

Parent Tips to Prepare for College

Middle School

Set Goals

Talk with your child about setting goals, both academically and socially. Encourage them to set goals to reach their full potential. Middle school is a time of social challenges, so make sure to check in to keep them motivated and focused.

Take on the Challenge

Encourage your child to take classes that will challenge them. It is important to start planning for the future by enrolling your child in the most challenging math and science courses for which they are eligible (i.e. Algebra 1, Geometry, Physical Science, etc.). Talk with teachers and counselors to make a plan that will serve your child best and help them reach their goals.

Get Involved!

Talk with your child about their hobbies, clubs, and other groups where they can participate. Looking for something different? Find a faculty sponsor and start a new club!

Check the opportunities offered through the [CU-ICAR](#) outreach programs.

Make a Plan

Talk with your child about deadlines and tests coming up. Make it a point to check in regularly about schoolwork and their grades.

Career Exploration

Share about your own career and talk with your child about career options. Talk about their interests and see where those may line up for potential future occupations.

Clemson offers outreach events for middle school students to encourage them to learn more about the fields of engineering and science. Check out our website for more information on these events:

[STEM Day](#) – Bring your student to campus to see and hear more about the College of Engineering, Computing, and Applied Science.

[Girl Scouts and Friends Day](#) – Bring your troop and friends to this outreach event where girls learn about STEM careers and participate in exciting engineering activities.

[EXPLORE Mobile Lab](#) – Bring the EXPLORE Lab to your school! This lab is sponsored by Duke Energy, and it brings engineering activities and materials to the middle school classroom to show students the opportunities that a degree in engineering can bring!

Camp

Summer camp is a great way to take learning beyond the classroom. Clemson offers the following summer camps for middle school students:

[Project WISE](#) – Come and stay on campus, experience what it is like to be a Clemson student. You will learn about engineering and meet new friends from across the country!

[Summer Science Camps](#) – Investigate chemistry, physics, and engineering design within the virtual classroom this summer. Sign up now to have your materials ready for the first session!

Check out the [College Board site](#) for tips on how to start college prep in middle school!

Ninth Grade

Explore Careers

Prior to starting high school, students should explore career ideas. Check out this [career worksheet](#) provided by the College Board to help students discover possible career options.

Meet with a Counselor

After career exploration, meeting with a high school guidance counselor can help students determine a plan that works best for them. They can discuss what classes are available to help them reach their long-term goals. Are there AP/IB classes available to them? It is important for students to continue to challenge themselves to take the highest-level courses for which they are eligible, including Geometry, Algebra 2, Chemistry, Biology, etc. For more information on working with your high school counselor, check out this [video](#).

Make a Plan

Talk with your child about deadlines and tests coming up. Make it a point to check in regularly about schoolwork and their grades. Time management is a good skill to develop in your student as they begin balancing academics and extracurricular activities. Investing in a [planner](#) may be a good start for helping students with time management.

Get Involved!

Talk with your child about their hobbies, clubs, and other groups where they can participate. Extracurricular activities help students find deeper meaning in their work and stay engaged in school. Looking for something different? Find a faculty sponsor and start a new club!

Check out the clubs and activities offered through Clemson's [EMAG!NE](#) outreach program.

College Search

Begin discussing college options and places where your student may want to further their education. It may be helpful to start in-state and see what colleges are close to home. You can also look for colleges that offer programs related to your student's interest and set up a tour. Check out Clemson's visitors page [here](#) for information.

Summer Programs

Look for summer outreach programs and camp opportunities to keep your student engaged over the break. There are many colleges that offer camps related to different interests and hobbies.

Tenth Grade

Explore Careers

Talk with your student about career options and where they might see themselves after high school. Are there careers that spark their interest? Look for more information about careers [here](#).

PSAT

Help your student prepare for the PSAT/NMSQT if it is being offered at their school. These tests can help your student prepare for college entrance exams like the SAT. Find resources for preparing for these tests [here](#).

Meet with a Counselor

Talking with a counselor is an important part of planning for the future. Based on your student's current classes, what comes next? Ask the counselor what course options your student has in relation to their career goals. Make sure your student continues to challenge themselves academically.

Make a Plan

Talk with your child about deadlines and tests coming up. Make it a point to check in regularly about schoolwork and their grades.

Get Involved!

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SAT/ACT Prep

These tests are referred to as college entrance exams. It is important that students prepare for these tests and set aside time to study. If they have results from the PSAT, the student reporting portal can show their areas of strength and weakness. Students can use this information to begin test prep. Check out these free, personalized [SAT study tools](#).

College Search

Work with your student to make a college wish list. Discuss things like the size of the school, the majors offered, and the location. You should also begin looking at the cost of college. Check out our website for types of financial aid [here](#).

Eleventh Grade

Meet with a Counselor

Talking with a counselor becomes even more important this year as they begin preparing for the college application process. Discuss with the counselor what classes are available and fit your student's individual needs. Continue to encourage them to challenge themselves and stay on track to complete higher level classes like Precalculus and Biology, as well as any AP classes that might be available.

Make a Plan

Talk with your child about deadlines and tests coming up. Make it a point to check in regularly about schoolwork and their grades. Now is a great time to discuss how to help your student stay organized. Junior year in high school comes with many good things, but it can be overwhelming. Stress to them the importance of time management and making priorities when it comes to completing work for school or extracurricular activities.

Get Involved!

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College Visits

You should have narrowed down the college search and have some idea of which schools offer the majors your student is interested in. Visit the college website and set up a tour of campus. Make sure you ask questions during your tour and get information about financial aid. For more information about Clemson's College of Engineering, Computing, and Applied Sciences, check out our [website](#).

Financial Aid

Find out about scholarships and financial aid available to your student. Research loans, grants and scholarships that could help pay for college tuition, room and board, and other costs associated with college. Begin applying for these funding options when they come available. Clemson's financial aid office has many [resources](#) on types of financial aid.

Summer Opportunities

Learn about the tools and tips needed to prepare for college this summer through our Clemson Career Workshop. This program will give students the chance to interact with Clemson students and faculty while participating in academic sessions in the fields of science, technology, engineering, math, and social sciences. Check out the [website](#) for more information!

Twelfth Grade

Meet with a Counselor

Encourage your student to begin filling out college applications. Meeting with a counselor, your student can submit applications, and talk about possible scholarships and financial aid. Counselors can help your student find out about scholarships, request, and complete applications on time. Check out this list of STEM scholarships.

Financial Aid

Students qualify for financial aid based on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In order to fill out this form, students will need your most recent tax returns and an FSA ID. Application forms are available beginning October 1st.

SAT/ACT

Help your student prepare to take the SAT/ACT for a final time in the fall, if needed. Students will have a choice on where to send their scores, and they can select the same schools to which they apply.

College Interviews

Find out about tours for specific majors and ask questions that will give you the facts about college life. For more information, check out our tours for the College of Engineering, Computing, and Applied Sciences [here](#).