

**2011/2012**  
**College Planner & Calendar**  
**for**  
**Junior and Senior High School Students**  
a comprehensive approach  
for high school juniors and seniors to  
bring order to the chaos of selecting and applying to college

**COLLEGE APPLICATIONS - FINANCIAL AID - SCHOLARSHIPS - ESSAYS - LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION –  
TESTING – INTERVIEWING - RESUME BUILDING - CHOOSING A MAJOR**

# Junior Planning

## THE JOURNEY BEGINS



## 2011/2012

# College Planner & Calendar

for

## Junior and Senior High School Students

Never before have there been so many ways to answer the question “What will you study in college?” Environmental Health Engineering, Resort Management, Voice and Opera, Sport and Fitness Administration or perhaps Cellular Biology & Histology? The choice is yours! You may decide to embark on a major that uniquely your own...putting together a combination of majors that will allow you to explore your specific interests. But how will get from point A to point B? What do you need to do now that will help you to achieve your college admission goals?

The answer lies in this Junior/Senior College Planner & Calendar! This planner is divided into three sections: Spring Term Junior Year, Rising Seniors - Summer, and Senior Year. The calendar that follows is designed to keep you on track throughout the process.

### Spring Term Junior Year



Testing  
Campus Visits  
Resume Building  
Choosing Your Major  
Creating Your College List

### Rising Seniors Summer



Essay  
Application Terminology  
Applications

### Senior Year



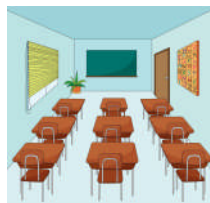
Interviews  
Scholarships  
Financial Aid  
While You Wait  
Getting Ready To Go


# **Spring Term Junior Year**





**Testing**  
**Campus Visits**  
**Resume Building**  
**Choosing Your Major**  
**Creating Your College List**

# A WORD ABOUT TESTING




 **ACT TEST** - The ACT is similar in length to the SAT with four sections – English, Math, Science and Reading for a possible point total of 36. There is an additional optional Writing component which you should always take as some schools may require it.

 **SAT TEST** - The SAT is a 3 hour and 45 minute exam composed of three sections – verbal, math and writing. Each section is worth 800 points for a possible total of 2400 points.

 **SAT SUBJECT TESTS** – Check with each college to determine if you will need to take these curriculum based exams. When given the choice choose the exams that will highlight your strengths.

**NOTE: IF YOU ARE TAKING THE MATH TEST, MOST COLLEGES PREFER THE MATH LEVEL 2 EXAM.** Check with the colleges you are applying to before registering for your exam.

1. A B C D E
  2. A B C E
  3. A B C D
  4. A B C D E
- 

Standardized tests are usually part of the application packet. This section is devoted to helping you understand the differences between these exams and the process you will need to follow when taking these exams.

## FREE TEST PREP WEBSITES

Check out the following websites for free test prep:

*Number2.com*  
*Collegeboard.com*  
*Actstudent.org*

## TEST REGISTRATION

To register for SAT and SAT Subject Tests log on to [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com)

To register for the ACT log on to [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org)



## TEST REGISTRATION

If you are applying Early Action or Early Decision (see application terminology section) plan on completing your testing in early October. All testing should be complete by this time including your SAT II exams.

## TEST REGISTRATION SENDING YOUR SCORES

When you register for the SAT or ACT you may choose up to four colleges where you would like to have your scores sent at no cost. Additional scores may be sent later for a fee.



## IDEA!

You can register on [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com) to receive a “test prep question” each day sent to your email address. This service is free.

## TESTING DIFFERENCES

ACT is curriculum-based with some logic-based questions.

SAT is based on critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

SAT Subject Tests are curriculum-based and are required by some institutions.

## TESTING DIFFERENCES – TEST CONTENT

In addition to English, reading and math, the ACT also has a science section.



## TESTING DIFFERENCES – READING

The SAT exam has sentence completion questions; the ACT does not.



## TESTING DIFFERENCES – ENGLISH & WRITING

SAT - the writing section begins with a 25-minute essay and concludes with grammar, punctuation and sentence structure.

ACT – has a separate English section and a separate writing section.

## TESTING DIFFERENCES – MATH

SAT & ACT Math problems include:

Number & operations  
Algebra & functions  
Geometry & measurement  
Data analysis, statistics and probability

## TESTING DIFFERENCES – MATH














The ACT also includes questions using Trigonometry.



## TESTING – MATH

**COLLEGEBOARD AND ACT ARE VERY SPECIFIC ABOUT THE TYPES OF CALCULATORS THAT MAY BE USED DURING THE EXAM.**

**CHECK WITH COLLEGEBOARD.COM AND ACTSTUDENT.ORG TO FIND OUT WHICH CALCULATORS ARE APPROVED.**

<p><b>SCORING DIFFERENCES</b></p> <p>ACT – points are not deducted for incorrect answers leaving students free to guess.</p> <p>SAT – ¼ point is deducted from your score for each incorrect answer.</p>	<p> <b>IDEA!</b></p> <p>If you can narrow your choices down to 2 on an SAT question you may want to guess.</p>	<p><b>WHICH TEST IS RIGHT FOR YOU?</b></p> <p>Given the differences between the two tests, consider taking both the ACT and the SAT to see which one is best for you. Colleges will accept scores from either exam and will use your higher score for admission and scholarships.</p>	<p><b>ACT ? SAT</b> <b>How do I register for these exams?</b></p> <p>Check with <a href="http://actstudent.org">actstudent.org</a> and <a href="http://collegeboard.com">collegeboard.com</a> now to find out when testing registration begins.</p> <p>Register early to ensure that you get your first choice testing center.</p>	<p><b>CHOOSING YOUR TESTING CENTER</b></p> <p>If your high school is not a test site look at options when you register for the exam and choose a site that you are familiar with. If you have not been to the test site make sure you print out and review the directions the day before.</p>	<p> <b>IDEA!</b></p> <p>It is important to complete your testing in the fall. Students applying Early Action or Early Decision need to check with each college to determine the latest acceptable testing date for each school's program.</p>	<p> <b>REMINDER</b></p> <p>Free test prep available: <a href="http://Number2.com">Number2.com</a> <a href="http://Collegeboard.com">Collegeboard.com</a> <a href="http://Actstudent.org">Actstudent.org</a></p> <p>Other test prep materials are also available at libraries and local bookstores.</p>
<p> <b>TESTING DAY STRATEGIES</b></p> <p><b>DON'T FORGET...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Admission ticket</li> <li>- Identification</li> <li>- Extra sharpened pencils</li> <li>- Calculator with extra batteries</li> <li>- Snack for break</li> </ul>	<p> <b>TESTING DAY STRATEGIES</b></p> <p>You may want to <b>bring a wristwatch</b> so that you can keep track of time. Some classrooms do not have clocks available!</p>	<p> <b>TESTING DAY STRATEGIES</b></p> <p><b>Relax the night before.</b> If possible step away from your studies and use this time to clear your mind.</p>	<p> <b>TESTING DAY STRATEGIES</b></p> <p>Review and <b>FOLLOW</b> the instructions on your admission ticket. Arrive at the test site before the time indicated on the ticket. You will need time to register and get settled!</p>	<p> <b>TESTING DAY STRATEGIES</b></p> <p><b>Go to bed early!</b> There is no substitute for a good night's sleep the night before the test!</p>	<p> <b>TESTING DAY STRATEGIES</b></p> <p>Get up early enough to have time to <b>eat a healthy breakfast</b> and to <b>get to the test site before the time</b> listed on your registration ticket.</p>	<p><b>DON'T PUSH THE</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>BUTTON!</b></p> <p>You can always retest at a later date...</p>
<p> <b>CELL PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED DURING TESTING...EVEN DURING BREAK.</b></p> <p>If you are caught with a cell phone your scores may be cancelled.</p>	<p> <b>REMINDER</b></p> <p>Don't forget to bring a healthy snack to eat during break!</p> <p></p>	<p><b>HOW COLLEGES REVIEW YOUR ACT SCORES</b></p> <p>While colleges may mix and match your SAT subscores, they view your ACT scores for each test date as a unit looking primarily at your composite score.</p> <p><b>HOW COLLEGES REVIEW YOUR SAT SCORES</b></p> <p>All colleges will look at the verbal and math sections while some will also consider your writing score. Colleges will often (but not always) take your best score from each section from multiple exams. Consider this when deciding which scores to send.</p> <p><b>SHOULD STUDENTS TEST MORE THAN ONCE?</b></p> <p>If you are not happy with your test scores you can retake your exams. To maximize the chances of raising your scores you may want to consider completing some type of test prep program.</p> <p><b>SCORE REPORTS</b></p> <p>Check with <a href="http://collegeboard.com">collegeboard.com</a> and <a href="http://act.org">act.org</a> to find out when your scores will be available. If you are facing an application deadline you may expedite your scores for a fee.</p>				



# A WORD ABOUT CAMPUS VISITS

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COLLEGE VISIT

**NO MATTER HOW GOOD A COLLEGE LOOKS ON PAPER, YOU WILL NOT KNOW IF IT IS THE RIGHT FIT FOR YOU UNTIL YOU VISIT THE CAMPUS.**

### CHECKLIST

- ✓ Research the colleges you will be visiting. You can do this by going directly to the college website or by logging onto [collegedata.com](http://collegedata.com).
- ✓ Develop a list of ten plus questions for each college.
- ✓ Register for an information session and campus tour online.
- ✓ Make all necessary travel arrangements.
- ✓ Contact the admissions office to find out if you can sit in on a class.
- ✓ Print out a campus map, driving directions and parking information. Parking may be limited so locating visitor parking ahead of time may alleviate the stress of navigating unfamiliar territory.
- ✓ Pack clothes appropriate for the climate you are visiting.
- ✓ Bring comfortable shoes for campus exploration.
- ✓ Dress appropriately for your campus activity. If you are simply taking a campus tour dress comfortably. If you are meeting with an admissions representative or professor dress in a manner that will allow them to remember you favorably.
- ✓ Bring your research and review it before walking onto campus.



### CHOOSING CAMPUSES TO VISIT

Many students have not yet put together their college list. This should not deter you from starting your campus visits. Visiting a variety of campuses including small private liberal arts colleges as well as large public universities will help you determine where you feel most comfortable. When doing your research you may want to check out the academic profiles of the students who were admitted into last year's freshman class. Is your profile similar? [Collegeboard.com](http://Collegeboard.com) and [collegedata.com](http://collegedata.com) both offer databases that will help you identify potential colleges based on your criteria.



### ARRIVING ON CAMPUS

If you arrive on campus with time before your tour you should go to the admissions office and check in. You may be asked to fill out a registration form at this time. Once you have completed the paperwork you can explore the campus, visit the bookstore or talk with current students. However you decide to spend the time make sure you are back at the admissions office a few minutes before your tour or information session begins.



### YOUR CAMPUS VISIT

While you are on campus take a look around...can you see yourself living there for the next four years? What does the surrounding area look like? Is the campus well maintained? Do the students look happy to be there?

### PLANNING YOUR CAMPUS VISIT

If you are traveling a great distance to visit campuses you may want to group your campus visits by region and plan ahead to ensure that you are able to make all of the necessary arrangements.



**IDEA!** The colleges that you are applying to may require an interview or the interview may be optional. Other schools do not allow interviews. If you are applying to a college that has an interview option and you are going to be on campus, you may want to contact admissions about setting up an interview during your visit.



### YOUR CAMPUS VISIT

When you check in for your campus tour, you may want to find out if it is possible to sit in on a class.

#### When observing a class ask yourself...

Are the students engaged in classroom discussion? Has the professor created an interesting learning environment?



### YOUR CAMPUS VISIT

You may want to eat at least one meal on campus. Is there a variety to choose from? Can you eat at more than one venue? Can you see yourself eating there for the next four years?



### YOUR CAMPUS VISIT

You may want to talk with students on campus. Students are usually happy to take the time to talk about their experiences. After all, they once were in the same position that you are in now.



### Things you may want to ask...

Are freshmen required to live on campus?

How are roommates assigned?

What if I don't get along with my roommate?

Is housing available on campus during school breaks?

Is off-campus housing near the college?

Is housing guaranteed all four years?



### Things you may want to ask...

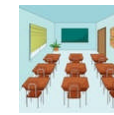
Is there Greek life?

What percentage of the student body participates in Greek life?

Does social life on campus revolve around the Greek system?

Do students stay on campus during the weekends?

Could you talk about some of your campus activities and programming?



### Things you may want to ask...

Can freshmen have cars on campus?

Do professors teach all classes?

What is the average size of an upper level class?

What is the attendance at sporting events?

If I am not in a special major like art or theater, would I still be able to take those classes and participate in the productions?



### AN INTERESTING NOTE...

The biggest influences for students deciding whether or not they like the campus are:

- 1) their tour guide and
- 2) the weather on the day that they visit.



### CAMPUS VISITS JOURNAL

**Bring your CAMPUS VISITS JOURNAL with you and make sure that you complete each section for each college while you are on campus. After visiting a number of college campuses it may be difficult to keep track of your impressions if you do not keep a record. Things you may want to record in your journal include: information on residential life, dining hall options, campus activities and your overall reaction to the college in general, Anything that is important to you should be recorded here.**

# BUILDING YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION RESUME



Your resume is an opportunity to provide information to the college admission counselor reading your file about how you spend your time outside of the classroom. Your transcript provides the foundation for your application packet by illustrating your academic achievement while your resume offers insight into who you are and where your interests lie. The information found here is designed specifically to help you create the most competitive college application possible.

The purpose of the resume is threefold:

1. To help you organize your thoughts and to help you prioritize which activities you want to include in your online application.
2. You will need to have letters of recommendation from your teachers and/or counselor for most schools you apply to. Your resume will provide additional information that will help your recommender write a comprehensive letter about your unique contributions.
3. Some colleges may ask for a resume. If you have the opportunity to interview you can bring your resume with you.



## RESUME COMPONENTS

Summary  
Awards/Certificates  
Extracurricular Activities  
Visual and Performing Arts\*  
Athletics\*  
Special Programs  
Community Service  
Internships/Work Experience

\*For students interested in participating in Athletics or planning to major in Visual and Performing Arts a separate resume may be required.



## JUST A NOTE ABOUT... SUMMARY

Your summary is one or two sentences that highlight your academic and extracurricular achievements. While there may not always be an opportunity to attach your resume to your online application there may be a place to include your summary within the application itself. This information may also be helpful for teachers who are writing your letters of recommendation.



## JUST A NOTE ABOUT... AWARDS/CERTIFICATES

1. If you haven't already done so, start creating a list of all of your academic awards and achievements.
2. Include all of your achievements beginning with your senior year followed by junior, sophomore and freshman awards.
3. Prioritize your awards based on order of importance and grade level.



## JUST A NOTE ABOUT... EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1. Create a list of all of your extracurricular activities.
2. Don't rely solely on your memory, talk to friends and family members about all of your high school extracurriculars.
3. Estimate how much time you have devoted to each activity and the role you have played (member, leader, contributor, officer).



**JUST A NOTE ABOUT...  
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

You will need to create a separate resume if you are planning to apply to a college that requires an **audition** or a **portfolio**. Your resume should include a list of all of your work. **Check with each college to which you are applying to determine specific requirements.**



**JUST A NOTE ABOUT...  
ATHLETICS**

If you are hoping to play competitive sports in college you should create a separate resume highlighting your athletic achievements for each sport you have played. Complete the recruiting form found within the Athletics section on the website of each college you are interested in. A highlights tape may also be required. **Check with each individual college you are applying to.**



**JUST A NOTE ABOUT...  
SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Summer programs, college coursework, research projects, language institutes, talent related summer camps, and any other special program that you have participated in all need to be included in your resume.



**JUST A NOTE ABOUT...  
COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Community Service hours are required by many high schools for graduation. If you are completing additional hours be sure to note this on your resume. Look for projects that allow you to get involved, not just show up. Find something that you enjoy doing and commit to it! This will allow you to have a meaningful experience and to get involved at a deeper level.



**JUST A NOTE ABOUT...  
INTERNSHIPS/WORK EXPERIENCE**

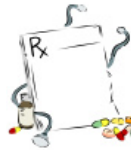
Everything you do outside of the classroom is important. Work and internship experience, whether paid or unpaid, are just as important as participating in school clubs and activities. Colleges recognize that many students are working to help their families and/or to save for college.



**JUST A NOTE ABOUT...  
TYING IT ALL TOGETHER**

**Detail your role: don't just list your activities. Did you have a leadership role? Were you an active supporter? What role did you play? This information will allow the college admission counselor reading your file to understand the level of your commitment to the activity.**

**Start now to put together a list of everything you want to include on your resume. List each activity, your role, the dates of your involvement and the number of hours you participated.**



# CHOOSING YOUR MAJOR



## WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

**MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY WANT TO DO WITH THEIR LIVES. IF YOU FALL INTO THIS CATEGORY YOU ARE IN GOOD COMPANY!**

*IT IS IMPORTANT TO DISCOVER WHO YOU ARE AND NOT RELY ON SOMEONE ELSE'S IDEA OF WHO YOU SHOULD BECOME.*

Choosing your major should not be done on whim. Take your time and research each area that is of interest to you. Check with your high school counselor, family members and friends to find out if there are job shadowing or internship opportunities where you can experience first hand what skills and abilities are required for the profession you are interested in. If you are unable to do this in high school you should be able to do this in college. When visiting colleges you are applying to check to see if freshman can participate in these types of programs.



**IDEA!**

### CHANGING YOUR MAJOR

If you are one of the few who already know what you will be majoring in you will still want to make sure that the college you select offers a variety of areas of study that you find interesting. This is important should you change your mind and want to change your major, you don't want to have to change your college.



### PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Although some colleges offer a pre-professional major you will find that most colleges assist students who are interested in these programs through an advisory system. If you are interested in any pre-health or pre-law program you will need to meet with the pre-professional advisor as soon as you get to campus.

*Students interested in pre-health or pre-law professions can major in anything as long as they take a series of classes that prepare them for the professional program they will be applying to. This is why it is imperative that you meet with the pre-professional advisor at the beginning of your freshman year.*

## questions to ask

- #1: What do you love to do? What classes and activities do you look forward to the most? Why?
- #2: What skills have you developed that you enjoy using?
- #3: What is important to you? What are your values?
- #4: What is the most awesome job you can imagine? Do you know anyone who has this job? If so, talk to them and find out what steps you need to take to do something similar.
- #5: Are there career assessments available at your high school? Check with your guidance counselor to find out what resources are available.
- #6: How are graduates in the profession you are thinking about joining faring in today's job market? Check with the career centers of the colleges you are applying to and find out what types of resources they offer their students.



**IDEA!**

When watching television/movies or reading a good book keep your eye out for characters who are doing things that you find interesting or different. Start a list of these activities and do some research. Is this something that could lead to a career?

# CREATING YOUR COLLEGE LIST



Worksheets designed to help you navigate the process of creating your school list include:

**WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A COLLEGE?**  
**COLLEGE COMPARISON CHART**  
**YOUR COLLEGE LIST**

These tools are located in this planner immediately following this section.



**APPLYING TO COLLEGE IS A PROCESS. TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME.**



**YOUR CRITERIA MAY DIFFER FROM THAT OF YOUR FRIENDS. REMEMBER THIS IS YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH – IT IS ALL ABOUT YOU!**



## STEP #1

Complete the “What Are You Looking For in A College?” assessment.



### IDEA!

If you would rather complete a college match evaluation online check out Collegeboard.com and click on “student,” “find a college” and “college search matchmaker.”



## STEP #2

Summarize the results from your completed assessments by noting which characteristics you prioritized as important.



## STEP #3

Log on to [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com) and click on “college search.” Plug in the criteria identified in step two to generate a preliminary list of colleges.



### IDEA!

You are the only one who knows what you are really looking for. If you will **take the time** to evaluate your preferences you will find a college that will be a **good fit** for you.



**YOUR COLLEGE LIST SHOULD ONLY INCLUDE COLLEGES YOU WOULD BE EXCITED TO ATTEND!!!!**



## STEP #4

Log on to [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com) to research colleges identified on your preliminary list. Be sure to check size, location and academic profiles. Record your findings on the “College Comparison Chart.”



### IDEA!

In addition to learning about colleges on [collegedata.com](http://collegedata.com), you may also want to visit [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com) and/or the website of each school that has captured your attention.



## STEP #5

Identify up to 10 colleges you find interesting and complete the “Your College List” chart.



### IDEA!

When compiling your college list be sure to choose at least two schools that match **your** academic profile.

## THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION PACKET IS ORGANIZATION

Buy a plastic crate to hold your file folders. Set up the following four sections in your crate: college information, college applications, scholarships and financial aid. You may want to color code each section.

Stay organized by doing the following: organize your mail and keep a separate folder for each college application. Photocopy or print your application for your files prior to submission. Write down your application and scholarship deadline dates in this calendar.

Toss any information about colleges that don't interest you. File only information for colleges you are planning to apply to.

## What Are You Looking For In A College?

Taking the questionnaire below can help you identify the types of characteristics that are important to you when choosing the college where you will spend the next four years of your life. Read each question below and circle the response that is most appropriate (1=very important, 2=somewhat important, 3=not important). Count up the number of responses that you gave a 1 and those characteristics are what you believe to be most important in a school.

<u>LOCATION/SIZE</u>			
1. Located in or near a small town	1	2	3
2. Located in or near a large city	1	2	3
3. Surrounded by scenic beauty	1	2	3
4. Located near home and close to family	1	2	3
5. Located in a warm climate	1	2	3
6. Located in a cold climate	1	2	3
<u>ACADEMICS/REPUTATION</u>			
7. Religiously affiliated	1	2	3
8. Well-known	1	2	3
9. Highly selective	1	2	3
10. Very competitive	1	2	3
11. Able to offer a variety of courses	1	2	3
12. Interested in offering interdisciplinary programs	1	2	3
13. Co-Ed	1	2	3
14. One or close to one where friends are going	1	2	3
15. Able to offer small classes	1	2	3

16. Research opportunities at the undergrad level	1	2	3
17. Academically rigorous	1	2	3
18. May receive personal attention from professors	1	2	3
19. Able to offer internships	1	2	3
20. Offers numerous study abroad programs	1	2	3
21. Offers graduate level courses to undergrads	1	2	3
<u>ATHLETICS</u>			
22. Involved with intramural athletics	1	2	3
23. Division 1 in athletics	1	2	3
24. Known to have great sports teams	1	2	3
<u>COLLEGE LIFE</u>			
25. One that has an active social campus life	1	2	3
26. One that has sororities and fraternities	1	2	3
27. Diverse in its population	1	2	3
28. Loaded with school spirit	1	2	3
29. Full of politically active students	1	2	3
30. Lively on the weekends	1	2	3

NOTES:



# YOUR COLLEGE LIST

NOW THAT YOU HAVE DONE YOUR RESEARCH  
IT IS TIME TO IDENTIFY  
THE COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU WILL APPLY

**Dream Schools** – Your profile falls outside of the profile identified by the college but you feel that you have a talent or circumstance that will capture the attention of the application review committee. You realize that being admitted is a reach but you would like to try. **We recommend that you choose up to two schools in this category.**

#1. \_\_\_\_\_

#2. \_\_\_\_\_

**50/50 Schools** – Your profile falls within the middle to lower range of the profile identified by the college. You realize that other strong students are also applying to this college and you believe that you have a one out of two chance of being the candidate selected. **We recommend that you choose up to two schools in this category.**

#1. \_\_\_\_\_

#2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Likely Schools** – Your profile falls within the middle to upper range of the profile identified by the college. This factor along with your extra curricular activities and your service to your community, give you confidence that you will most likely be admitted to the college. **We recommend that you choose up to four schools in this category.**

#1. \_\_\_\_\_

#2. \_\_\_\_\_

#3. \_\_\_\_\_

#4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Confident Schools** – Your profile indicates that you have achieved well above the profile of the college. This achievement, along with your extra curricular activities and your service to the community, indicate it is very likely you will be admitted to the college. **We recommend that you choose up to two schools in this category.**

#1. \_\_\_\_\_

#2. \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Remember - EVERY school on your list should be a school that you would be happy to attend. Hundreds of colleges will fall into each of these categories based on your unique qualities. Do your research and choose wisely so you will have options when it comes time to make your final decision.**

# **Rising Seniors Summer**



**Writing Your Essay  
Application Terminology  
Applications**

# WRITING YOUR ESSAY



Your essay gives you the opportunity to communicate something about you that the admissions counselors cannot learn from any other part of your application. An effective essay is one that leaves the reader feeling like he has gotten to know you and that he likes what he sees. Keep in mind that a good essay can strengthen your application...a weak essay can spoil your chances...and an average essay will do little to compel the admissions counselor reading it to decide in your favor.



Do not wait until the last minute to write your essay. Writing your essay requires careful thought and planning. Allow enough time to write, edit and rewrite.



If you choose to write your essay about an event or about someone who has been influential in your life **make sure that your essay is about how the event or person has affected you** - not just a description of the event or important person in your life.



Before starting your essay take some time to assess your personal qualities. Colleges are looking for students who are intelligent, smart, energetic, intellectually curious, good-hearted, talented, creative, insightful, and who possess strong writing skills.



If you decide to personalize your essay by referencing the name of the college be sure to change the name of the college for each essay you send.



**STEP #1:** Brainstorm about the personal qualities you would like to convey. **What makes you special?**



**STEP #2:** Read each essay topic carefully and think about ways to convey what makes you special through your essay.

**REMEMBER- YOU MUST ANSWER THE QUESTION.**



**STEP #3:** Begin writing your first essay. Outline and then draft your essay – show by example what you want to convey. Give yourself a deadline for completing the first draft and stick to it. **Set your essay aside and edit it.** Do this as often as necessary until you are comfortable showing it to others.



**STEP #4:** Identify someone who knows you well. Ask that person to review your essay and give constructive suggestions for change. Give the person reviewing your essay a deadline for returning it to you. You may find it helpful to have more than one person review your essay. You may want to ask your high school counselor, friends or family to help you with this. **Reviewing your essay takes time. Remember to say “thank you!”**



**STEP #5:** While your first essay is being critiqued you should begin working on any personal statements, short answers or additional essays required for your applications.



**STEP #6:** Once you get back your edited essay incorporate those suggestions you agree with and write another draft, making changes until you are satisfied with your work.



You may use your essay for more than one application as long as you

**ANSWER THE QUESTION!**

## CHOOSING YOUR ESSAY TOPIC



**IDEA!**

**Print out the essay questions from each of your applications and look for a common thread.**



If you are trying to make your essay “fit” when it really doesn’t, you will need to revise your essay. Remember you must

**ANSWER THE QUESTION!**

**PROOFREAD YOUR ESSAY... THEN PROOFREAD IT AGAIN!**

# A WORD ABOUT APPLICATION TERMINIOLOGY



**A WORD A DAY:** As you begin your college search you will come across terms that you may not understand. This section is devoted to defining these terms. Taking time to understand each term will help you navigate the college application process with a lot less stress!



## TYPES OF APPLICATIONS

Applications are found online either on the college website itself or in some cases on the Common Application website ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)).

You can print your application and mail it or you can apply online.

### INSTITUTIONAL APPLICATION

Most colleges have their own application. Some schools are also members of the Common App. For colleges with both options, students may choose which option is best for them.

### COMMON APPLICATION

Approximately 350 colleges use the Common Application. Some colleges use this application exclusively. Students should check college websites for application options.

### HIGH SCHOOL CODE

Your high school code, sometimes referred to as a your CEEB code, is required to register for your ACT or SAT test. You may also need this code for your applications.

### COLLEGEBOARD.COM & COLLEGEDATA.COM

These two websites provide excellent information about college admissions and college profiles.

## APPLICATION PACKET COMPONENTS

Each college will ask specifically for information about you. In addition to the application, additional information requested may include your transcript which includes your GPA, your class rank, standardized test scores, a resume of your extracurricular activities, an essay and letters of recommendation.



### TRANSCRIPT/GPA

This is the most critical piece of your application packet. This record of your high school grades is an indicator of how you have performed and the level of difficulty of your coursework. GPA may be weighted or unweighted.

### CLASS RANK

Class rank tells colleges where you stand academically in relationship to your peers. If students in your school are ranked, your rank may be on your transcript.



### STANDARDIZED TESTS

Types of tests include ACT, SAT and SAT Subject Tests – see testing section of this planner for in-depth information

### RESUME FEATURING YOUR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Anything outside of the classroom is an extracurricular including sports, clubs, community service, talent development, work and home responsibilities.

You should include information about the most important activities you have participated in. Colleges want to see how and where you spend your time.



### ESSAY

This is your opportunity to tell something about yourself that is not found in any other part of your application. A good essay will give the reader a sense of who you are.

### RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

Check with each college to determine if letters are required. If you need letters make sure you ask teachers who know you well. Give your recommenders plenty of time to write for you.



## APPLICATION DECISION OPTIONS

### REGULAR DECISION

When applying Regular Decision students will find out if they have been admitted in the spring.

### EARLY ACTION

Students who submit application materials by this deadline will *usually* find out if they have been admitted by January 1. Students may apply to more than one college under this program. Early Action is not binding.

### RESTRICTED EARLY ACTION

If you are applying to a college under Restricted Early Action, you may not apply Early Action to any other college. Admission under this program is not binding.

### EARLY DECISION

You may only apply to ONE COLLEGE under the Early Decision program. **If you are admitted you must attend this college!**

### ROLLING ADMISSIONS

A college using rolling admissions will typically notify applicants of their admission decision a few weeks after receiving all of the required application materials.



## APPLICATION DECISIONS

### DEFERRED

Students who apply Early Action or Early Decision may be deferred to the regular applicant pool instead of being admitted or denied. Students will be notified if this occurs.

### WAITLIST

Students who are not admitted may be placed on a waitlist. These students have met admission requirements but will only be offered a space in the class if space becomes available.

## FINANCIAL AID TERMINOLOGY

### FAFSA

All forms of financial aid begin with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In the financial aid section of this planner details on this very important topic.

### CSS PROFILE

In addition to the FAFSA some colleges will ask for a CSS Profile. Check college websites to determine if you need to complete this form. Mark these deadlines in your calendar.

### EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC)

This is what colleges expect you and or your family to pay for your college education based on your FAFSA.

### GAPPING

This occurs when there is a difference between the cost of attendance and the EFC. Colleges generally expect the family to cover the additional cost.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are a way to help you pay for college. While applying can be time-intensive, the payoff is worth it. Each college offers scholarships. Check college websites for details. Many outside organizations also offer scholarships. Check with your counselor.



## A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES FOR... APPLICATIONS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

There are deadlines for SAT/ACT test registration, applications, scholarships and financial aid.

### ADHERING TO DEADLINES IS CRITICAL.

#### APPLICATION DEADLINES

Each college sets its own timeline. Check with each school to determine deadline dates. Record each deadline in your calendar.

#### SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINES

Scholarship deadlines may differ from application deadlines. To keep track of your deadlines record them in your calendar.

#### FINANCIAL AID DEADLINES

Each college will set its own deadline. Check the Financial Aid weblink for each school and record the various deadlines in your calendar.

#### NATIONAL CANDIDATE REPLY DATE IS MAY 1st

By May first you must notify your college of your intent to attend.

### A WORD ABOUT "SENIORITIS"

With everything you have to do, college applications, testing, scholarships and applying for financial aid, along with your regular activities, **the temptation to take easier classes and/or let your grades slip can be overwhelming.** You need to understand that while the initial review of your transcript includes grades earned through your junior year, **colleges may request the first semester grades of YOUR SENIOR YEAR** as well. Your seventh semester grades help determine just how interested you are in learning. **While you may believe you have earned the right to an easy senior year, college admissions counselors do not share this belief.** Colleges are interested in admitting students who are interested in participating in their own education.

# UNDERSTANDING THE APPLICATION PROCESS



## HOW WILL YOU APPLY?

Regular Decision? Early Decision? Early Action?  
Restricted Early Action? Rolling Admissions?

Which option is best for you?

## APPLICATION COMPONENTS - REVISITED

**THE APPLICATION:** The application is the heart of your application packet. You will be asked for basic information about where you live, where you go to high school, information about your parents, courses you are currently enrolled in and activities you have participated in during high school.

**THE ESSAY:** The essay is your opportunity to tell colleges something about you that they will not discover in any other part of your application. Use your essay to set yourself apart from other applicants.

**ACTIVITIES LIST:** This is a summary of everything you have done in high school outside of the classroom.

**LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:** When choosing someone to write a letter for you, you will want to ask an academic teacher (math, science, English or social science) and perhaps your counselor. It is important to choose people who know you well and who have positive things to say about you.

**TRANSCRIPT:** Your transcript is the most important piece of information included in your application packet. Colleges want to see how you have performed academically in high school.

**TEST SCORES:** Colleges will accept the ACT or the SAT and some may require SAT Subject Tests.

## APPLICATION DECISION OPTIONS - REVISITED

### REGULAR DECISION

When applying Regular Decision students will find out if they have been admitted in the spring.

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A college using rolling admissions will typically notify applicants of their admission decision a few weeks after receiving all of the required application materials.

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

### FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS

Regardless of which application you are completing you will be given a list of instructions.

### FOLLOW THEM!

**College admissions counselors look to see if you are capable of following directions...it is important!**

### GRADES & TEST SCORES

You may also be asked to self-report your grades, your ACT/SAT scores and which other colleges you are applying to.

**It is important to be honest.**

### APPLYING ONLINE

You do not have to complete your application in one sitting. You can save your application and return to it again and again.

**REMEMBER TO SAVE!**

### COMMON APPLICATION – SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT

A student signed Secondary School Report needs to be completed by your counselor. This report includes a letter of recommendation.

### COMMON APPLICATION - SUPPLEMENT

When completing the Common App click on "College Specific Supplements" to find out if additional materials are required. **If this material is not submitted your application file will be marked "incomplete."**


### MAJOR SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT

Many colleges require supplemental materials and/or auditions/portfolios for certain majors. Check with each college to determine if this applies to you.

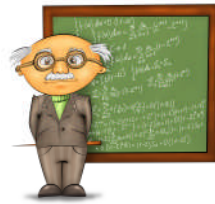
### ATHLETIC SUPPLEMENT

If you would like to play sports in college check to see if a supplement is required.

**Don't forget to register with NCAA at:** <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common>.

 <b>STEP #1</b> Identify which type of application you will be completing. This may be the Common Application or the application that is specific to your college.  <b>STEP #2</b> Go through all of your applications <i>and write down your deadlines in this calendar.</i>  <b>STEP #3</b> If you haven't already done so, you should start working on your applications at this point. Organize your applications by deadline dates and work on the application that has the earliest deadline first.	<p align="center"><b>ACTIVITIES LIST</b></p> <p>Information about your extracurricular activities will often be requested in the application itself. If there is a place to provide this information in the application you should do so.</p>	<p align="center"> <b>IDEA!</b></p> <p>You will need to provide similar information on each application, so you may want to collect all of your information before you begin.</p> <p align="center"> <b>IDEA!</b></p> <p>Your activity list should include awards, community service, clubs, and athletics...basically everything you do outside of the classroom including paid employment.</p>	<p align="center"><b>ACTIVITIES LIST</b></p> <p>If you are applying online you will not be able to attach your resume and must include the information within the application itself.</p>
 <b>STEP #4</b> Colleges are going to ask you for a list of your activities during high school. If you have not done so already, begin compiling this list now.  <b>STEP #5</b> Put together a packet for each recommender which includes a list of colleges and deadlines, a copy of your activities list and a stamped, addressed envelope for each school to which you are applying.	<p align="center"> <b>IDEA!</b></p> <p>You do not need to have a complete list of colleges you are applying to at this point. You just need to let your recommenders know that you will need a letter.</p>	<p align="center"><b>LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p align="center"><b>HOW MANY LETTERS?</b></p> <p>Many colleges require letters of recommendation. Each college will tell you in the application instructions how many letters to submit. It is quality not quantity that counts!</p> <p align="center"><b>WHO SHOULD WRITE FOR YOU?</b></p> <p>You will want to ask an academic teacher and perhaps your counselor. It is important to choose people who know you well and who have positive things to say about you.</p> <p align="center"><b>WHEN SHOULD YOU ASK FOR YOUR LETTERS?</b></p> <p align="center"><b>YOU NEED TO GIVE EACH RECOMMENDER AT LEAST 4 WEEKS TO WRITE YOUR LETTER.</b></p>	<p align="center"> <b>IDEA!</b></p> <p>Once you have distributed your recommendation packets <i>record the recommendation deadlines in this calendar</i> to remind you to follow-up with your recommenders. It is your responsibility to make sure letters are received by the deadline.</p>
 <b>STEP #6</b> Now is the time to ask your teachers and counselor to write your letters of recommendation. Give them their packets and remember to say  <p align="center"><b>THANK YOU!!</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>TRANSCRIPTS/TEST SCORES</b></p> <p>Colleges not requiring a transcript will ask you to self-report your grades. If you are admitted you will be required to send your transcript for grade verification.</p> <p>Each high school has a different method for sending transcripts. Check with your counselor to find out what you need to do to have your transcripts sent to the colleges to which you are applying.</p>	<p align="center"><b>SENDING YOUR TEST SCORES</b></p> <p>Most colleges will ask you to send your ACT, SAT and/or SAT Subject Test scores. Check with your counselor to find out if your ACT/SAT scores are on your transcript. If not you will need to send your scores from the testing agencies. Some colleges will ask that your scores be sent directly from the testing agency even if the scores do appear on your transcript. When you register for your SAT or ACT exam you can choose four colleges to send your test scores to automatically at no charge. After you have taken the test if you want to send your scores you may need to pay a fee. You can request that your ACT scores be sent at ACT.org and that your SAT scores be sent at Collegeboard.com.</p>	

# Senior Year



**Interviews**  
**Scholarships**  
**Financial Aid**  
**While You Wait**  
**Getting Ready To Go**

# THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW



**IT'S QUESTION TIME!!**



## PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

The best way to prepare for your interview is to practice, practice, practice. Don't just prepare answers in your head, say them out loud. If possible find someone to interview you so that you will have the experience of actually responding to questions under pressure. This helps you to put your thoughts in order and gives you practice formulating your thoughts into sentences. Make sure that you have appropriate questions to ask your interviewer. Do your research. If you can find it online don't ask about it. Remember, the purpose of the interview is to answer questions posed to you by the interviewer and to ask questions of the interviewer about the college. This is not the time to ask the interviewer personal questions about him or herself.

**REMEMBER TO SEND A THANK YOU NOTE TO YOUR INTERVIEWER.**

### INTERVIEW TIPS



#### APPROPRIATE DRESS - MEN:

While a coat and tie aren't necessary, you do need to look professional. You may want to wear a collared shirt and nice slacks with dress shoes. **No jeans or sneakers please!**



#### APPROPRIATE DRESS - WOMEN:

When choosing interview attire, dress as though you are going to a nice restaurant with your grandparents. Nothing low cut or too tight, light makeup and minimal jewelry are all that is required.



#### DO YOUR RESEARCH!

Demonstrate your interest by researching the college for which you are interviewing. Ask appropriate questions that show your familiarity with the college.



#### BE ON TIME!

It is critical that you show up to your interview on time and appropriately dressed. First impressions are often the ones that linger.



#### EYE CONTACT!

Maintain eye contact with the person who is interviewing you! Try not to fidget, play with your hands or your hair. Sit up straight in the chair and talk to the person who is interviewing you.

#### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

???

While the questions asked here may or may not be the exact questions you will be asked in the interview the answers to these questions will provide a solid foundation for you and will help you build your confidence.

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

Tell me about yourself.

Use this opportunity to talk about something that is not in your application. What do you want the interviewer to know about you?

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

Describe yourself in one adjective.

Adaptable, focused, personable, involved, caring, entrepreneurial, funny, interesting...

The choice is yours...what word best describes YOU?

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

How would your teachers describe you?

Interested in learning, participates in class, leader, comes prepared....

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

Tell me about a strength that you have.

Focus on something you do well and give examples.

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

How do you plan to significantly contribute to the college you choose to attend?

You will want to give this a great deal of thought before the interview. What can you bring that will enhance the college community?

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

Why is our college a good fit for you?

Use the research you have done on the college to answer this question. Apply this information to what you have done inside and outside of the classroom to show how you will be an asset to the college.

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

Tell me about a weakness.

Many weaknesses are also considered strengths. Think about something that you consider to be a weakness and see if you can turn it into a strength.

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

What is your intended area of study?

If you know what you want to study that is great! Most students have not yet identified a major. If you fall into this category you may want to talk about how you plan to figure it out!

#### INTERVIEW QUESTION

?

What is the most important way that you spend your free time?

Highlight time spent that underscores your choice for your major and/or significant activities that have meaning for you.

# SCHOLARSHIPS



It is **NOT NECESSARY** to **PAY** for scholarship information!



## SCHOLARSHIP SCAMS

Check out [findaid.org/scholarships](http://findaid.org/scholarships). This helpful webpage provides information on scholarships as well as a link to information on scholarship scams.



**FREE** scholarship information can be found **RIGHT HERE!**

### START HERE...

Check out these websites:  
Fastweb.com  
Collegedata.com  
Collegescholarships.org



### STEP # 1

Visit your high school website or counseling office to find out what scholarships are available through your high school.



### STEP # 2

Research scholarship opportunities at the colleges you are applying to.



### STEP #3

Mark your calendar with deadline dates for the scholarships you are interested in applying for.



### STEP #4

Scholarships may be available through state or community organizations, local businesses or religious organizations. Take this opportunity to research these options.



### STEP # 5

Assess your progress. Where are you in the process? Don't wait until the last minute to submit your scholarship applications.



### IDEA!

Many colleges offer scholarship opportunities that require a separate application. Check with the financial aid department of each college you are applying to to find out what scholarship opportunities are available.

## HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR AREA-SPECIFIC SCHOLARSHIP WEBSITES...

**PERFORMING ARTS** – [artsaward.org](http://artsaward.org); [donnareed.org](http://donnareed.org); [musicscholarships.us](http://musicscholarships.us)

**ENGINEERING** – [students.sae.org](http://students.sae.org); [aistfoundation.org](http://aistfoundation.org)

**COMMUNITY SERVICE** – [prudential.com/spirit](http://prudential.com/spirit);  
[findaid.org/otheraid/service](http://findaid.org/otheraid/service)

**ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS** – [artofproblemsolving.com](http://artofproblemsolving.com)

Many scholarship websites exist...you may want to Google your area of interest to find additional options.



### IDEA!

Collegeboard.com also provides scholarship information. Visit this website to research additional scholarship options.



### IDEA!

When choosing the scholarships you will be applying for you may want to make sure that your qualifications match the scholarship requirements. If they do not, you may want to research other opportunities. Remember time is limited...use yours wisely.

## DID YOU KNOW...



Multiple layers of a scholarship application (transcript, essay, letter of recommendation, resume) mean fewer applicants.



You may have to rewrite your essays for your scholarship applications. Do not let this prevent you from applying. Remember, as the number of steps increase, your competition will decrease.



Additional information can be found in books dedicated to scholarships. Books may be found in your local library or at a local bookstore.

# FINANCIAL AID



The key to finding financial aid for college lies with the  
**Free Application for Federal Student Aid**  
(FAFSA)



[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

## THREE TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

**Federal Aid** – Eligibility is determined when you file your FAFSA.

**Institutional Aid** – Each college has funding available based on need. You must file your FAFSA to be considered for institutional aid. The formula used here may vary from the formula used to determine federal eligibility.

**Merit-based Aid** – Many colleges will award scholarships based on academics, talent and community service. Need is not a factor in awarding this type of aid.



### IDEA!

Institutional aid varies among colleges. Check with each college you are applying to and determine if a separate financial aid application is required.



### REMINDER

In addition to the FAFSA some colleges will ask for a CSS Profile. Check college websites to determine if you need to complete this form. Mark these deadlines in your calendar.



Some websites will charge a fee for filing for financial aid. NEVER pay for this service. The only official website is [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). This is all you need when applying for federal student aid.



**FAFSA4caster** - [www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov)

Visit this website to receive an estimate of your financial aid eligibility.



### TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

Once you receive your FAFSA4caster estimate you may want to take another look and make sure you have included **ALL** of your relevant financial information.



Regardless of the outcome of this estimator it is important that you file your FAFSA. **ALL financial aid begins with FAFSA!** Colleges will not consider you for institutional aid until you have filed.



**STEP # 1** - Check with your high school to determine if there will be a financial aid night.



**STEP # 2** - Log on to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Click on **#1. Before Beginning a FAFSA** and familiarize yourself with the information provided.



**IDEA!** Print out the worksheet found at **#1. Before Beginning a FAFSA** to determine what documentation is required. Gather all of your documents together before starting your application.



**STEP # 3** - Apply for your **FAFSA PIN** number which is your electronic signature for your online application. Instructions can be found at **# 1. Before Beginning a FAFSA**.



**IDEA!** Parents and students both need a **PIN** number. You must file a FAFSA each year the student is in college using the same **PIN** numbers.



The FAFSA application **CANNOT** be filed before January 1. The application will not be available online until this date. However, you can complete the **FAFSA4caster** now to receive an estimate of your financial aid eligibility.

## STUDENT AID REPORT

Once you submit your FAFSA you will receive your Student Aid Report (SAR). Your SAR will summarize your information and give you your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is the portion colleges expect you and/or your family to pay for your college education. If there are extenuating circumstances in your household you may submit a letter stating these special circumstances, request a meeting with a college financial aid officer, or place a phone call to the colleges you have been admitted to asking for special consideration.









**A WORD ABOUT GAPPING:** You may find when you receive your financial aid package that there is a gap between your EFC and the financial aid package itself. This is called gapping. When this occurs the institution offering the package expects the family to come up with additional financing to pay the difference.

# WHILE YOU WAIT...



## UNDERSTANDING THE COLLEGE NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Each college has the right to choose how they will notify students about their decisions. Some colleges offer a “rolling admissions” process which means that as they process applications they begin sending out decision letters. Other institutions wait for all applications to be submitted before starting the review process. These colleges often wait until mid to late March to notify students. Keep in mind that some of these institutions will start sending out decision letters as early as the end of January in no particular order. If your friends receive letters from a school that you have also applied to and you have not yet received your letter it doesn’t mean anything. You just have to wait a little longer. Regardless of the selection process, all colleges are supposed to notify you by April 1.

while you wait... paying for college	while you wait... grades	while you wait... scholarships	while you wait... summer jobs	while you wait... summer programs
<p style="text-align: center;"> <b>COA= Cost of Attendance</b></p> <p>COA includes tuition, fees, room, meals, books and some miscellaneous expenses. You may want to begin by creating a chart that lists each school you have applied to and its’ COA.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Now is a good time to take out your Student Aid Report (SAR) and look at your EFC. Compare your EFC with the COA. Subtract the EFC from the COA. The remaining amount is what needs to be covered in your financial aid package.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Once you have been admitted to an institution the admissions office sends this information to their Office of Financial Aid. Here financial aid officers review your SAR and put together a financial aid package for you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Information about your financial aid package will be sent to you independently of your acceptance letter. Your financial aid package may be a combination of grants, loans and work study. Each school will have its own package with some offers more attractive than others.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>You may want to take the information from each package you receive and create a comparison chart.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ask yourself the following question:</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Which colleges offer packages that allow you to attend based on the criteria outlined by your family?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Is there a gap between the EFC and the amount provided in your financial aid package (gapping)?</p> <p><b>Now is a good time for the family to discuss the acceptable level of debt.</b></p>	<p>The college you decide to attend will require a final transcript. For this reason it is important to keep your grades as high as possible.</p> <p><b>Colleges have rescinded offers based on poor grades earned during senior year.</b></p>	<p>Take this time to continue to explore scholarship options. If you haven’t already done so, you may want to register with fastweb.com.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<p>If you are planning to work this summer, you may want to start exploring job options now. Some companies may require multiple interviews and, if a reference check is required, this may add to the length of the process.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p>	
	<p><b>while you wait... national reply date</b></p> <p>The National Reply Date is the date by which you must notify colleges of your decision to attend or not to attend. This date is May 1.</p> <p><b>If you do not respond by this date, the college has the right to give your seat to another candidate.</b></p>	<p><b>while you wait... final transcript</b></p> <p>Once you have made your final decision, you will need to notify your counselor so that your final transcript can be sent out after graduation. You may also want to let your recommenders know where you have decided to attend and thank them again for their hard work on your behalf.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACCEPTANCE, DENIAL, WAITLIST</b></p> <p>These are possible decisions that you may encounter regarding your applications. Remember: if you are not admitted to a college, it doesn’t mean that you aren’t qualified or that you wouldn’t be wildly successful there; it just means that they had too many qualified applicants for each space. If you are placed on a waitlist and you are still interested in attending that college you should send in the reply card and continue to check your status periodically. You should still accept admission to a school you have been admitted to and send in your deposit, housing and registration materials. If you are later offered admission at the school where you are waitlisted and you would like to attend, simply let the college you were planning to go to know and they will release you from your commitment.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p>	



# GETTING READY TO GO

## MAY 1 IS THE NATIONAL REPLY DATE FOR COLLEGES

You must notify the college that you are **planning to attend no later than May 1** and submit your deposit. **If you neglect to do so, your spot may be released to someone on the waiting list.** You should also notify the colleges you have been admitted to but are not planning to attend.



### STEP # 1

Tell your counselor where you have decided to attend and request that your final transcript be sent once finals are over.



### STEP #2

Keep track of any deposit deadlines for housing, registration, meal plans, activity and registration fees. If you don't get your deposits in on time you decrease your chances of getting what you want.



### STEP # 3

You may be required to take placement tests. Check with your college to see how and when these are administered.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT ROOMMATES

If you receive a survey regarding roommate preferences, complete the survey honestly to increase the chances of a good match.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT CAMPUS SAFETY

Be smart! If you are out at night stay together. Don't walk around by yourself! If you are studying alone at the library you should call campus security for an escort back to your residence hall. Campus security is available for just this purpose.



### WHAT SHOULD YOU TAKE... FOR YOUR ROOM



Read carefully all information sent to you about residential life. Some colleges have very specific bedding and small appliance (microwave and refrigerator) requirements.



If you can rent your refrigerator and/or microwave check with your roommate to make sure you are not duplicating these items. This also applies to the television.



Take a look around your room now. What do you use everyday? Lamps, pillows, blankets, rugs, wastebaskets, pictures...you get the idea.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

You will have unlimited opportunities to get involved in campus activities. Choosing a club or activity that interests you will ensure that you meet other students who are like-minded. Getting involved will change your college experience.



### LET'S TALK ABOUT LAUNDRY

At some point you are going to need clean clothes. If you are not currently doing your own laundry, you may want to ask someone for helpful tips before leaving home!



IDEA!

White + red = pink

You may want to separate the whites from the colors!

### MONEY MATTERS

#### Bank Account

Talk with your parents about the best way to establish a bank account that allows for easy access while you are at school.

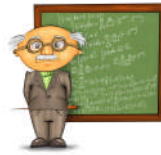
#### Credit Cards

Talk with your parents about credit card use. A card with a lower limit allows you to establish your credit rating while helping your monitor your expenses.

### ENDINGS AND NEW BEGINNINGS....

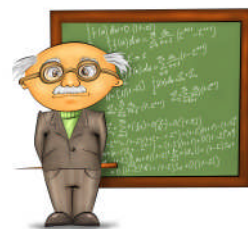
Your hard work has brought you to this place. You are leaving soon to embark on a new adventure that will prepare you for your life's journey. College provides an opportunity to discover who you are. Here you will find new friends, be exposed to new experiences and have the chance to participate in new activities that may develop into new passions. Take advantage of all college has to offer but always remember you have friends and family who want to share in your future. Call home!








## **GETTING STARTED... THINGS TO DO**

- ✓ **REGISTER FOR YOUR ACT (ACT.ORG) AND SAT AND SAT SUBJECT TESTS (COLLEGEBOARD.COM).**
- ✓ **MAKE A LIST OF ALL OF YOUR ON CAMPUS AND OFF CAMPUS ACTIVITIES.**
- ✓ **ANSWER THE QUESTIONS LISTED IN THE CHOOSING YOUR MAJOR SECTION OF THIS PLANNER.**
- ✓ **COMPLETE THE ASSESSMENT “WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A COLLEGE” LOCATED IN THIS PLANNER.**
- ✓ **BEGIN IDENTIFYING COLLEGES YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AND RECORD THEM ON THE “COLLEGE COMPARISON CHART.”**
- ✓ **COMPARE YOUR ACADEMIC PROFILE WITH THE ACADEMIC PROFILES OF THE COLLEGES YOU ARE INTERESTED IN. SORT THEM ACCORDING TO THE CATEGORIES INCLUDED ON “YOUR COLLEGE LIST.”**
- ✓ **PRINT OUT THE ESSAY TOPICS FOR EACH OF YOUR APPLICATIONS AND COMPARE THEM. LOOK FOR A COMMON THREAD.**
- ✓ **FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE APPLICATION TERMINOLOGY AS WELL AS THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND PRINT OUT YOUR APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS.**
- ✓ **IDENTIFY THE TEACHERS YOU WILL ASK TO WRITE FOR YOU AND PREPARE THEIR PACKETS.**
- ✓ **TO RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION REGISTER WITH FASTWEB.COM.**






*2011/2012*  
*College Calendar*




## AUGUST 2011

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Begin or continue researching the colleges that are of interest to you and that match your academic profile. Identify what factors are important and complete your college list.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>			7	1	2	3	4	5
			14	8	9	10	11	12	13
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			28	29	30	31			
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>							
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BUILDING YOUR RESUME</b></p> <p>Compile a resume that includes the areas discussed in the “Resume Building” section of this planner. Ask your family to review your resume to ensure that all of your activities and leadership roles are included. Be sure to indicate any community service you have done that is above and beyond your high school’s requirement.</p>		 <b>REMINDER</b> Your college search is about where you would like to attend college!	 <b>REMINDER</b> Be sure to include at least 2 colleges on your list that your counselor is confident you will be admitted to.		 <b>REMINDER</b> EVERY school on your list should be a school that you are excited to attend.				




## SEPTEMBER 2011

<b>DEADLINES</b>		For each college you are applying to, check the website to ensure that you have completed the necessary testing. If you still need to test, sign up at <a href="http://ACT.org">ACT.org</a> or <a href="http://Collegeboard.com">Collegeboard.com</a> .	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>		4	5	6	7	8	9	10
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			25	26	27	28	29	30	
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____		<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>							
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES...</b></p> Deadlines for college applications and scholarships are not negotiable. It is critical that you know when your applications are due and that you get your application and all supporting documentation in by the deadline. Check to see if your deadlines are “postmarked by” or a “received” by deadlines.		 <b>REMINDER</b> Start thinking about which teacher(s) you would like to ask to write your letters of recommendation.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Give your teachers at least four weeks to write for you!	 <b>REMINDER</b> Prepare the packet outlined in the “Let’s Get Organized” section of this planner and give it to you teacher(s).					




## OCTOBER 2011

<b>DEADLINES</b>		While you may feel that you have earned the right to take it easy your senior year...you need to keep your grades up! You will need to send your 7 <sup>th</sup> semester grades to the colleges you are applying to!	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			16	17	18	19	20	21	22
			23	24	25	26	27	28	29
			30	31					
1. _____	_____	<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>							
2. _____	_____								
3. _____	_____								
4. _____	_____								
5. _____	_____								
6. _____	_____								
7. _____	_____								
8. _____	_____								
9. _____	_____								
10. _____	_____								
11. _____	_____								
12. _____	_____								
<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;"><b>A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES...</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;">Deadlines for college applications and scholarships are not negotiable. It is critical that you know when your applications are due and that you get your application and all supporting documentation in by the deadline. Check to see if your deadlines are “postmarked by” or a “received” by deadlines.</p>		 <b>REMINDER</b> Print out the essays from each of your applications and look for a common thread. Ask someone else to review your essays.	 <b>REMINDER</b> The key for a successful athlete is practice, practice, practice...the key to a successful essay is rewrite, rewrite, rewrite!	 <b>REMINDER</b> This is your opportunity for the admissions counselor to discover something new about you. Take this opportunity to set yourself apart.					




## NOVEMBER 2011

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Work on your applications a little each day If possible plan to have all of your applications completed by Winter Break.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			13	14	15	16	17	18	19
			20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			27	28	29	30			
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>							
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES...</b></p> <p>Deadlines for college applications and scholarships are not negotiable. It is critical that you know when your applications are due and that you get your application and all supporting documentation in by the deadline. Check to see if your deadlines are “postmarked by” or a “received” by deadlines.</p>		 <b>REMINDER</b> Review the “Interviews” section of this planner and think about how you would answer those questions.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Research each college you will be interviewing with and compile a list of questions that show your interest in the college.	 <b>REMINDER</b> First impressions are lasting impressions...dress appropriately. For tips refer to the “Interviews” section of this planner.					




# DECEMBER 2011

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Start researching scholarships that you can apply for. Go to fastweb.com and complete their user profile to receive e-mails about scholarships related to your intended major.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
			25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____		<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>								
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES...</b></p> Deadlines for college applications and scholarships are not negotiable. It is critical that you know when your applications are due and that you get your application and all supporting documentation in by the deadline. Check to see if your deadlines are “postmarked by” or a “received” by deadlines.		 <b>REMINDER</b> Winter Break will be a lot more fun if you don't wait until the last minute to complete your applications.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Be sure to thank the teachers who have written recommendations for you.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Do not wait until the last minute to hit the “Submit” button.						




# JANUARY 2012

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Where possible check your application status online for each college you have applied to and find out if your file is complete. Check on any missing items.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	
<b>COLLEGE or SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
			15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
			22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
			29	30	31					
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____		<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>								
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES...</b></p> <p>Deadlines for college applications and scholarships are not negotiable. It is critical that you know when your applications are due and that you get your application and all supporting documentation in by the deadline. Check to see if your deadlines are “postmarked by” or a “received” by deadlines.</p>		 <b>REMINDER</b> File your FAFSA this month.	 <b>REMINDER</b> If you have had a schedule change since you first submitted your applications you need to notify the colleges you have applied to.			 <b>REMINDER</b> Give your mid-year reports to your counselor. These will be sent out once 7 <sup>th</sup> semester grades have been recorded.				




## FEBRUARY 2012

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Where possible check your application status online for each college you have applied to and find out if your file is complete. Check on any missing items.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP	DATE DUE		5	6	7	8	9	10	11
			12	13	14	15	16	17	18
			19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			26	27	28	29			
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____		<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>							
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A WORD ABOUT DEADLINES...</b></p> Deadlines for college scholarships are not negotiable. It is critical that you know when your applications are due and that you get your application and all supporting documentation in by the deadline. Check to see if your deadlines are “postmarked by” or a “received” by deadlines.		 <b>REMINDER</b> Continue working on scholarship applications.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Keep your grades up! You will need to submit a final transcript to the college you will be attending.		 <b>REMINDER</b> If you haven't filed your FAFSA, file it as soon as possible.				




# MARCH 2012

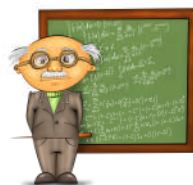
<b>DEADLINES</b>		Some colleges offer <b>Admitted Students' Events</b> that can aid those students who are unsure of where they would like to attend. Take advantage of these!	<b>Sun</b> <b>Mon</b> <b>Tue</b> <b>Wed</b> <b>Thurs</b> <b>Fri</b> <b>Sat</b>	
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>		_____ <b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b> <b>5</b> <b>6</b> <b>7</b> <b>8</b> <b>9</b> <b>10</b> <b>11</b> <b>12</b> <b>13</b> <b>14</b> <b>15</b> <b>16</b> <b>17</b> <b>18</b> <b>19</b> <b>20</b> <b>21</b> <b>22</b> <b>23</b> <b>24</b> <b>25</b> <b>26</b> <b>27</b> <b>28</b> <b>29</b> <b>30</b> <b>31</b>	
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____		<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE COLLEGE NOTIFICATION PROCESS</b></p> <p>Each college has the right to choose how they will notify students about their decisions. Some colleges offer a “rolling admissions” process which means that as they process applications they begin sending out decision letters. Other institutions wait for all applications to be submitted before starting the review process. These colleges often wait until mid to late March to notify students. Keep in mind that some of these institutions will start sending out decision letters as early as the end of January in no particular order.</p>		 <b>REMINDER</b> Some of your friends may already know where they will be going. Don't be discouraged! You will be hearing shortly!	 <b>REMINDER</b> Keep your grades up! You will need to send your final grades to the college you will be attending in the fall.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Start thinking about a summer job or internship. You may need to set up an interview or submit teacher recommendations.

## APRIL 2012

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Enjoy the last two months of high school but remember to keep your grades up! You wouldn't want to have your college acceptance rescinded because of poor grades these last few months.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14
			15	16	17	18	19	20	21
			22	23	24	25	26	27	28
			29	30					
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____		<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>							
<b>THE NATIONAL REPLY DATE</b> The National Reply Date is the date by which you must notify colleges of your decision to attend or not to attend. This date is May 1. If you do not respond by this date, the college has the right to give your seat to another candidate.		 <b>REMINDER</b> Give your final transcript request to your counselor. These will be sent out once your final semester grades have been recorded.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Study for your AP Exams! Some colleges use the results from the AP Exams to determine whether core requirements have been met.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Continue to work on your scholarship applications!					

## MAY 2012

<b>DEADLINES</b>		Check the website of the college you will be attending to find out which scores on your AP Exams or SAT Subject Tests will meet core requirements.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat		
<b>COLLEGE/ SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>			6	7	1	2	3	4	5	
			13	14	8	9	10	11	12		
			20	21	15	16	17	18	19		
			27	28	22	23	24	25	26		
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____ 11. _____ 12. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>THINGS I NEED TO DO...</b>									
<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;"><b>ENDINGS AND NEW BEGINNINGS....</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;">Your hard work has brought you to this place. You are leaving soon to embark on a new adventure that will prepare you for your life's journey. College provides an opportunity to discover who you are. Here you will find new friends, be exposed to new experiences and have the chance to participate in new activities that may develop into new passions. Take advantage of all college has to offer but always remember you have friends and family who want to share in your future. Call home!</p>		 <b>REMINDER</b> Study for your AP Exams and SAT Subject Tests!	 <b>REMINDER</b> Make sure all of your assignments are turned in so that sending your final transcript to your college will not be delayed.	 <b>REMINDER</b> Enjoy the last few weeks of high school!							



**2011/2012**  
**college planner & calendar**  
...a sneak peek at what's inside

**Spring Term**  
**Junior Year**



**Testing**  
**Campus Visits**  
**Resume Building**  
**Choosing Your Major**  
**Creating Your College List**

**Rising Seniors**  
**Summer**



**Essay**  
**Application Terminology**  
**Applications**

**Senior**  
**Year**



**Interviews**  
**Scholarships**  
**Financial Aid**  
**While You Wait**  
**Getting Ready To Go**