

College & Career Readiness Checklist

What families can look for when exploring postsecondary pathways.

1. Academic Preparation

- Is the student meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations?
- Are course grades strong across core subjects?
- Has the student completed recommended college-prep coursework?
- Does the student have access to advanced classes (AP, dual credit, honors)?

2. Career Exploration

- Has the student explored different career interests?
- Has the school provided career assessments or interest inventories?
- Are there opportunities for job shadowing or internships?
- Does the student understand the education or training needed for their career goals?

3. Postsecondary Planning

- Has the student created a postsecondary plan (college, trade school, military, workforce)?
- Has the student researched programs that match their interests?
- Has the student attended college or career fairs?
- Has the student met with a counselor to discuss options?

4. College Readiness Skills

- Does the student demonstrate strong study habits?
- Can the student manage time and deadlines independently?
- Does the student know how to ask for help when needed?
- Has the student practiced writing essays or personal statements?

5. Financial Readiness

- Has the family explored financial aid options (FAFSA, scholarships, grants)?
- Does the student understand college costs and budgeting?
- Has the student applied for scholarships?
- Has the family discussed financial expectations and limits?

6. College Application Process

- Does the student know application deadlines?
- Has the student gathered required documents (transcripts, test scores, letters)?
- Has the student completed or started applications?
- Has the student reviewed application essays with a teacher or counselor?

7. Career & Technical Education (CTE) Pathways

- Are CTE programs available in the student's school or region?
- Has the student explored certifications or credentials?
- Are there dual credit or apprenticeship opportunities?
- Does the student understand how CTE pathways connect to careers?

8. Social & Emotional Readiness

- Can the student manage stress and challenges?
- Does the student have strong communication skills?
- Is the student comfortable navigating new environments?
- Does the student have a support network?

9. Transition Planning for Students with IEPs or 504 Plans

- Does the student have a transition plan starting by age 14–16?
- Has the team discussed accommodations for college or work settings?
- Does the student understand their strengths and needs?
- Has the family explored disability services at colleges or training programs?

10. Questions for Follow-Up

- What areas need more exploration?
- What supports does the student need to stay on track?
- What next steps should be scheduled with counselors or advisors?