

College Planning Timeline

Junior Year

September

- Brainstorm and evaluate your interests, goals, values, and abilities in regards to a college education. What do you see yourself doing as a job or career in the future?

October

- Take the PSAT/NMSQT
- Attend local college fairs in order to survey and get information on a variety of colleges.
- Attend college meetings at the high school when admissions counselors from various schools speak to groups of students about the schools.
- Attend an introductory meeting with your counselor to familiarize you with the college search and application process. At this meeting, you will review your transcript from your first two years of high school for accuracy.

November

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- Explore Naviance

December

- Analyze the results of your PSAT/NMSQT. Your counselor and the materials returned with your PSAT/NSQT scores will help you recognize your specific areas of strengths and weaknesses. An in-depth analysis of your strengths and weaknesses will give you target areas to study as you prepare for the SAT.
- Discuss with your counselor the upcoming SAT dates and begin to plan when you would like to take the test.

January

- Begin to develop a list of attributes you would like your prospective college to have. Consider such areas as: size, location, two-year/four-year, academic programs/majors.
- Prepare for Spring Testing.

February/March

- Meet with your school counselor to devise a list of schools that match the criteria you developed in January. Use Naviance to help you find colleges that match your interests.

April

- Visit college campuses for tours or open houses. In order to get a realistic picture and accurate representation of what a college is like on a daily basis, it is imperative to visit the school on a day when classes are in session.

May

- Take the SAT, ACT, or both

- Attend Spring College Fairs (New Jersey National College Fair).

June

- Take the SAT or ACT if you have not taken it already.
- Submit brag sheets to your counselor and ask teachers for letters of recommendation in order to prepare for applications in the fall.

July/August

- If your Spring SAT or ACT scores revealed any weaknesses, address those weaknesses by using preparatory materials like Khan Academy for upcoming testing. Additional tutoring over the summer may also help you improve upon your scores.
- Continue to visit colleges and contact coaches at colleges regarding possible sports participation.
- Register for any SAT or ACT tests you would like to take in the fall.
- Attend a college essay class that will assist you in preparing your essays for admissions.
- Attend Common App help session with school counselors to help understand the Common Application.

Senior Year

September

- After refining your list of possible schools through visits over the summer, meet with your counselor to verify and confirm the list of schools.
- Review your complete high school transcript with your counselor to check for accuracy of courses, grades, and rank.
- Meet with teachers to ask them for letters of recommendation and provide them with the pertinent accompanying information.
- Continue to visit prospective colleges or schedule a follow-up visit for colleges you are especially interested in.

October

- Begin to prepare information needed for college applications (extracurricular activities, honors and awards, etc.)
- If you are applying Early Decision or Early Action, apply now.
- Maintain your grades because most colleges request senior grades.
- Meet with college representatives when they come to give presentations at school.
- Submit your FAFSA forms at www.fafsa.ed.gov The FAFSA should be completed as early as possible. The earliest date the forms can be completed is October 1st.

November

- Continue filing applications to colleges.
- Personally thank teachers that have written you recommendations.

December

- Finish filing applications.
- Look for scholarships posted to google classroom and Guidance website.

February

- Monitor your college applications to be sure that all of your materials have been sent and received on time.
- Check email regularly for correspondence from colleges, scholarship programs, financial aid organizations.

March/April

- Continue monitoring the status of your applications.

May

- Decide what college you will attend. Send in the required tuition deposit by May 1st.
Notify the other colleges you applied to that you will not be attending school there in the fall.

June

- Arrange through your school counselor to send your final transcript to the college you have selected and will attend.