



## 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Start your scholarship search.** Scholarships are considered “free money” because they don’t have to be paid back! They’re given to students based on financial need, talents or life experience. Your counselor will have information about scholarships available in your area. There are scholarships available for middle school students. Check out the scholarship pages on [OKcollegestart.org](http://OKcollegestart.org), and visit [UCanGo2.org](http://UCanGo2.org) to find more scholarship links and resources.
- ☐ **Study hard!** Make sure you use good study habits and keep your grades up.
- ☐ **Socialize.** Are you involved in any clubs, special interest or service groups? Find a group that sparks your talents and interests. Keep track of your extracurricular activities and volunteer work for college and scholarship applications.
- ☐ **Save away.** When you get extra money for work, birthdays or holidays, stash some of it away in your savings account for future college expenses. See [OklahomaMoneyMatters.org](http://OklahomaMoneyMatters.org) for savings ideas and money management tools. Sign up for a college savings account from Oklahoma’s 529 college savings plan at [Oklahoma529.com](http://Oklahoma529.com), or continue to add money to an existing account. It’s generally best to keep most savings in your parent’s name.
- ☐ **Make courses count.** Start thinking about the courses you’ll take in 9th grade. Choose challenging classes that will give you a head start for high school and college. Learn more about graduation and college entrance requirements at [UCanGo2.org](http://UCanGo2.org).
- ☐ **Visit a college campus.** Many colleges now offer virtual tours. Find a list of the Oklahoma tours on the [Explore Schools](http://Explore Schools) page of [OKcollegestart.org](http://OKcollegestart.org).
- ☐ **Stay motivated.** Look into participating in academic enrichment programs, summer workshops and camps with specialty focuses such as music, arts and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math).
- ☐ **Counselors, teachers, parents and friends are all good sources of information.** Ask them any questions you have about attending college or a career technology center, in addition to doing research on your own.
- ☐ **Sign up.** Don’t miss out on the opportunity to earn free tuition at an Oklahoma college or career technology center. Qualifying students can sign up between 8th grade through December 31 of their senior year. You may also qualify if your parent or guardian is an Oklahoma public school teacher. Talk to your school counselor or visit [OKPromise.org](http://OKPromise.org) to learn more.