

COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE:

The next 12 months are key in the college planning process. Get yourself an academic planner, a calendar, several file folders, and get ready to plan one of the most exciting times of your life!

TO DO: SPRING OF JUNIOR YEAR:

SAT & ACT

- Create accounts on WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.ORG and WWW.ACT.ORG and sign up for the SAT and/or the ACT.
- Study by visiting WWW.SATPRACTICE.ORG, WWW.ACTSTUDENT.ORG/TESTPREP/, WWW.NUMBER2.COM and WWW.KHANACADEMY.ORG
- Use your access code from your PSAT score report to sign in to My College Quickstart on College Board. This will help you prepare for the SAT using a study plan based on *your* PSAT results.

JUNIOR GRADES & SENIOR SCHEDULE

- When you apply to college in the fall, colleges will see your grades up through the end of junior year. Finish strong! If you need help, see your teacher or counselor.
- Make sure you know what courses are required by the colleges you want to apply to. Meet with your counselor to ensure you are meeting all requirements as well as maintaining a rigorous senior year schedule. You will have to put your senior year schedule on your applications! If you change your schedule after you apply (such as drop an AP course), your counselor must notify the colleges.

MAKE A LIST...AND ORGANIZE IT!

- When making your list of colleges, consider: size, location, cost, majors, athletic programs, etc.
- Rank the schools on your list. Need help? Check out WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.ORG and click on the black arrow at the top and choose college planning or WWW.ACTSTUDENT.ORG and click on the drop arrow next to "Information for", choose "Students and Parents", then on "Class of 2019".
- For career info (salary, descriptions, outlook), check out the Occupational Outlook Handbook online at [HTTP://WWW.BLS.GOV/OOH](http://WWW.BLS.GOV/OOH) and on WWW.CAREERCRUISING.COM, under "Careers."
- Use Career Cruising! There are tons of college and career planning tools on there!
- Visit all your schools' websites and take note of deadlines and other requirements on a calendar/planner!

THINK ABOUT MONEY!

- Every university lists their costs on their website. Go over this with your parents.
- You will find a financial aid estimator/net price calculator on their sites. Use that tool to calculate your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) based on your and your parents' income.
- There are many scholarships out there! Start building a spreadsheet of scholarships you may want to apply for, along with deadlines, requirements and amounts awarded.
- Visit the Scholarship page of the website

TO DO: SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

VISIT COLLEGES

- Visit as many colleges as you are able to! Take the tour offered by the admissions office (most have them daily). Talk to students and faculty if you get the chance. Ask the admissions office if you can sit in on a summer class to see what it's like.
- Visit large, small, public, and private schools. This can help you decide which college might be the right fit for you.
- Check out the campus visit checklist at: [HTTPS://BIGFUTURE.COLLEGEBOARD.ORG/FIND-COLLEGES/CAMPUS-VISIT-GUIDE](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide)

VOLUNTEER AND/OR GET A JOB, ATTEND A CAMP

- Your GPA and test scores are important, but colleges look for more than that! Admissions counselors look for: signs of leadership, character, a sense of responsibility, and a commitment to service to get a glimpse at your personal values and how you can contribute to their campus community.
- Got free time this summer? Get a part-time job — it shows responsibility and reliability. Volunteer — hopefully you've spent time and effort serving your community over the past few years. If not, it's not too late! Check out: [HTTP://TINYURL.COM/WHERETOCARE](http://tinyurl.com/wheretocare)
- If you can attend a camp or summer program at a university — do it! This is a fantastic way to get a slice of college life and looks great on your applications.

PLANNING TO PLAY COLLEGE SPORTS?

- Register for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility Center if you plan to continue playing a sport in college: [WWW.NCAACLEARINGHOUSE.NET](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)
- Read the info on the website to make sure you are meeting all necessary academic requirements.

CREATE AN ACADEMIC RESUME

- Create/update a list of all your accomplishments — both academic and personal.
- List all extracurricular activities, clubs, and work experiences since you started high school.
- Use the worksheet you received during your junior meeting (also online on JHS Counseling website and PowerSchool).

REMEMBER!

- Rest up and enjoy summer! Fall is going to be a busy time with applications. Do what you can now to prepare yourself and it'll make the start of your senior year much more enjoyable!

TO DO: SENIOR YEAR

SEPTEMBER:

GETTING READY!

- Get a calendar and mark it with registration, admissions and financial aid deadlines and fees.
- Determine if the schools that interest you have online applications — most do!
- Attend college visits in our CC throughout the fall. We have schools from all over come to meet you!
- Register for the SAT/ACT one more time if you want to try to improve your scores.
- Make sure you have those SAT/ACT test scores sent directly to the universities you are applying to.
- Check if your colleges require letters of recommendation. If so, ask teachers and your counselor NOW to give them enough time to write you a great letter. Remember to give your recommender a copy of the Letter of Recommendation Questionnaire.
- Write first drafts of your application essays. Ask your English teacher to read it and give feedback.
- If you are applying Early Decision/Action, you should have all of this done - those deadlines come very soon (many are November 1st!).
- In preparation for October 1, go to WWWFAFSAEDUGOV and click on "FAFSA ID". Create an account. You will need this very soon and it is helpful to have it ready to go.

OCTOBER:

MONEY MONTH!

- Go online to WWWFAFSAEDUGOV on October 1 and complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) with your parents.
- You will use your (and your parents') completed 2017 tax information.
- Keep copies of everything in a safe place, including your FAFSA ID.
- Even if you don't think you will qualify for financial aid, complete the FAFSA! Some colleges use this information to offer direct scholarships to students!
- Come to the scholarship, financial aid and college fair night(s) at JHS! Bring your parents too!

NOVEMBER:

EARLY DEADLINES!

- Stay on track of important deadlines and details — many Early Decision/Action applications are due by November 1st.
- If necessary, re-take the SAT and/or ACT and SAT Subject Tests (if needed).
- If you haven't asked for letters of recommendation yet, do it now. Teachers and counselors aren't at school during winter break so if you need anything done before then, you should ask ASAP. Remember, teachers and counselors are asked by lots of students to write letters and we want to write the best letter possible for you — so give us time.

**DECEMBER:
APPLICATION
DEADLINES
ARE HERE!**

- University of Washington (GO DAWGS!) application is due December 1st!!! Their application is entirely online and you must submit your application by this date.
- Apply, apply, apply! Finish those apps!
- If you applied Early Action/Decision, you may begin to hear if you were accepted or not!
- Remember, if you need anything for your applications, school is closed during winter break. Plan ahead and get what you need before break! (Transcripts, letters of rec, etc!)

**JANUARY:
FINISH
STRONG!**

- Watch your grades! If you need help, talk to your teacher, your friends, your counselor — get help!
- 1st semester grades are important. Many colleges request “Mid-Year Reports” that include an updated transcript showing your senior year, 1st semester grades.
- Remember, if you listed your senior year courses on your college applications, the college is expecting you to remain in those courses. Any changes to core classes may have to be approved by the college admissions office before the high school can make changes. Dropping academic courses could affect your admissions status.

**FEBRUARY:
MID-YEAR
REPORTS**

- Many schools request Mid-Year Reports. Your counselor will complete any Mid-Years on Common App as soon as grades are finalized. If you need hard-copy (printed out) transcripts, you must request them from Mrs. McGuire by filling out the transcript request form (available on the JHS counseling site and PowerSchool). You are responsible for mailing your updated transcripts to your schools, if necessary.

**MARCH:
CHECK YOUR
MAIL!**

- Be on the lookout for acceptance notifications! Check your regular mail and your email!
- Once you know you are accepted, check with your school’s financial aid office to ensure your paperwork is complete. Submit any info they may need.

**APRIL:
KEEP IT UP!**

- Keep those grades up! Remember, your college will see your final senior grades and they are important!
- Review the financial aid award letters from the schools you were accepted to. Make your final school decision and check with the school about finalizing financial aid arrangements.

**MAY:
DECISIONS!**

- May 1 is National College Decision Day! Inform every college of your acceptance or rejection of their offer of admission and/or financial aid by this date! Your deposit to your school of choice is also due.

**JUNE:
YOU DID IT!**

- As part of your senior checkout, you must let Mrs. McGuire know where to send your final transcript. This means you must let her know which college to send it to!
- GRADUATE!!!