

# Preparing for College, Military, or Workforce:

## *Senior Checklist*

### **August/September**

- Register for the SAT and/or ACT as soon as possible if you did not take it as a junior, or if you aren't satisfied with your scores and want to take it again. There are free apps for your phone which will help you with this too. BHS pays for 2 tests and you can get more for free if you are on Free/Reduced lunch. A Junior College does not require an ACT or SAT. See Ms. Roark for details.
- When you register for the SAT or ACT remember to include four colleges where you want your scores sent for free. If you send the scores late you must pay. If you are thinking about playing sports in college it is good to send your scores to the NCAA Clearinghouse. Also remember it takes about a month after you take the test for colleges to receive your scores. Only you can select to have your scores sent to a college and we can't send them to the college for you.
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges: meeting with college representatives who visit your high schools during the fall, attending local college fairs, visiting campuses. Seniors are allowed 2 college visits during the year without taking an absence. See your Counselor at least 1 week in advance to arrange the college visit and get your form.
- Narrow down your list of colleges and begin to consider "dream" and "back up plan" schools. Check the website of the college to see if you apply on the website or if you use "Applytexas.com". Check application deadlines because Texas A&M and UT Austin have a December 1 deadline. You don't want to miss an application deadline. If your college has an application that is open go ahead and apply.
- Most colleges require a fee when you apply except a junior college. When you reach the end of an application it may ask if you are paying now or paying with a waiver. If you are on Free/Reduced lunch and take the SAT or ACT you may be entitled to four admission application waivers. See Ms. Roark for more information.
- Keep a folder with letters of recommendations, transcripts, test scores, waivers and other important information you may need throughout the year. Keep a record of all the volunteer hours/opportunities you have participated in. These may be important for college applications or scholarships.

## October

- If you are applying for a university, do so this month. It does not hurt to complete the application before you have taken or retaken the SAT or ACT. The college will get your application and then email you to let you know what documents they require. Follow the directions in the email to set up an account where you can check your status.
- Visit with all of the military or college recruiters when they do a lunch visit. You can always see your Counselor and ask if she could call a military recruiter for you if you want to talk to them.
- FAFSA opens October 1. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the form you will complete to find out what financial aid you are eligible to receive from the government. It is free to apply so complete it and see if you qualify for a pell grant. Grants are free money for college and you do not have to pay them back.
- **New State Requirement:** every student must complete the FAFSA in order to graduate. Many schools require you to complete the FAFSA to be considered for scholarships.
- If your college application requires an essay you should finalize the essay this month. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application. Include any information in your essay such as your employment, first person in your family to go to college, or any other disability or hardship you have endured/overcome. A college will take all of the into consideration when looking at your application.
- Not all colleges ask you to submit a letter of recommendation but if they do you should request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. Provide an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities to each person writing a recommendation. Ask for the recommendation letter at least 1 week in advance of when you need it. Keep copies of the letters for use when you are applying for scholarships in the future.
- Research possibilities of scholarships. Visit the school website at [www.gobearsgo.net](http://www.gobearsgo.net) and go to the High School page. Click “Academics” at the top and then “College and Career Readiness”. Choose the Scholarships tab on the right. You should never be asked to pay money to apply for scholarships or financial aid. Many colleges for which you are applying have scholarships they give out but you need to check with them and see how to apply. Free sites where you build a profile and they will email you scholarships for which you can apply are below:

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

[www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)

[www.chegg.com/scholarships](http://www.chegg.com/scholarships)

## November

- Finalize and send college applications this month. If you are denied admission to a college you should contact them to find out why. This is also another opportunity to take an ACT or SAT retest and raise your score to see if you can be admitted.

- Sign up to have Mrs. Hagan send your transcript to the college once you have submitted your application.
- Make sure testing companies (ACT/SAT) have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying. They will want them sent from the testing site if you did not request them to be sent when you tested.
- Make an appointment with an Admissions Counselor at the college you plan to attend. This will allow you to get specific questions answered about your major, financial aid, housing, etc. See your Counselor for a College Visit form.
- Sign up to take the TSI test which is required for college entrance. A College or University can use SAT/ACT scores if high enough but junior colleges will require that you pass the TSI test before you can enroll. You can take all three parts at one time or take parts one at a time. BHS is a testing site and the cost is \$14 total for the Reading, Writing and Math sections. You can retest on any parts you fail. Take your test early so you are prepared to send your scores to your college.

### **December**

- Make sure you have finalized all FAFSA details with your college. Check with the financial aid office at your college to see if there is anything missing on your FAFSA. Many times there will be an additional form that they need to process your FAFSA.
- Register for the December or January ACT or SAT. This may be the last chance to retest and raise a score in time for a college to consider this for admissions/scholarships.

### **January**

- Check application deadlines for sending in required fees and paperwork. Do not hesitate to contact your college admissions or financial aid if you have any questions. There are no “dumb” questions!
- Make sure you have checked on and applied for scholarships available at your specific college.

### **Feb/March/April**

- While most of your applications will be complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, don't slack in the classroom. The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript and grades still matter! No Senioritis!

- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers still start to arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you have not made a decision yet. Make sure you ask about scholarships offered at your college.
- Check with the website often to know about applications for local scholarships. If you do not apply, you will not get a scholarship!
- Check deposit deadlines at your college. Many colleges will require you to pay a deposit confirming you will be attending before they give out scholarships or housing. Don't miss these deadlines!
- You should contact the college early in February if you need housing. If you are staying in an apartment, you should check on these early to lease.

## **May**

- Make a final decision about your college and make sure you have accepted financial aid packages. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.
- Make sure you have requested that your final transcript be sent to the college you will attend. See Mrs. Hagan for details about requesting the final transcript. If you took dual credit classes you must send a final transcript to TVCC before they will release your final TVCC transcript.

## **Important Information:**

**October 1** – Students can begin completing the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). The student and a parent must each click on and complete the FSA ID tab at the top of the page before you start your FAFSA.

*We have a UT Tyler Intern Student coming every Thursday to help you sign up for FAFSA and apply to colleges.*

***See Ms. Roark for all testing questions.***

Take the ASVAB – This isn't just a military entrance exam...it is also a great career interest test.