

COLLEGE PREPARATION TIMELINE

9th Grade- START THINKING

- Follow a rigorous program of study.
- Get involved in school or community based extracurricular activities that interest you or enable you to explore career interests. Consider working or volunteering.
- Start planning for college and thinking about career interests.

10th Grade- STAY ON TRACK

- Continue to follow a rigorous program of study.
- Meet with your School Counselor to discuss colleges and their requirements and make sure you are on the right track.
- Consider taking a practice Preliminary SAT (PSAT), or the PLAN exam also known as the Pre-ACT.

11th Grade- RESEARCH & PLAN

Fall

- Take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). You must take the test in 11th grade to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Program.
- Talk with your family and prioritize what factors are important to each of you as you search for a college. Consider location, cost, size, selectivity, campus life, academic programs, class size, safety, career placement, internships, foreign study, financial aid and scholarship possibilities.
- Make an appointment with your School Counselor to discuss your plans or to get help if you are stuck.
- Talk with your teachers. They are a valuable resource. They all had to make these choices at one point themselves.
- Obtain information about the colleges that interest you. Contact the admissions office of those schools that interest you to request a catalog, application and scholarship/financial aid information. Find out when Open Houses and Visitation Days are scheduled.
- For more information about scholarships and federal student aid opportunities, visit www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov.

Spring

- Register for and take exams for college admissions. Many colleges accept the SAT I and or SAT II: Subject Test(www.collegeboard.com), while others accept the

ACT(www.act.org). Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.

Summer entering 12th grade- VISIT

- Narrow down your list of colleges you are interested in attending.
- Visit all of the campuses of the colleges you are considering. This is your opportunity to learn as much as you can about the academic and social life. Come prepared with a list of questions that reflect your concerns. Go to www.collegetours.com

12th Grade- DECIDE & APPLY

Fall

- Consider retaking the SAT & ACT if you think you can improve your score.
- Register to take the SAT II: Subject Tests. Some colleges you are applying to require you to do so. Check with the college you are applying to for details. Most colleges do not require this.
- Talk to your School Counselor by early fall if you are interested in a Military Academy Appointment or the ROTC.
- Obtain college applications as soon as possible. Check with your Guidance Counselors for some applications, it is your responsibility however to secure applications.
- Read and follow application instructions carefully. Pay close attention to directions and deadline dates. Stay organized. Allow yourself enough time. Plan ahead.
- Ask your Guidance Counselor for application submission details. They may want you to submit it to the counselor directly.
- Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse (ncaaclearinghouse.com) if you plan to compete in a Division I or Division II sport. Make your counselor aware that you plan on doing this.
- Fine-tune your resume making sure to include your activities, accomplishments, honors and goals. Include this in your college application.
- Write a thoughtful and interesting essay that reflects what is special about you. Let your individuality shine through. Some but not all colleges require a college essay.
- Ask teachers/advisors/coaches for letters of recommendations for college application. Give them at least 2-3 weeks to complete.
- Make arrangements for an interview, audition or portfolio review if is required. Be aware of deadlines dates.

- Meet with college representatives.
- Determine which financial aid forms (FAFSA, CSS Profile) the individual colleges require. Both can be completed online. Colleges provide their institutional form

Winter

- Encourage your parents to complete income tax forms early so you can fill out your federal student aid application.
- Jan. 1 complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (www.FAFSA.ed.gov), along with any other financial aid applications your school of choice may require.
- Complete scholarship applications

Spring

- Visit colleges that have invited you to enroll.
- Review your college acceptances and compare financial packages.
- When you decide which school you want to attend, notify that school of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Many schools require notification and deposit by May 1.