

foster advocates



Higher Education Resource Guide

A resource guide by Fosters for Fosters looking to pursue higher education.

Inside, you will find questions that our Fostering Education team found helpful for each step in the college process. Use these questions for self-reflection and finding the best fit for educational and personal needs.

-Ryn (2021 Foster Ed leader)

- Do you know a supportive adult who could write you a letter of recommendation? (Teachers, mentors, counselors, employer)
 - If not, how can you begin creating those relationships?
- Can you earn college credits now? Look into college in school (CIS) or postsecondary enrollment options (PSEO).
 - Could give you credits that would reduce the cost of college later.
- Are you able to maintain your current GPA?
- What school subjects or careers are you interested in?

... two years out

- What type of post-secondary education would you like to pursue?
 - 6-12 months career and technical school
 - 2-year community college
 - 4-year private and public universities
- Do you need to take any tests for the type of college you want to apply to (ACT/SAT)?
- How's your mental health? Do you have a therapist?
 - If not, find a strong support system through social workers, life coaches, or online counselors.

... one year out

- Do you have a list of colleges/programs you may want to attend?
 - Make a list that includes "reach" or "dream" schools that may be more difficult to get into, and "safety" schools that may be easier to get into. Consider applying to both types of schools!

Handy Links

- [College Scholarships and Support for Higher Education](#)
- [Minnesota resource database](#)

... one year out

- Things to consider when looking at schools:
 - Location: Do you want to stay in Minnesota or go to school somewhere else?
 - Diversity: Will you feel safe and heard at this school?
 - Resources: Do they offer Foster-specific resources (foster liaison, programs for foster youth)?
 - Academics: If you are interested in a specific major, do they have a program?
 - Graduation rate: Do most students graduate and find jobs after attending this school?
- Is there a way for you to visit schools you are interested in? Does the school offer a fly-in program?

... while applying/ six months out

- Do you have the resources you need, including:
 - Stable housing?
 - A bank account or possibly a savings account?
 - Enough food and food options?
 - Computer, internet, and phone?
 - Transportation options?
 - Childcare?
- Is your mental health still strong enough to attend college?
 - Do you have a support system?
- Do your identified schools have any programs/resources that are specific to Fosters/diverse students (ex. TRIO SSS, etc.)

... while applying/ six months out

- [if unable to visit] Can you get in contact with current students to ask about their experiences?
- Have you applied for financial aid?
Consider:
 - FAFSA
 - Education & Training Voucher
 - Scholarships
 - Grants

Did you know...

Our “Fostering Higher Education Act” will allow Fosters to attend an accredited Minnesota colleges for free, covering tuition and living expenses, beginning fall 2022.

... after you're accepted

- Who is my academic advisor?
 - Can they give me information on choosing classes, withdrawing from classes, and what tutors or support options are available?
- Do I have a budget that includes all of my costs and financial aid?
 - How much financial aid did I receive?
 - Is it enough to cover everything?
 - Do I need to apply for additional aid?
- What is the housing situation on campus (if residential)? Are first-years required to stay?
- What accommodations does the school provide for students with disabilities? (extra time during test-taking, separate testing location, note taker?)

- What majors/classes am I interested in? When is registration?
- What materials do I need?
 - General resources - Notebooks, laptop, calculator, etc.
 - On-campus - bedding, clothing, etc.
- Do admitted students have an orientation? When should I expect to go to campus?
- How can I prepare myself mentally for the transition into college?
- What mental health resources are available, and what resources does the school offer to students that may be in crisis?
- What clubs/organizations could I join that would help me create a support group?

Applying for college?

- Fill out your FAFSA
- Apply to school
- Apply for ETV and scholarships

Did you know? Foster Advocates has a [searchable Minnesota resource guide](#)

If you have questions on the college process, need help finding resources, want to connect with other Fosters, or have advice for us, please email education@fosteradvocates.org.

fosteradvocates.org

The doors may seem closed, but the keys are always looking to be found.

-Ryn

Every day may not be good, but there is good in every day. Being a Foster student brings pride and honor to many, but it can also bring confusion or uncertainty. Don't be afraid to ask for help and utilize resources! Above and foremost, enjoy the experience!

-Michael

You don't have to pay for knowledge we went through for free, as long as you're willing to accept it, it will always be there.

-Ace

- Does the school have a career center? If so, what resources do they offer (ex. resume/cover letter assistance, job search, interview prep, etc.)
 - Some career centers offer funding to low-income students that can help them with funding for professional clothing, taking tests such as the GRE, MCAT, etc. (would be something to think about later down the road, though)