



Senior Planning Toolkit

Fond du Lac High School

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Stay Connected Using the Following:

[Fond du Lac High School Student Services Website](#)
[FHS Student Services FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

*Also please make sure that you have a correct email address in SKYWARD as we email often!

Meet Your Fond du Lac High School Student Services Department

Counselors

A-Dia: Mrs. Burns-Johnson
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Applying to College Basics

Admission Criteria

Some combination of the following (not all colleges use all of these):

- Rigor of courses (Honors, AP, dual enrollment)
- Class Rank
- Grade Point Average
- SAT/ACT Scores
- Recommendations
- Interviews Activities/Awards/Service
- Personal Essays

How to Decide Where to Apply

Start to make some decisions about which college programs, majors, or degrees interest you, and see which schools offer your chosen programs. Think about what type of setting you would like to be in (Public? Private? City? Rural? Large? Small?). Check to see if the schools offer the extracurricular activities or athletics that interest you. Also, consider the cost of attendance.

- 1. College Rep Visits** Check your email and our [Counseling website](#) for the schedule
- 2. Online College Searches** Website Suggestions:
 - 1) XELLO [Log in](#) to Xello.
 - 2) CollegeBoard BigFuture: bigfuture.collegeboard.org
 - 3) Princeton Review: princetonreview.com
- 3. Campus Visits** Take advantage of our college tour days.
[VIRTUAL TOURS AROUND THE US AVAILABLE HERE.](#)

College Applications - Start at the beginning of Senior Year or over the summer!

- 1. Create your List of colleges** that you plan on applying to and share with your parents/guardians as well as your counselor (and as many other people that are invested in your education).
- 2. Complete application online.** Check the college's website for information about how to apply: [Common App](#), [UW Application](#), or directly through the college's website. Make sure to complete all sections.
- 3. Counselor recommendations:** If a counselor recommendation is required, or if you would like us to have more information about you when filling out the School Report forms, please submit a [Request for Letter of Recommendation Form](#) to your counselor at least four weeks prior to your first deadline.

4. **Teacher recommendations:** If a teacher recommendation is required, ask an academic teacher at least two weeks prior to your deadline. Provide that teacher with your resume or any other forms they request. It may be helpful to think about which teachers will provide you with a GREAT recommendation. Please submit a [Request for Letter of Recommendation Form](#) to your teacher at least four weeks prior to your first deadline.
5. **Complete the [FAFSA](#)** in December
6. **Send your SAT/ACT scores.** If you have to send scores beyond the four free included when you take the tests, log in to your [CollegeBoard](#) and/or [ACT](#) accounts to send official scores electronically.
7. [Send your transcripts through XELLO](#)
8. Your application will not be processed until all components have been completed.
9. WAIVERS are available, see your counselor for more information.
10. [College Application Checklist](#)

Additional Application Considerations

1. Check to see if separate housing, financial aid, and/or scholarship applications are required.
2. You do not have to wait for SAT/ACT scores before sending your college applications. Put future test dates on your applications where applicable.
3. Pay attention to your deadlines!
 - a. Early Action: non-binding. You may apply earlier and learn your admissions decision earlier. Many Early Action deadlines are October 15, November 1, or November 15.
 - b. Early Decision: binding. This means that if you are accepted into the school, you are expected to commit to attend and withdraw any other college applications for other schools. Many Early Decision deadlines are October 15, November 1, or November 15.
 - c. Regular Decision: many regular decision deadlines are January 15, February 1, or February 15.
4. Most colleges will require a decision and a deposit by May 1 to confirm your decision to attend.

SAT & ACT TESTING



- Colleges typically accept either SAT or ACT scores and they will typically count your highest scores.
- The FHS High School Code is 500668.
- For college applications, you must send test scores directly to colleges from your [ACT](#) or [CollegeBoard \(SAT\)](#) accounts. Hold onto your score report from your 11th grade ACT (which will be mailed to your home) because you will need the access code to log in to your account and send scores. *Counselors cannot send scores for you.*
- Please see your counselor prior to registering for a test if you qualify for a fee waiver. FEE WAIVERS can provide free test taking prep.
- Test prep resources: please see the [Counseling website](#) for more information.
- See the [SAT Test Day Checklist](#) and [What to Expect](#) to be prepared on your SAT testing day.
- Visit the [ACT Test Day](#) website to be prepared for your ACT testing day.
- ****New**** beginning this fall, ACT will allow students to register for section retests after taking the full test once.



What is Financial Aid? Some Basic Information to Help Understand the Financial Aid Process

Financial Aid is any money a student receives to pay for college. This can include grants, scholarships, and loans. Any tuition, room and board, or other expenses not paid for through these methods become the student's responsibility.

Grants: Money that is given by the government to help those in need; this money is not repaid. Grants are completely need-based.

Loans: Money that is loaned by the government or private loan agencies to help pay for college tuition and expenses. This money **MUST** be repaid to the lending agency along with interest. Use loans only as a last resort and take out only what you need. Loans can be need-based or non-need based.

Scholarships: Money that is given to a student by a scholarship committee. This money does not have to be repaid. It is often awarded after an application is submitted, and sometimes after an interview. The student(s) chosen best exemplify the qualities that the committee is looking for. For many larger scholarships, academic excellence, leadership, community service, and personal character are considered. ***Check the Counseling website and your school emails OFTEN for regular notifications about available scholarships. These are the best ways to stay informed of available scholarships.**

Cost of Attendance (COA): Each college or university will provide an estimated COA on their website. This will give you an idea of how much it will cost to attend that school as a full time student. You will want to examine the estimated COA for each of the colleges you are considering attending.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): The first step in securing financial aid is completing the FAFSA. The FAFSA qualifies you for both federal and state grants and loans. The FAFSA can be completed online at www.fafsa.gov (be careful not to use any other fake "FAFSA" websites!). First, you'll have to apply for your FSA ID, which both you and your parents will need. Full instructions are on the FAFSA website. ***Completing the FAFSA is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. Although Counselors can help with providing the websites, Counselors cannot help students complete the FAFSA. Keep your eyes on your emails for FAFSA help sessions and Financial Aid information sessions. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION.](#)**

I'M ADMITTED...NOW WHAT?

1. **Do not rush your decision.**
2. **Review your options carefully.** Gather as much information as possible about your future options. Compare financial aid and scholarship offers, attend prospective student events at the colleges to which you were accepted, and talk with your family about your decision.
3. **Develop an action plan with your college admissions counselor.** Find out if you will be required to take any placement exams and when they will be offered. Find out when new student orientation is held and schedule your session. If you are offered conditional admission or are placed on a waitlist, make sure to follow up with the college admissions counselor to determine your next steps. Meet with your college representative when they are at FHS and help get all of your questions answered.
4. **Send AP scores and dual enrollment transcript.** Once you know which school you will be attending, make sure you have sent any AP scores or dual enrollment transcripts directly to the college in order to receive college credit. You can send your AP scores from your [CollegeBoard](#) account. If you have taken courses at dual credit courses through [UW-Oshkosh](#) or [MPTC](#) dual credit program, please visit those schools' websites to request your college transcript be sent to the college you will be attending.
5. **Have a strong finish to high school.** You need to finish your senior year strong! Reread your acceptance letter. It usually informs you that your admittance is conditional on the successful completion of your senior year. Colleges can and do rescind their offers of admission if a student's grades significantly decline or if a student becomes involved in a disciplinary situation after the offer of admission is made.
6. **Send final transcripts.** [Click here for more information.](#)

NOT ATTENDING A COLLEGE? OTHER OPTIONS

If needed, email your counselor for an appointment to discuss your plans for after high school. There are many other options open to students who decide not to attend a four year college. Here are some of the options available to you:

1. **Apprenticeship**- Going into an apprenticeship is a wonderful opportunity for students to gain training with the intent of going into the workforce. <https://dpi.wi.gov/te/resources/toolkit>
2. **Gap Year** - Taking a gap year is a student and family decision. Seek out opportunities that will benefit your future and make sure to have these discussions with your parents. CLICK here for more information: <https://gapyearassociation.org/index.php>
3. **Work Force/Employment** - Many students begin working during high school and choose to continue focusing on full time employment after graduation. Work with your counselor to develop your resume, employability skills, and post-secondary plans, and meet with the Career Specialist for additional resources and opportunities. PARTICIPATE in our FONDY Business Fair.
4. **Military** - If you think you may be interested in a military career, your first step should be to gather as much information as possible. Speak with a recruiter and schedule a time to meet if you are interested in learning more.
www.goarmy.com, www.airforce.com, www.marines.com, www.navy.com,
www.gocoastguard.com



Planning Timeline



Summer BEFORE 12th Grade

- Create a username and password called a [FSA ID](#) that you'll use to confirm your identity when accessing your government financial aid information and electronically signing your federal student aid documents. **Note: Both you and one parent must each create your own FSA ID; if your parent creates it for you, that will cause confusion later and will slow down the financial aid process.**
- Use the FAFSA4caster at financial aid estimator www.fafsa.gov to determine federal aid to which you may be entitled. To supplement government aid, be sure to apply for scholarships. Your goal is to minimize the amount of loan funds you borrow so you have less to pay back later.
- Narrow down the list of colleges you are considering attending. Visit the schools that interest you. Know the difference in non-profit and for-profit institutions and beware!
- Contact colleges and visit websites to request information and applications. Ask colleges about financial aid, admissions requirements, deadlines, and their scholarships.
- Decide whether you're going to apply for admission under a particular college's *early decision*, *early action* or *regular decision* program. Be sure to learn about the program deadlines and requirements.
- Research admissions requirements for your post high school interests
- Begin drafting application essays.
- Tour colleges.
- Create a resume.
- [Ask for letters of recommendations from those that will write you a GREAT one.](#)
- Update your resume for when meeting with college admissions representatives, applying for scholarships, and to give to anyone writing a letter of recommendation for you.
- Think about who to use for scholarship and college recommendation letters. If possible, let the person know in advance you'll be asking for these.
- Research scholarships on the [Counseling website](#) and make notes about when these will be due.
- Create and set up a system for keeping track of your scholarships applications and deadlines. Many students use Google Sheets or Google Docs. Essays can be tweaked and used multiple times for different applications!

Parents To Do

- Create your own [FSA ID](#) if you don't have one yet. (The FSA ID is a user name and password you'll use for such purposes as signing your child's FAFSA and applying for federal parent loans.) **Note: You and your child must each create your own ID. If your child creates this for you or if you create it for your child, it will cause confusion later and slow down the financial aid process.**
- Take a look at your financial situation and be sure you're on the right track to pay for college and/or support your post high school plans. If you haven't yet, attend a financial aid workshop.

- Talk to your child about what they would like to do after high school, share these conversations with others such as your child's school counselor.
- Talk to your child about colleges he/she is considering and help him/her clarify his/her goals and priorities.
- Take your child to visit college campuses, preferably when classes are in session. **Listen** and let your child do the talking.
- Help your child find scholarships he/she may qualify for and assist with organizing these into a system. Proofread but DO NOT write the essays for your child. Readers will know.
- Ask your employer about possible scholarships available for employees' children.
- Check out free Financial Aid and Scholarship information on our website:
[Financial Aid](#)
[Scholarship](#)
- **DO NOT feel that you need to pay for financial aid or scholarship information!!!**

SENIOR TO DO LIST

FALL:

- Meet with your high school counselor. Talk to trusted adults about your post high school plans.
- Keep track of application dates and deadlines, scholarships and housing.
- Submit applications and payments/waivers. (If you qualify for free and reduced lunch see your counselor for fee waivers on all applications)
- Send application materials to the admissions offices. Include transcripts, test scores, and letters of recommendation.
- Apply for FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at FAFSA.gov.
- Register and take the ACT and/or SAT again (early fall semester), if needed.
- Register and take the ACT and/or SAT again (early fall semester), if needed.
- Review your transcript to make sure you are on track for graduation and double check your requirements.
- Visit colleges!
- Ask your counselor, teachers, and employers for letters of recommendation early. Give at least four weeks before your deadlines.
- Keep working hard! You are in the home stretch, but senior year grades, including second semester, can affect many things (scholarships, acceptances, etc.).
- Don't slack off in your course load. Colleges will be looking at your senior schedule and want to see that you are still challenging yourself.
- Continue with extracurriculars. Remember that it is important to choose something and stick with it.
- If you plan to play sports in college at the Division 1 or 2 level, make sure to sign up for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#), speak with your School Counselor, and submit any needed forms.
- Attend the college fair and meet with college admissions as they visit the high school.
- To request transcripts; [click here for more information](#).

WINTER:

- Compare financials at each college or university with your Financial Aid packages.
- Decide which college or university you will attend next fall.
- If required, pay your enrollment deposit.
- Complete your housing application.

- Watch your email for campus updates.
- Make housing arrangements.
- Register for college placement tests.

SPRING:

- Admissions will be looking at grades for your last semester, too. Finish strong!
- Take placement tests.
- Review financial aid offer(s) from your future campus.
- Send final grades from your senior year to the campus you'll be attending.
- Visit the college fair and ask questions to your rep about things such as housing, meal plans, course schedules, registration days, etc.
- Visit the business Fondy Fair and make connections with business owners
- Complete the [FAFSA](#) by the March deadline if you have not already done so.
- Visit colleges one more time before you commit.
- Keep working hard in class - colleges want to see seniors maintain their grades until graduation.
- Compare financial aid packages from different schools.
- Decide which college to attend, and notify the school of your decision by May 1.
- Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- Notify schools that you will not attend of your decision.
- Continue to look for scholarship opportunities.
- Keep track of important financial aid and scholarship deadlines.
- Sign and send in a promissory note if you are borrowing money.
- Notify your college about any outside scholarships you received.
- Enjoy the end of the year and graduation!

SUMMER:

- Sign up for student orientation at your future campus.
- Get prepped for freshman year!

How to get a GREAT Letter of Recommendation?

When to ask:

Ask the recommender 4-5 weeks ahead of when you need your letter. The earlier you ask the better; some teachers prefer to write the letters during the summer. Make sure you provide the date to your recommender; follow up with your recommender a week before they are due.

*If you are applying to college under an early decision or early action plan, be sure to think ahead of time and ask for recommendations during the summer of going into your Senior year.

*College bound Seniors you should be applying for scholarships and will all need letter of recommendations; go check out the scholarships page.

*Seniors going into the workforce, get those letters of recommendations now!



How to help your recommender write:

Provide them with positive detailed information using an activities list, resume, and /or [brag sheet](#). Include them in conversations about your future planning, what you have done to build your resume, how your interests relate to your goals, etc.

Thank your recommender:

Take the time to thank your recommender, great letters take time! Write them a thank you, they will appreciate it.

Going to a UW System School:

HOW TO SUBMIT LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

From UW HELP

Letters of recommendation from teachers, counselors, and other educators are a great way to strengthen your students' college applications. UW-Madison requires at least one. Other UW campuses typically don't require them, but many applicants use them to demonstrate that they're ready to succeed in college.

STEPS FOR SUBMITTING LETTERS TO UW-MADISON:

1. Inform your students to ask each letter writer to use [UW-Madison's letters of recommendation website](#) to submit letters.
2. Your students should provide the writer with any information he or she might need, such as details about obstacles they've faced or the goals they have achieved.

STEPS FOR SUBMITTING LETTERS TO CAMPUSES OTHER THAN UW-MADISON:

1. Your students should provide the writer with any information he or she might need, such as details about obstacles they've faced or the goals they have achieved.

2. The student should ask the writer to submit the form to each UW campus they're considering. The way the writer should do this depends on his or her job:
 - Teachers and school counselors should submit the completed form (see below) with the students' paper or electronic transcripts. Teachers may ask students to deliver these forms to a counselor for submission. Counselors can attach the forms directly to a student's transcripts.
 - Other types of writers, such as employers, may mail or email the form to the admissions office of each UW campus that the student is interested in. Mailing addresses and email addresses are listed on the first page of the form.

UW Recommender Form - Use the Recommendation for Undergraduate Admission Form

SILVER CORD PROGRAM-

don't forget to earn that graduation cord

WHAT IS THE SILVER CORD SERVICE PROGRAM AT FHS?

- Students who have completed 100 hours will receive one-half credit towards graduation (1x).
- Students who completed 120 hours will receive a youth service honor cord at graduation and one-half credit towards graduation.
- Students who completed 160 hours will receive a youth service high honor cord at graduation and one-half credit towards graduation.

The vision of the Fond du Lac School District Counseling Program is for every student to acquire the academic, career, and personal/social skills to achieve their fullest potential and make a positive difference in their home, workplace and global community. This statement summarizes the intent of the program.

***applications can be picked up from Student Services**



SCHOLARSHIPS:

APPLYING TO SCHOLARSHIPS

REMINDER THAT THE FHS FUNDS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION along with many other scholarships can be found at this [website](#).

We are constantly updating this as we receive more scholarships. Some scholarships deadlines have already passed.

APPLY APPLY APPLY!



The Fond du Lac Foundation offers many wonderful scholarship opportunities as well:

<http://www.fdlareafoundation.com/scholarshipinformation.html>

APPLY APPLY APPLY!

Please check the college that you plan on attending for scholarships, often they will have their own to offer. If you are planning on attending a school within the UW system please use the following link to check their scholarship opportunities:

<https://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/counselors/navigating-financial-aid/uw-system-scholarship-links/>

APPLY APPLY APPLY!

[Going to a TECHNICAL COLLEGE click here and fill out this application.](#)

Also do not forget about FAFSA!

<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about>