

Your College Readiness Roadmap



Goal of Freshman Year Embrace New Things

- 1. Try writing a personal narrative.
- 2. Learn to navigate high school.
- 3. Try a variety of extracurricular activities.
- 4. Make thoughtful summer plans to explore your interests.



Parent Milestones

Continue to support your child's exploration of activities and encourage them to find independence. Help them utilize the resources and faculty they can access for academic support and to advocate for themselves when appropriate.

Goal of Junior Year Strive and Plan Ahead

- Fall**
- 1. Take the PSAT.
 - 2. Start searching for scholarships.
 - 3. Stay involved, gain leadership, and continue to do well.
 - 4. Evaluate post-secondary education options.
- Winter**
- 1. Register for the SAT or ACT test.
 - 2. Create a testing plan with your counselor/advisor.
 - 3. Discuss course plans with your counselor/advisor as it relates to college interests and majors.
 - 4. Create a supplemental portfolio (*if applicable*); artists, architects, writers, and athletes.
 - 5. Attend college rep visits at your high school.
- Spring**
- 1. Take AP tests in May.
 - 2. Narrow your college interest list and plan college visits.
 - 3. Line up thoughtful summer plans.
 - 4. Apply for scholarships.
 - 5. Register with the NCAA eligibility center (*if an athlete*).
 - 6. Schedule (or reschedule) standardized tests.
- Summer**
- 1. Continue researching colleges.
 - 2. Take the ACT/SAT.
 - 3. Draft your main college essay.
 - 4. Continue applying for scholarships.



Parent Milestones

Meet as a family with your student's college counselor before senior year begins. Use this time to discuss the qualities of a school that will be important academically, culturally, socially, and financially.

Visit colleges and apply for financial aid through the FAFSA/CSS Profile.

Return to the qualities your child shared were important as you help them make a final decision.



Parent Milestones

Make a financial plan for paying for college and begin researching scholarship and aid options.

Goal of Sophomore Year Find Academic Momentum

- 1. Try writing a personal narrative.
- 2. Keep up with your school work and grades.
- 3. Practice the PSAT and take AP exams in May.
- 4. Stay involved and continue an extracurricular(s).
- 5. Research colleges online.
- 6. Discuss course plans with your counselor/advisor for junior year.
- 7. Make thoughtful summer plans.



Parent Milestones

Help determine which standardized test to take: the SAT, ACT, or both. *Any accommodations for tests must be arranged at least four months in advance.*

Help research scholarship options and revisit financial plans.

Visit colleges, if possible. By summer, ensure your child has a working draft of their college essay. Encourage them to work on it over the summer.

Helpful Resources

- *The Fiske Guide to Colleges 2025* (Order on Amazon)
- The College Scorecard | <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>
- FAFSA/CSS Profile | <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>
- The SCOIR College Network | <https://www.scoir.com/>
- Naviance | <https://www.powerschool.com/college-career-and-life-readiness-cloud/naviance-cclr/>
- SAT Suite of Assessments | <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/>
- The ACT Test for Students | <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act.html>
- College Essay Guy | <https://www.collegeessayguy.com>
- NCAA Eligibility Center | <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

Goal of Senior Year Find Your Fit

- Fall**
- 1. Visit colleges, attend college rep visits, assess long-term fit, and make a strategic application plan.
 - 2. Collect letters of recommendation.
 - 3. Apply for financial aid through the FAFSA/CSS Profile and understand potential costs.
 - 4. Continue taking the SAT or ACT (through Nov for most students).
 - 5. Early application. First deadline is October 15.
- Winter**
- 1. Apply for colleges regular decision. November and December deadlines.
 - 2. Provide additional documentation (*if required*).
- Spring**
- 1. Navigate decisions, deferrals and waitlists.
 - 2. Evaluate your financial aid offer(s).
 - 3. Take AP tests in May.
 - 4. National Decision Day May 1.