



BISHOP JOHN J.
SNYDER
HIGH SCHOOL

Established 2002

College Planning Handbook

2026–2027 • Class of 2027

Office of School Counseling

Bishop John J. Snyder High School

A practical guide for students and families from the beginning of senior year through graduation.

1. Welcome from the Office of School Counseling

Dear Senior and Parent(s),

Congratulations! You are about to embark on an exciting year at Snyder. It will be a busy year, and the Office of School Counseling is here to help and support your plans. This handbook is designed to serve as your manual from early fall through graduation.

Over the past three years, you have strengthened, developed, explored and committed to your academics, extracurricular activities, service, leadership and character. As a senior, we strongly encourage you to have honest conversations with your family and pursue institutions that best meet your post-Snyder needs and goals.

As a senior, you are the primary person responsible for maintaining communication among college or military personnel, your parents and the Snyder School Counseling Office. Your organization, communication and time-management skills will be critical.

Your two most important Snyder resources:

Your Naviance account and your Snyder email. They contain college, career and scholarship research tools, important deadlines, Snyder forms, and the Senior Plan Form. Transcripts are requested and sent through Naviance.

Counselor	Role	Contact
Ms. Kindall Crummey, M.Ed., MACM	Director of School Counseling	kindallcrummey@bishopsnyder.org • (904) 771-1029 x8962
Ms. Nicole Friederich, M.Ed.	School Counselor	nicolefriederich@bishopsnyder.org • (904) 771-1029 x8961

2. Own Your College Planning Process

The Office of School Counseling provides college application, orientation and support. However, the student must take ownership of the process. Parents are supportive partners, but they are not responsible for managing the student's applications.

What ownership looks like

- ☐ Maintain an organized timeline for applications, documents and deadlines.
- ☐ Communicate regularly with admission personnel, your parents and your Snyder counselor.
- ☐ Attend individual or group meetings and share important information with your parents.
- ☐ Evaluate, determine and prioritize your college criteria and preferences.
- ☐ Research college, career and/or military options using college websites, Naviance and resources in School Counseling.
- ☐ Pre-register for college admission representative visits at Snyder and attend college fairs.
- ☐ Register for standardized tests on time and track score status and score-reporting deadlines.

- ☐ Research and apply for financial aid and scholarships while monitoring every deadline.
- ☐ Finalize your college list by October of senior year and keep School Counseling informed of changes.
- ☐ Request recommendation letters early and politely when required.
- ☐ Follow every application procedure, submit supplementary materials, keep copies, and record when materials are sent.

Required Snyder follow-through

Senior Plan Form — Due May 7, 2027

Submit the Senior Plan Form through Google Forms to the Office of School Counseling by May 7, 2027. The Senior Plan Form is the official transcript request for the college you have chosen to attend. Also submit copies of all admission and financial award letters to School Counseling when you receive them. You will be reminded of this via your Snyder email.

3. Senior-Year College Planning Timeline

Use this timeline as a planning framework. Always verify each college's specific requirements and deadlines. Naviance and the School Counseling Google Classroom should be checked throughout the year.

Time	Priority Actions
Early Fall	Research and refine your college list; register for needed SAT/ACT testing; review application requirements; begin essays; identify recommendation writers; meet with your counselor.
September	Complete applications that have early deadlines; continue testing as needed; request recommendations early; organize financial-aid research.
October	Finalize your college list; submit early applications as appropriate; monitor Naviance; begin/continue scholarship research; complete required financial-aid applications when available.
November–December	Submit remaining early/regular applications according to college deadlines; confirm that required materials have been received; continue scholarship applications.
January–March	Monitor admission portals and email; respond promptly to requests for additional materials; continue scholarship and financial-aid research.
April	Review admission and financial-aid offers carefully; compare academic fit, costs and aid; make an informed final decision.
May	Submit the Senior Plan Form by May 7, 2027; submit copies of admission and financial awards to School Counseling; complete final college-selection steps.
Graduation / Final Transcript	Maintain strong academic performance through the end of senior year. Colleges may review final grades and may act on significant academic declines.

4. Building Your College List

We recommend completing approximately 4–8 applications based on your high school credentials and undergraduate admission criteria. A balanced list may include 1–2 reach schools, 2–4 possible schools and 2 highly likely schools. Most applications should fall into the possible category.

Admission is never guaranteed.

Do not apply simply to see whether you will be accepted, and do not assume that admission is a sure thing. Discuss your final short list with your parents and share it with your counselor.

Category	What it means
Reach	Your credentials suggest admission is unlikely. Some highly selective colleges are reaches for virtually every student.
Possible	Your credentials and the college's admission profile suggest admission is possible, and you would likely attend if accepted.
Likely	Your credentials suggest admission is likely, and you would gladly attend if admitted.

Questions to ask when evaluating colleges

Area	Look beyond the name. Consider...
Enrollment & Student Profile	School size, freshman class, retention, residential/commuter population, financial aid, student interests, athletics and campus culture.
Location	Distance from home, travel costs, urban/suburban/rural setting, weather, nearby city and recreational opportunities.
Facilities	Libraries, laboratories, studios, technology, practice spaces, residence halls, dining and recreation.
College Type & Philosophy	Two-year/four-year, public/private/religious, liberal arts/pre-professional/technical focus, calendar and curriculum structure.
Academic Environment	Faculty credentials, class size, faculty-student relationships, advising, academic support, workload and intellectual environment.
Career Preparation	Internships, career advising, research, graduate-school preparation and employment/graduate-school outcomes.
Campus & Student Life	Housing, dining, activities, clubs, athletics, religious/cultural organizations, social life and campus community.
Cost & Financial Aid	Tuition, fees, housing, books, personal expenses, travel, aid eligibility, scholarships, grants, loans and work expectations.

5. College Applications: The Details Matter

Treat every application as an opportunity to present your best work. Read every direction before beginning, follow requirements exactly, keep copies of what you submit, and track when materials are sent.

- ☐ Read every word of the application directions before you begin.
- ☐ Use accurate, complete information.
- ☐ Submit your best work and make sure essays are thoughtful, logical, organized and proofread.
- ☐ Be yourself rather than writing what you think an admission office wants to hear.

- ☐ Use specific examples to explain why activities, accomplishments and interests matter to you.
- ☐ Emphasize meaningful involvement rather than listing a long series of superficial activities.
- ☐ Keep your own copies of applications and submitted materials.
- ☐ Proofread more than once.
- ☐ Remember that a college application is a legal document. Falsifying information or submitting work that is not your own can be considered fraud and may disqualify you.

6. Writing Strong College Essays

College essays help admission readers learn about your accomplishments, goals, passions, insights and experiences- including lessons learned from mistakes. The goal is to capture your individuality and show the person behind the application.

What makes an effective essay

- ☐ Choose a subject that genuinely interests you and reveals something important about you.
- ☐ Use reflection, specific experiences and concrete details rather than clichés or a résumé-style list.
- ☐ Let the essay add something that the rest of your application does not already communicate.
- ☐ Write in a warm, direct and humble voice when those qualities are genuine.
- ☐ Use your own voice and comfortable vocabulary.
- ☐ Revise repeatedly, especially if writing is not your strongest skill.
- ☐ Proofread carefully for spelling, grammar and clarity.
- ☐ Follow the college's exact word or character limit rather than relying on a generic length.

Start early.

We recommend that students who need additional writing support begin in the summer or early in senior year and rewrite frequently.

7. Letters of Recommendation

When a college or scholarship requires a recommendation, choose a teacher or other appropriate person who knows you well, has recent experience with you, and can write a full and descriptive recommendation.

- ☐ Ask someone who knows you well.
- ☐ Ask early and give plenty of notice.
- ☐ Ask personally.

- ☐ Provide all necessary materials.
- ☐ Complete the Letter of Recommendation Request Form available through Naviance or School Counseling.
- ☐ Make sure the recommender understands what to do with the completed letter.
- ☐ Waive your right to read the letter when the application process permits/requests this.
- ☐ Send a thank-you note.

8. Standardized Testing

If at least one SAT with Writing and/or one ACT with Writing score are not on file with Snyder and the colleges to which you will apply, you should register online as soon as possible to test at least once before each college's admission deadline.

Snyder CEEB / High School Code: 100819

Use Snyder's CEEB code when registering for applicable standardized tests.

Test preparation may include independent study, practice tests, prep books, group courses, or individual/small-group tutoring. Snyder does not endorse a particular test-preparation organization or tutor.

Sending scores

Students are responsible for sending SAT or ACT scores to colleges, scholarship programs or the NCAA Clearinghouse when required. Scores may be sent by designating recipients during registration or by requesting score reports after testing. Update score recipients as needed each time you test.

9. Financial Aid & Scholarships

The student has primary responsibility for seeking financial resources and should be prepared to spend significant time researching financial aid and scholarships. Students should apply for financial aid even when they are uncertain whether they will qualify.

Resource	Purpose / Snyder guidance
FAFSA	The federal application used to determine eligibility for federal grants, loans and work funds. The source handbook directs students to StudentAid.gov and states that the form is filed after October 1.
Florida Financial Aid Application	The Florida application used for Bright Futures and other state grants/scholarships. The source handbook directs students to the Florida Student Financial Aid site and emphasizes applying during the senior year before graduation.
CSS Profile / Institutional Forms	Some private colleges may require an additional financial-aid form, such as CSS Profile or an institution-specific form, to collect more detailed financial information.
Private / Local Scholarships	Research civic, private, religious and corporate scholarship opportunities and follow each organization's requirements and deadlines.

Compare the whole financial picture.

Different colleges may offer different amounts and types of aid. The college offering the largest award- or the first award to arrive- is not necessarily the best choice. Educational fit should remain central while you compare costs and financial aid.

10. Avoid the Senioritis Trap

Colleges pay attention to senior-year course selection and academic performance. A strong upward trend can help an admission decision, while a senior-year slump can be detrimental.

- ☐ Continue taking your senior courses seriously.
- ☐ Maintain your effort after applications are submitted.
- ☐ Remember that colleges may review seventh-semester and final grades.
- ☐ Avoid dramatic declines in academic performance after admission.
- ☐ Inform your counselor if a college tells you that your file is incomplete.

Admission is not the end of the process.

Colleges reserve the right to revoke offers of admission or place admitted/matriculated students on academic probation if final grades fall dramatically.

11. Naviance, Google Classroom & Communication

Naviance and the School Counseling Office are central Snyder resources during senior year. Use them throughout the process rather than only when a deadline approaches.

- ☐ Check Naviance regularly for college research, deadlines, forms and transcript-related tasks.
- ☐ Use Naviance for transcript requests as directed by School Counseling.
- ☐ Check your Snyder email for announcements, resources, forms and deadlines.
- ☐ Keep your counselor informed when your college list changes.
- ☐ Respond promptly when a college or scholarship organization requests additional information.
- ☐ Keep appointments and follow through on counseling-office requests.

12. Senior College Planning Checklist

- ☐ I have met with my family to discuss college goals, preferences and financial considerations.

- ☐ I have researched colleges using Naviance and other reliable resources.
- ☐ I have built a balanced college list and discussed it with my counselor.
- ☐ I have finalized my college list by October.
- ☐ I have registered for any standardized tests I need.
- ☐ I have requested recommendation letters early when required.
- ☐ I have completed and proofread my applications.
- ☐ I have submitted all required supplemental materials.
- ☐ I am tracking every college deadline and application status.
- ☐ I have researched FAFSA, Bright Futures, and other financial-aid opportunities.
- ☐ I am applying for scholarships and tracking deadlines.
- ☐ I am checking college email and applicant portals regularly.
- ☐ I am reporting incomplete files or important college communications to my counselor.
- ☐ I have submitted copies of admission and financial award letters to School Counseling.
- ☐ I will submit the Senior Plan Form by May 7, 2027.
- ☐ I will maintain strong academic performance through graduation.

13. My College Planning Notes

Use these pages to keep important information in one place.

College List

Reach: _____

Possible: _____

Possible: _____

Possible: _____

Likely: _____

Likely: _____

Important Deadlines

College / Scholarship: _____ Deadline: _____

College / Scholarship: _____ Deadline: _____

College / Scholarship: _____ Deadline: _____

College / Scholarship: _____ Deadline: _____

Questions for My Counselor

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____