

BEFORE COLLEGE MOVE-IN DAY

Parent Preparation Checklist

Use this checklist as a guide while preparing your student for college, career training, military service, community college, commuting from home, or another path toward greater independence. Every student is different, so feel free to customize this list to fit your family's needs.

COMMUNICATION & EXPECTATIONS

- Discuss how often you'll communicate after classes begin.
- Discuss preferred methods of communication (text, phone, video calls, etc.).
- Set realistic expectations for response times.
- Discuss family events, holidays, and school breaks.
- Create an emergency communication plan.
- Identify when students may need support and when they may need space.
- Add family contacts to student's phone.
- Save important school and housing contacts.

Notes:

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- Student knows how to schedule medical appointments.

- Student has insurance information readily available.
- Prescriptions are transferred and refill procedures are understood.
- Emergency contacts are updated.
- Student understands how to access campus health services.
- Student knows how to access counseling or mental health resources if needed.
- Student has basic first-aid and health supplies.
- Discuss healthy sleep habits and stress management.

Notes:

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

- Review class schedule.
- Identify tutoring and academic support services.
- Locate academic advising resources.
- Discuss class attendance expectations.
- Review time management strategies.
- Student understands how to communicate with professors.
- Student knows where to seek help if struggling academically.
- Encourage use of office hours and student success resources.

Notes:

FINANCIAL READINESS

- Discuss monthly spending expectations.
- Create a basic budget.
- Review banking information.
- Discuss emergency expenses.
- Student understands financial aid responsibilities.
- Review scholarship requirements if applicable.
- Discuss credit card use and debt management.
- Determine who is responsible for specific expenses.

Notes:

LIFE SKILLS

- Student can do laundry independently.
- Student can prepare basic meals.
- Student can manage a personal calendar.
- Student knows how to schedule appointments.
- Student understands transportation options.
- Student can complete basic paperwork and forms.
- Student knows how to handle common household responsibilities.
- Student knows how to advocate for themselves.

Notes:

SAFETY & DECISION MAKING

- Discuss personal safety.
- Review emergency procedures.
- Discuss healthy relationships and boundaries.
- Talk about peer pressure.
- Discuss alcohol, vaping, and substance use.
- Review digital safety and social media habits.
- Discuss responsible decision-making.
- Identify trusted adults and mentors.

Notes:

COMMUNITY & SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- Identify key support people.
- Explore student organizations and clubs.
- Research mentoring opportunities.
- Identify volunteer opportunities.
- Explore leadership programs.
- Locate cultural, professional, or affinity groups.

- Identify opportunities to build meaningful connections.
- Encourage involvement beyond the classroom.

Notes:

VALUES, PURPOSE & PERSONAL GROWTH

- Discuss personal values.
- Discuss character and integrity.
- Talk about goals for the coming year.
- Discuss personal responsibility.
- Talk about handling setbacks and disappointments.
- Discuss what success means beyond grades.
- Encourage service, leadership, and growth opportunities.
- Discuss how students want to be remembered by peers, professors, and future employers.

Notes:

BEFORE MOVE-IN DAY

- Housing confirmed.
- Financial aid completed.
- Student ID obtained.

- Class schedule finalized.
- Technology needs addressed.
- Emergency contacts updated.
- Transportation plan established.
- Important documents organized.
- Packing completed.
- Celebrate this milestone together.

Notes:

DON'T FORGET

College preparation isn't just about getting students to campus.

It's about helping them develop the confidence, skills, support systems, and sense of purpose they'll need for the journey ahead.

Every family is different.

Use this checklist as a guide—not a rulebook—and add the items that matter most for your student and your situation.