

Junior Roadmap for the Summer

The Alvirne High School Counseling Office recognizes that students have choices once they graduate from high school to be productive members of society. The four options they have are:

Continue your education Gap Year/Volunteer Get a job Join the military

To ensure that we plan and prepare properly for each specific choice, we have created specific benchmarks or a “Roadmap” to assist everyone on their journey.

Continue your education

This is sometimes the most complicated and stressful choice some families make. There are so many moving parts and some uncertainty related to schools and the financial obligations attached to them. This section is not a fully comprehensive plan but more like a solid starting point. This will provide some suggestions and resources to start down the path. You are strongly encouraged to set up times to meet with the school counselor to review plans and resources to ensure that all options have been considered. There will be a senior parent night in the fall and counselors will be making presentations to senior English classes to reinforce the plans that have been reviewed over the spring. The title of this section is “**Continue your education**” because we are not just talking about college but rather continuing to learn new skills beyond high school with the goal to eventually enter the workforce. The options here consist of different levels of instruction from career schools to 4-year colleges and universities. Each have their own advantages and it depends on the goals that students have as to which is the most appropriate. Below is the list of the five things that are suggested to begin and/or complete prior to the start of the next school year. There are also several other resources that may be of some help.

7 Things to work on before September:

- 1) Research schools and institutions that are of interest to you and plan on visiting them to see if they “fit” what you are looking for. It is also suggested to visit these places again in the fall when there are students on campus to see if the feeling you had at first is the same you had the second time. We like to see between **5-7 schools** initially with the goal to apply to the top 5.
- 2) Students can begin to work on the **Common Application essay** now and over the summer. The writing prompts for the 2023-2024 application cycle are:

1. *Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.*
2. *The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?*
3. *Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?*
4. *Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.*
5. *Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.*
6. *Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?*
7. *Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.*

<https://appsupport.commonapp.org/applicantsupport/s/article/What-are-the-2023-24-Common-App-essay-prompts>

- 3) Students may begin to ask their teachers and counselor to write **letters of recommendation** for them. Each school has their own restrictions as to how many letters they require. It is a good rule of thumb to get two letters from teachers and one from your school counselor. It is also suggested to get a letter from someone outside of the school that may be required for scholarships later in the year. It is highly recommended that students ask their teachers and counselor personally followed up by adding them to the student's Naviance page. This will link the teachers' account to the students' account making the process of uploading the letter and the teacher evaluation form much easier.
- 4) Create a **Common Application account**. Out of the approximately **3800** institutions of higher education, close to 900 schools use the Common Application. Students can begin this in August by going to www.commonapp.org. School counselors have informed students of this opportunity during our classroom visits during the spring of the junior year.
- 5) Update your information or get on for the first time and become familiar with Naviance. You can get on it via Clever. This will be of great use to you as you proceed with applications to college and scholarships.

6) Create your account or continue to use The College Guidance Network. Access can be found here:

Student Access:

Click this activation link:

<https://www.school.collegeguidancenetwork.com/activate/300280>

Select "I have a school email address."

Family Access:

Click this activation link: <https://www.school.collegeguidancenetwork.com/activate/300280>

Select "I do not have a school email address."

Enter your information and click "create account" button.

Enter the parent PIN: **255469**

7) Finally, in August it is recommended that families begin the **financial aid process** by applying for your Federal Student Aid ID (FSAID) <https://fsaid.ed.gov>. The actual financial aid form cannot be completed until after December 1, 2023. Many resources can be found at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA4caster is another interesting tool that the federal government provides to estimate your financial aid opportunities. THIS WILL BE A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT FOR THE CLASS OF 2024 AND BEYOND. TO MEET THIS REQUIREMENT, FAMILIES WILL NEED TO COMPLETE A QUICK QUESTION DURING THE ANNUAL VERIFICATION PROCESS THIS SUMMER.

By no means is this an exhaustive list but it is a good start. It is highly recommended that you have frequent contact with the school counselor if there are any questions or concerns. Below is a list of other useful resources as we move forward. Also, please visit the counseling page of Alvirne's website to review newsletters and other important information. Best of luck!!!

Gap Year/Volunteer

There may exist the opportunity for students to give back to society while they reflect on what they wish to do in their future. This Gap Year or volunteer experience may be accomplished many different ways. It is recommended that people explore opportunities through their churches or local churches to see if there are formal programs where you can be part of an organized and structured program to help people in need. There are some great resources on the Career Guidance Network! Below is a list of other resources that may provide some assistance:

<http://www.americangap.org/>

<http://www.habitat.org/>

<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/>

<https://www.cityyear.org/>

Get a job

Some students wish to enter the workforce to begin to earn a salary and to put forth skills they may have acquired while in high school. It is important for the student to meet with their counselor to review what skills they may have acquired through their coursework at Alvirne. It is also recommended that students begin to develop a resume. Depending on the type of jobs being sought, a resume may be needed and students are encourage to utilize the services of their counselor and English teachers to create a quality resume. Below is a list of other resources that may provide some assistance:

<http://www.livecareer.com/resume-templates>

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

<http://www.nhes.nh.gov/services/job-seekers>

Join the military

For the students that wish to serve their country in one of the branches of the military, there are many options. It all begins with the students participating in the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). This is offered each fall at Alvirne and is also offered through the recruiting offices of the local recruiters. It is important to establish a solid working relationship with these recruiters and to also research the different branches just like students that are researching different colleges. Each branch is unique and provide a myriad of opportunities depending what you are looking for. Here is the contact information for our local recruiting office.

Army:

522 Amherst St #26, Nashua, NH
(603) 577-9710

Navy:

522 Amherst St. #26, Nashua, NH
(603) 578-9572

Air Force:

522 Amherst St #26, Nashua, NH
(603) 595-6386

Marines:

522 Amherst St, Nashua, NH
(603) 598-0937

Coast Guard:

65 Water St, Newburyport, MA
(978) 465-0731

WEB SITE INFORMATION **COMPREHENSIVE COLLEGE PROCESS INFORMATION**

www.collegeboard.com

SAT information, prep, online registration; financial aid; college planning, information, search; CSS/Profile registration.

www.collegenet.com

College search, resources, recruiting; scholarship search; financial aid; educational sites search engine.

www.petersons.com

College search; career guidance and assessment; financial aid; test prep; summer opportunities; study abroad.

www.act.org

Information regarding test dates and registering for the ACT.

FINANCIAL AID

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Designed for students. Provides details about the entire financial aid process, from considering college to repaying loans.

www.nhheaf.org

New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation. College planning; various sources of funding, with calculators.

www.finaid.org

Large variety of financial aid information.

www.fastweb.com

College scholarships and financial aid information.

www.fastap.org

College scholarship search.

www.salliemae.com

Educational loans.

CAREER INTEREST SURVEYS & INFORMATION

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

<https://www.onetonline.org>