

College Planning for 12th Graders

Fall Semester:

- Look at or start your **college planning calendar/timeline** and be sure to put in all of the important dates coming up this school year. This should include: SAT/ACT/SAT subject test dates, college application due dates for early action, early decision, and regular decision, Oct 1st is the first day you can complete the FAFSA, scholarship application deadlines, etc.
- **Register for the SAT and/or ACT.** Spend more time prepping for the test(s) to improve your scores.
- Sign up for any **SAT subject tests** that you need to take, and have not already taken.
- Continue to visit colleges that you plan to apply to.
- **Ask early for letters of recommendation** from whomever the schools you are applying to require you to. You will probably need 1 or 2 from core subject teachers. A letter from a pastor, an employer, coach, boy scout leader, or someone you volunteer for, may also be allowed, encouraged, or required.
- Work on and submit college applications before their due dates. Do not forget that there may be advantages to early action applications at many great schools. Look into this at your reach schools, especially if you have one you really want to attend.
- Complete and submit your **scholarship applications** before they are due. Some scholarships are automatic, if you qualify for them based on your grades and SAT scores, and others have separate applications that must be completed. Apply early.
- **Do the FAFSA October 1**, or as soon thereafter as you can. The student and parent have to set up a PIN to begin. Parents will need to do much of this form. They can link their taxes to the FAFSA. Another financial aid form required by some schools is the CSS profile. Complete that if any of your schools require it.
- Review and make any necessary changes/corrections to the **Student Aid Report (SAR)** generated by your FAFSA when you get it. It should arrive to your email soon after you submit your FAFSA.

Spring semester:

- Revisit (or visit for the first time) colleges you are serious about attending
- Consider college acceptances; compare financial aid packages offered.
- Talk with financial aid representatives from the colleges where you are accepted with questions about paying for college.
- Make informed decisions about paying for college. Will you need a loan? In whose name? How much are your parents going to help?
- Decide which college you want to attend and let them know. Some scholarships require that you declare their school as your first choice to receive the formal scholarship offer. Once you let the school

know you plan to attend, you can begin working on the fun stuff like: housing options, meal plans, setting up orientation visits, shopping, etc.