

**STEP 1:** Identify and acknowledge your hopes and concerns about life after high school.

## welcome to your senior year!

Congratulations! Take a moment to think about all the positive steps you've taken in your life to get you this far. Your senior year is the gateway to your adult life — the choices you make and the actions you take this year will impact your future greatly.

### warm-up: fast-forward — hopes and concerns

Imagine it is one year from today. High school is over. Graduation has come and gone. You've spent one last summer with your childhood friends. And now, today, you are taking your first big step toward life on your own. Choose one of the sentence starters below and **free write** in the box below.

- *I am moving into my new dorm room today...*
- *It is the first day of class at my new college...*
- *I've just arrived at boot camp...*
- *Today is my first day at my new job...*
- *I am beginning my training at trade school today...*
- Or choose your own place to start...



Really imagine you are there . . . What do you see around you? What do you hear? How do you feel? Excited? Worried? What are you thinking about on this big day?

**STEP 2:** Set up and begin using a **Senior Year Planning Calendar** to manage your deadlines.

STUDENT HANDOUT

## postsecondary options

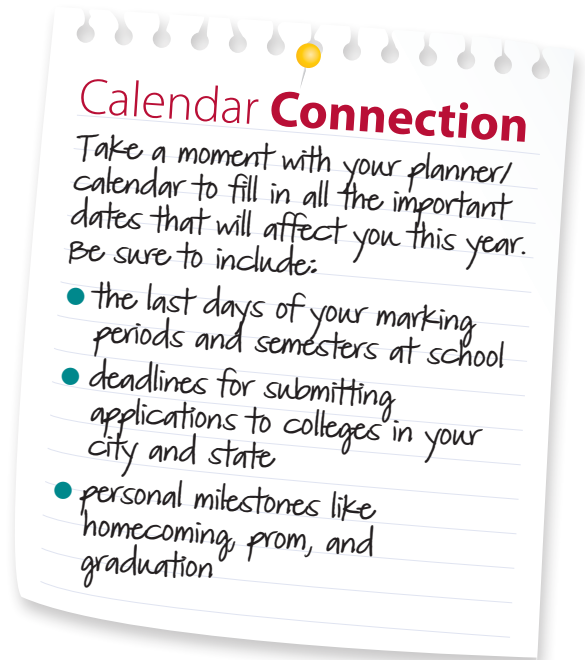
What's the next step for you after high school? Here are several options for training and education after graduation:

- on-the-job training
- military service
- an apprenticeship program
- a trade or technical education program
- a certificate program
- a 2-year Associate degree program
- a 4-year Bachelor's degree program

The option you choose for yourself depends on your **values**, your **goals**, and your **postsecondary plan**.

## planning for success

Senior year is a time to plan and take action to ensure that your future is bright and full of possibilities. The **Senior Year Roadmap** will help you keep track of all the steps you need to take.



## a shared mission

This class is all about managing the requirements of senior year and maximizing your opportunities for success after graduation. This year, you will learn how to:

- **PLAN** to meet your long- and short-term goals
- **REFLECT** on your personal strengths and create products in order to demonstrate them to colleges and employers
- **APPLY** to schools, programs, training opportunities, and financial aid.
- **RESPOND** to the postsecondary options before you
- **ADAPT** to the transition from high school student to professional learner or career person
- **COMMIT** to a postsecondary option by deciding which school, program, or training opportunity to pursue
- **TAKE ACTION** to ensure you make a successful transition from high school to college or work

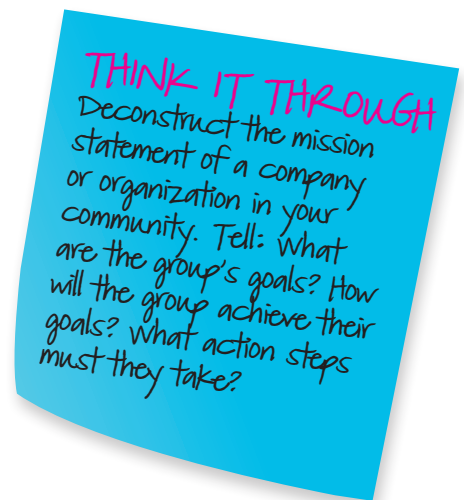
As you work through the handouts, you can also create a **Senior Portfolio**, that will contain products and documents you can use to apply to college, apply for jobs and internships, apply for scholarships and financial aid, and guide your life after high school. By June, you'll have all the tools you need to confidently make the transition from high school to adulthood. Welcome to your future!

This class is a place to work, think, and share your experiences with your peers. As a group, you will be facing a lot of difficult but rewarding work this year. How you work together is all up to you.

## creating a mission: identifying common goals and values

Just like a company or an organization, your class will be working together toward a common goal. It's up to you to identify what that goal is, and what you and your classmates value together, as a group.

A mission statement tells what a group wants to accomplish (their goals) and why they want to do it (their values).





**STEP 4:** Identify your personal values and ultimate goals.

# a picture of you in the future

Everyone wants to be “successful” in life. However, success means different things to different people. The first step in achieving success is understanding your personal vision of success: What do you value? What are your goals?

Your goals may be professional or personal.

**Examples of professional goals include:**

- Goals for your career
- Goals for your education
- Goals related to money or finance

**Examples of personal goals include:**

- Goals for your family and friends
- Goals for your personal growth
- Goals for your spirituality
- Goals for your health

**THINK IT THROUGH**  
 Visualize your goals over the next 20 years. What would you like to achieve, personally and professionally, at each stage? Draw a picture or write in words what you would like your life to look like in the future. You can include details about: your school life, your house or living situation, your family, your job, your love life, your hobbies or interests.



| September of next year<br>(think back to your Warm-Up): |                       |                      |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| High School Graduation                                  |                       | By the time I am 21: |
|   |                       |                      |
| By the time I am 30:                                    | By the time I retire: | By the time I die:   |
|   |                       |                      |

**STEP 5:** Create a Personal Mission Statement.

## what do you value?

Your personal values, unlike the values of a group, are based on you and who you are. Your values develop based on your culture, your family, your childhood, your community, and your personal beliefs. Be honest when assessing your personal values — they will drive all you do this year.

**Some things you might value:**

responsibility | leadership | enjoyment of life | money | exploration | creativity | knowledge | expertise | spirituality | prestige | status | popularity | variety or change | excitement | independence | security | personal time | accomplishment | guidance | support | challenge | helping others | location | physical challenge | collaboration | contributing to society | comfort | recognition | interacting with other people

**making it real!**

Bookmark this page, so that you can come back to your personal mission statement often this year as you think about who you are and who you want to become. Don't let anyone distract you from your mission!



| My values:                     | My goals: |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
|                                |           |
| My personal mission statement: |           |
|                                |           |

## BIG IDEA

Your personal mission statement is like your ultimate goal — it is a summary of what you believe, what you want, and what success looks like to you. Use this ultimate goal to guide your decision making this year, and you will be on the right track toward success!

## **ultimate goals:** you are on a mission

Congratulations! Setting a class and personal mission is a great way to focus your senior year and start off on the right foot! At the end of each week, you'll take a moment to reflect on what you've accomplished and what you still need to do.

1. Which **action steps** have you completed? List them here.
  
2. Which **action steps** are still incomplete? List these, as well.
  
3. Look back at the **Warm-Up activity** and compare how you feel now with how you felt at the beginning of the week. After Lesson 1, what concerns or worries do you have about senior year? Acknowledge them here.

### **taking the message home**

Is your family on board? Share your personal mission statement with your family and get their support now for the work you will be doing this year and in the future.

Try using this sample script to initiate a conversation. You'll be glad you did!

"Hey (Mom/Dad/Grandma/Bob/Aunt Judy), now that I'm a senior in high school I have to make a lot of difficult decisions about my future. I just wanted to let you know that, after I graduate, I'm thinking about \_\_\_\_\_.  
I know it sounds a little crazy and scary, but don't worry! I'm in this class at school called PeerForward which is going to help me figure out how to apply, get in, and pay for it. What do you think?"