College planning calendar for juniors

Fall

Start with you: Think about your abilities, social/cultural preferences and personal qualities. List things you may want to study and do in college.

Learn about colleges. Look at their websites (www.collegeboard.org has links). Talk to friends, family, teachers and recent grads of your school now in college. Browse college guide books. List college features that interest you.

Meet with your school counselor. Will there be a college night? When will college representatives visit your school? (Put the dates in your calendar.)

At school, sign up early to take the PSAT/NMSQT®, which is given in October.

Make a file to manage your college search, testing and application materials.

If appropriate (for example, if you're interested in drama, music, art, sports, etc.), start to gather material for a portfolio.

With your family, start to learn about financial aid. Read the Department of Education's *Funding Your Education* (about federal aid programs). Use *Getting Financial Aid* published by the College Board and the financial aid calculator at www.collegeboard.org to estimate how much aid you might receive.

Winter

Make a family appointment with your counselor to discuss ways to improve your college-preparation and selection processes.

Sign up to take college admission tests (e.g., the SAT) this spring. Register online or through your school. Fee waivers are available for students with financial need. To prepare, download practice materials from admission test websites.

Begin a search for scholarships. National sources include the *College Board Scholarship Handbook* and electronic sources. Don't overlook local and state aid sources (ask a counselor or check your public library).

College Counseling Sourcebook, 7th Edition. © 2012 The College Board. All rights reserved.
Permission granted to copy this for educational purposes.

College planning calendar for juniors (page 2)

Ask a counselor or teacher about taking the SAT Subject Tests™ in the spring. You should take them while course material is still fresh in your mind. You can download "Taking the SAT Subject Tests," which offers test-prep advice, from www.collegeboard.org.

Think about which teachers you will ask to write letters of recommendation.

Spring

Visit some local colleges — large, small, public and private. Get a feel for what works for you. Attend college fairs, too.

Develop a list of 15 or 20 colleges that attract you. Request viewbooks and information about financial aid and academic programs that interest you. Plan campus visits. It's best to go when classes are in session.

If you are considering military academies or ROTC scholarships, contact your counselor before leaving school for the summer. If you want a four-year ROTC scholarship, you should begin the application process the summer before your senior year.

Summer

Plan summer activities early. Enrich yourself by volunteering, getting an interesting job or internship, or signing up for special summer learning programs.

If you are an athlete planning to continue playing a sport in college, register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (www.eligibilitycenter.org).

Find a full-time or part-time job, or participate in a camp or summer college program.

Visit colleges. Take campus tours and, at colleges you're serious about, make appointments to have interviews with admissions counselors.

Create a résumé — a record of accomplishments, activities and work experiences since you started high school.

If you are applying to a visual or performing arts program, work on your portfolio or audition pieces.

Source: *The College Board*

College Counseling Sourcebook, 7th Edition. © 2012 The College Board. All rights reserved.
Permission granted to copy this for educational purposes.