

Here are some important pieces of the post-secondary planning and college processes that you can either start or continue working on now and during the summer. We have found that students who work on their plans for after high school during the spring and summer before senior year are much, much happier and less stressed out seniors.

For those of you thinking of employment or military service after high school:

- We recommend doing informational interviews/research about careers to learn more about current professions.
- Contact recruiters to learn more about your options with the military services.
- Research apprenticeships on the VT Dept of Labor website here [Apprenticeships](#).

For those of you thinking of college, here are some parts of the college process for you to work on:

1. Continue college search/tours and narrowing down a list.

- We recommend your final list includes:
- 2-3 “safety” schools, 2-3 “on target” and 1-2 “reach” schools (about 6-8 in total).
 - Look at a school’s “common data set.”
 - We recommend a mix of both academic and financial “safety” schools
 - [HERE](#) is a document to help you stay organized once you start rolling with the process. (please make a copy)
- Use the [Big Future](#) on the College Board website.

2. Prepare to take or retake the SAT and/or ACT.

- Register for spring/summer/fall testing. Check College Board (www.collegeboard.org) and ACT (www.act.org) websites for testing dates and for regular updates.
- Continue to check college websites for testing requirements. Some (not all!) colleges are “going test optional.”
- Practice, practice, practice!
 - This is a great time to practice and prepare for your testing. Practice can raise your scores big time! You can use test prep books (library or bookstore) or download some SAT/ ACT study apps on your phone. Check out the links on our [Post-Secondary Planning Worksheet](#).

3. Start writing your application essay and filling out the Common Application.

- Thinking about and starting these steps over the summer will help ease the stress in the fall. Here is a link to the Common App and another link to the essay prompts.
 - [Common Application](#)
 - [Common App Essay Prompts 2025-2026](#)
- 4. If you are considering playing college sports at the Division 1 or 2 level, you MUST:
 - Register for the NCAA at: [NCAA](#) For peace of mind, get this process started ASAP.
- 5. Visit colleges (virtually or in person):
 - In addition to touring schools that come up in your searches, you can tour UVM, St. Mike's, SUNY Plattsburgh, VSU (Vermont State University) campuses, CCV, Norwich, Champlain, etc. for some closer schools to see what demographics you like. You will learn something new with every college visit!
 - Try [youvisit.com](#) for virtual college visits
- 6. If you would like, log onto [raise.me](#)
 - Enter your accomplishments to become eligible for scholarship money at some colleges (the deadlines are very early fall during your senior year).
- 7. Attend all School Counseling AT's in the fall and visit with college reps when they come to CHS. The college reps that visit CHS will be the ones reading YOUR application.

Here are some ways to explore your interests to help with picking college majors and/or careers:

- Take advantage of the **2 free college classes** you get before you graduate through the Vermont Dual Enrollment program. Click [here](#) for more info.
- [Intro to College and Careers at CCV](#) (free course and does not count towards your other 2 free courses teaches time management, stress management, test taking, note taking, how to find majors, how to pay for college, etc.)
- [Governor's Institute of Vermont](#) has great online summer opportunities.
- [UVM Summer Academy](#) has some really cool options.
- We recommend doing informational interviews/research about careers to learn more about professions that are out there.

Remember:

- Our Counseling website [CHS Counseling Site](#) and the Post-Secondary Planning sheet below have a huge amount of resources for you including: college and major searches, financial aid info, test prep resources, etc.

- [Post-Secondary Planning Sheet](#)
- [Great ways to save money on college/training](#)

Feel free to contact your counselor if you have any questions or want to chat more about any of this. We're here for you on this wild and exciting ride we call *planning for your future!*