Checklists

Activity Family Checklist

Parents and guardians: whether or not you are a college graduate, you are an essential member of your child's success network. Working together from ninth grade through the transition to college is important for your child's success. This checklist will guide you through each stage of the college admissions process.

Preparing for College

- ☐ Create an environment at home that is conducive to doing schoolwork (p. 10).
- ☐ Talk with school counselors and teachers about your child's college plans and ask how you can support their path to college (p. 6).
- ☐ Learn about college prep supports for high schoolers, like Advance at College, Summer Search, and Upward Bound (p. 68).
- ☐ Enroll your child in an SAT or ACT preparation course and/or find online test prep tools (p. 32).
- ☐ Talk with your child about making good personal decisions, which will support their goal of attending college (pp. 9-11).
- ☐ Find out if you have access to **Xello** through your school and learn how it can help you through the college admissions process (p. 23).

Applying to College

- ☐ Research colleges together to identify schools that fit your child's needs academically, socially, and financially (pp. 15-23).
- ☐ Attend college fairs and visit colleges with your child (pp. 23-24).
- ☐ Be aware of deadlines for college applications and financial aid forms. Put deadlines on a family calendar.
- ☐ Help your child with applications by proofreading them and keeping paperwork organized (p. 39).
- ☐ Make copies of all documents sent by mail or submitted online and place in a college file.
- ☐ Designate a place for all college-related mail and regularly review it together.

Paying for College

- ☐ Involve your child in discussions about financing their college education (pp. 41-45).
- ☐ Attend financial aid workshops and do research online (pp. 41-58).
- ☐ Open a Pennsylvania 529 College Savings Plan account. Learn more at **www.pa529.com**.
- ☐ Help your child research scholarships (pp. 53-54).
- ☐ Estimate your Student Aid Index (SAI) (p. 42).
- ☐ Help your high school senior complete and submit the FAFSA as soon as possible, typically beginning in October (pp. 46-47).
- ☐ **Remember: a college is not the "right fit" if it is not affordable for your family.**

Transitioning to College

- ☐ Make sure your child keeps current with mail and email the summer before college for instructions related to housing, billing, medical forms, etc. (pp. 60-61).
- ☐ Talk with your child about managing expenses at college (p. 62).
- ☐ Encourage your child to use on-campus resources, such as tutoring, the health center, and the counseling center (p. 60).
- ☐ The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects your child's privacy, but denies you access to financial, healthcare, or educational information about your child from their college. Your child must sign a waiver to grant you access to college bills, transcripts, and/or health information. Look for information about FERPA on the college's website.