

# 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

## How to Guide and Advise Your Junior

*The junior year is when students should seriously begin examining their postsecondary options. Juniors should also take college tests, make college visits, and start searching for scholarships.*

**1. Continue to monitor academic progress.**

Since most college applications are completed in the fall of a student's senior year, the last grades on a student's transcript are usually his/her junior year grades. Junior year grades are therefore the most important grades in high school. Make sure that your son or daughter understands the importance of getting good grades his/her junior year.

**2. MME ( Michigan Merit Exam)**

MME is given to every junior in the spring. This test consists of ACT, Work Keys, and the Michigan Curriculum Test. These tests are required by the state.

**3. Make sure that your son or daughter registers for the PSAT/NMSQT in September.**

The PSAT/NMSQT is a national test that's administered by high schools in October. The PSAT/NMSQT is divided into five sections (two Verbal, two Math's, and one Writing). College bound juniors should take the PSAT/NMSQT for the following reasons: 1) It's good practice for the SAT, and it gives students an idea of how they'll score on the SAT. 2) Students can see how their academic skills compare to those of college bound students across the country. 3) Students whose scores are exceptionally high are recognized by the National Merit Foundation. This recognition can lead to scholarships.

**4. Think about and explore college options.**

There are approximately 2,500 four-year colleges and universities in the United States. When looking for a college, consider the following:

Location	Available majors
Size	Reputation
Cost	Competitiveness
Facilities	Community

Early in the selection process, determine what's important to you and to your son or daughter. Are you looking for a college close to home? Do you want a small college or a large college? Once you've determined what you're looking for, you can then begin to search for colleges that meet your needs.

**Tip:** *Early in the college selection process, have a frank discussion with your son or daughter with regards to the amount of money you are able and/or willing to contribute to his/her college education.*

**Tip:** *Once you have identified a college that you'd like to investigate further, call the admissions office and ask to be placed on their mailing list. You will then receive information on visitation days and upcoming events.*

**5. ACT-The ACT is given at school the spring of their Junior year.**

*How is the ACT scored?*

The ACT consists of four multiple-choice tests: English, Reading, Math and Science Reasoning. Students are given a score (1-36) for each of these tests; the four scores are then averaged to arrive at a Composite score. The national average Composite score is 21.1. Since

there is no penalty for guessing, students should answer every question. There is a writing component that is scored separately.

*How is the SAT scored?*

The SAT I has three sections: Critical Reading, Mathematics and Writing, with scores ranging from 200 to 800 for each section. The highest possible combine score is 2400. Since there is a slight penalty for guessing, if a student has no idea what the answer is, he/she should leave it blank. If a student can eliminate one or more answer choices, he/she should make an “educated” guess.

**Tip:** *For an additional fee, ACT and SAT will send you the test questions, your son or daughter’s answers, and the correct answers.*

*Why take the SAT II?*

The SAT II: Subject Tests are one-hour tests that measure knowledge in specific subject areas (Biology, French, World History, etc.). Some selective colleges require or recommend that applicants take one or more of these tests for admission and /or placement. (These colleges all list the SAT II as a requirement in their admissions information.) Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for registration and additional information.

**6. Parchment**

Students will register with the counselors on Parchment. This website is used to request their transcript.

**7. Make college visits.**

The junior year is an excellent time to make college visits. If you visit colleges during the summer months, be sure to revisit the colleges you’re seriously considering in order to get a feel for what they’re like when they’re in “full swing.”

To plan a college visit, call the admissions office several weeks ahead of time.

**How to make the most of your college visit:**

- A. Prepare for your visit by learning as much as you can about the college. Read their catalog, visit their Website, etc.
- B. Take a tour, noting the cleanliness, atmosphere, and size of the campus. Also note how the students look and act.
- C. Many colleges now offer group information sessions for parents and students. Attend one of these sessions if possible.
- D. Talk to someone in the department your son or daughter is considering as a major (e.g., business, education). Be sure to check out the labs, computers, and other facilities for that major. Also ask what kinds of jobs their graduates get, their average starting salaries, etc.
- E. If your son or daughter is an outstanding student, check to see if the university has an Honors Program. Honors Programs offer a variety of unique opportunities including honors housing, access to low enrollment honors courses, and/or priority scheduling.
- F. Visit a dorm, and if possible, eat in one of the student cafeterias. Also, check out the freshman dorm options so that you’ll know which dorm to request if your son or daughter decides to attend that college.
- G. Inquire about any special program or activity in which your son or daughter may be interested (band, tutoring, intramural sports, co-op programs, study abroad, etc.).
- H. Visit the student union and talk to students. Ask them what they think of the school, what they like about it, what they dislike, what they do on weekends, etc. Students are generally friendly, honest, and happy to give you their opinions.

- I. If you are concerned that your son or daughter may have difficulty being accepted, or if there are aspects of his/her academic record that you would like to explain, make an appointment with an admissions counselor. Take an unofficial transcript with you.
- J. If you are interested in financial assistance, ask if you can make an appointment with a counselor in the financial aid and/or scholarship office. If you want to discuss scholarship possibilities, take an unofficial transcript with you.
- K. Many parents have concerns that relate to 1) the safety of the campus, 2) T.A.s (teaching assistants) teaching classes and/or labs in place of professors, and 3) the ability of students to schedule the classes they need in order to graduate in four years. Admissions representatives and tour guides can address issues and/or answer any questions that you may have.
- L. To find out how your son or daughter compares academically, ask what the average GPA and ACT/SAT scores are for their incoming freshman.
- M. Ask what percentage of their students return after their freshman year and what percentage of their freshmen graduate.
- N. Pick up a campus newspaper.

**Tip:** *Have your son or daughter send a follow up email if he/she had a personal interview or conference.*

**Tip:** *Once you start contacting colleges and making visits, start a filing system. In this filing system, keep notes on contacts made and subjects discussed. Include names, dates, etc. Also keep copies of all correspondence and of all completed application forms.*

**Tip:** *If you can't visit a college, call the admissions office and request a CD of their campus. Also visit their Website. Often you can take a "virtual tour" and even "chat" with students and faculty.*

#### **8. Make sure your son or daughter has selected the right courses for his/her senior year.**

Be sure that your son or daughter's senior courses fulfill high school graduation requirements, the requirements for the college(s) he/she is considering and if necessary, the requirements for athletic eligibility for the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. For additional information on NCAA refer to [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org). It is the student's responsibility to make sure they are meeting the eligibility requirements and requesting their official high school transcript.

Encourage your son or daughter to continue taking academic courses, even though he/she may want to "take it easy" his/her senior year. Colleges recommend that seniors continue to follow a strong college prep program, and to make sure that they're doing so, most colleges ask students to list their senior courses on their application.

**Tip:** *Many colleges require that all freshmen take a math placement test before they register for classes. Students who do not take math as a senior are more likely to have difficulty with this placement test. You should therefore encourage your son or daughter to take a math course during his/her senior year.*

**Tip:** *All college students must be computer literate. At the very least, they need to know how to use a word processing program and how to send and receive e-mails. Make sure that your son or daughter has adequate computer skills and that he/she can type reasonably well.*

#### **9. Help your son or daughter choose meaningful activities for the summer months.**

Students should try to get a job and/or do volunteer work in a field that's related to their intended major or career. There are also a number of excellent college programs for high school juniors.

**10. Narrow your list of college choices.**

Visit colleges over the summer so that your son or daughter will know which schools he/she wants to apply to in the fall.

**11. NCAA Eligibility**

Athletes interested in Division I or II college sports must register with the NCAA before the end of their senior year. Information is available on the eligibility website at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org). Also, schedule an appointment with your counselor to review your transcript, ACT score and eligibility requirements. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they are meeting the eligibility requirements and to request their official high school transcript.

**12. Private Scholarship**

Start investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs. Scholarship information is available in the counseling center and online.