

## Suggested High School Task Lists

The following list of recommended tasks will help students with disabilities plan and prepare for college.

### Freshmen Year

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- Learn the specific nature of your disability and how to explain it so others will understand your needs.
- Learn about your strengths.
- Learn how to participate actively in your IEP, especially your transition plan, which is your plan to help you achieve your goal of attending college.
- Learn how to advocate for yourself in developing your transition plan with your case manager and IEP team.
- Prepare academically by carefully planning your high school courses.
- Work with your guidance counselor to be sure that you will have the standard and verified credits you need to obtain the desired diploma.
- Learn how to use the academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and services, and learning strategies that you will need in college.
- Explore assistive technology and how it can help you complete tasks that are difficult for you.
- Ask your guidance counselor to teach you about the college resources available in your school.

### Sophomore Year

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- Continue to actively participate in your IEP transition planning with your case manager and IEP team.
- Continue taking courses to prepare you for college.
- Continue to learn about your strengths.
- Continue to work on the skills that are hard for you to do.
- Add to your understanding and use of learning strategies to help you access the same course work as your peers.
- Participate in extracurricular activities, hobbies and work experiences.
- Identify interests, aptitudes, values and opportunities related to occupations in which you are interested.
- Meet with your career or guidance counselor to discuss colleges and their requirements.
- Register and take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in the fall.
- Research how to get accommodations for the PSAT.
- Speak with college representatives that visit your high school and are at college fairs.
- Visit college campuses and talk to college students about their campus experiences.
- Continue to save for college and investigate funding sources.

- Consider leading your IEP transition planning with your case manager and IEP team.
- Learn about the differences in how you receive your academic supports in high school and when you get to college. Have your IEP team talk about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which covers supports you receive in high school, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which covers supports in college.
- Continue your involvement in school- or community-based extracurricular activities.
- Continue exploring assistive technology.
- Focus on matching your interests and abilities to the appropriate college choice.
- Research the resources in your state to find a college preview event for students with disabilities. If your community has this type of event, plan on attending.
- Look for college campuses that have majors in which you might be interested and the kind of campus community in which you would like to live.
- Identify the appropriate academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services that you will need in the postsecondary setting.
- Keep a current list of the academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services you use in high school in a portfolio.
- Consider taking a course to prepare for the SAT or the ACT test.
- Research how to get accommodations on the SAT or ACT.
- Take the SAT or ACT in the spring. Consider taking them more than once.
- Establish a possible career goal (you can always change your mind).
- Think about a possible college major consistent with your career goal and your strengths and interests.
- Learn time management, organizational skills, study skills, assertiveness communication, stress management and test-taking strategies which will help you get good grades.
- Learn how to set short-term and long-term goals.
- Learn how to advocate for yourself — not everyone will understand your disability or be sensitive to your needs.
- Gather information about college programs that offer the disability services you need (you may want to add these to your portfolio).
- Speak with college representatives who visit your high school and at college fairs.
- Visit campuses and especially service providers to verify the available services and how to access them. Or if you can't visit the campus, take a virtual tour on the college's Web site. Make sure to check the disability support services section of the college's site to understand what you need to do to receive academic services and supports.
- Consider people to ask for recommendations — teachers, counselors, employers, coaches, etc.
- Investigate the availability of financial aid from federal, state, local and private sources.
- Investigate the availability of scholarships provided by organizations, such as corporations, labor unions, professional associations, religious organizations and credit unions.
- Continue saving for college.
- Contact the vocational rehabilitation counselor who serves your school to determine your eligibility for vocational rehabilitations services.
- Invite the VR counselor to attend your IEP meeting.
- Make sure that the documentation of your disability is current. Colleges usually want current testing based on adult norms, usually less than three years old when you begin college.

- Lead your IEP meeting.
- Learn about the Americans with Disabilities Act and how it helps you in college and on the job.
- Meet with your school guidance counselor early in the year to discuss your plans.
- Continue to develop your advocacy skills and to polish study skills.
- Learn about what faculty members in college will expect from you.
- Continue exploring possible college majors that are consistent with your career goal and your strengths and interests.
- Figure out how you learn best and how this will help you in college.
- Find out how to get accommodations in college. It's a very different process from high school!
- Role-play talking with professors about your accommodations.
- Explore assistive technology that you may need in college.
- Research the resources in your state to find a college preview event for students with disabilities. If your community has this type of event, plan on attending.
- Role-play college interviews with counselors, family members and teachers.
- Finalize your portfolio so that it contains at least the following:
  - Copies of your psychological and educational evaluations.
  - Transcripts.
  - ACT or SAT scores.
  - Your current or latest IEP.
  - Your medical records (if appropriate).
  - A writing sample or other work samples related to your choice of a major.
  - Your letters of recommendation from teachers and employers.
  - The current list of academic accommodations and auxiliary aids and services you may need in college (be sure to include assistive technologies).
- Visit colleges (start early in the year):
  - Visit the college website and look at the admissions office to see when college tours are offered.
  - Be prepared when you visit colleges to write or talk about your experiences.
  - Admissions officers will provide information about admissions procedures and financial aid opportunities.
  - Take your portfolio with you to share with disability service providers, if appropriate.
  - Evaluate the disability services, service provider and staff.
  - Talk with college students receiving disability support services about their experiences.
- Compare the various colleges and think about living in the campus community (e.g., housing, social activities, classrooms, leisure activities, services for students with disabilities and athletic activities).
- Apply to two or more of your preferred colleges — choose one that is a “reach” or your “dream” school, one where you expect to be accepted and one where you KNOW you can be accepted.
- Prepare your applications carefully, paying close attention to the instructions and deadlines. Be neat. Be accurate.
- When accepted, consider attending the pre-admission summer program (if available). It will be worth your time and ease the process when classes start in the fall.
- Take the SAT again, if appropriate.
- Send a thank you note to the individuals who wrote you recommendation letters.
- If not done in your junior year, contact the vocational rehabilitation counselor to determine your eligibility for DRS services while in college.