

ARVADA HIGH SCHOOL



A Guide to Post-Graduate Planning

Class of 2021

SENIOR PRIORITY CHECKLIST

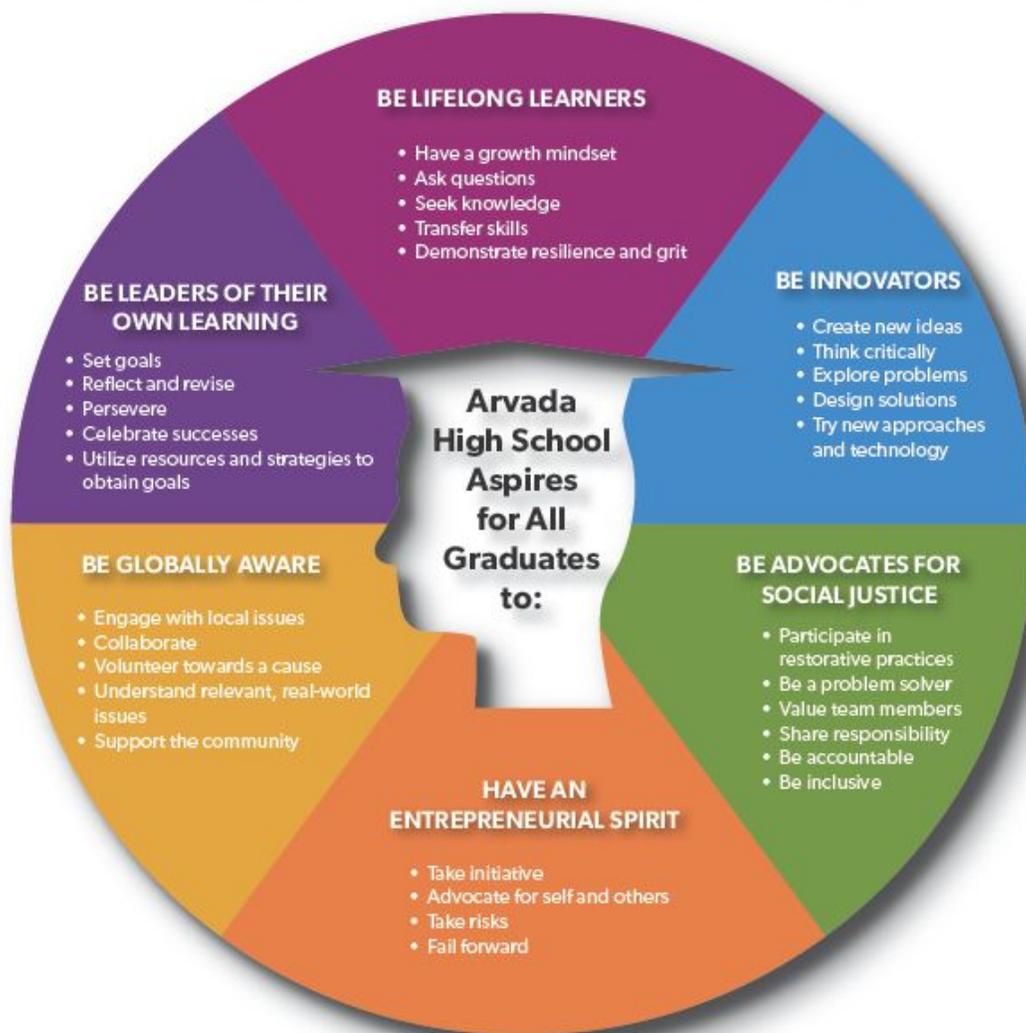
- Credit check with counselor (Sept/Oct)
- Complete COF(Everyone gets this free Money!) (Sept)
- Write a college essay (Sept)
- Have 2 adults write you recommendations (Sept/Oct)
- Apply for FAFSA (Oct)
- Attend Virtual College Fair (Oct 17)
- Research/Tour (virtual) at least two colleges/trade schools (Fall)
- Complete 1-2 scholarships a month (Sept/May)
- Take SAT (if desired) (Sept/Oct)
- Apply to 2 colleges/trade school (Sept-Dec)
- GRADUATE!!! **May 20, 2021, 10:00 a.m.**

ARVADA HIGH SCHOOL MISSION

Empowering students to be leaders of their own learning.

ARVADA HIGH SCHOOL VISION

What do we hope to become? A profile of an Arvada HS graduate:



Arvada HS Graduation Requirements

English	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Social Studies	3.5 credits
Science	3 credits
Physical Education	.5 credit
Fine Art/CTE Elective	.5 credits
Additional Coursework	8.5 credits
Total Credits	23 credits

HEAR (Higher Education Admission Requirements)

English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Additional Coursework	2 credits

(Many 4-year universities require two years of Foreign Language)

Senior Year Guidelines 2020-2021

September

- Stay strong academically throughout your Senior year
- Attend an individual conference with your counselor to plan post-graduate steps
- Schedule to take SAT or ACT on weekend, if you want to. We have fee waiver codes for the SAT. This is not required. Many colleges will not be asking for SAT scores due to COVID
- Research colleges/trade schools/apprenticeships
- Keep your research organized
 - Applications, essays, recommendations, financial aid and scholarship applications
- Set up a calendar with important deadlines
- Request letters of recommendation from counselors and teachers
- Register for the College Opportunity Fund (<https://cof.college-assist.org/>). This should already be completed if you took any Concurrent Enrollment courses.
- Review your Facebook/Social Media content as colleges may check it out

October

- Oct 13 - Colorado Free Application Day. Apply to CO public schools and pay no application fee
- Complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid); keep looking for scholarships
- Tour colleges you are interested in or do a “virtual” tour online
- Attend college fairs (virtually)
- Continue to follow up with teachers and counselors regarding recommendations
- Narrow down post-secondary application list to three options
- Continue college/Post-secondary research
- Check application dates for colleges/trade schools/apprenticeships
- Write your essays (if needed) and have at least two people edit them
- Continue with scholarship searches

November

- Watch deadlines for applications
 - General rule: Out-of-state applications should be completed by Thanksgiving, In-state by the end of December
- Keep a copy of your application materials
- Send official ACT or SAT scores (if needed) through ACT.org or Collegeboard.org
- Let Counseling Office know where you’ve been accepted and any scholarships you’ve been awarded

December

- Complete remaining college applications, no later than winter break
- Be sure FAFSA information has been submitted to colleges
- Keep looking for scholarships
- Make sure your 1st semester grades are accurate
- Let Counseling Office know where you've been accepted and any scholarships you've been awarded

January-February

- Submit required documents to financial aid office at chosen college
- Know when trade school/apprenticeship applications are due and complete those by deadlines
- If any major awards, championships and/or honors have been received since initial application, send to the college for consideration
- Let Counseling Office know where you've been accepted and any scholarships you've been awarded

March-April

- Commit to post-secondary school/workplace of choice
- Check your acceptance status
- Keep your grades up
 - Colleges always accept applicants conditionally – and one of those conditions is maintaining or improving 2nd semester grades
- Complete scholarship applications by deadlines
- Let Counseling Office know where you've been accepted and any scholarships you've been awarded

May

- Send tuition and housing deposits as early as possible, thereby reserving a spot in the dorms
- Take Advanced Placement exams if applicable
- Write thank you notes to teachers, scholarship organizations and anyone else who has been helpful to you in this process of being a successful young adult
- Let Counseling Office know where you've been accepted and any scholarships you've been awarded
- Complete graduation checkout and GRADUATE ☺

2020-2021 College Test Dates

Check www.collegeboard.org for SAT Subject Test Policies

SAT

<u>SAT Test Dates</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
Oct 3, 2020	Sept. 22, 2020 (late registration)
Nov. 7, 2020	Oct. 7, 2020
Dec. 5, 2020	Nov. 5, 2020
Mar. 13, 2021	Feb. 12, 2021
May 8, 2021	April 8, 2021
June 5, 2021	May 6, 2021

Register at: www.collegeboard.org

ACT

<u>ACT Test Dates</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
Oct 10,17,24,25, 2020	Sept. 25, 2020
Dec 12, 2020	Nov. 6, 2020
Feb. 6, 2021	Jan, 8, 2021
April 17, 2021	Mar. 12, 2021
June 12, 2021	May 7, 2021
July 17, 2021	June 18, 2021

Register at: www.act.org

Ask your counselor for SAT fee waiver codes.

Advanced Placement Exams May 3-14, 2021

- ❖ Tuesday, May 4, 8 AM: AP Calculus
- ❖ Wednesday, May 5, 8 AM: AP English Literature and Composition;
12 PM: AP Physics
- ❖ Thursday, May 6, 8 AM: AP US History; 12 PM: AP Computer Science
- ❖ Friday, May 7, 8 AM: AP Chemistry
- ❖ Tuesday, May 11, 8 AM: AP Spanish Language and Culture
- ❖ Wednesday, May 12, 8 AM: AP English Language and Composition
- ❖ Thursday, May 13, 12 PM: AP Statistics

What Are Colleges Looking For?

High Importance

- **High School Grades:** HS GPA most important
- **Admission Test Scores (SAT & ACT):** More colleges are going test optional. With COVID, many colleges will be waiving this.

Moderately Important

- Class Rank
- Essay Writing or Writing Sample
- Teacher and Counselor Recommendations
- Student's Demonstrated Interest (in college and/or major of study)
- Community Service
- Extracurricular Activities (including any leadership roles)

Lower Importance (depending on college and program)

- Work Experience
- Interview
- Portfolios
- AP Subject Test Scores
- SAT II/Subject Scores
- State Graduation Exam Scores

Letters of Recommendation

Many colleges and universities require a specific number of letters of recommendation. They may also be specific about who should write them. Typically, the requirement includes two academic teachers and a counselor recommendation. Choose teachers with whom you have a strong, positive relationship. If the college or university does not specify who the letters should be from, you may also consider asking for a letter from a coach, a supervisor, your pastor, or another non-family member adult who can speak to your specific skills and strengths.

Resources for the College Search

There are many websites, guidebooks and people serving as helpers for your college/trade school search. Listed here are some of the recommended sources:

- Naviance Student is your #1 go-to resource. Sign in through Clever.
 - Go to clever.com
 - Log in as student (top right)
 - Put in Arvada High School
 - Use your regular Jeffco login info
 - Click on blue Naviance box to access your account
- Both ACT and SAT have very informative and helpful websites. They contain a plethora of information from reliable sources:
 - www.act.org
 - www.collegeboard.org
- www.petersons.com
- <https://www.mycoloradojourney.com/journey>
- Ask your counselor about other specific scholarships you might qualify for
- Individual colleges and universities each have their own websites usually designated by .edu suffix.

People:

Your counselor is an excellent resource to help guide you. He/she is your partner in this process and wants to make sure that each of you are successful.

Teachers, coaches and other significant adults in your life can also be helpful. Those who know you may have distinct opinions about a “good fit” for you. Recent Arvada HS graduates and other friends who are currently enrolled in college are other good resources. They will tell you their stories, both positive and negative.

Parents, family friends and relatives They love you!!

In Denver, many of the larger universities have alumni organizations and they would love to be contacted by you to talk about their alma mater.

College admissions officers/counselors provide enormous amounts of information and they can be contacted via email, phone, at college fairs and on campus. Remember that their time is limited, so have your questions ready for them. Do some homework ahead of time so you already have basic information on the school.

The Application Itself

Colleges have different applications. Most require some or all of the following parts:

Application Form – These are typically online. Most commonly, you will apply through the school's website. If you are applying to multiple 4-year universities, the Common Application may be more helpful. You will be asked for biographical and parent information as well as school information.

Application Fee – The fees usually range from \$0-\$100. The fee is non-refundable and many colleges offer fee waivers for low-income families.

High School Transcripts–Transcripts must be official and submitted from the Counseling Office via Naviance.

- Be sure your Naviance Student account is updated.

Admission Test Scores – At many colleges, you must submit SAT, SAT Subject Tests or ACT scores. Many schools will accept a high school transcript with the scores on them or a screenshot of the scores from collegeboard.org or act.org. Other schools require that scores are sent directly from the national testing agency, i.e. ACT or College Board.

Letters of Recommendation – Many colleges ask for one or more letters of recommendation from a teacher, counselor or other significant adult who knows the student well. The letters of recommendation are due at the time of the application deadline. Please allow two weeks for teachers and counselors to write your letter of recommendation.

Essay – The essay is an opportunity for colleges to get a glimpse of your thinking process, your writing skills, and your personal story. This is a chance to express your individuality and set yourself apart from others.

Interview – Some schools and programs may require an interview. Please contact your counselor if you'd like to schedule a mock interview.

Audition/Portfolio – If applying to a program such as art, music, theater or design, students may need to submit work examples. The college or university will guide you as to ways to submit your portfolio. In some cases, a personal audition may be required.

The entire application should present a single picture of a student. Fill the application out honestly and carefully to reflect your best self.

Early Decision, Early Action and Regular Decision

These terms can be confusing and colleges often use more than one type of process:

Early Decision is the process in which students make a commitment to a first choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll (this is not common). Students must withdraw other applications as soon as they have been admitted. If a student is granted Early Decision admission and not granted the financial aid that makes attendance possible, he/she will be released from the commitment. Deadlines can be as early as late October.

Early Action is the process of applying well in advance of the regular deadline for admission to a particular institution. Admission under Early Action is not binding. Each school has different requirements surrounding this option, so be sure to check the institution's guidelines. Sometimes specific scholarships are attached to early action programs as well.

Regular Decision is the process by which a student applies by a particular date and receives a response from the school by a particular date. These dates are usually in March, but not later than April 15.

Rolling Admission is the process through which an institution reviews applications as they are completed and decisions are made throughout the admissions cycle.

Wait Listing is a process by which institutions attempt to hedge against under enrollment. They place students on a list and then as their acceptances come in, they may offer admission to wait listed students.

Decisions to use any of these processes are best made individually. Consult your counselor if you are unsure or would like further information.

A Few Words About Deadlines...

Application deadlines are critical in the college admissions process. Missing a deadline often means that you have lost the opportunity to apply at all. Additionally, please remember the Counseling Office has its own deadlines to keep and we are not open during the breaks. Generally, you must give the office two weeks prior to your college's deadline to get the transcripts and supporting documents ready.

Tips for Campus Visits

Brochures and websites give you a lot of information, but you are not able to get the “feel” of the campus and truly imagine yourself there. A campus visit allows you the opportunity to visit the residence halls, get more specific information about the school and the programs offered, and get a general sense of campus life.

Sometimes it's not feasible to visit an out-of-state campus or they may not be offered because of COVID-19. Other options include a virtual tour online, calling the admissions office to gather more information, or ideally, speaking to a student who attends or has graduated from the college or university.

Before Visiting...

Schedule a guided tour either via the school's website, or through the admissions office. While there, you may want to visit the bookstore, library, and student union. The tour often includes question and answer sessions with current students. Consider some questions you might want to ask. These are also good questions to ask admission representatives at the college fair. Some examples may include:

- Why did you choose this school?
- How many hours per week do you study and where?
- How big are the classes?
- Where do students go to socialize?
- What is there to do in the surrounding town/city/around campus?
- Do you have sororities and fraternities?
- What kind of school sponsored activities are there (eg. sports)?

College Fairs

These will be conducted virtually this year due to COVID-19. Go to <https://www.gotocollegefairs.com/> or <https://www.nacacfairs.org/> to sign up for one of the fairs and learn more about different colleges.

Paying For College

Cost is always one of the first concerns when choosing a college. There are several options to help fund a college education. Financial aid is money that is given, borrowed or earned for educational purposes. Sources of financial aid include federal and state governments as well as the school/college/university, and private businesses.

Types of Financial Aid

College Opportunity Fund -This is a stipend paid for by the state of Colorado and covers a portion of your total in-state tuition when you attend a participating Colorado public or private institution. The state pays the stipend directly to the college. Sign up for COF online at cof.college-assist.org and click on “Apply for a Stipend”. COF will cover the following tuition costs:

- Public Institutions: \$40/credit hour
- Private Institution: \$20/credit hour

To be eligible for financial aid, a student must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Have a valid Social Security Number
- Comply with Selective Service registration (if male, age 18-25)
- Enroll at least half-time in an eligible program
- Have a high school diploma, GED, or enroll at a community college and successfully complete six credit hours
- Be enrolled or accepted as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program at a school that participates in the federal student aid programs
- Not have a drug conviction for an offense that occurred while you were receiving federal student aid
- Not owe a refund on a federal grant or be in default on a federal student loan
- Demonstrate financial need

Grants – Money from the federal or state government, college/university or private companies or organizations. Most grants are need-based. They do not need to be repaid.

Scholarships– Money that is won or given for a variety of reasons, such as academic, athletic, personal attributes or affiliations. Some are need-based and others are not. They do not need to be repaid.

Work Study – Money that is earned typically on-campus when in college. Work study does not need to be repaid and can be based on need or not. The student receives the income as he/she works, so the funds are not available upfront to pay tuition. Many students use these funds for living expenses.

Loans – Money that is borrowed from the federal or state government, a lender or other private sources which has to be repaid is considered to be a loan. Each of the loans has different stipulations regarding interest rate and deadline for repayment. It is important to understand the parameters of a specific loan.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the universal application for financial aid for all schools in the United States. The **only** legitimate place for you to complete a FAFSA is www.fafsa.gov. Also, one parent and the student must apply for a PIN (Personal Identification Number) to electronically sign the FAFSA form. This can be done at www.pin.ed.gov.

The earliest possible date you can complete the ***FAFSA is October 1st*** of the year before the student plans to attend school, i.e. If a student plans to attend college beginning in the fall of 2021, the earliest day to submit FAFSA is October 1, 2020. To complete the FAFSA you need: the student's Social Security Number and tax returns from the previous year (i.e. 2019 in this example).

The EFC (Expected Family Contribution) is sent to the family after completing the FAFSA. This is the amount the government believes your family can afford to send your student to school. The COA (Cost of Attendance) minus the EFC (Expected Family Contribution) equals the family's financial need. COA varies by college, so a family may appear to have a need at some schools and not at others.

Please be aware:

- If parents are divorced, students should only answer questions about the parent with whom they primarily lived with for the past 12 months.
- Be aware that scam websites will charge you to submit your FAFSA – **ONLY** apply at www.fafsa.gov

Web Resources for Financial Aid Information and Scholarships

www.denverscholarship.org

www.jeffcoschoolsfoundation.org/scholarships.html

www.finaid.org

www.collegeinvest.org

www.educationcents.org

www.fastweb.com

<https://pages.collegeboard.org/scholarship-opportunities-from-collegeboard>

www.nasfaa.org

www.goingmerry.com

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)

WUE (pronounced “woo-ee”) is the Western Undergraduate Exchange, a program coordinated by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Through this program, students in the western states may enroll in participating two and four year public college programs at a reduced tuition level: up to 150% of the institution’s resident tuition. In all cases, WUE tuition is considerably less than nonresident tuition.

Each institution determines the eligibility criteria. Check the school you are interested in for qualifiers. There are also a limited number of slots available, so it is very important to apply early! When you apply be sure to indicate WUE candidacy. If there is no indicator on the application, contact the admissions office for instructions. The WUE website is most informative at www.wiche.edu/wue. The website will indicate which colleges participate in the WUE program.

Transferring Concurrent Enrollment and Advanced Placement Credits

Concurrent Enrollment: Be sure to request and submit your final transcript from the college you received the concurrent enrollment credit from (i.e. Red Rocks, CU Denver, etc). to the college or university you will be attending. Arvada HS cannot submit these transcripts. This must come directly from the college.

Advanced Placement: Students who took AP exams can submit their scores for possible college credit via www.collegeboard.org. You will not receive college credit unless you submit your scores to the college you are attending.

Resources for Trade Schools/Apprenticeships

<https://www.emilygriffith.edu/apprenticeship>
<https://www.buildcolorado.com/apprenticeships-education>
<https://www.onetonline.org>
<https://www.emilygriffith.edu/college-trades-and-industry>

See your counselor for more specific options available to you

Resources for Military

Navy: <https://www.navy.com/?activity=1247289>
Army: <https://www.goarmy.com/info.html?iom=AGNO>
Air Force: <https://www.airforce.com/>
Marines: <https://www.marines.com/>
ASVAB Military Entrance Exam Information:
<https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/asvab>

See your counselor for specific recruiter contact information