



Exploring
Post High School
Options

Exploring Your Interests, Abilities, & Values

In order to make decisions about what you want to do after high school, you must first take time to reflect on *who you are* in terms of your interests, abilities, values, goals, etc. Here are some questions that might help you focus on your unique identity.

Interests

What classes do you enjoy most? In which subjects are you most successful? Which subjects do you like least?

What are your interests and hobbies outside of school? What talents or skills do they use?

What activities do you find fun? If you had unlimited funds and time, what would you do?

Do you enjoy working with machines or tools? Do you like to repair things or take things apart and see how they work?

Do you enjoy experimenting with ideas or projects?

Do you enjoy leading others, making decisions, or getting things started? Or do you prefer to follow the lead of others?

Abilities and Talents

What are your academic strengths and weaknesses? It is important to *honestly* evaluate your grades and test results in relation to your effort in school.

Do you work well with people and enjoy being around others when you work or do you prefer working more on your own?

Are you persuasive? Do you enjoy talking with people and influencing them to do or buy something?

Do people find you to be a good listener and/or a good teacher?

Are you imaginative, inventive or creative?

Job Values

Creativity - Do you desire a job where you can use your imagination and be inventive?

Time - Do you want a job that allows you flexibility and/or time to pursue other interests?

Environment - Is it important for you to work inside or outside; in physical or non-physical jobs?

Variety - Do you want to be able to do many different and interesting things?

Prestige - Do you want a job that provides respect, is highly visible, and helps you feel important?

Salary - How much do you need to earn for the lifestyle you desire?

Independence - Would you like to do work that allows you to be your own boss?

Work with your hands - Do you want to use your hands, machines, or tools to make or repair things?

Life Values

Do you hope to have a family someday? What are your values relating to family time, money, parenting, childcare, etc.?

What motivates you?

How do you plan to make a contribution to your community and to the needs of others?

Do you have plans for healthy recreation and exercise?

What legacy would you like to leave behind?

Choosing Careers



After exploring your interests, abilities, talents, and values, you are ready to consider potential careers. Identifying possible careers helps high school students select courses, activities, internships and part-time jobs where they may be successful and happy. It also helps students consider how much and what type training or formal education will be required after high school. Choosing a career should not be viewed as a “permanent commitment” but rather a process. As students take a class, job or field trip, they may change their career plans. Ruling out careers that you do not like is just as valuable to discovering what you do like. We begin this career exploration process in classroom guidance sessions during sophomore year. Listed below are a number of resources available at Prospect High School to further assist your career search process.

Computerized Career Searches

Career Cruising

Career Cruising is a web-based career resource to explore future careers, plan future education and research colleges. The *Career Matchmaker* of this website is a great way to match interests and skills to various careers.

Career Cruising - www.careercruising.com

Username: d214-(insert GAPPS username)
Password: six digit student ID number

Naviance

Naviance is a web-based college and career research and planning tool available to PHS students with numerous career exploration features. The *Do What You Are* online questionnaire allows students to determine their personality type and discover potential careers and college majors that would be personally rewarding. The *Career Interest Profiler* helps students match their interests to potential careers. The *Cluster Finder* allows students to find careers that match their interests, abilities and personal qualities. Finally, the *Explore Careers and Clusters* feature allows students to explore specific career job descriptions, required training, and potential wages.

Occupational Outlook

Career information can be found in the Occupational Outlook Handbook available at www.bls.gov/ooh/. For each career, these websites describe the job, required knowledge and skills, work environment, educational requirements, wages, and job outlook.

Career Exploration

Listed below are some of the career resources available for PHS students. Students should also listen to morning announcements and visit the College and Career Center for more information.

Career Trek	A Career Trek is a career-focused field trip to explore occupations of interest. Touring the worksite, talking with professionals and participating in hands-on activities helps enrich students' understanding of career fields.
Internship	Individual internship experiences can be arranged for a semester or summer. These internships allow a student to volunteer within an organization, observing typical daily duties.
Independent Opportunities	Career related opportunities within various companies, such as workshops, conferences, events and summer opportunities. For more information visit http://www.necsspartnership.com/
Career Nights	District 214 hosts several Career Nights each fall to allow students to meet with representatives from different occupations.
Dual Credit Courses	Harper College offers vocational courses to local high school students. Most of these courses allow students the option to earn both high school and college credit. Contact your counselor for more information on currently available programs.
College and Career Center	Many print and online publications and resources are available to assist students in their career exploration.

A VERY IMPORTANT POINT TO REMEMBER!

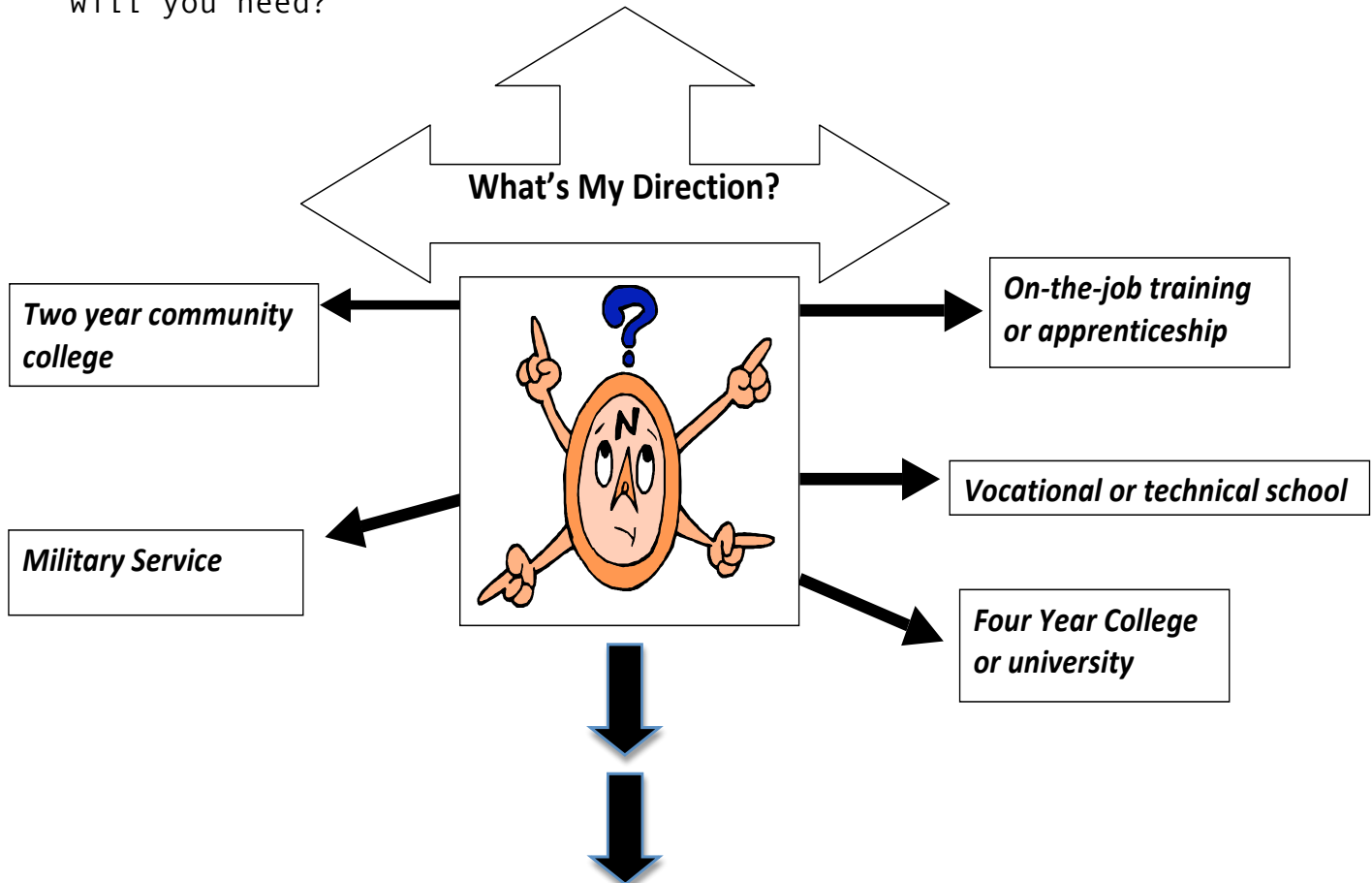
The choice of a career is YOURS!! It is not the choice of your parents, friends, teachers, or any other advisors.

It is important to discuss your choice with the significant people in your life to gain the benefit of their insight and experience, but the ultimate choice is yours!

Your career should be fun and rewarding. Spend some time and energy exploring your options now to make a good choice.

Future Plans

Which path after high school will best help you meet your needs and reach your goals? How much formal education and/or training will you need?



And remember that there are different pathways you can take to reach the same career or educational goal. For example, you can start at a two-year college and transfer to a four-year college or start in the military and then go to a two or four year college.