

Countdown To College: Year by Year plan



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3 areas of Preparation



Academic Preparation

- Course selection
- Career goals
- Testing
- Study skills
- Research
- Using resources
- Vocabulary



Financial Preparation

- Scholarships
- Grants
- Savings
- Loans
- Budgeting
- Test Fee Waiver applications
- Application fee waivers



Independence

- Budgeting
- Grocery shopping
- Laundry
- Banking
- Time management
- Stress management

9th Grade



Academic Preparation

- Meet with your counselor
- Explore magnet and career academic options
- Build your study skills



Financial Preparation

- Start saving for college expenses
- Open a bank account
- Register for scholarship databases



Independence

- Seek out a mentorship programs
- Prepare meals for self and family
- Do the laundry

Freshman Summer/Wrap Up

- Volunteer in your field of interest
- Begin SAT/ACT studying, preparation
- Explore college/career choices
- Explore scholarship opportunities

10th Grade



Academic Preparation

- Take challenging or college prep courses
- Prepare for the PSAT
- Tour college campus



Financial Preparation

- Continue saving money
- Attend financial literacy workshops
- Consider jobs that relate to your area of interest



Independence

- Driver's education courses
- Learn car maintenance
 - Change a tire
 - Check the oil
- Develop a resume

Sophomore Summer/Wrap Up

- Take college campus tours
- Volunteer or work part-time in your field of interest
- Prepare for the SAT/ACT
- Take SAT/ACT & plan future test dates
- Pursue scholarship opportunities
- Complete “mock” college applications

11th Grade



Academic Preparation

- Explore dual enrollment
- Take the PSAT
 - Don't assume it is meaningless! Schools recruit based off of PSAT scores
- Complete career assessments
- Strategize with Guidance Counselors



Financial Preparation

- Review Bright Futures guidelines
- Explore fee waivers for SAT/ACT
- Apply for scholarships and sweepstakes



Independence

- Practice networking
- Develop an elevator speech
- Seek out leadership opportunities

Junior Summer/Wrap Up

- Continue campus tours
- Explore internship opportunities
- Reach out to enrollment representatives
- Take or retake the SAT/ACT
- Draft a practice college entrance essay
- Complete Bright Futures application
- Continue accumulating community service hours, exploring fields of interest

12th Grade



Academic Preparation

- Focus on graduation requirements
- Retake SAT/ACT tests
- Take subject tests after completing courses in that subject



Financial Preparation

- Complete the FAFSA
 - ***October***
 - “Prior prior”
- Apply for scholarships
- Continue saving money from jobs or graduation cards



Independence

- Update resume for summer jobs, internships
- Ask for letters of recommendation
- Keep track of application deadlines without parental reminders

Senior To-Do-List



Create a checklist and calendar for:

- Standardized tests
 - Dates
 - Registration deadlines
 - Fees, waivers
- Financial aid application forms and deadlines
 - FAFSA October 1st!
- Materials your college may require, such as letters of recommendation, essays, etc.
- College application due dates
 - Early, Rolling, Priority...

Types of admission

Early Action – not binding. Can apply to multiple colleges. Apply in November and receive a decision typically by January. You accept or decline by May 1st.

Early Decision – Binding. Only apply to one college because you must attend if accepted. Apply in November and receive notification in December.

Priority Deadlines- If you apply before this deadline, you have a higher chance of getting admitted and/or receiving a scholarship to a public university. Many state and/or public universities use priority deadlines to encourage early applications.

Types of admission

Regular Admissions- This is a set deadline for applying to a college. You apply by one date-usually January 1-February 1 for freshmen and February-April for transfers.

Rolling Admissions- Many public universities and some private colleges offer Rolling Admissions. You apply as soon as you can and within a few weeks you can find out whether or not you get in. This goes on throughout most of the admissions cycle for a college.

August & September

- Review college application, compile required materials
- Register for or retake the SAT and/or ACT
 - Does your school require subject tests?
- Ensure you are on track to graduate with guidance
- Narrow down your list of colleges. Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school. Find out if you qualify for any scholarships at these schools.



October

Some colleges will have deadlines as early as this month.

Ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver, if you qualify.

Finalize your college essay – ask your English teacher to proofread!

Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers.

Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should never pay for scholarship information.

November

- Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month.
- Follow your school's procedure for sending transcripts.
- Make sure testing companies have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.



December & January

Organize regular decision applications and financial aid forms, which will be due in January and/or February.

Register for the January/February SAT/ACT (If needed). It is the last one colleges will be able to consider for a senior.

Ask your guidance office to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied.

Don't procrastinate the FAFSA! The sooner you complete it, the sooner you will have an idea of your financial aid options.

February, March & April

Most of your applications will be complete.

Don't slack in the classroom! Colleges will still see your second semester transcript. Senior year grades and course rigor still COUNT!

Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive.

Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

May

May 1st is typically the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit.

When you've made your college decision, notify your counselor and the colleges.

If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.

Make sure you request that your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.

If you are "wait listed" by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.

Almost There!



Senior Summer/Wrap Up

- Submit final high school transcript.
- Submit AP/CLEP test scores – most schools DO NOT pull these scores from your high school transcript.
- Gather health records.
- Explore college clubs and organizations.
- Communicate with your future roommate (if applicable).
- Send thank you notes to friends and family who sent graduation gifts and cards.

School Spirit!



- Learn your school's fight song
- Get some school SWAG
- Research campus history, traditions
- Represent your school proudly
- Take part in campus traditions and events
- Be a part of your school's community!

Great Tools for Your High School Years

Study Tools and Resources

- <http://jaxpubliclibrary.org/>
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- www.youtube.com

Great Tools for Your High School Years

Scholarships & Financial Aid

- www.fastweb.com
- <https://fafsa.ed.gov>
- www.scholarships.com
- Floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf
- www.finaid.org

Great Tools for Your High School Year

Career and Degree Exploration



Career Coach is designed to help you find a good career by providing the most current local data on wages, employment, job postings, and associated education and training.

- Careers
- Degrees
- Career Assessment
- Resume Builder

<https://fscj.emsicareercoach.com/>

Thank You!

