

Senior Planning Checklist for Students & Parents 2011-2012

August

- Register to take the Fall ACT.

September

- Begin and maintain a college calendar of all admission and financial aid deadlines.
- Review your transcript in detail and check credits for graduation.
 - Your course selection says volumes about your ability, motivation and maturity.
- Attend College Night at SCHS (September 14th).
- Register for ACT as soon as possible whether you are retaking or taking for the first time.
 - The October test date is your best choice.
- If you haven't already, make a list of colleges that interest you and request information from them.
- Make sure you and your parents are on the same page. Iron out any area of disagreement before the search process gets too far along.
- Keep a folder on every school in which you are interested.
- Look at application deadlines.
- If you haven't already, make plans to visit the colleges of interest to you.
- Consider volunteering or getting involved in a service project. (This can help make you stand out from the crowd in your application.)

October

- Narrow colleges of interest to less than five. Research these thoroughly.
- Attend Catholic College Night at SCHS and SPS College Fair at the University Plaza.
- All high-school athletes wishing to compete in Division I or II college sports must register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse.
 - Information about the Clearinghouse can be found in the Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.
 - The Clearinghouse maintains and processes all of the initial-eligibility certifications. See the website for the eligibility standards.

- If you have further questions about NCAA eligibility, you may call the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse at 877-262-1492.
- Begin preparing applications with great care.
 - MOST institutions recommendation for application submission falls in October.
- Begin requesting teacher recommendations. Ask at least 10 school days prior to deadline.
- File early decision or early action applications before Dec 1.
- Begin checking for special scholarship announcements on the Career Center website.
- Find out if your colleges have institutional scholarship deadlines by visiting their web sites or reviewing their literature.
- If you are not planning to attend college, see Mr. Guilkey and begin procedures for other post-high school opportunities.

November/December

- Continue to search and apply for scholarships. Many scholarship deadlines fall on or around Dec 1.
- Be sure to apply for scholarships in time to meet application deadlines.
- Start gathering identity and financial documents necessary to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
 - Visit FAFSA on the Web for a list of required documents.
 - Both student and parent should request a Department of Education PIN number.
 - The PIN serves as an electronic signature for FAFSA on the WEB and significantly reduces processing time.
 - Early decision and early action responses should arrive this month.
 - Read the award letter carefully.
 - Financial award letters may arrive with the early admissions. If you have questions about the financial aid award, contact the financial aid office directly.
 - Make sure you understand the terms and conditions of the award before making a final commitment.
 - www.fafsa.ed.gov

January

- Parents should file the FAFSA as soon as possible after Jan 1.
- Applying early improves the chances of receiving aid from as many resources as possible.
- Be sure to complete the financial aid application for each college.

- Male students who will be 18 at the time they complete the FAFSA are required to register with Selective Service to be eligible for federal and state aid.
 - www.sss.gov
- Continue to apply for scholarships.

February/March

- Avoid Senioritis. Senior grades can be crucial to your admission (including 3rd and 4th quarter grades, especially for those on waiting lists or on the cusp of admissions).
- All acceptances are conditional until colleges deem your final grades have met their standards.
- Watch deposit deadlines for housing
- Colleges will begin notifying students of admission status and financial aid.
- If financial aid is not adequate, call the specific financial aid office. The first offer is not necessarily firm! Perhaps you can provide special circumstances that exist.
- Participate in Financial aid information nights scheduled by local colleges.
- Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. Applications received by the priority deadline are given the highest consideration.
- The Student Aid Report (SAR) should arrive two to four weeks after the FAFSA is submitted.
 - The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) figure is printed on the front page at the upper right.
 - If the SAR has not been received four weeks after submitting the FAFSA, call 1-800-4-FED-AID.
 - If there are any errors on the SAR, make corrections and mail back immediately.
 - If you provided a valid email address, you can view and make corrections online.
- Continue to apply for scholarships. Apply! Apply!
- Begin looking for summer jobs or internships.

April

- By April 15th most colleges will have notified you of your admissions standing.
- Continue to apply for scholarships.
- Review financial award letters (financial aid packages)

- Hit the books for next month's AP Exams. AP scores will determine how much credit is granted. College credit for AP exams can mean big savings.
 - Do not count on this unless you have first checked the procedures at your institution.

May

- Colleges have an acceptance reply deadline of May 1 (excluding early decision candidates), which you must confirm with an acceptance letter and deposit.
- If you are taking AP exams, make sure scores will be sent to the final-choice college.
- If there is a gap between the cost of attendance and the financial aid offered, families should start pursuing alternative payment methods.
- Complete the semester with good attendance and academic standing
- Make request for final transcript at Commencement Practice
- Submit Enrollment Fee.

June

- Prepare for final transition to college
- Finalize your housing plans
- Attend Student Orientation
- Register for Classes

