

Preparing for College Admissions 9th Grade Checklist

Transitioning from middle school to high school can be an exciting yet daunting time. As a high-achieving student from a low-income background, you may feel like you must pave your own path. Whether or not you are thinking ahead to college, 9th grade is the perfect opportunity to build a foundation for a successful high school career.

STARTING STRONG

Meet with your counselor early in the year to discuss your high school goals and college interests. Ask as many questions as you can! Gain a good understanding of how your middle school career transitions to high school.	
Set a good tone for your high school career by building good habits, like keeping a weekly planner, having dedicated homework time, or being active in the classroom.	
Start building strong relationships with your teachers, counselors, and even school administrators.	

COURSEWORK

Talk to your counselor about advanced courses and tracks offered at your school. Exploring options early is important! Your school may have policies or you may experience scheduling conflicts (e.g., certain AP courses only being offered in the Fall or Spring semester, or at the same time as specific athletics/music programs).	
Map out a rough four-year coursework plan . It's okay if things change, but a basic plan will enable you to consider taking the most challenging courses later in high school and will be something to refer back to.	
We recommend that you take at least one course per core subject area every year. Core subjects include Math, Science, History/Social Studies, English, and Foreign Language.	

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Continue extracurricular activities from middle school that you want to develop. Explore activities that you're excited about trying in high school. Colleges like to see longevity and depth in your involvement.	
Be on the lookout for community service projects or part-time jobs.	

DID YOU KNOW?

All QuestBridge college partners are dedicated to meeting [100% of students' demonstrated financial need](#).

COLLEGE-BOUND

Start saving for college and consider taking on a part-time job during your summers to kick-start your savings.	
Begin your college research . Explore the QuestBridge college partners on our website to get started.	
Prepare for the PSAT and/or PreACT tests. The National Merit Scholarship is a prestigious national award for which you can only qualify if you score well on the PSAT. This will help you prepare for the SAT and ACT .	
Take summer school/community college/online courses to enhance your academic record.	

THE STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER

Visit our [website](#) for more information dedicated to equipping high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds, including:

- Coursework planning FAQs
- Maximizing your summers
- [Checklists](#) for each grade