

A photograph of two young women with glasses looking at a notebook. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and is wearing a dark sweater. The woman on the right has dark hair tied back and is wearing a striped sweater. They are both smiling and looking at a notebook held by the woman on the right. The image is overlaid with a blue geometric pattern consisting of diagonal lines.

JUNIOR YEAR PLANNING GUIDE

COLLEGE BOUND MICHIGAN &
BIGFUTURE SCHOLARSHIPS

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INTRODUCTION

This planning guide connects MCAN's College Bound Michigan Initiative (CBMI) with College Board's BigFuture Scholarships. With both programs working in tandem, students in Michigan will feel supported in their college-going journeys.

The goal of this Planning Guide is to encourage the junior class to start their BigFuture journey early, while also providing strategies to seamlessly integrate CBMI planning into your college advising curriculum. By building excitement and knowledge early on, schools taking part in both CBMI and BigFuture will see a positive college-going culture in their school.

WHAT IS COLLEGE BOUND MICHIGAN?

College Bound Michigan (CBMI) is the joining of all three of MCAN's statewide initiatives: Michigan College Month, College Cash Campaign and Decision Day into one comprehensive campaign for postsecondary attainment.

WHAT ARE BIGFUTURE SCHOLARSHIPS?

Applying for college is a complicated process. College Board has created a program that guides students through it. This scholarship program is open to all students and doesn't require an essay, application, or minimum GPA. Instead, it rewards student efforts and initiative as they complete key steps along their path to college. Juniors who participate in BigFuture are eligible to win up to six \$500 scholarships and one \$40,000 scholarship. At least half of all scholarships (over \$2 million) will be designated for students whose families earn less than \$60,000 a year. Whenever students who meet these requirements complete a step, they'll earn an extra entry in monthly drawings for scholarships.

HOW TO USE THE JUNIOR YEAR PLANNING GUIDE

This planning guide provides educators a checklist broken down from September to June to help you plan how to support students during their junior year and set them up for success in their senior year. This includes taking advantage of BigFuture Scholarships, which give students the chance to earn money for completing the college-going steps.

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BIGFUTURE SCHOLARSHIPS

See the table below for the BigFuture timeline. By completing each step, students will be entered into a monthly drawing for a scholarship. Drawings will continue every month until the end of February of their senior year.

- 1 Start Your Career List**
Explore careers that match your interests.
Start: Any time*
Deadline: By the end of February of your senior year
- 2 Build Your College List**
Find two or four-year colleges that interest you.
Start: Any time
Deadline: By June 30 of your junior year
- 3 Start Your Scholarship List**
Find other scholarships to help you pay for college.
Start: July 1 before your senior year
Deadline: By the end of February of your senior year
- 4 Strengthen Your College List**
Make sure your college list has a mix of reach, match, and safety schools.
Start: July 1 before your senior year
Deadline: By October 31 of your senior year
- 5 Complete the FAFSA**
Fill out the free government form to apply for financial aid.
Start: October 1 of your senior year
Deadline: By the end of February of your senior year
- 6 Apply to Colleges**
Apply to the schools you want to attend.
Start: October 1 of your senior year
Deadline: By the end of February of your senior year

CLASS OF 2024

- Until June 30, 2023: Build a College List
- From July 1, 2023 – Oct. 31, 2023: Strengthen Your College List
- From when the FAFSA opens in December 2023 – Feb. 29, 2024: Complete the FAFSA
- From Oct. 1, 2023 – Feb. 29, 2024: Apply to College

CLASS OF 2025

- Until Feb. 28, 2025: Start a Career List
- Until June 30, 2024: Build a College List
- From July 1, 2023 – Feb. 28, 2025: Explore Scholarships
- From July 1, 2024 – Oct. 31, 2024: Strengthen Your College List
- From Oct. 1, 2024 – Feb. 28, 2025: Complete the FAFSA
- From Oct. 1, 2024 – Feb. 28, 2025: Apply to College

CLASS OF 2026

- Dec. 1, 2023 – Feb. 28, 2026: Start a Career List
- Dec. 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025: Build a College List
- July 1, 2024 – Feb. 28, 2026: Explore Scholarships
- July 1, 2025 – Oct. 31, 2025: Strengthen Your College List
- Oct. 1, 2025 – Feb. 28, 2026: Complete the FAFSA
- Oct. 1, 2025 – Feb. 28, 2026: Apply to College

JUNIOR YEAR PLANNING GUIDE

JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER

- Host a junior family meeting to discuss expectations for this year
- Provide the [junior year checklist](#)
- Meet with junior students to discuss plans for after high school
- Invite juniors to attend college fairs, college admissions representative visits, and college tours
- Support students as they take the PSAT (if applicable)
- Support students in creating a [College Board account](#) to access SAT and AP scores online and send them to colleges
- Register for SAT and CLEP exams and print admissions and registration tickets
- Manage BigFuture Scholarship steps and opportunities ([Start a Career List](#), [Build a College List](#), [Explore Scholarships](#))

DECEMBER-FEBRUARY

- Work with students on building a college list with at least six (6) schools on BigFuture
- College Board provides a [Step-By-Step Guide](#) on building a College List in a student account
- Use the [College List Builder](#) to help students prepare and research their reach, match, and safety schools
- Encourage students to make a college plan that allows them to track and share their progress
- Keeping your [Class Progress Tracker](#) up-to-date will help keep you organized and on-track
- Connect with classroom teachers and request dedicated time for you to present and support students in creating their accounts
- Connect with computer & technology teachers to request they integrate college research into their class curriculum and allow students to research colleges & programs that interest them

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JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

MARCH-APRIL

- Work with students to prepare them for the SAT
- Share [SAT Practice Strategies](#) with students
- Share [College Entrance Exams FAQ](#) with students
- Continue to encourage students to use Khan Academy as practice
- Share information with parents about the SAT such as the [Parent Guide to the SAT](#)
- Provide students with a sample BRAG sheet that they can begin preparing in class to support their personal statement essay and postsecondary planning
- Create a survey to collect data on postsecondary plans for juniors to prepare supports for their senior year
- Utilize [Decision Day Resources](#) to plan and execute a fun event for the whole school
 - Consider how you can connect with the community to build a college-going culture in your city or town
- Invite juniors to attend your school's Decision Day event

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JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

MAY

- Host your Decision Day events! Be sure to include your juniors to build excitement around their college-going journey.
 - Use hashtags #CollegeBoundMI, #DecisionDay, #IDecided, #CollegeSigningDay, and #BetterMakeRoom on social media with pictures of your events
- Work with your English department to make sure students have an opportunity to begin personal statement essays in class to prepare for senior year

JUNE

- Register for the upcoming cycle of [College Bound Michigan](#)
- Work with your administration on the [School Counselor Strategic Planning Tool](#) to help drive change in your school with clear goals and measurable outcomes for student achievement and success
- Ensure that all students have a [Senior Year Checklist](#) so that they can prepare over the summer

JUNIOR YEAR PLANNING GUIDE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & LINKS

[BigFuture Scholarships](#)

[College Board](#)

[BigFuture YouTube Channel](#)

[BigFuture Videos for Educators](#)

[College Bound Michigan Resource Hub](#)

[Michigan FAFSA Tracker](#)

[Michigan College Access Network](#)