

Pre-College Calendar and Checklist



August

- Review your high school coursework and activity plans.
- Keep in mind that colleges look for the following:
 - challenging coursework
 - a strong GPA
 - involvement in extracurricular activities such as sports, volunteer work, or church.
- Obtain a Social Security Number if you don't already have one. You will need it to apply for college and financial aid.
- Check with your high school counselor about requirements to be designated as a State Scholar.

September

- Identify sources of college and career information at your school. Start looking through guidance publications, college catalogs, college web sites, and guidebooks.
- Put together a list of 10 colleges that you would like to attend. Plan to apply to at least 3-5 schools.
- Talk to your parents and your high school counselor about where you want to go to school.
- Study and register for the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT).
- Obtain dates and locations of college fairs and "parent nights" in your local area.
- Visit with your high school counselor about scholarship opportunities.

October

- Take the PSAT and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT). Remember to take your calculator.
- Inquire about Advanced Placement (AP) or summer college courses that may be available to you.
- Attend college fairs and financial aid/parent nights.

November

- Begin online scholarship searches at www.fastweb.com and www.scholarships.com

December

- Your PSAT/NMSQT score report should arrive.
- Start planning to take the SAT I and/or SAT II exams, if necessary. You may also need to take the ACT. Check with the colleges you are applying to and find out specific testing requirements. Ask your high school counselor about registration deadlines.

January

- Go through the catalogs of the 3-5 schools that interest you the most and schedule college visits.
- During your college visits, make sure you meet with an admissions representative and a financial aid officer to find out what types of aid are available.
- Attend financial aid nights, if you have not already done so.

February

- Start seriously investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs. Ask your teachers and counselor if any local organizations offer free use of a scholarship search program.
- Go to www.fastweb.com and www.scholarships.com to review scholarships available to you.
- Register and study for the SAT (I and II) and/or ACT exams.

March

- Continue investigating outside funding sources.
- Register and study for the SAT and/or the ACT exams, if you have not already done so.
- Continue to check with your high school counselor about what you need to be doing to prepare for college.

April

- Begin scheduling visits to each of the 3-5 schools that are on your final list. If appropriate, apply for an interview and/or an overnight visit.
- Consider taking the Advanced Placement (AP) exams while information is fresh in your mind.
- Take an SAT prep course to help prepare for the upcoming test.
- Begin preparing essays for college admissions and scholarship applications.

May

- Take the SAT (I and II) and/or the ACT exams.
- Take Advanced Placement (AP) exams which are given in high schools nationally in early to mid-May.
- Be aware of the test dates and registration deadlines for the remaining SAT I and SAT II exams. You may take them during your senior year in high school.
- Continue compiling information to find out which organizations award scholarships to graduating seniors. (You may have to begin applying the summer after your Junior year.)

June

- Take the SAT (I and II) and/or ACT exams if you did not take them last month.
- Read a variety of books and magazines and review your math skills over the summer. This will help you to prepare for the SAT, if you plan to take it in the fall.
- Obtain a summer job that might be related to your career interests.
- If possible, save some money from your summer job to pay for college costs.
- If you travel this summer, consider scheduling a college visit.

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