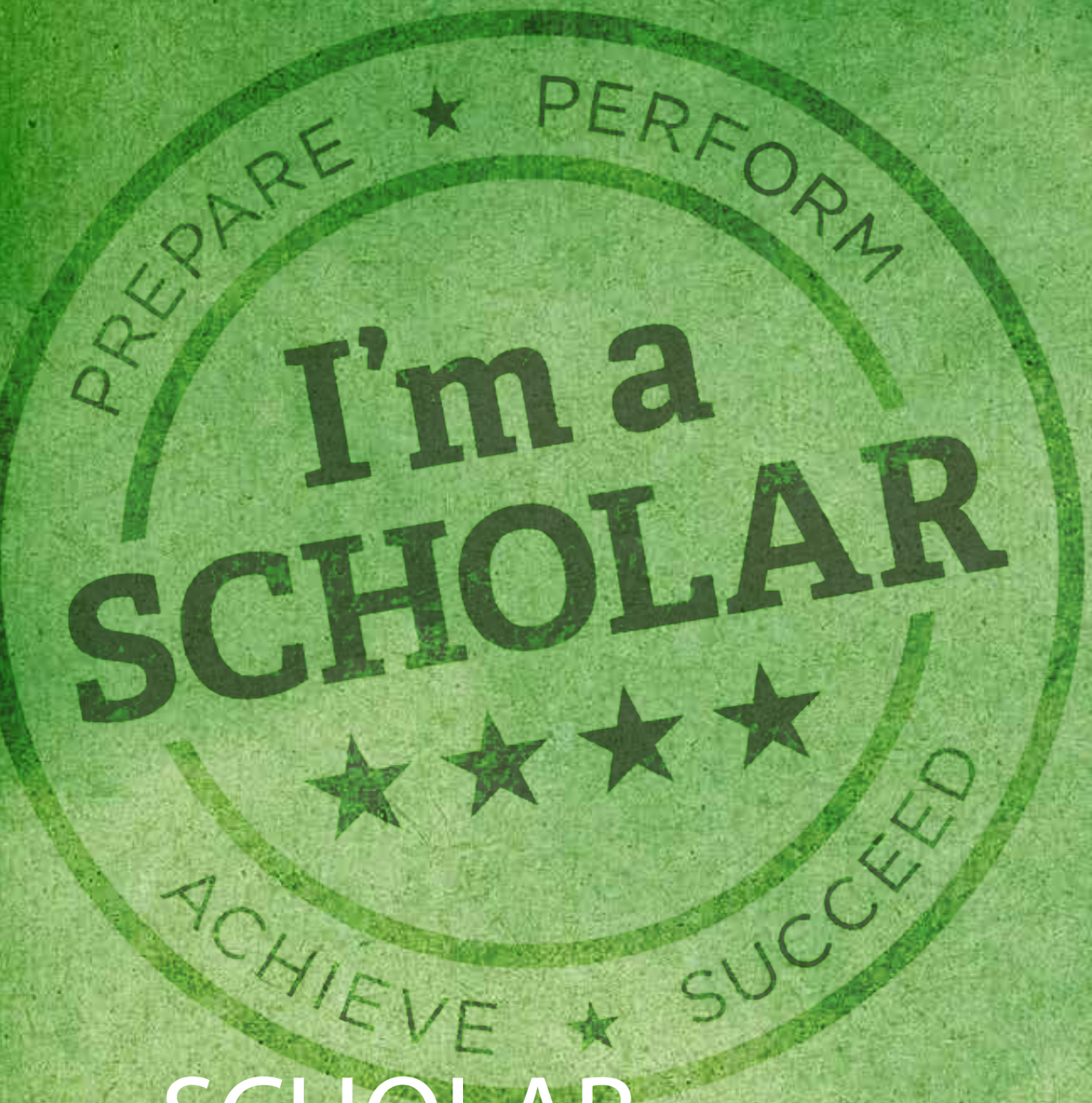


SCHOLAR SUCCESS GUIDE GRADE 11

A program of the **Indiana Commission for Higher Education**

21st Century SCHOLARS INDIANA

I PLEDGE to graduate with a minimum of a Core 40 diploma from a state-accredited Indiana high school. I will complete the Scholar Success Program that helps me stay on track for college and career success. I will achieve a cumulative high school GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. I will not use illegal drugs or alcohol or commit a crime or delinquent act. I will apply for admission to an eligible Indiana college my senior year and apply on time for student financial aid. I aim **TO SUCCEED.**

Dear Student,

Congratulations! You're beginning your junior year of high school — a time when you should give careful consideration to what you really want in a college in terms of academics, campus life and setting.

This kind of preparation during your junior year will help you make the best choice for yourself next year as you begin the college application process. It will also help when it's time to choose which college you'll attend. The groundwork you lay now can ensure you attend the school that best aligns with your plans and goals for your future.

The three **Scholar Success Program** activities you'll complete as an 11th-grader will help prepare you to succeed after high school. You will **visit a college campus**, **take a college entrance exam** and **search for scholarships** to pay for expenses not covered by your 21st Century Scholarship.

In addition to these activities, there are other things you can do now to help you prepare:

- ✓ **Stay involved in activities outside of class.** Colleges are impressed by a longtime commitment to one or two extracurricular activities, so it's more important to stick with the same activities throughout high school than trying a lot of new ones each year. As you get older, you should have the chance to take on more leadership roles in your sport, club or other activity. If leadership opportunities present themselves, take advantage — colleges will notice!
- ✓ **Keep your grades up.** Meet with your school counselor to find out what your cumulative GPA is, if you don't already know. Remember, you must earn a minimum of a 2.5 GPA to be eligible for your 21st Century Scholarship. If your grades aren't where they should be, now is the time to really commit to improving them.
- ✓ **Research colleges.** There are many colleges to choose from, and the number of options can feel overwhelming. Set up time to meet with your school counselor, who can help you come up with a shorter list of colleges that would be a good fit for you. From there, you can do research on your own to decide which ones you're most interested in.

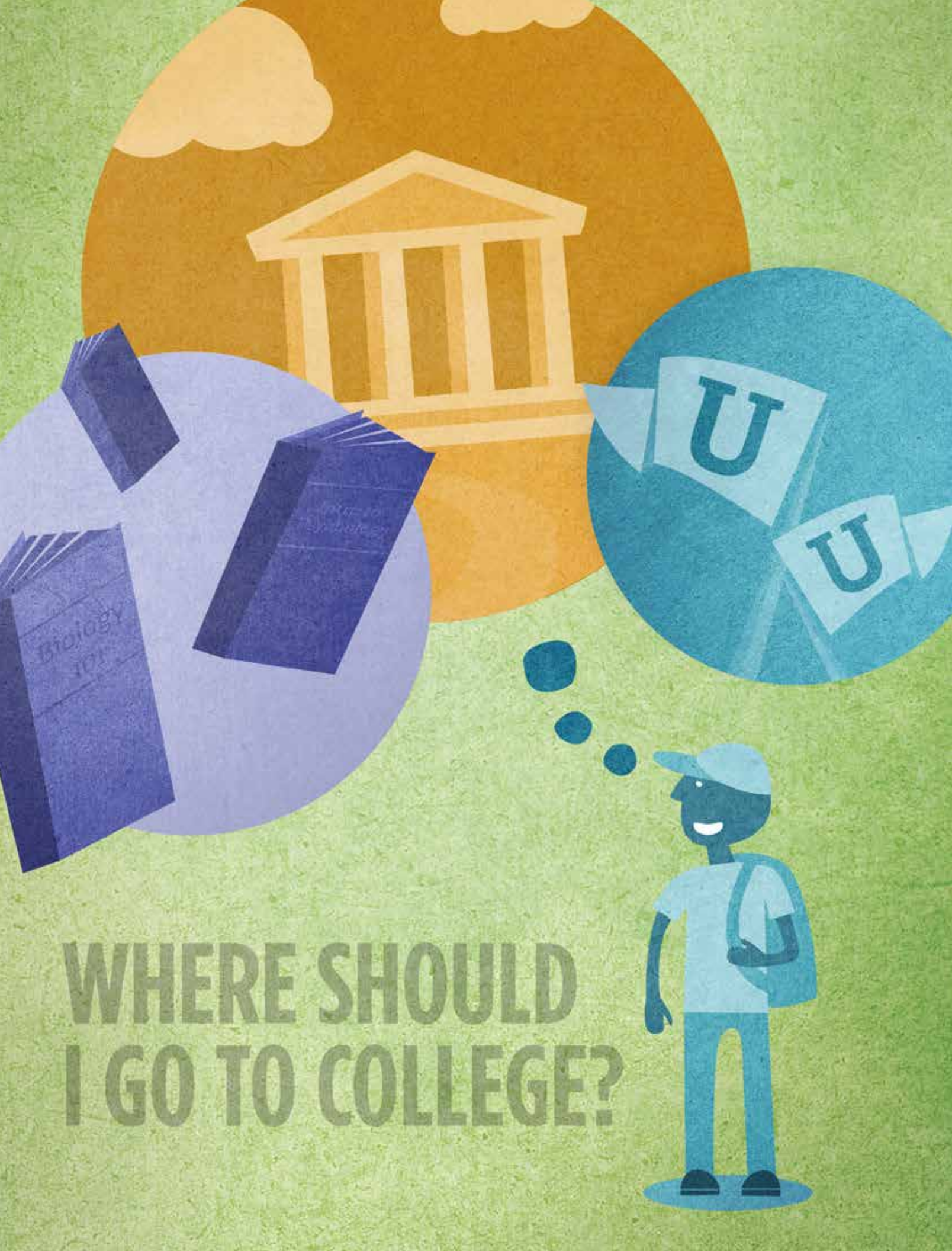
And remember: As a 21st Century Scholar, you have committed to the Scholar Pledge to meet academic requirements, including completing the Scholar Success Program, and to remain drug- and crime-free during high school and college.

This program guide will help you complete your required activities as a junior so that you can stay on track toward graduating high school and succeeding in college and your future career.

Have a great school year!

Teresa Lubbers

Teresa Lubbers
Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education



WHERE SHOULD I GO TO COLLEGE?

21st CENTURY SCHOLAR PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS

As a 21st Century Scholar, you have taken the Scholar Pledge to meet the following requirements:

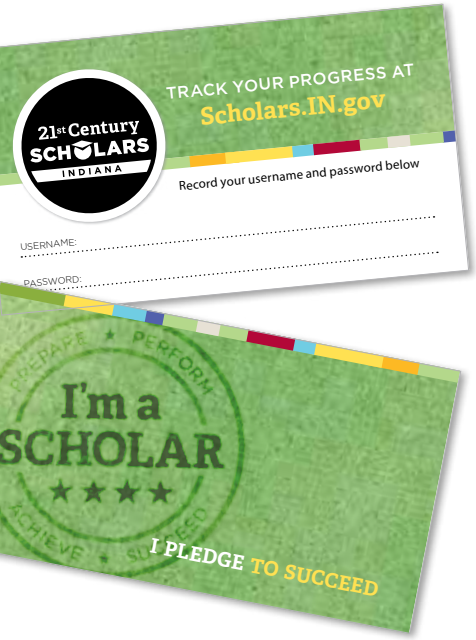
- ✓ Complete the Scholar Success Program, which includes activities at each grade level in high school to help you stay on track for college and career success. The chart below shows all 12 activities that you must complete. The following pages provide instructions and resources to help you complete this year's requirements.
- ✓ Graduate from a state-accredited high school with a minimum of a Core 40 diploma and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- ✓ File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 10 as a high school senior and each year thereafter until you graduate from college.
- ✓ Apply to an eligible Indiana college as a high school senior, and enroll in college as a full-time student within one year of high school graduation.
- ✓ Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards established by your college.
- ✓ Complete 30 credit hours each year you are in college to stay on track toward earning your degree on time.
- ✓ Do not use illegal drugs, commit a crime or delinquent act, or consume alcohol before reaching the legal drinking age.

The Scholar Success Program includes activities that will help you stay on track for college and career success.

GRADE	REQUIRED ACTIVITIES		
09	Create a Graduation Plan[1]	Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity	Watch "Paying for College 101"
10	Take a Career Interests Assessment	Get Workplace Experience[2]	Estimate the Costs of College
11	Visit a College Campus	Take a College Entrance Exam (ACT or SAT)	Search for Scholarships[3]
12	Submit Your College Application	Watch "College Success 101"	File Your FAFSA

1. Plan should be updated annually to keep students on track for high school graduation and college admission.
2. Includes job shadowing, internship, part-time employment, interviewing a professional or related experience linked to a student's career aspirations.
3. Includes any additional scholarship opportunities beyond the 21st Century Scholarship.

WRITE YOUR SCHOLARTRACK USERNAME AND PASSWORD ON THE BACK OF YOUR SCHOLAR ID CARD AND KEEP IT WITH YOU.



TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

As you complete the 11th-grade Scholar Success Program activities, log in to your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** to confirm you've completed the requirements. If you haven't already created your ScholarTrack account and completed your 9th- and 10th-grade Scholar Success Program activities, get started now so you don't fall further behind and risk losing your scholarship. You must complete your freshman, sophomore and junior activities by June 30 of your junior year to maintain eligibility for your scholarship. And all activities must be completed by March 10 of your senior year.

Keep your contact information updated

Throughout high school, you will receive information and resources to help you stay on track. Keep your mailing address, email address and phone number up to date to make sure you don't miss anything. You can make any necessary updates through your ScholarTrack account.

Don't have a computer?

If you do not have Internet access at home, use a computer at school, a public library or a friend's house. Or talk to your school counselor, parents or teachers for help.

DON'T ALREADY HAVE A SCHOLARTRACK ACCOUNT?

GET STARTED

at Scholars.IN.gov

1 CLICK "SCHOLARTRACK"

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov** and click "ScholarTrack." Select "New Student Account" and enter your Scholar ID and date of birth. (To find your ID, follow the link below the Scholar ID field.)

2 CREATE A PROFILE

Your Scholar profile will help us better understand you and your education goals. Fill in the information and follow the steps to complete your profile and create a password.

3 CONFIRM YOUR ACCOUNT

Check your email for a confirmation message from 21st Century Scholars. Click the link in the email to verify your account. Use the student dashboard to track your progress and access important resources.

11

GRADE 11 CHECKLIST

What steps must you take now to achieve your goals?

If you're not sure, that's okay! That's the whole point of the Scholar Success Program: to guide you every step of the way as you prepare for college and career success.

In 11th grade, your Scholar Success Program requirements will keep you on the right track as you visit a college campus, take a college entrance exam (the ACT or SAT) and search for scholarships to supplement your 21st Century Scholarship.

On the next few pages, we'll walk you through each of the steps and direct you to the resources you'll need to check them off your list and continue on your way to success!

Visit a College Campus

Visiting college campuses is the best way to get a feel for what the schools are really like and to find out if they would be a good fit for you. See pages 8–9 for more information.

Take a College Entrance Exam

A college entrance exam is a standardized test that assesses college readiness. Almost all colleges require potential students to take one to be considered for admittance. The most common entrance exams are the ACT and SAT. Find out more on pages 10–11.

Search for Scholarships

A scholarship is a kind of grant, payment or funding that supports your education and does not have to be paid back. The sooner you start searching for scholarships, the more opportunities you have to apply for and receive them. Any scholarships you earn can help pay for college expenses not covered by the 21st Century Scholarship. Learn more on pages 12–13.

My name is Yensuahte.

I'm a Scholar and I want to go to medical school to be an ER physician.

How is the 21st Century Scholars program helping you prepare for college?

I've been on a few trips to college campuses with other 21st Century Scholars students, and I really enjoyed those visits. I got to learn about different colleges and also meet other Scholars in the area.

What is the biggest benefit of being in the 21st Century Scholars Program?

It's helped get me started on the right path to get to college. I get tons of college resources from the program. I didn't think much about it when I signed up in the 8th grade because college seemed so far away, but now that it's getting closer, I'm really grateful that I had the opportunity to enroll. It's keeping me on the right path, and I appreciate that.

What advice would you share with younger Scholars who are starting to prepare for college?

Don't ever limit your options. There are always resources to help you get where you want to go. Always keep reaching for new goals.

11 Visit a College Campus

A college visit gives you the opportunity to tour a campus and explore the classes, programs and resources it offers students. Planning your tour through a college's admissions office helps ensure that you get the most out of this experience.

Exploring a college through its website, brochures or videos gives you only a partial picture of a school. You need to see for yourself what each college is like: walk around the campus, check out the student housing, observe a class, tour the dining hall, etc. If possible, visit more than one school to get a sense of how college life differs from campus to campus.

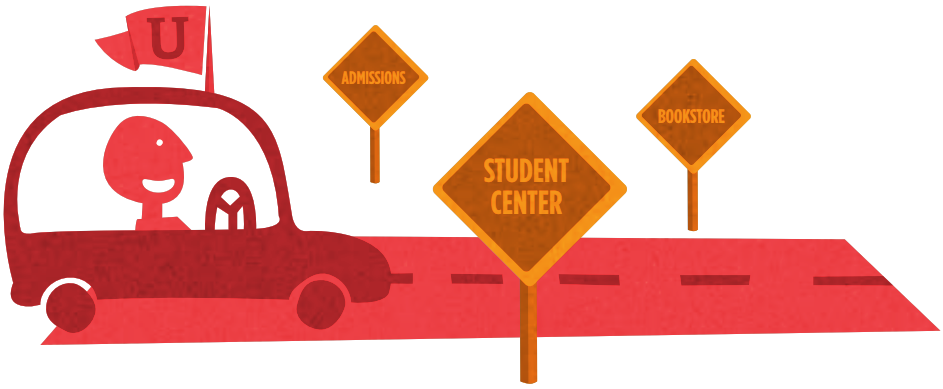
Get started!

Make a list of the schools that interest you most. Visit **LearnMoreIndiana.org/college** for tips and information that can help you choose which colleges to visit. Consider whether a college has the classes and programs that will help you achieve your future career goals. Contact each college's admissions office to schedule your tours. Ask about meeting with an admissions counselor, academic advisor and faculty member while you're on campus.

Next, figure out who will go with you on each tour — a parent or guardian, a mentor or a family friend, for example. If one of your friends plans to visit a college that interests you, see if you can tag along.

Before you go

Write down a list of questions you want to ask during your visit, such as how big the classes are, what your housing options would be and what activities, sports or clubs exist on campus.



During your visit

Your tour will probably include the college grounds, buildings and facilities, such as: student housing, class buildings, dining halls, the student recreation center, the bookstore and the career center. If you have the opportunity to sit in on or observe a class, take advantage. Make it a goal to get answers to all the questions you wrote down before your visit. Try to talk to a faculty member, an academic advisor, a member of the admissions staff and even current students, and be sure to get people's contact information so you can follow up if you think of more questions. Remember to ask the admissions office about what support services are available for 21st Century Scholars.

After your visit

As soon as possible after your visit, write down your impressions of the college and what you liked and didn't like about it. This is especially helpful if you'll be visiting several campuses. Don't be afraid to reach out to the people you met with on campus if you have additional questions. Visiting a campus in person is always the best option, but if you can't visit a particular college you're interested in, check its website to see if a virtual tour is available.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions that confirm you've completed this activity.

WHAT TYPE OF COLLEGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES

Indiana has more than 50 public and private four-year colleges. Four-year colleges offer bachelor's degrees. Often, these colleges also offer master's and doctoral degrees. Many four-year colleges provide on-campus housing and are ideal for full-time students.

TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

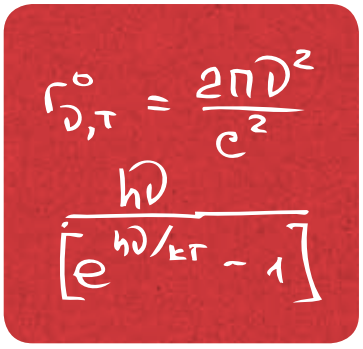
Indiana has about 100 two-year college campuses. Two-year colleges, also called community colleges, offer associate degrees at a lower tuition rate and often focus on vocational trades. They are also a great way to earn credits that can transfer to a four-year college. Two-year colleges often don't offer on-campus housing.

OTHER TYPES OF COLLEGES

Some four-year colleges may also be research institutions, where professors are actively researching their fields. There are also online colleges, and special-focus colleges, which include religiously affiliated schools, seminary, art schools, military schools and more.

11 Take a College Entrance Exam

A college entrance exam is an admissions requirement at nearly all colleges, and it's a key component of your college application.

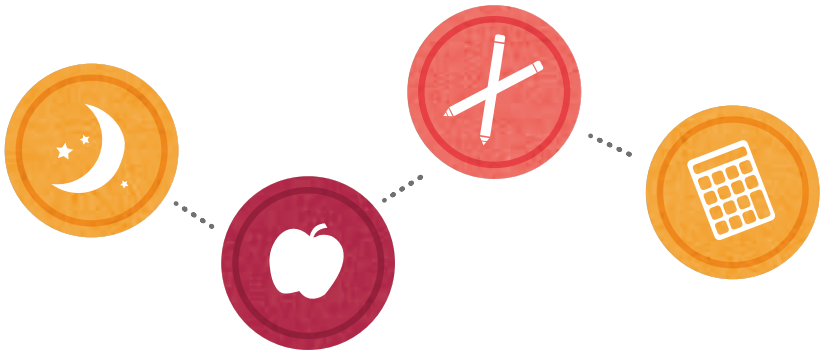


The most common exams are the SAT and the ACT. The SAT includes reading, math and writing (both essay and multiple-choice questions), with optional subject tests. The ACT includes English, math, reading and science. Before you sign up to take an official exam, make sure you're choosing the one that best suits your needs: some colleges require or prefer ACT scores, while others require or prefer SAT scores. Check each college's admissions website to see which test is required or preferred.

Get started!

Register to take the ACT or SAT during the spring semester of your junior year. You can register online at **ACTStudent.org/regist/** for the ACT or **SAT.CollegeBoard.org/register/** for the SAT. You can also register by mail — ask your guidance counselor for paper registration forms. Both the ACT and SAT require a $50 fee at the time of registration, but as a 21st Century Scholar, you should qualify for a fee waiver to cover the cost. Talk to your counselor about requesting a fee waiver.

When you register for your exam, find out where and when the test will be. If transportation will be an issue, talk to your parents or guardians, school counselor, mentor or Outreach Coordinator for help with ideas for getting to and from the testing site.



Prepare for the exam

You'll perform better on the exam if you spend some time preparing and familiarizing yourself with the format and types of questions you will encounter. Ask your teachers, counselors or mentor if your school or community offers any free or low-cost test prep. See if your school or public library has ACT or SAT prep practice books. Check out **ACTStudent.org** (for the ACT) and **CollegeBoard.org** (for the SAT) for free practice tests, test day tips and other resources to help you prepare yourself and improve your skills.

Take the exam

Get plenty of rest the night before the exam, and make sure to eat a good breakfast in the morning. Make sure you know exactly where the testing site is, and give yourself plenty of time to get there. Regardless of which exam you're taking, you'll need to bring a photo ID, your test admission ticket (learn about this when you register), two sharpened No. 2 pencils, an eraser and a calculator (you will not be able to use the one on your cell phone). Also bring along a healthy snack and a drink for break time. As you take the exam, work carefully and steadily, but don't spend too much time on any one question. If you don't know the answer to a question, skip it and come back once you've finished the rest of the test.

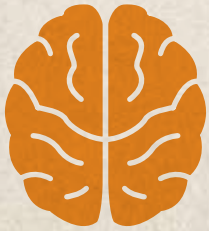
COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions about your workplace experience.

STUDY SMART

Studying for a big test seems daunting, but it's simple when you break it down into study blocks. It's wise to make a daily schedule and commit to it. A well-planned weekly routine will help you get studying done, and leave you enough room to enjoy breaks. Find a location free of distractions. Try turning off your phone and other devices while you're studying.

Think about your study style. Do you work better early in the morning, or late at night? Do you like reading over your notes after class, or is it better to return to them after you've had a break? Try a few different ways to study to find what works best for you.



11 Search for Scholarships

Your junior year is the perfect time to start searching for scholarships to help you pay for college expenses. A scholarship is "free money" that can help pay for college.

Unlike loans, scholarships do not have to be paid back. Remember that your 21st Century Scholarship covers up to full tuition and mandatory fees, but even if you do receive full tuition, the award does not cover expenses such as room, board, books and supplies, and other living expenses — and these can be costly. You should pursue as many additional scholarship opportunities as possible to help cover these extra costs.

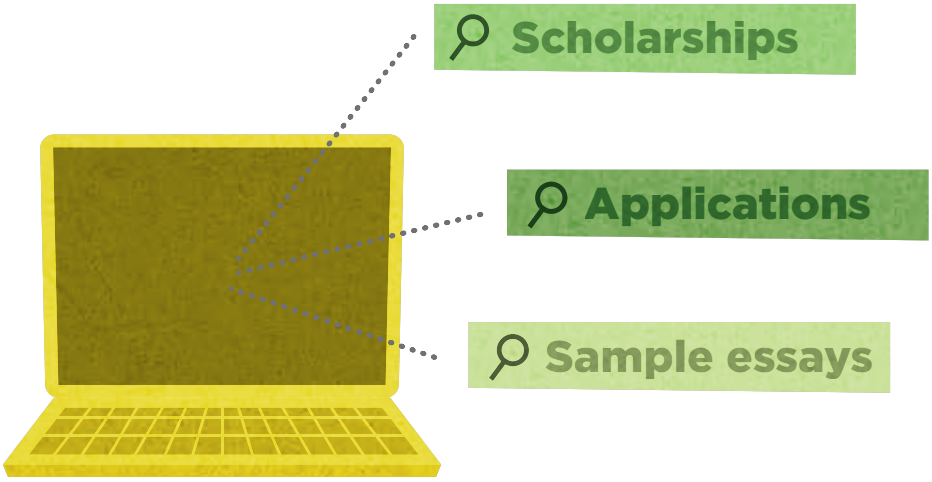
Get started!

Your school counselor should be one of your first stops as you begin your scholarship search. The school counselor's office should have lots of information on available scholarships, especially local ones. Your counselor may be able to recommend certain scholarships for which you might be eligible, and he or she can also contact scholarship-granting organizations for additional information if needed. You can also ask your counselor to provide you with a list of scholarships other students at your school have received — for example, ask to see a list of scholarships earned by last year's senior class.

Search local for scholarships

Search for local scholarships before you search for national scholarships. Since local scholarships typically draw from a much smaller applicant pool than national scholarships — only students in your community and the surrounding area are applying — you have a better chance of receiving them. Check local businesses, civic groups, community foundations and social organizations to see what scholarships are available. Your parent, guardian or a family friend may work at a business that sponsors scholarships. Get in touch with the financial aid offices at the colleges you're interested in to find out if they offer any scholarships.

To search for Indiana scholarships, visit **LearnMoreIndiana.org/cost**. Many free scholarship search sites are available online to help you search for national scholarships (see sidebar). Remember that you should never pay for a search site.



General search tips

Your scholarship search should begin early your junior year. You may be able to apply for some scholarships as a junior, and you'll be better prepared to apply for other scholarships as a senior. As you conduct your search, keep a running list of scholarships for which you're eligible. Consider keeping a calendar just for application deadlines so you don't miss any important dates.

Many applications require an essay or personal statement, so start thinking about essay topics and creative ways to approach personal statements.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENT!

Go to **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack** and log in to your account to answer a few questions that confirm you've completed this activity.

GET PAID FOR YOUR GRADES.

Check out the scholarship sites below to find money to help pay for your degree.

- Scholarships.com
- StudentAid.Ed.gov
- CollegeBoard.com
- FindTuition.com
- ScholarSite.com
- ScholarshipExperts.com
- CollegeToolkit.com
- Fastweb.com

My name is Jordan.

I'm a Scholar and I'm thinking about attending Indiana University Bloomington.

How have you and your family started preparing for college? Visiting campuses, talking to advisors, etc.?

We've been meeting with my counselor to set up college visits and talk about other steps I need to take to prepare.

How is the 21st Century Scholars program helping you prepare for college?

Being in the Scholars program makes me feel like I'm not doing it all by myself when it comes to college. Somebody else cares and they're there to help.

How does being a 21st Century Scholar help you in high school?

It's made me more responsible. I have a 21st Century Scholars mentor who's helping me, and it's made me start thinking more about college. I didn't used to think about what it means to be a Scholar, but now I'm focusing on it more.

RESOURCES

We know the road to college can be confusing, which is why Indiana has created this guide, as well as many other resources to help you succeed in high school and prepare for college.

School Counselors

The first people you can turn to for help are your school counselors. They have been through the process before, helped many other students like you and can connect you to the assistance you need.

Scholars.IN.gov

The 21st Century Scholars website is a comprehensive resource for you and the Scholar Success Program. If you need more information about the program requirements discussed in this guide, check out **Scholars.IN.gov/ssp**.

Student Support Center: 1-888-528-4719

Call the Scholars helpline if you have any questions about your scholarship or the 21st Century Scholars program. Or you can email us at **Scholars@che.IN.gov**.

Learn More Indiana

Learn More Indiana has answers to your questions about planning, preparing and paying for college completion and career success.

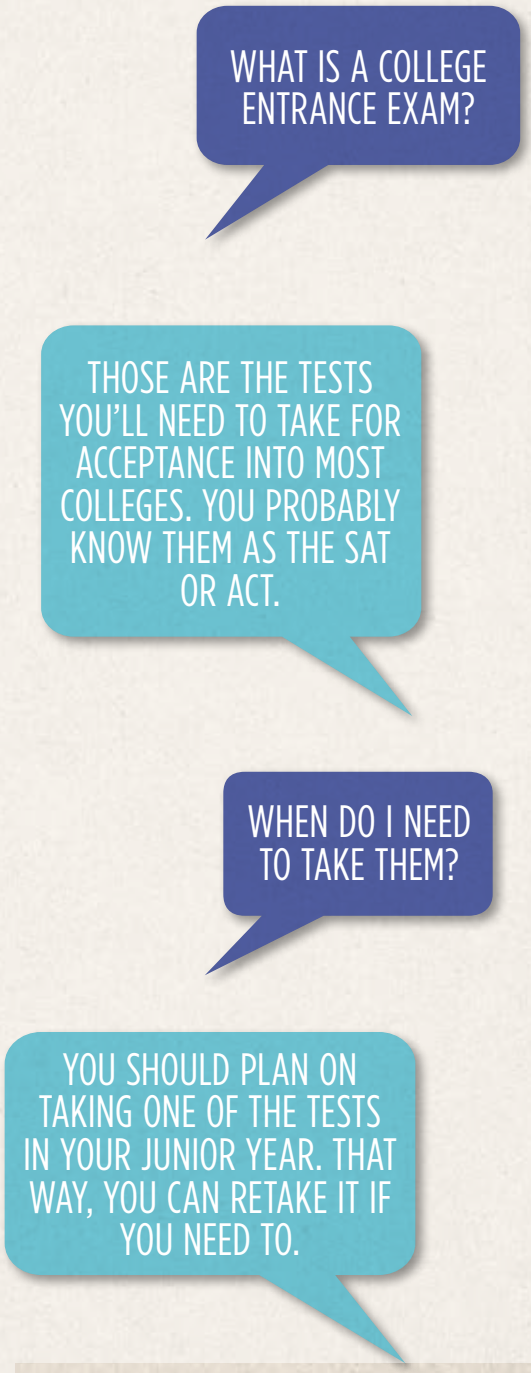
Website: **LearnMoreIndiana.org**
Facebook: **Facebook.com/LearnMoreIN**
Twitter: **Twitter.com/LearnMoreIN**

College Success Coalitions

Learn More Indiana has developed a growing network of state and local organizations working to help more Hoosiers access and complete college. These organizations host local events and activities to help students and their families prepare for college.

College Success Coalition member organizations include local government, businesses, colleges, schools, local media, libraries, youth-serving organizations, service clubs, community foundations, faith-based organizations and others.

To find a College Success Coalition near you, visit **LearnMoreIndiana.org/coalitions**.



FAQS

How do I maintain the Scholar Pledge and keep my scholarship?

To maintain eligibility for your scholarship, you must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the Scholar Success Program, which includes activities at each grade level in high school to help you stay on track for college and career success.
- Graduate from a state-accredited high school with a minimum of a Core 40 diploma and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 10 as a high school senior and each year thereafter until you graduate from college.
- Apply to an eligible Indiana college as a high school senior, and enroll in college as a full-time student within one year of high school graduation.
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards established by your college.
- Complete 30 credit hours each year you are in college to stay on track toward earning your degree on time.
- Do not use illegal drugs, commit a crime or delinquent act, or consume alcohol before reaching the legal drinking age.

What should I do if I change schools or my contact information changes?

It's important that you receive notifications and updates from the 21st Century Scholars program to make sure you're on track to complete the requirements. Update your school and contact information in your ScholarTrack account at **Scholars.IN.gov/scholartrack**. From your dashboard, click "Edit My Profile."

Do I have to file the FAFSA every year in high school?

No. You must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) during the year you graduate high school. This will be your senior year, unless you plan to graduate early.

If I graduate early, can I still use the 21st Century Scholarship?

Yes. If you plan to graduate following your junior year, you need to notify your school counselor so he/she can inform the 21st Century Scholars program of this change. You must also complete the FAFSA by March 10 of your junior year.

Can I use my scholarship to pay for dual-credit classes while in high school?

No. The scholarship is only available once you have graduated high school.

If my GPA falls below 2.5 for a semester, will I lose the scholarship?

You must achieve an overall, cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale upon graduation from high school. A cumulative GPA is the average of all your grades during all your semesters in high school. Even if your cumulative GPA falls below 2.5 at some point during your high school career, you are still eligible for your scholarship as long as your GPA is at least 2.5 at the time of graduation.

Can I receive the scholarship if I complete a high school equivalency exam (like the GED or TASC) or complete home school?

No. You must graduate with a Core 40 diploma from an eligible high school recognized by the Indiana Department of Education.

What happens if I don't complete my 11th-grade Scholar Success Program activities on time?

You must verify you've completed the three grade-specific activities via ScholarTrack by June 30 of each academic year, or you will be placed on probationary status. You must complete the activities by June 30 of the following year to return to good standing, or you will be at risk of losing the 21st Century Scholarship. You must complete all of the activities by March 10 of your senior year to be eligible to receive the scholarship.

Scholars.IN.gov

INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

SEP/2015