

Key Milestones

Wherever you are in the college search journey, use this guide to make sure you're on track! Missed a milestone? Don't panic. Talk to Mrs. Bucher and see how you can catch up. It's never too late to find the right college.

If you're a **Junior**

In the fall

- ✓ Take challenges courses.
- ✓ Take the PSAT's.
- ✓ Talk to Mrs. Bucher about whether or not you should take any standardized tests. Some colleges and universities have "test-optional" policies and don't require students to submit their SAT or ACT scores. Other colleges require them.
- ✓ Attend college fairs, open houses, and information sessions. Talk with college representatives. Ask them about campus life, application requirements, and financial aid.
- ✓ Start thinking about what your major will be.

✓ In the spring

- ✓ Meet with your school counselor to ensure that you're still on track to graduate and are taking the right classes to prepare for college. If you have gaps to fill in, now is the times to review your course selections for senior year.
- ✓ Explore the career paths and subjects you might want to study in college. Attend a career fair or shadow a professional in a field you're interested in, to learn more about their work and the path they took to get there.
- ✓ Work with your school counselor, college & career counselor, parent, or guardian to develop a list of colleges that interest you (Mrs. Bucher suggests eight to ten colleges). Use Naviance to research the colleges on your list, keeping track of your questions and the things that you like about each college.

- ✓ Research scholarships from outside sources like local businesses, organizations, employers, unions, churches, etc. Be sure to note application deadline dates.
- ✓ Attend college open houses. If you are unable to visit a college in person, most colleges have virtual open houses and tours available.
- ✓ Identify who will write your letters of recommendation. **Remember: Mrs. Bucher recommends having letters from two teachers and your counselor!**
- ✓ In the summer, continue to research and visit colleges.
- ✓ Have a serious talk with your parents about how you'll pay for college.
- ✓ Stay involved in extracurricular activities: consider a summer job, internship, or volunteer position.
- ✓ Start writing your college essay in August!
- ✓ Get ahead of your college applications. **APPLY NOW!** The Common Application opens on August 1st!

A note about standardized testing:

Standardized testing will look different than normal because of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you plan to take standardized tests, be sure to check with the test administrator directly to learn how and when they plan to administer tests. Also note that some colleges and universities have decided to temporarily stop requiring standardized test results because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Be sure to check with the colleges you are applying to, to understand their current policies.