

F FRESHMAN

It is never too early to plan for the future

- Study hard and take challenging classes. From this point forward, everything counts!
- Meet with guidance counselor, teachers or attend presentations to make sure that you know what courses are required to graduate.
- Take some time to plan your four years of courses at high school to make sure that you have a road map. Remember, you can always make changes as you go along.
- Continue any extracurricular activities that you have been involved in and explore new activities that you may enjoy.
- Read as much as you can. Books, newspapers, magazines can all be included in a solid reading plan.
- Start a college-planning log to keep a record of extracurricular activities, honors and awards, volunteer activities, performances and any other event you may want to include.
- Take the PSAT or PLAN (pre-ACT). It is good practice and it won't count towards your college application.
- Start to think about your interests and how they might translate into career options.
- Explore the various ways you can learn about different colleges both online and offline. Visit your college/career center at school to see what resources they have available.
- It is not too early to start thinking about the SAT and ACT test. Check out the "SAT Question of the Day App" for your smart phone.
- Plan your summer! Work experience, volunteer activities, summer camp, academic camps/programs are all great ways to use your time wisely.

S SOPHMORE

Concentrate on academic preparation and extracurricular activities

- Study hard and take challenging classes and keep those grades up!
- Continue to be involved in extracurricular activities. Look for leadership opportunities.
- Take the PSAT and PLAN (pre-ACT). It is good practice and won't count towards your college applications.
- Save samples of your best papers and works of art (it that applies).

- Get involved in volunteer activities when possible.
- Start to identify teachers that you would like to have write college recommendations for you.
- Investigate options to participate in post-secondary credit course enrollment for Junior and/or senior year. Applications must be submitted by the end of sophomore year.
- Plan your junior year courses carefully. Remember that challenging courses are what colleges are looking for.
- Talk to your counselor about SAT subject tests. Some tests may be appropriate to take at the end of sophomore year.
- Register to take any AP exams if you are currently taking AP courses.
- Update your college-planning log.
- Keep up with your reading plan.
- It is not too early to preparing for the SAT and ACT test. Check out the "SAT Question of the Day App" for your smart phone.
- Continue to investigate all of the online and offline resources available to learn about different colleges.
- If you have interest in any particular college, make sure that you check out application requirements (such as SAT subject tests, art classes, etc.) so that you can plan accordingly.
- Plan your summer! Work experience, volunteer activities, summer camp, academic camps/programs are all great ways to use your time wisely.



J JUNIOR YEAR

Begin the college selection process. Learn as much as you can about the college application process.

FALL

- Make a calendar for all of the standardized tests that you consider taking so that you register on time and have the date, time and location of the tests in one place.
- Take the PSAT in October.
- Study hard and keep your grades up.
- Buy a copy of a college guide (like the *Fiske Guide*) to keep on hand at home or use a copy in your college/career counseling center.
- Continue/begin extracurricular activities that you are involved in. Strive to assume leadership roles when possible.

- Visit your college/career counseling center to see when different colleges will be visiting your school. Schools that seem of interest to you, mark on your calendar to remind yourself to attend the presentation.
- Start a "college planning" file for all of the documents related to your search. Make sure you include your college planning log in this file.
- Have a conversation with your parents about your college selection process. Make sure that you have an open and candid discussion around financial needs and limitations.

WINTER

- Once you receive your PSAT scores, make sure you review your scores, talk to your counselor and identify steps to take if you need to improve your scores.
- Check the registration dates for SAT/ACT tests and be sure to register for one or both of the tests.
- If you have not met with you counselor to discuss college selection, make an appointment to see him/her now.
- Register for AP tests for any AP courses that you are currently taking.
- Register for any SAT subject tests that you may want to consider taking.
- Start thinking about an initial college list. Complete an inventory worksheet (*College Match*) to see what types of schools you should consider.
- Continue to attend presentations given by visiting colleges. Make sure that you have the most up to date schedule from your college/career counseling center.
- Start to make plans for the summer. Consider academic courses, volunteer or paid work or internships that will match your interests.



J JUNIOR YEAR *Con't*

SPRING

- Continue to work on your college list.
- Consider using your spring break to visit colleges.
- **Attend college and financial aid night presentations at your school**
- Choose challenging classes for senior year.
- **Take the SAT or ACT test or both.**
- Research college choices both online and offline and contact schools to request additional material.

SUMMER

- Look for college applications and think about your essay topics. It is a great time to get started on your personal essay.
- Consider who you will ask for teacher recommendations
- Update your college planning log with your activities
- Register for SAT or ACT prep class if you need to improve your scores
- Register for the fall SAT or ACT test for college applications and think about your essay topics. It is a great time to get started on your personal essay.



S SENIOR *Apply to colleges. Make decisions. Finish high school with pride!*

FALL

- Create calendar with all of the critical dates for the application process. Registration dates, financial aid submission dates, test dates (if you are re-taking) etc.
- Make sure that you have all of the required courses to graduate and classes that are required by any school you are interested in applying to.
- Study hard and keep your grades up. If you are applying regular decision, colleges will see your first semester grades and classes that you are taking.

- **Finalize your college list with your counselor and parents. Make time for additional college visits if time permits. Make sure you have all of the applications and required supplements.**
- Talk to your counselors about early action and early decision options.
- Take the SAT or ACT tests if you need to re-take them.
- Identify teachers that you would like recommendations from. Give them the recommendation form and stamped envelopes addressed to the college admissions office if they do not have an online option.
- Complete your essays and ask for editing and input from teachers and parents.
- **Request transcripts and test scores to be sent to colleges that you are applying to.**



WINTER

- If you applied early, and you were accepted congratulations! Make sure that you withdraw any remaining applications.
- **If you did not apply early decision, submit all applications.**
- Begin working on FAFSA and start to investigate scholarship options.
- **File all FAFSA forms and apply for state aid.**
- Ask your school to send updated transcripts with new grades and any honors/awards you have received.
- Verify that all application materials have been sent.



SPRING

- Decision letters may arrive anytime between February and April. Make sure you keep up with your classwork, as your acceptance may be contingent on your final grades!
- Evaluate financial aid offers. If you did not receive adequate aid, consider calling the school to discuss your needs.
- Make your final decision on where you would like to attend by May 1st. Make sure that all deposits are received by the deadline.
- Have your final transcript sent to the college you will be attending.
- Enjoy the remainder of your senior year!

Great websites for your college search

bigfuture.com

collegedata.com

parchment.com

collegegreenlight.com

unigo.com

youuniversity.com

ctcl.org (Colleges That Change Lives)

collegerealitycheck.com



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