



PARENT PLANNING GUIDE

The Summer Before Senior Year

In preparation for senior year, it's time to think and talk more seriously about your child's post secondary plans, what they want to do after high school. In their junior seminar course, your child learned about the different pathways available to them – four or two year college, military, technical and workforce training – and made an initial list of the pathways that most excite them. This planning guide is meant to support you as you help them think through their options.

Regardless of pathway, an important to-do for every family is to develop a post secondary financial aid plan. It is no secret that post secondary programs can be expensive! Even after grants and scholarships, the average Mastery Charter student attending college or a technical program has a bill of \$2,000-\$8,000 for every year they are attending school.

- **Talk with your child** about how much you will be able to contribute to their post secondary education. Consider having your child set aside a portion of their summer job paycheck in a savings account.
- **Begin to gather your tax and financial documents**, which you will use to submit the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in the fall. The FAFSA will determine your child's eligibility for federal student financial aid based on a variety of factors, most notably your family's assets and income and how much you might be able to contribute to your college education.
- **Encourage your child to search for scholarships** that will help make their postsecondary next step more affordable. Their College Coordinator can provide resources for places to start.

If your child is thinking about attending a college...

- ✓ **Schedule College or School Visits:** Spend some getting to know the colleges your child is most interested in, either virtually or in person. Don't forget about Camden Community College and the Community College of Philadelphia! Visiting with your child's top choices and engaging with admissions representatives not only gives them a better idea of where they want to go, but shows "demonstrated interest" to the school, which can contribute to their admissions application.

How will they get there? Encourage your child to think through the location of their top choices. If a school is outside the Philadelphia or Camden area, have them consider how they would get to and from school. Some schools offer transportation to major cities – this is a great question to ask during admissions visits!

Talk about majors: Talk with your child about their top three majors and why they are interested in them. Keeping an open mind about schools and majors at this stage will help your child consider different possibilities for their next step.

If your child is an athlete and plans on playing in college, contact the coaches at the schools to which you are applying and ask about intercollegiate and intramural sports programs and athletic scholarships.

- ✓ **Practice to Retake the SAT:** If your child still needs to take (or retake) the SAT, the summer is a great time to do some test prep. Your child's College Coordinator can provide resources for test prep before the end of the school year.

If your child is thinking about the military...

- ✔ **Review Qualifications for Enlistment:** Recruits must be a U.S. citizen or legal resident and be on track to graduate from high school within the next year. In addition, recruits can have no criminal felony charges or convictions, no more than three dependents, no history of serious medical conditions, and no more than four tattoos.
 - ✔ **Meet with a Recruiter:** The best way to find out which military career path is right for your child is to talk to a military recruiter. Remember, military careers aren't limited to being a soldier. There are opportunities for doctors, engineers, pilots, computer specialists, communications professionals and more!
 - ✔ **Prep for Entry Tests:** The ASVAB (Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery) tests your child's mental qualifications and determines their job placement. The higher their score on the ASVAB, the more jobs they qualify for once they enlist, so practice is key. Recruits will also need to pass an extensive physical exam – summer is a great time to get in shape!
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If your child is thinking a technical or career training program...

- ✔ **Talk about career options:** Determine what technical or trade programs may be best suited for your child based on their interest, skills and personality. Does your child like being outdoors? Enjoy building things? Interested in healthcare? Have an interested in IT? There are trade and technical programs that can turn these interests into lifelong careers.
 - ✔ **Explore Programs:** Check out the existing programs in the Philadelphia and Camden area. Your child's Senior Seminar advisor can provide a list of high quality programs as a starting point.
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If your child is undecided...

- ✔ **Explore, Explore, Explore:** Encourage your child to actively explore the many college and career options available to them after graduation! In addition to visiting schools or programs, if you have a friend or family member who works in a field that interests your child, ask them if they would be willing to do a job shadow for a day or help set up an internship.

If you have any questions over the summer, reach out to your child's College Advisor.

**Their contact information can be found on the
Postsecondary Family Planning Hub on Mastery's website.**



Mastery Charter Schools