Ridgewood High School

Postsecondary and Career Expectations

Each student should have an individualized learning plan to help make decisions about career and post-secondary (PS) education or training, to plan a course of study, and to make financial aid assessments with family members.

By the end of 8th grade

- Complete an orientation to career clusters
- Complete a career cluster survey
- Attend a career exploration day
- Prepare a budget
- Be exposed to a financial unit in a course or workshop
- Know how salary impacts standard of living
- Understand that taking the right courses in high school can reduce the cost of college
- Know the relationship between high school coursework, attendance, and grades to postsecondary plans
- Outline a plan for community service and extracurricular activities related to postsecondary plans

By the end of 9th grade

- Revisit career cluster interest survey and take a career interest survey
- Know one or two career clusters for further exploration and development
- Select a career pathway within a career cluster of interest
- Visit at least one workplace aligned with career interests
- Be aware of youth employment opportunities while in high school
- Know own learning style and how it relates to career interests
- Develop public speaking skills
- Complete a financial aid assessment with a family member
- Know general cost ranges of various postsecondary institutions
- Attend a postsecondary options workshop
- Attend a college fair
- Know the different types of postsecondary credentials and institutions
- Complete a college fit/match inventory
- Complete or enroll in at least one early college credit opportunity
- Review coursework, and postsecondary/career plans in relation to the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators (every year)

By the end of 10th grade

- Know educational requirements, cost, expected entry level, and midpoint salary for occupations in selected career clusters
- Know career attributes related to career interests
- Know how career pathways courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at postsecondary options
- Know where to find scholarship opportunities
- Know the affordability of postsecondary options in relation to expected entry-level career salary and anticipated debt
- Explore internships and apprenticeships for scholarships and money opportunities
- Attend a postsecondary affordability workshop with a family member
- Identify two related postsecondary paths and/or college majors strongly correlated with assessment results
- Outline a plan for high school courses to prevent remediation at the college level
- Meet with a counselor to discuss coursework and postsecondary/career plans using ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators

By the end of 11th grade

- Participate in a job shadowing opportunity
- Complete an elective course to explore career interests
- Participate in mock job interview
- Create a resume and personal statement
- Identify an internship opportunity related to career pathways
- Know financial aid deadlines for chosen postsecondary options
- Create a plan and timeline for financial aid process
- Learn about debt and credit scores
- Outline a plan to pay for college
- Know the difference between need-based, merit-based, and self-help student financial aid programs
- Visit at least 3 postsecondary institutions
- Determine readiness for college-level coursework in math/ELA and enrollment in either "catch up" or "speed up" course
- Know 3-5 match schools, one safety, one reach school for postsecondary program of study
- Know the general timing of postsecondary entrance exams and applications
- Take at least one college entrance exam

By the end of 12th grade

- Obtain an internship opportunity related to the career pathways
- If applicable, receive industry-based certification(s) related to the career pathways
- Know the terms and conditions of any scholarship or loan
- Know estimated cost of each postsecondary option
- By 12/31 Complete the FAFSA
- By 12/31 Attend a FAFSA completion workshop
- Secure letters of recommendation for college and scholarship applications
- Understand the college placement process
- By 12/31 Complete 3 or more admissions applications to postsecondary institutions
- By 12/31 Meet with a school counselor to ensure all steps in the postsecondary admissions process are completed on time

- Career Exploration and Development
- Financial Aid and Literacy
- Post-Secondary Education Exploration, Preparation, and Selection