

### The Alaska Career Information System – AKCIS

AKCIS provides students with career & college exploration tools.

AKCIS is free to Alaskans through a partnership between the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education and the Department of Labor & Workforce Development. To create your own AKCIS portfolio & explore your future, talk with your school counselor or career resource advisor. You can access and update your portfolio throughout your high school years. For more information on AKCIS call (877) 269-7974 or visit www.akcis.org.

# The AlaskAdvantage Success Center

Stop in to see us!

We help students and parents complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), understand the financial aid process, and explore career and education opportunities.

Visit us in Anchorage or call us at 269-7980. We are located on the second level of the Dimond Mall, Suite 200.



Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education Outreach & Early Awareness 800 E. Dimond Blvd., Suite 200 Anchorage, AK 99515 (877) 577-3367 (toll-free in AK) (907) 269-7980

# Checklist Cateet bieb College &

# Pre-High School

- ☐ Start saving for college if you haven't already. Put all or part of your Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) into a College Savings Plan.
- ☐ Learn about the Alaska College Savings Plan at www.uacollegesavings.com. These funds can be used at any accredited institution,including many technical and trade schools.
- ☐ Do your best in school. If you are having difficulty, don't give up—get help from a teacher, tutor or mentor.
- Become involved in school or community activities that enable you to explore your interests, meet new people, and learn new things.
- ☐ Go to career information events. Ask employers what kind of education they expect their employees to have.

# High School

### **Every Year**

- ☐ Enter your information in FAFSA4caster (at www.studentaid.ed.gov) to estimate what federal aid you may qualify for, and continue to save for college.
- □ Take a college and career program of study. Take four years of English; three years of mathematics, including algebra I and a higher level class such as algebra II, geometry or data analysis and statistics; three years of science, including one year each of at least two of the following courses: biology, chemistry, and physics; three years of social studies; and one year of a language other than English. For more information visit www.FederalStudentAid. ed.gov/funding.
- ☐ Stay involved in school- or community-based extracurricular activities that interest you or enable you to explore career interests. Consider working or volunteering. Remember—it's quality (not quantity) that counts.
- ☐ Talk to your school counselor and other mentors about education after high school. Your counselor can answer questions about what classes to take in high school, how to sign up for standardized tests, and financial assistance.
- ☐ Continue saving for college. Even small amounts help. Put all or part of your Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) into a College Savings Plan.
- ☐ Learn about the Alaska College Savings Plan at www.uacollegesavings.com. These funds can be used at any accredited institution, including many technical and trade schools.



# High School

# College & Career Prep Checklist

### 9th Grade

- □ Use AKCIS\* to explore career options, programs of study, colleges, and ways to pay for college. Create a personal portfolio if you have not done so already.
- ☐ Take the high school classes to make you college- and career-ready. Check out the recommended classes in the "Every Year" column.

### **10th Grade**

- ☐ Update your AKCIS\* portfolio and continue with your education and career plan.
- ☐ Continue with college- and career-ready classes.
- ☐ Consider taking a practice Preliminary SAT (PSAT), or the PLAN exam, also known as the "pre-ACT."\*\*

### 11th Grade

# All Year

- ☐ Attend college and career fairs and presentations and research colleges and training programs that interest you.
- ☐ Update your AKCIS\* portfolio and continue with your education and career plan.
- ☐ Investigate financial aid, including scholarships. Understand the different types and sources of aid.
- ☐ For more information about scholarships and federal student aid opportunities, visit www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov.

### Fall

☐ Take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/ NMSQT).\*\* You must take the test in 11th grade to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Program.

# Spring

Register for and take exams for college admission.\*\* Many colleges accept the SAT I and/or SAT II: Subject Test, while others accept the ACT. Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.

### Summer before 12th Grade

- □ Narrow down the list of colleges or training programs you are interested in attending. If you can, visit the schools that interest you.
- ☐ Contact schools to request information and applications for admission. Many prefer that you apply online. Ask about financial aid, admission requirements and deadlines. Make note of all critical program deadlines and requirements.
- ☐ Explore programs such as the Western Undergraduate Exchange that help you save on the cost of attending college out-of-state. Find more information at www. wue.wiche.edu.
- ☐ Supplement any aid FAFSA4caster estimates you might receive by applying for scholarships. Your goal is to minimize the loan amount you need to borrow.

### 12th Grade

### All Year

- ☐ Work hard all year; second-semester grades can affect scholarship eligibility.
- ☐ Stay involved and seek leadership roles in your activities.

### Fall

- ☐ Meet with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and meet school admission requirements.
- ☐ If you haven't done so already, register for and take exams such as the SAT I, SAT II: Subject Test, or ACT for college admission.\*\* Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.
- ☐ Apply to the schools you have chosen.

  Prepare your applications carefully. Follow the instructions, and PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!
- □ Well before your application deadlines, ask your counselor and teachers to submit required documents (e.g., transcript, letters of recommendation) to your selected schools.
- ☐ Before applying for federal student aid, be sure to get a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov so that you can complete your FAFSA application and access your information online. One of your parents must also get a PIN.

# Winter

☐ If possible, have your parent(s) complete income tax forms early. If your parent(s) have not completed their tax forms, you can provide estimated information on your federal student aid application, but remember to make any necessary changes later.

- ☐ As soon after Jan. 1 as possible, complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), along with any other financial aid applications your school(s) of choice may require. You can complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa. ed.gov or on paper, but the online process is faster and easier. You should submit your FAFSA by the earliest financial aid deadline of the schools to which you are applying, usually by early February.
- ☐ After you submit the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within three days to three weeks. Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.
- Complete scholarship applications.

# Spring

- ☐ Visit schools that have admitted you.
- ☐ Review your financial aid packages.
- ☐ Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you. In fact, getting to know your financial aid staff early is a good idea no matter what—they can tell you about deadlines, other aid for which you can apply, and important paperwork you might need to submit.
- □ When you decide which school to attend, notify that school of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Many schools require this notification and deposit by May 1.
- ☐ Plan to attend your school's Student Orientation to find out what resources are available to help you succeed.

Congratulations and get ready for your next great educational adventure!

<sup>\*</sup> See AKCIS information on back.

<sup>\*\*</sup>REMEMBER: Register for all tests in advance and be sure to give yourself time to prepare appropriately! If you have difficulty paying a registration fee, see your school counselor about getting a fee waver.