

What path will YOU take?

Education

Most jobs require education beyond high school. The level of education you will need will depend on the job you want.



Career and technical schools offer programs ranging from 6 to 18 months to prepare for careers in fields like plumbing, electrical, auto mechanical, culinary, cosmetology, etc.

Two-year colleges offer associate's degrees. You can enter the workforce with a degree in fields like healthcare or information technology. You also have the option to transfer to a college or university to earn a bachelor's degree.



In Florida, **state colleges have formal 2+2 agreements** with local universities. These relationships give students the option to complete the first two years of their bachelor's degree at a state college and the second two years at a university. This can help families save money on a four-year degree.



A bachelor's degree from a **four-year college or university** can prepare you for jobs in fields such as business, education, or engineering. You can also continue on to graduate school to study fields like law or medicine.

While earning your bachelor's degree, you will build a broader body of knowledge, which can offer you more flexibility to change careers throughout your life.

Service

If you enlist in the **US military**, you will receive training and learn skills that can transfer to a career. You will also have the opportunity to continue your education later using GI Bill benefits.

AmeriCorps offers another opportunity for service. You can participate in projects that serve communities in need, like home building or disaster cleanup. You will also receive an education award you can use to go back to school.



Employment

Entering the workforce is another option for students. To increase your earning potential, consider looking at an apprenticeship program, or working for a family business.

Get the Support You Need

There are many options for what you can do after high school, so making a decision can seem intimidating. Use this guide to start planning your next steps early on.

As you take this journey, your plan might change along the way. That's okay! You can always turn to the tools in this guide to revisit and revise plans as needed.

Career Clusters

Florida's state colleges offer courses in different career clusters. This can help you explore a field that interests you without needing to know the exact job you want.

Clusters may vary slightly from one college to another, but they generally fall into the following categories.



Business



Education



Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)



Health Sciences



Human Services



Communications



Law, Public Safety, Government



Information Technology



Culinary



Manufacturing



Construction



Arts

To learn more about available career clusters, visit:

www.floridacollegesystem.com/students/programs/meta-major_academic_pathways.aspx



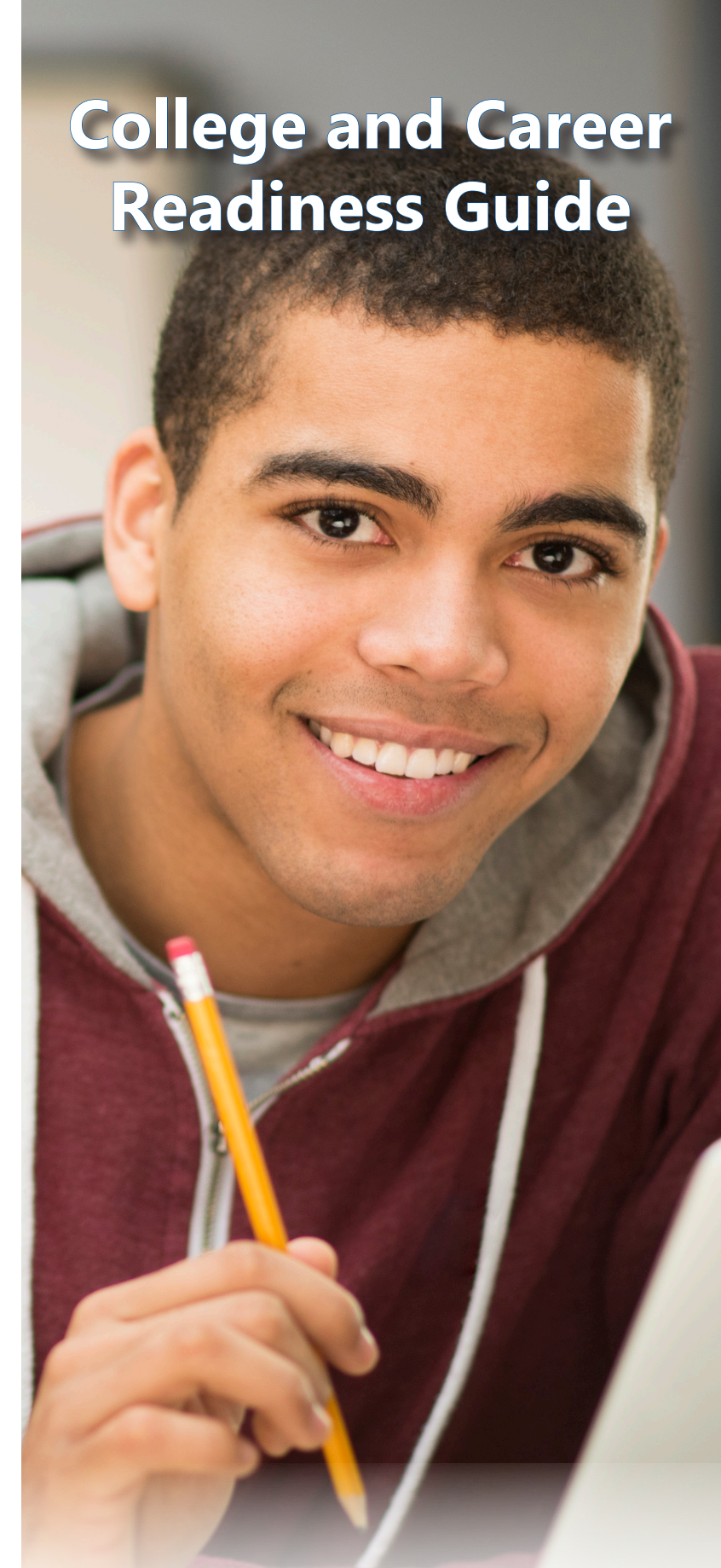
Leap Tampa Bay is a part of Florida College Access Network, a statewide network with the goal of ensuring all Floridians have access to the postsecondary education they need to be prepared to participate in Florida's workforce.

For more college access resources, visit www.FloridaCollegeAccess.org



Plan It Florida is one of four College Ready Florida initiatives coordinated by Florida College Access Network. The goal of Plan It Florida is to equip students with the resources and skills they need to make a plan for life after high school.

College and Career Readiness Guide



7th-9th Grade Expose

It's never too early to start thinking about your future! Focus on building skills that will be useful no matter what path you take, and look for opportunities to expose yourself to post-high school options.

Develop good study skills and focus on getting good grades.

Notice which subjects you enjoy the most, and/or which you are the strongest in, and get extra help in subjects you struggle with.

Research options for high school, and consider magnet schools or career academies.



Participate in hobbies like sports, robotics, science fair, math league, debate, 4H, Model UN, music, theater, faith-based activities, and community service to explore your interests.

Research area college and universities that offer enrichment programs like TRiO, GEARUP, or CROP.

Start learning about jobs and careers through family friends, books, and through free resources like MyCareerShines and Launch My Career. You can also look into opportunities to shadow a family member or friend at their job to learn more about it.



www.mycareershines.kuder.com



www.launchmycareerfl.org

Goal: Identify 3 Career Clusters

Florida's state colleges divide classes according to "career clusters." By the end of 9th grade, identify at least 3 of these clusters you'd like to learn more about. (See the back of this brochure for more info.)

10th Grade Explore

In 9th and 10th grade, start exploring different options for life after high school and thinking about which one might be right for you. This can help you plan what classes you want to take in high school or what activities you participate in.

Start taking advanced classes in subject areas that interest you. Consider options like AP, Honors, and dual enrollment.

Study for the PSAT, and take it in the fall.



www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf

Use online resources like Khan Academy to get help with school subjects, or to learn more about topics that interest you.



www.khanacademy.org



Research scholarship opportunities available nationally and in your local community. Will you need to complete community service hours, participate in extracurricular activities, or achieve a certain GPA to qualify?

Goal: Identify 3 Careers

Start learning more about careers in the clusters that interest you. By the end of 10th grade, identify 3 you want to learn more about. Start researching the education requirements for these careers.

11th Grade Experiment

You might find that you have many interests, and you don't know which you'd like to pursue. That's okay! Participate in activities and academic opportunities that allow you to experiment with different skills to learn more about who you are and what you're good at.

Focus on your grades! Since you will likely apply to colleges in the fall of your senior year, grades from your junior year will be the most recent ones they will see.



www.act.org
www.collegeboard.org/sat

Start visiting colleges that interest you. Find out if your school or a community organization sponsors college visits.

Use online tools like the College Scorecard to research colleges and universities that interest you.



www.collegescorecard.ed.gov

You can also look into camp opportunities to spend a week on a college campus over the summer. Many sports, arts, and science camps offer these programs.

Goal: Identify 2-4 Pathways

In 11th grade, identify 2-4 pathways you can take after high school based on your career interests. Check out the back of this brochure to learn more about the available pathways.

12th Grade Execute

- Finalize a list of 2-4 colleges you will apply to
- Ask teachers/supervisors/mentors for letters of recommendation starting in September
- Check with your guidance counselor to see if you qualify for application fee waivers
- Complete your college applications; keep in mind that, for some colleges, you may need to apply by **November 1** to qualify for scholarships and aid from that institution
- Find out if any of the schools you are applying to accept the Common Application
- Complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** as early as possible to qualify for free money for college
- Complete the Florida Financial Aid Application to apply for Bright Futures and other state aid
- Research and apply for local and national scholarships
- Compare financial aid packages from schools that accept you--talk to your guidance counselor for help
- Choose a college, complete enrollment paperwork, and submit your deposit
- Make plans to attend orientation and register for classes



www.commonapp.org



www.fafsa.ed.gov

The FAFSA opens on October 1. Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to find out if you qualify for free money for college!

Goal: Apply and Go!

It's time to put your plan into action!

Follow the steps above to apply to colleges and for financial aid. Soon you will be on your way to life after high school!