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Preparing for Your Education

Find out what you need to do to prepare for education beyond high school.

Education beyond high school can give you choices that may not otherwise be possible, open doors to better paying positions, and give you the opportunity to do the things you enjoy most. By advancing your education, you can expand your possibilities and increase your career choices.

New: Financial Aid Estimator Tool - FAFSA4caster

The FAFSA4caster provides students with an early estimate of their eligibility for federal student financial assistance. Students considering furthering their education beyond high school can use this FREE tool to:

- Calculate their eligibility for federal financial aid, including grants
- Reduce the time it will take to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the qualifying form for all federal student financial aid

Federal Student Aid is excited to provide this tool to help students and their families evaluate their options for planning and paying for education beyond high school. To access FAFSA4caster, visit www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov.

Non-federal financial assistance programs and requirements often vary from school to school. Always check with your school before applying for financial aid.

Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is the education on the management of personal finances and is an essential part of planning and paying for postsecondary education. You'll find links to Web sites that provide information on money management, handling credit and debt, and information on consumer protection.

[KnowHow2GO.org](#)

The more education you get, the more likely it is you will always have a job. KnowHow2GO provides middle schoolers to adults extensive information on the value of continuing education after high school, how to prepare for college, the myths vs. realities about college and the availability of financial aid for college. In addition, the KnowHow2GO Web site provides resources for information on counseling, academics, and financial aid that is available within your state or territory.

Students [TOP](#)

Assess Yourself

The first step to finding the right program and type of school for you is to evaluate your interests. A self-assessment will help you examine your interests and goals, and offers ideas on fields of study and careers that might be right for you.

For information on careers, latest career fields in demand, how to get the training you need for the job you want, and where to look for a job, visit [Career Voyages](#).

[Planner Timeline](#)

Find out what you should be doing each year of high school to start preparing for college.

[Student Planner](#)

Use this tool to enter your high school courses and standardized test scores and determine whether you meet the minimum requirements of the schools of your choice. Please be patient if we don't currently have the academic requirements of your college choice; we are adding more as we receive them.

[Take the Tests](#)

Once you have assessed your interests and determined what type of program you want to enroll in, you may be required to take one or more standardized tests. [Here](#) you will find more information about common standardized tests and what you need to do to prepare for them.

Parents [TOP](#)

Start Early

[Click here](#) to go to our new Web site area that discusses early awareness for middle school students. Is your child thinking about college, technical, or trade school? Learn how they can go and how to pay for their education beyond high school.

Preparing for your child's higher education is a long-term commitment. Find out about higher education savings plans and what you can do to help your child get ready for life beyond high school.

We welcome your suggestions and ideas on how the new middle school information can better serve you. Please send your comments to ask.aidawareness@ed.gov. Currently, we can't respond directly to respondents.

[College Savings Calculator](#)

Use this handy calculator to determine how much you could or should be saving to meet college expenses, and how to maximize your savings efforts.



Preparing for Your Education

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