

JUNIOR

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE



THIS IS A KEY YEAR IN THE COLLEGE PLANNING PROCESS

FALL

- Stay on track with classes and grades. Check your class rank and GPA with your school counselor. It's never too late to improve. Colleges like to see an upward trend.
- Take the PSAT – this test qualifies you for the National Merit Scholarship program (money for college).
- Evaluate your educational options – figure out a more specific path (fulltime employment, further education, training, or military).
- Make a list of colleges that match your criteria.
- Go to college fairs, college nights, speak with college reps at your school, or use an online college finder to gather more information.
- Plan when you will take college admission tests (SAT or ACT) and mark them on your calendar so you have time to prepare.
- If you want to play D I or II sports in college start the certification process and check with your counselor to be sure you are taking a curriculum that meets NCAA requirements.

WINTER

- Stay with your extracurricular activities and take on leadership roles.
- Organize your college information.
- Begin narrowing down your college choices – compare the schools on your list and rank your choices. Categorize them into 3 groups: safety, match, and reach schools. Use numbers (GPA and ACT/SAT scores of previously accepted students) in categorizing the schools.
- Prepare for standardized tests (ACT or SAT).
- Talk to your family about the colleges you are interested in.
- Learn more about financial aid, your family's resources, and financial aid from the schools you are interest in.

SPRING

- Prepare for a challenging schedule for senior year – meet with your school counselor to determine your classes for next year to meet graduation requirements and will show colleges that you are not slacking during your senior year.
- Start searching for scholarships locally and online. Create a list that you can apply to your senior year.

- Contact who you would like to write a letter of recommendation – counselor, teachers, coaches, activity leaders, etc.
- Apply for a summer job or internship in a field that you are interested in.
- Set up appointments at your top college choices to tour, meet with professors/coaches, etc. Come prepared with questions.

SUMMER

- Visit your top five colleges to tour campuses, speak with admissions and financial aid staff.
- Get advice from other college students about college life especially if they attend a school you are interested in.
- Organize financial aid information that includes a list of aid sources, requirements for each application, and a timetable for meeting the filing deadlines.
- Start working on your application essays – compose rough drafts and have a teacher or another adult read it and discuss what you need to work on. Proofread your final essays a few times.
- Make early decision preparations – if you decide to apply early decision you will need to start working on your application as soon as possible.