

## College and Career Planning Checklist

### GRADE 11

#### Fall

- Obtain a social security number, if you do not have one, you will need it to apply for college and financial aid.
- Start to review your college and technical choices and make selections. Use [www.flvc.org](http://www.flvc.org) or <https://www.flchoices.org/> to explore the best options for you! Make a list of at least 10 colleges; you will want to apply to at least 3-6 in the fall of your senior year.
- Study for and sign up to take the **PSAT in October**. Check with your school guidance office for registration details. If you plan to ask for testing accommodations because of a disability, be sure your paperwork has been approved by the College Board. Check with your school counselor for details. **You must take the PSAT in 11<sup>th</sup> grade to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Competition (NMSQT).**
- Attend the college fair at the Melbourne Auditorium in October, as well as any other college fair opportunities, both locally and nationally.
- Students who plan to pursue Division I or Division II sports in college **must** apply for eligibility online through the NCAA Eligibility Center. <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/> See your coach or athletic director for specific guidelines.

#### Spring

- Start to plan to take the SAT (**January**) ACT (**April at high school**) tests. You can locate study materials on [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). Check the university requirements at the schools you will be applying to for testing requirements. Check with your school guidance office for registration details. If you plan to ask for testing accommodations because of a disability, be sure your paperwork has been approved by the College Board. Check with your school counselor for details. *Consider retaking the ACT or SAT after you receive your score reports. Make sure to study before taking the test again for college admissions.*
- Attend financial aid nights at your high school or local community college to start learning about the FAFSA and the process of applying for financial aid.
- Begin to prepare your college essays. Start to think about your topics. Check the applications of your top colleges to find out if it is an open ended essay or one that asks you to write about yourself.
- Ask a teacher or counselor to write a recommendation that can be used for scholarships and college admissions at the beginning of your senior year.
- Start to check into scholarships and start thinking about how you will pay for college. You can join online scholarships searches such as [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)
- If you haven't done so already, visit your top choice colleges and narrow down your choices by July.
- Use the internet to access the websites of colleges you will be applying to in the fall.

### GRADE 12

#### Fall

- Make a list of all the things you need to do and the deadlines you need to meet during your senior year of high school. You'll be taking entrance exams, completing applications, paying fees, and much more.
- Review your coursework with your guidance counselor to be sure that you've taken (or are scheduled to take) all the courses you'll need for admission to your preferred colleges.
- Register for SAT or ACT if you would like to retake tests. If you are applying to schools that require subject area test scores, make sure you have completed those tests too!
- Continue to pursue extracurricular activities.

- Complete college forms and essays (as required) and submit them by the required deadlines. Many colleges now offer an online admission option; check college Websites for information.
- Be sure to keep copies of everything you send, so you can refer to or resend them later if you have to.
- If you've changed your list of schools you're applying to since you took the ACT® or SAT®, arrange to have your test scores forwarded to the colleges you're applying to.
- Visit the colleges you're most interested in attending. There's no substitute for actual experience. Try to connect with a current student so you can see what classes and dorm life are really like.
- December 1<sup>st</sup>** you can file for Bright Futures by going to Student Florida Financial Aid Application. All Florida Aid applicants must all file a FAFSA Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Winter

- File your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1. You can complete it online at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> or fill out a printed form and mail it. You'll need information from your parents' tax return to complete the application, so ask them to file early.
- After your application has been reviewed, you'll be able to view your Student Aid Report (SAR) online. This will include your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is a number used by schools to calculate how much you'll be expected to pay for college, as well as the amount of federal student aid you may be eligible for.
- Ask your high school to send your transcripts to the colleges you're applying to by putting in a transcript request form and paying \$1.00 per transcript.
- Boys who are 18 years or older must be registered for Selective Service to receive student financial aid.
- Complete scholarship applications.

Spring

- Watch your mailbox or email because many colleges announce acceptance decisions between February and April. If you can, make one last visit to each of the schools you're accepted to. Once you make your decision, be sure to return your acceptance letter by the deadline (usually the beginning of May) to save your spot.
- Student financial aid letters usually arrive by the beginning of May. If you need additional funding, it's not too late to apply for a student loan.
- Submit your tuition deposit to the college you've chosen. Be sure to get it on time (typically early in May). A late payment could jeopardize your admission.
- Request your final transcripts from the school guidance office. If you are NCAA Eligible, make sure you also request your final transcript be sent to the NCAA, as well as your college.

Summer

- Follow the college's financial aid instructions closely.
- Get a job to earn extra money for the school year.
- Open a bank account you can access at college – a checking account with a debit card is recommended, and possibly a savings account.

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