

College & Career Readiness

Helping Your Student Navigate What's Next



College



Career



Training



Military



Workforce

Your student's next chapter starts now.

What Does "College & Career Ready" Mean?

It means being ready for what's next.

ACADEMIC

Strong coursework, skills and habits

CAREER

Exploration, workplace skills and experience

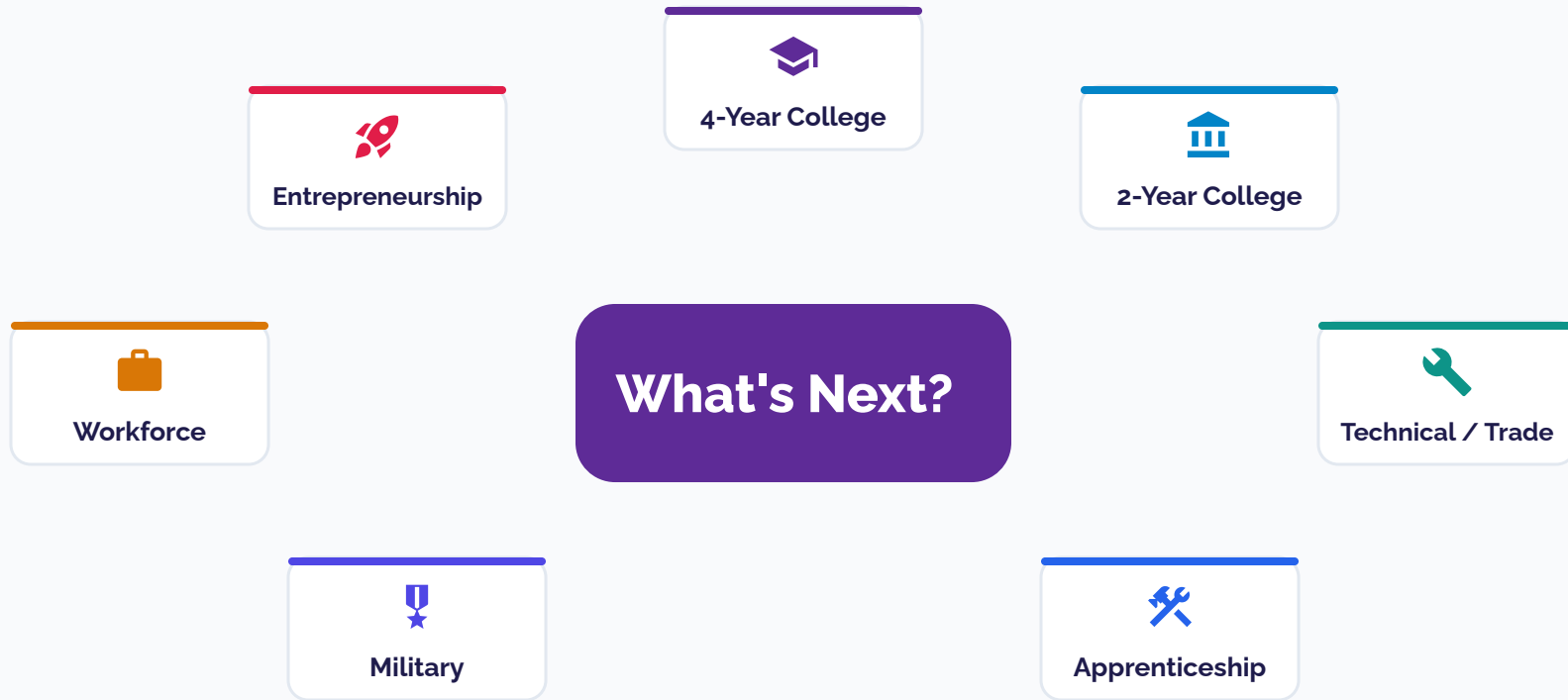
PERSONAL

Organization, communication, independence and self-advocacy



Bottom Line: Readiness is more than a GPA or test score.

There Is More Than One Successful Path



BOTTOM LINE: The goal is not one particular path. The goal is a good next step.

Juniors: Explore + Prepare

Junior Year Roadmap

1. Academics

- Stay focused on grades
- Review graduation requirements
- Plan senior-year courses

2. Exploration

- Research careers
- Explore colleges and programs
- Visit campuses/programs
- Attend career events

3. Preparation

- Build a résumé
- Learn about testing
- Begin financial-aid conversations
- Meet with your counselor

PARENT QUESTION

"What are you curious about?"

Seniors: Explore → Execute

Senior Year Action Roadmap & Execution Checklist



1. Research



2. Apply



3. Financial Aid



4. Compare



5. Decide

SENIOR YEAR MEANS:

- Finalize options
- Track deadlines
- Complete applications
- Request transcripts
- Ask for recommendations

NEXT STEPS & DECISION:

- Complete financial-aid steps
- Apply for scholarships
- Compare offers
- Make a decision

BOTTOM LINE

Parents: Help build the system. | **Students:** Own the process.

Ways to Apply to College

APPLICATION METHODS — How to navigate different application systems

1. COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY APP

- Apply directly through the school's website
- Often the best place to start

2. COMMON APPLICATION

- One application used for many participating colleges
- Students may submit applications to multiple schools

3. MINNESOTA STATE APP

- Used for many [Minnesota State colleges & universities](#)
- Check specific campus and program requirements
- [Create a Star ID](#)

4. OTHER APPLICATION SYSTEMS

- Some colleges use their own application system
- Some programs may have additional requirements

IMPORTANT

Not every college accepts every method — check admissions for deadlines, fees, & required materials

Don't forget your transcript!

TRANSCRIPT VS APPLICATION — Understanding the difference & process

APPLICATION VS TRANSCRIPT

Your application and your transcript are TWO different things.

Application

→ Tells the college about YOU

Transcript

→ Provides your official academic record

STUDENTS SHOULD:

1. **Complete** the college application
2. **Request** the transcript through Parchment
3. **Select** the correct college/destination
4. **Check** that the request was submitted
5. **Watch** the status until it is processed

AT ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL

Official transcripts are sent through Parchment.

The 5 Things Parents Should Focus On

Essential focus areas to help guide your student's transition

01

Academics

Are they taking appropriate courses?

02

Exploration

Do they understand their options?

03

Organization

Can they track deadlines?

04

Money

Have we talked honestly about cost?

05

Independence

Can they advocate for themselves?

Bottom Line

Focus on readiness—not perfection.

Choosing a College or Program

LOOK FOR FIT — Key dimensions to evaluate every option

ACADEMIC

Does it offer what the student needs?

FINANCIAL

Can our family afford it?

PERSONAL

Will the environment work for the student?

CAREER

Will it help the student move toward their goals?

BOTTOM LINE

"Best" is personal.

Career Exploration Matters

A step-by-step pathway to guide your student's future direction



EXPLORE THROUGH:

Job shadows

Observe professionals on the job

Internships

Gain hands-on work experience

Work-based learning

Connect classroom to industry

Career fairs

Explore multiple industries at once

Conversations with professionals

Conduct informational interviews

Career assessments

Evaluate interests and strengths

Let's Talk About Money

FINANCIAL PLANNING — Key questions to discuss before applications are submitted

What can our family afford?

Will the student contribute?

Will we borrow?

What scholarships are realistic?

What if the first choice costs more than expected?

THE FINANCIAL AID FORMULA



Sticker Price

Published tuition & fees



Financial Aid

Grants, scholarships & aid



Net Cost

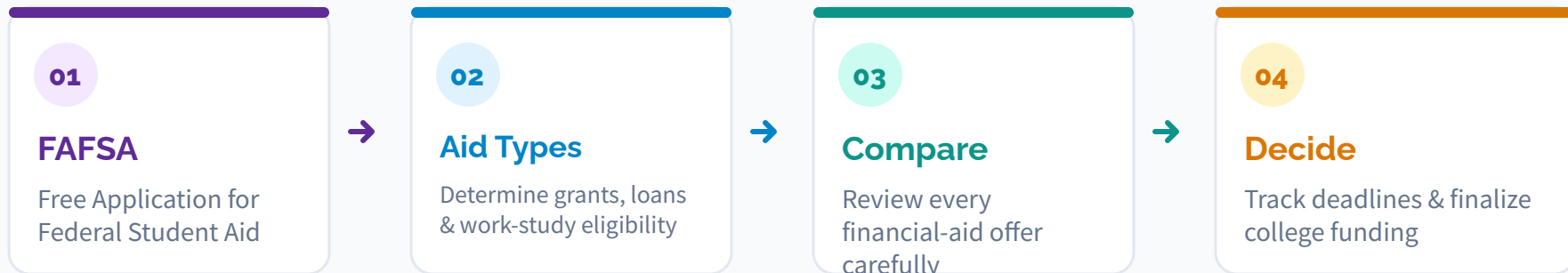
Actual out-of-pocket cost

BOTTOM LINE

Sticker price ≠ actual cost

FAFSA & Financial Aid

FINANCIAL AID PROCESS — Key steps to secure funding for your education



ELIGIBILITY & CRITICAL REMINDERS

Helps Determine Eligibility For:

- Federal grants
- Federal work-study
- Federal student loans
- State aid & institutional aid

FAFSA is FREE.

Deadlines matter.

Read every financial-aid offer carefully.

Scholarships: Start Local

SEARCH STRATEGY — Maximize your aid by focusing on local opportunities and keeping organized

WHERE TO LOOK

- Albany High School opportunities
- Local businesses
- Community organizations
- Foundations
- Employers
- Colleges
- Professional organizations
- State programs

KEEP ONE TRACKER

Track every application using these key data points:

1. **Scholarship Name**
2. **Amount**
3. **Deadline**
4. **Submitted Status**



RED FLAG

Be cautious of anyone promising guaranteed money for a fee. Legitimate scholarships will never charge an application fee.

STRATEGY TIP

Local scholarships have fewer applicants — your odds of winning are significantly higher!

7 Skills Your Student Needs Before Graduation

INDEPENDENCE CHECKLIST — Key competencies for college, career, and adult life



01

Send a professional email?



02

Make a phone call to ask a question?



03

Schedule an appointment?



04

Track deadlines?



05

Complete a form independently?



06

Compare options and costs?



07

Ask for help?

BOTTOM LINE

These are college skills. These are career skills. These are LIFE skills.

What Can We Do This Month?

ACTION CHECKLIST — Priority goals for student and parent success

JUNIORS PREPARATION PHASE

- ☐ Meet with counselor
- ☐ Explore 2–3 career areas
- ☐ Research 3 postsecondary options
- ☐ Review senior courses
- ☐ Start a résumé
- ☐ Talk about finances

SENIORS EXECUTION PHASE

- ☐ Finalize options
- ☐ Create deadline calendar
- ☐ Complete applications
- ☐ Research scholarships
- ☐ Complete financial-aid steps
- ☐ Check application portals

PARENT CHALLENGE

Schedule one 30-minute "future conversation."

College & Career Opportunities

UPCOMING EVENTS AT AHS — Manufacturing tours, college rep visits, and campus tours

MANUFACTURING TOURS

CMMA MONTH

- **Oct 1st: Louis Industries**
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
- **Oct 1st: Two Rivers**
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Oct 8th: Columbia Gear**
8:30 AM – 9:30 AM

COLLEGE REPS AT AHS

COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE MONTH

- Alex Tech — 9/21 @ 11:00am
- St. Johns / St. Bens — 9/22 @ 1:00pm
- St. Scholastica — 9/29 @ 12:45pm
- SCTCC — 10/1 @ 9:00am
- MN State Universities — 10/2 @ 2:00pm
- Concordia — 10/26 @ 12:45pm
- NDSU — 10/27 @ 1:30pm
- SCSU — 10/30 @ 1:00pm

SPRING CAMPUS VISITS

Upcoming off-site college visits scheduled for spring:

- St. Cloud Community & Technical College
- St. Cloud State University
- St. Johns / St. Bens

Where Can We Get Help?

SUPPORT & RESOURCES — Guidance office services and external tools

SCHOOL COUNSELING

ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE

We can help with:

- Graduation planning
- Career exploration
- College & program research
- Applications & testing
- Scholarships & financial aid
- Financial-aid resources
- Career & technical pathways

YOUR COUNSELORS

Emily Simon

Last Names A–K
845-5049

Katie Rusch

Last Names L–Z
845-5047

Visit the Counseling Office during school hours or reach out via email to schedule an appointment.

STATE & FEDERAL

ONLINE PORTALS & TOOLS

[MCIS \(MN Career Info System\)](#)

Career, education & labor-market information

[MN Office of Higher Education](#)

College planning & state financial aid

[Federal Student Aid](#)

FAFSA & federal financial aid resources

[Minnesota Department of Education — Career & College Success](#)

Stay Connected

RESOURCES & SOCIAL MEDIA — Visit our portal and follow us online

OFFICIAL WEBSITE

Counseling & Student Support

Access guidance resources, graduation planning tools, financial aid information, and staff contacts.

VISIT US ONLINE

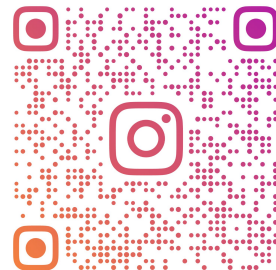
<https://district745.org/counseling-student-support/>

INSTAGRAM

Follow Our Page

@COUNSELING_AHS

Scan the QR code to connect with us for daily updates, upcoming deadlines, and student announcements.



COUNSELING_AHS

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Reach out to the counseling office anytime with questions or for support!

