

9th Grade Student Checklist

Academics and Goal Setting

Learn about your high school graduation requirements

Talk to your school counselor each year to make sure you are taking the right class credits to graduate. These high school requirements will help you be college ready to help you with college admissions.

Get to know the levels of courses offered by your school and make plans to take “challenging courses.”

Understand your Grade Point Average (GPA)

Your freshman GPA will impact the GPA you have when you apply to college. It is important to keep good grades all four years. Don’t wait to ask for help. Talk to your teachers and go to tutoring if you’re struggling in a class!

Create short-term goals for high school, and long-term goals for after high school

Think about what you want to accomplish in high school, then what you want to accomplish later in life. What goals do you have? What do you want to accomplish? Then think about what you need to do today to make sure you reach your goals. These goals are for you and can change. Add your goals to your Peak Ed/Elevated [MaiaLearning](#) account.

College and Career Prep

Learn about the different careers and college pathways after high school

Certificates (1-year), Associate degrees (2-year), and Bachelor degrees (4-years) are what students work on after high school. Community colleges will offer certificate and associate degrees, while 4-year universities and colleges offer bachelor degrees. The career you want will determine the best educational path for you, but most jobs in Colorado will require further education past a high school diploma. Use your Peak Ed/Elevated [MaiaLearning](#) account to research college and careers, and to take career interest inventories.

Getting Involved & Giving Back

Get involved in extracurricular activities that interest you

Extracurricular activities are what students do outside of normal class activities; for example sports, clubs, jobs and volunteering. Being involved in these



activities help you develop leadership skills and make you stand out when you apply to colleges and scholarships.

Volunteer regularly

What do you care about? How can you make a difference—small or large—in your school, neighborhood, or community? Find ways to volunteer regularly. You can start out volunteering once a month or every other month; create a habit of volunteering. Many of the most competitive scholarships look for students who’ve volunteered regularly throughout 4 years of high school.

Whatever you choose to do, make sure it’s something you’re passionate about so that it’s fun and doesn’t feel like work. Colleges also like to see that you’ve consistently volunteered at 2-3 organizations instead of having 20 different organizations where you only spent 1 day a year. Example community service opportunities includes volunteering at a local foodbank (e.g. Care & Share), YMCA, tutoring students, cleaning up the neighborhood or your school, etc. Any time you work for “free,” you could consider it volunteering. Also check out <https://www.volunteermatch.org/>.

Explore summer opportunities

Consider working a job, doing an internship, or volunteering with a position that allows you to volunteer, but also learn about a field of interest.

Financial Aid

Start applying to scholarships now!

Did you know that you can apply to scholarships as a 9th grade student? You can apply each year. Get started with creating an account on <https://www.raise.me/>. This allows you to earn micro scholarships based on your grades, activities and achievements! This is more incentive to earn good grades.

You can also create scholarship accounts on <https://www.unigo.com/> or <https://www.goingmerry.com/>.

Research 12th Grade Scholarships

Research the large scholarships of 12th grade year and see what they look for in a student. Then, make sure you’re doing the activities and behaviors that will make you a great candidate for that scholarship. Some of the large scholarships include [Daniels Fund](#), [Gates Scholarship](#), [Boettcher](#), [Coca Cola](#), [Greenhouse Scholars](#), [Cameron Impact Scholarship](#), [Coolidge Scholars](#) (you apply to this one as an 11th grader), [Jack Kent Cooke](#), and [Sachs Foundation](#).