

Junior Prep List ~ Class of 2026

For Juniors Going into Senior Year

[Schoology | Student Services Course](#)

College Research

- Use [Naviance](#): College Search, JMHS Scattergrams, College Overlaps and more.
- Visit colleges & attend college fairs: Attend virtual or in person information sessions/college tours/open house events.
- Check college websites for updates and related information for the colleges you are interested in.
- Follow social media outlets for colleges of interest.
- Attend fall college visits with admission representatives scheduled through the JMHS College & Career Center.

College Essay

- Brainstorm potential essay topics - Colleges want to hear *your* voice and get to know *you*.
- Visit [Common Application](#) and [Coalition Application](#) for the 2025-2026 college essay prompts.
 - Over 1,000 colleges/universities utilize the Common App and 170+ utilize the Coalition App.
- Visit the [College Essay Guy](#) - Free guide to writing a personal statement and free resources.
 - [The College Essay Guy's Blog](#)
 - College Essay Resources in [Schoology](#)
- Begin or continue the essay writing process; plan to return to school in August with at least a draft of your essay.



College Letters of Recommendations

- Think about which core teacher(s) you will ask to write you a letter of recommendation and consider asking those teachers this spring. Find out what information they will need from you.
- Complete the [Student Self-Evaluation Form](#), [Resume](#), [Parent Information Form](#). Submit to your counselor by the due date.

College List/Applications

- Begin to finalize your list of colleges. Be prepared to share your list of colleges in the fall with your school counselor.
- Enter your list in [Naviance](#), "Colleges I'm Thinking About"
- Research colleges and complete college searches. Identify a broad range of colleges and their admission difficulty. You want a balance and range of colleges you are planning to apply to.
- Consider [NOVA](#) or two-year college options; economically feasible, and helpful transition to a four-year college.
- Look at application requirements and get organized to complete applications in the fall. College applications for 2025-2026 will be available by early to mid-August.
- [Common Application](#) and [Coalition Application](#) - Many colleges/universities participate in these application platforms which allows for students to apply to multiple colleges using one application.

Standardized Testing

- Check college websites for updates to their testing policies.
- Register/prepare to take the *SAT or ACT Test* (JMHS CEEB Code is 472-278)
 - SAT: www.collegeboard.org
 - ACT: www.act.org
- [Varsity Tutors](#): Free on-demand chat tutoring, live group classes, essay review, test prep for FCPS students
- [Khan Academy](#): Free online courses, practice & lessons | [ACT](#) also offers free test prep on their website
- [Fairtest.org](#): List of test optional colleges/universities. Verify information with each college.

Financial Aid Information

- [Federal Student Aid](#): An Office of the Department of Education
- [FAFSA](#): **Free** Application for Student Aid. The 2026-2027 FAFSA application is expected to open October 1, 2025.
- [VASA](#): Virginia Alternative State Aid for students who are ineligible to complete the FAFSA. This is only for aid in the state of Virginia and does not provide federal aid.
- [College Access Fairfax](#): Financial aid workshops, scholarships and resources for FCPS students. Previous program recordings and presentations are available and can give you a sense of what to expect in the fall.
- [SCHEV](#): State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
- [Academic Common Market](#): Pay in-state tuition at participating out of state schools for certain majors not offered in Virginia
- Financial aid presentations will be offered through [College Access Fairfax](#).