

## Senior Year

# Pre-College Calendar & Checklist

### September

- Meet with your school counselor to discuss college plans and find out about financial aid opportunities.
- Get organized. Keep a personal calendar of important dates and deadlines. Organize your important college information in folders.
- Ask your counselor to help you with a college search on the computer if you're uncertain about college choices (i.e., Naviance).
- Check your colleges' testing requirements. Sign up for the fall SAT, ACT, and/or SAT Subject Tests.
- Access applications and financial aid materials online.
- Complete NCAA Eligibility Center Application for initial eligibility <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> for prospective college student athletes and notify your school counselor.
- Student should apply for their own Student Federal Aid (FSA) ID <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>.
- Parent/Guardian should apply for their own FSA ID, which is required to complete the on-line FAFSA.
- Be sure to have your parents attend the financial aid meeting at your high school. Additional assistance may be obtained through the Financial Aid Office at Cecil College.

### October

- Explore virtual college and career fair options.
- Meet with selected college representatives at your high school.
- Begin filling out college applications. Compose a personal statement and activity résumé.
- Ask for letters of recommendation from teachers, counselors, and/or others who can strengthen your application.
- Discuss college application essays with your English/Language Arts teacher or school counselor.
- Visit as many of your top choice colleges as possible. Make appointments for interviews and campus tours.  
Ask permission to sit in on some classes.
- Complete and submit your college application. "Priority" and "early decision" deadlines may be as early as October.
- Take the SAT and/or ACT.
- Sign up for the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).
- Complete "Colleges I am Applying to" in Naviance.

### October - continued

- Access the online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov). All colleges require a completed FAFSA to determine your eligibility for financial aid.
- Check to see if your colleges also require the PROFILE form for financial aid. The application is available online at <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>.
- Be sure to have your parents attend the financial aid meeting at your high school. Additional assistance may be obtained through the Financial Aid Office at Cecil College.
- Complete your FAFSA, beginning December 2023, as soon as possible. (Remember, keep copies of all forms you submit!) Check with your college(s) for specific deadline dates.
- Helpful hint: Utilizing the IRS retrieval tool when completing the FAFSA will help expedite submitting your tax returns to colleges if needed.

***Talk to your counselor about the pros and cons of "early decision."***

### November

- Complete and submit all college applications with a November deadline.
- Keep informed of scholarship opportunities posted in the Guidance Office/Guidance website/Naviance.
- Take the SAT and/or ACT if necessary.
- Take the SAT Subject Tests if required by your colleges.
- Keep working on your college applications. Check on deadlines.
- Stay focused on your high school classes. Colleges will want a transcript that includes your first semester grades.
- Create MD CAPS account (see pg. 10 for details).

### December

- Complete and submit all college applications.\*
- Make sure an official high school transcript (request from your Guidance office through Naviance) is included with your application.
- Many colleges have December application deadlines for merit-based scholarships.*

### January

- Give any mid-year report forms to your counselor so that your first semester grades can be sent to your colleges.

## February

- Continue checking for scholarship opportunities posted in the Guidance Office/Guidance website/Naviance.
- Check to see if your mid-year reports have been sent to the schools to which you have applied.
- Rank your final list of colleges. You should receive acknowledgements from the colleges to which you have applied.
- Check with those schools that have not contacted you.
- Make sure your FAFSA has been submitted. Maryland's deadline for the FAFSA is March 1. Some schools may have earlier deadlines. Check with each institution for specific dates.

## March

- Keep your high school counselor informed when you receive acceptance or denial letters/notifications from colleges.
- Check your Student Aid Report (SAR) for accuracy and report any errors. Request duplicate SARs if you have not decided which college you will attend.
- Contact each admissions and financial aid office to make sure your application is complete.
- Check on local scholarships posted in the Guidance Office/Guidance website/Naviance.

## April

- Expect a financial aid award letter\* from the colleges that have accepted your application. If you have not received any information, contact the financial aid office of that college.
- Compare the financial aid awards that you receive.
- Talk to the financial aid officer at your first choice college if the financial aid offer does not meet your needs.
- Decide which college you will attend and send in a deposit before the deadline.
- Notify the other schools that you will not be attending.
- Sign and return the financial aid award letters.
- Check on local scholarships posted in the Guidance Office/Guidance website/Naviance.
- A listing of all types and amounts of financial aid for which you are eligible at the college.*

## May

- Tell your school counselor which college you will be attending and request that a copy of your final transcript be sent there via Naviance.
- Notify your school counselor of all awarded financial aid including scholarships.
- Share your plans with those people who have written letters of recommendation and thank them for their support.
- Pursue volunteer opportunities, employment, or internships for the summer.
- Check for any late scholarship applications.
- Request that a final transcript be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center.