for the ACT online at www.act.org You must first create an account and then you can register.

For most four-year colleges, you'll need to earn a 21 or higher on your ACT in order to be admitted. For community colleges, you will usually be admitted with an 18 or higher, unless the school does not require the ACT (Butler), in which case you would take the Accuplacer. The Accuplacer is given on-campus at your school of choice. **You should have already taken the ACT at least once as a junior. If you have not taken it yet, you need to do so ASAP.** ACT scores are used by many schools to help award scholarships, so make sure your ACT scores have been sent to your school of choice no later than the financial aid deadline for your school. These are listed on school websites, but for Kansas the financial aid deadline is usually October 1 or November 1. Some schools, like K-State, will wait for the November ACT scores to come in before awarding financial aid, but some will not. It's much better to take it early!

Letters of Recommendation

When requesting a letter of recommendation, follow these tips:

- Ask a teacher, counselor, principal, boss, manager, clergy, or another professional who knows you well.
- Ask for your letter of recommendation in person or via professional email. Do not ask over Twitter or other social media.
- Ask for your letter of recommendation at least a week in advance, if not two to three weeks before you need it. Do not ask for last minute letters.
- Provide the person writing your letter with a [brag sheet](#). These can be found on the counseling website (see front page) or in the counseling office.
- Consider providing a resume along with the brag sheet.
- In most cases, the person will return the letter to you in a sealed and signed envelope. Do not open it. Forward it on to where it needs to go. You can also provide the person writing your letter with an address or stamped envelope and they can send it. Some letters are uploaded electronically now, so if the person needs to do this, make sure to tell them where the letter needs to be uploaded.

College Application Essays

Some, but not all, schools will ask you for an essay. Follow the given topic and make sure to have your English teacher or another teacher proofread it for you. Many colleges use these to award scholarships, so make sure you give it your best shot!

Your Resume

Although you may feel that you don't need a resume until the end of college, you may need one to attach to your college application. See the examples on the next few pages. Here are some tips to writing a resume:

- Search sample resumes for a design you wish to use and avoid using resume templates if possible. You don't want your resume to have the same fonts and format as every other person.
- YOUR NAME should be the largest text on your resume. You want to stand out. Don't use the word "RESUME."
- NEVER include false information on a resume.
- Don't use complete sentences.
- Unless applying for a very specific job, leave out the "Objective" and "Summary" section. More often than not, these sections hurt people when applying for jobs.
- ALWAYS include an "Education" section. Include colleges if taking dual credit coursework.
- Be sure and list any extra certifications/endorsements (First Aid, CPR, OSHA, MS Office, Food Handlers, etc)
- Never use the word "I."
- Pick a format and follow it. (same font for headings, bullets should line up down the page)

- Ensure that everything listed on your resume correlates to the job you're applying for.
- Word your experience in a way that makes you highly qualified for the job you are applying for.
- Resume should include at least 5 keywords from the job description.
- Be SPECIFIC on the skills section (Good communicator, Team Player, Takes Initiative, Hard Worker)
- Choose a SIMPLE, non-scripty font (*Don't use something like this*). Use **bold**, underline, and *italics*. Someone with poor eyesight should be able to read it.
- Limit your use of color except on main headings (choose colors wisely)
- Resume should clearly show you at least meet minimum qualifications (preferably meeting additional qualifications)
- EACH BULLET on your resume should start with ACTION VERBS!!!
- Correct verb tense should always be used. If it's a past job, all verbs should be past tense. If you are currently working there, use present tense. This seems easy, but you would be amazed how often this is missed.
- Your resume should show how you have added value and solved problems at every company you list.
- There should be absolutely NO MISSPELLINGS or grammatical errors.
- References ARE NOT included on your actual resume. Same file, different page (do not say "available upon request") Include Name, Relationship, Title, Address, Phone, Email
- ALWAYS ASK someone to be a reference. Follow proper reference etiquette.

Finally, always have someone proofread your resume. You can have this done by a counselor, teacher, or even on many college campuses at the writing center.

**Resume examples on next page. These are really plain - feel free to reformat as needed.

A sample resume showing no work experience

June B. Smith
123 Alphabet St.
Valley Center, KS 67147
Call/Text: 555-5555 Email: junebsmith@email.com

GOAL

Seeking an entry-level position in retail sales at a hardware store

EDUCATION

Valley Center High School, Valley Center, KS 67147

Anticipated: May 2019

- Excelled in AP Calculus and AP Chemistry
- Enjoyed classes in public speaking, Spanish, woodworking, and computers

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Although I have no prior experience in retail sales, I believe the following accomplishments show that I could learn the job quickly:

Math Skills

- Earned a grade of "A" in all higher-level math courses, including AP Calculus
- Managed \$1,000 investment that earned 4.2% APR

People Skills

- Played checkers most Sunday afternoons with senior citizens at a nursing home
- Formed study group with 4 people to boost grades in French

Product Knowledge

- Automotive: My father is a mechanic and we rebuilt my '99 Volvo including the engine, brakes, and suspension
- Electronics: Programmed family's TVs, BlueRay, and Cable Box to run on one remote
- Construction: Helped my aunt rebuild a 100 sq/ft screened-in porch on her home

Selling

- Sold my '99 Volvo and earned a \$120 profit
- Sold magazines door-to-door for charity, raised \$300

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Reliable - Missed only two days of school this year
- Honest
- Bilingual - Fluent in Spanish

A sample resume showing some work experience

June B. Smith
123 Alphabet St.
Valley Center, KS 67147
Call/Text: 555-5555 Email: junebsmith@email.com

GOAL

Seeking an entry-level position in retail sales at a hardware store

EDUCATION

Valley Center High School, Valley Center, KS 67147

Anticipated: May 2019

- Excelled in AP Calculus and AP Chemistry
- Enjoyed classes in public speaking, Spanish, woodworking, and computers

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales Associate, 05/2015 - present

True Value, Valley Center, KS

- Assist customers in finding what they were looking for
- Run the register and count change
- Clean restrooms, sweep and mop floors, dust shelves
- Organize tools
- Take inventory

SKILLS

People Skills

- Played checkers most Sunday afternoons with senior citizens at a nursing home
- Assisted younger students in woodworking class to boost grades

Product Knowledge

- Automotive: My father is a mechanic and we rebuilt my '99 Volvo including the engine, brakes, and suspension
- Electronics: Programmed family's TVs, BlueRay, and Cable Box to run on one remote
- Construction: Helped my aunt rebuild a 100 sq/ft screened-in porch on her home

Selling

- Sold my '99 Volvo and earned a \$120 profit
- Sold magazines door-to-door for charity, raised \$300

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Reliable - Missed only two days of school this year
- Honest
- Detail-oriented and organized

This resume was done by a VCHS student. It was chosen due to the excellent amount of experience and volunteer work listed. Make sure to get involved!

Jane A. Smith

123 N. Alphabet St.
Valley Center, KS 67147
Jane.Smith@email.com
(555) 555-5555

Summary of Qualifications

- Leadership skills and communication skills from ROTC experience
- Received the Air Force recruiting Squadron Excellence Award
- National Honor Society Member

Education

- Valley Center High School, Valley Center, Kansas - 2015 - present
- Expected graduation: May of 2019
- GPA: 4.0

Relevant Coursework

- College Courses: Speech, Psychology, and Sociology
- Business Courses: Business Essentials - marketing and economics
- Computer Classes: Computer Apps

Experience

Day Care Service - Child Care Provider – Valley Center, KS

October 2014 -Present

- Answer wide range of childcare needs
- Prepare meals for children and keep house clean and picked up
- Read to children and engage in extracurricular activities
- Maintain a child safe environment/ supervise children
- Administer first aid and daily medications as required

Summer Nanny - Child Care Provider – Valley Center, KS

June 2016-August 2016

- Supervised and monitored safety of children
- Prepared three meals a day, plus snack
- Organized daily activities
- Assisted with summer homework

JROTC- Cadet - Wichita, KS

October 2015- May 2016

- Rank - Senior Airman
- Element Leader
- Assistant Flight Sergeant

Mary Kay Consultant- Assistant - Wichita, KS

August 2014- November 2014

- Organized and stocked cosmetics
- Took detailed notes when asked to
- Followed instructions as given

Activities and Honors

- Involved in Letter Woman's Club and Students Helping Out Warriors Club
- Honor Roll since 2014
- Toys For Tots volunteer
- Numerous ROTC volunteer work: road clean up, IDent-A-Kid, etc.
- Volunteer at the Lifeline Animal Placement and Protection organization

Additional Skills

- Time management skills
- Leadership skills
- Ability to work with large groups
- Organizational skills
- Adaptability
- Critical thinking
- Detail-oriented

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Possibly the most important question you will ask yourself as you prepare for college is, “How am I going to pay for this?” Make sure to take into account the cost of your entire college career, plus how much money you anticipate making in your desired career. Some students end up owing several hundred dollars a month or more on their student loans when they graduate, which can make it hard to make ends meet. See https://ksdegreestats.org/program_search.jsp to check how much your degree will cost you.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

1. Contact the financial aid office at the colleges to which you are applying. Ask them any questions you may have about tuition, available scholarships, and loans/grants.
2. Fill out the FAFSA. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is an online form that you fill out each year in order to see what financial aid you can receive (loans and grants). Remember, loans must be paid back; grants do not need to be paid back.
 - a. For help filling out the FAFSA, check out the “Scholarships and Financial Aid” page on the VCHS Counseling website (see front page).
 - b. The FAFSA opens on October 1 of your senior year. Fill it out as soon as possible as financial aid is given on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - c. The FAFSA is due at different times throughout the year, depending on the school you’re attending. Check with your school to see when it needs to be submitted by.
3. Go online to find free scholarship applications (**NEVER** pay to apply for a scholarship). A good place to start is www.fastweb.com, where you will create a profile and it will find scholarships for you to apply for. You can also see local and other scholarships on your Xello account. *You can begin applying for scholarships as early as the end of junior year* (sometimes even earlier), so make sure you start early!

Two-Year Colleges

Many students choose to begin at a two-year college or at a technical college, such as Butler or WSU Tech. Some students choose to do their associate’s degree, which is a two-year degree - for some jobs, this is all that’s necessary. Associate’s degrees are the highest degrees awarded at either type of school. Associate’s degrees are great for trade/hands-on jobs like mechanics, plumbing, machining, etc.

Normally, two year colleges attract students because:

- Tuition is cheaper than that of a 4-year university
- Many students have the ability to live at home while attending
- Smaller class sizes, therefore more help from the professor

Many two-year colleges offer what’s called a “Pathway Program,” which is a program that’s linked to a 4-year university. For example, Allen Community College has a pathway program to a

Criminal Justice degree at Washburn. Students spend the first two years at the community college, and the last two at the university. Pathway Programs are great in that they make the transition seamless between schools.

Technical Colleges

Tech colleges provide students with the skills needed to be successful in a hands-on trade like plumbing, sheet metal work, auto repair, welding, veterinary technician, machining, and much more. Students can earn either a certificate or an associate's degree at a technical college. **The following programs are offered free of cost to VCHS juniors and seniors through WSU Tech**, so ask Ms. Allen or your counselor if one interests you: Auto Service, Aviation Exploration, Aviation Maintenance, Business, CATIA, Carpentry/Construction Science, Composites/Sheet Metal, Electronics, Healthcare, HVAC, Industrial Automation, Interior Design, IT Systems, Machining, Police Science, Robotics, Welding.

OTHER HELPFUL WEBSITES

The College Board (tons of information here!): www.collegeboard.com

The National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC) - a good resource to many different links: <http://www.nacacnet.org>

ACT: www.act.org

US News and World Report "School Comparison:" www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/eduhome.htm

Colleges That Change Lives: <https://ctcl.org>

College View: www.collegeview.com

Financial Aid Websites

Compare Financial Aid Packages - part of College Board site that allows you to compare financial aid packages: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/scholarships-and-aid/index.html>

Fastweb - scholarship search engine: www.fastweb.com

Help with the FAFSA: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out>

CSS Profile - Some private or Ivy League schools require this:

<http://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp>