

12th Grade College Planning

Students

To Do:

ALL YEAR

- Work hard all year, second-semester grades can affect scholarship eligibility.
- Stay involved in after-school activities, and seek leadership roles if possible.

FALL

- Meet with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.
- If you haven't done so already, register for and take such exams as the SAT or ACT for college admission. Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.
- Apply to the colleges you have chosen. Prepare your applications carefully. Follow the instructions, and PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!
- Well before your application deadlines, ask your counselor and teachers to submit required documents (e.g. transcript, letters of recommendation) to the colleges to which you're applying.

WINTER

- Encourage your parent(s) to complete income tax forms early. If your parent(s) has (have) not completed their tax forms, you can provide estimated information on your federal student aid application, but remember to make any necessary changes later.
- As soon after Jan. 1 as possible, complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA, along with any other financial aid applications your school(s) of choice may require. You can complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Submit your FAFSA by the earliest financial aid deadline of the schools to which you are applying usually by early February.
- If you have questions about the federal student aid programs or need assistance with the application process, call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or the TTY for the hearing impaired, 1-800-730-8913.
- After you submit the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within three days to three weeks. Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.
- Complete any last scholarship applications.

SPRING

- Visit colleges that have invited you to enroll.
- Review your college acceptances and compare the colleges' financial aid packages.

- Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you.
- When you decide which school you want to attend, notify that school of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Many schools require this notification and deposit by May 1.

To Explore:

- Explore www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov/guide as you work through the FAFSA process.
- Make informed decisions about student loans; the following resources are important at this point:
 - Your Federal Student Loans: Learn the Basics and Manage Your Debt. (www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov/repayingpubwww.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov)
 - Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid, especially the sections headed "Borrower's Responsibilities" and "Borrower's Rights" (www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov/guide).

Parents

To Do:

- Work with your child on filling out the FAFSA.

To Explore:

- Make sure your child's personal information is safe when he or she applies for financial aid. For tips read, "Student Aid Identity Theft" at www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov/pubs.
- Go to www.irs.gov and read IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Higher Education to see how you might benefit from federal income tax credits for education expenses.
- Understand the benefits of federal student loans.
- Help your child learn about the responsibilities involved in accepting student loans. (www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov/repayingpub)
- Look at communications from schools to which your child sent FAFSA information.

Source: "College Preparation Checklist" Pamphlet from www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov