

Action Plan: High School Seniors

Fall

Pulling Your Applications Together

1. Narrow your list of colleges to between 5 and 10.
2. Get an application and financial aid info from each college.
3. Visit as many as possible.
4. Make a master calendar and note:
 - Test dates, fees, and deadlines
 - College application due dates
 - Required financial aid applications and their deadlines
 - Recommendations, transcripts, and other necessary materials
5. Ask for recommendations. Give each person your resume, a stamped, addressed envelope, and any required forms.
6. Write application essays and ask teachers, parents, and friends to read first drafts.
7. Apply early, (by November 1) to the college of your choice. For early admissions, colleges may require test scores and applications in early November.
8. Send your SAT® scores to colleges, (most 2-year colleges do not require you to submit SAT scores.)
9. Ask if your colleges offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility
10. Get Financial Aid Info
11. Attend financial aid info events in your area.
12. Use Scholarship Search at collegeboard.com, review scholarship books, and ask your counselor about local and state funding sources.

Winter

Application Details

1. Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.
2. Have your high school send your transcript to colleges.
3. Contact colleges to make sure they have received all application materials.
4. You and your family should save this year's pay stubs to estimate income on aid forms that you will file early next year.
5. Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Men 18 or older must register for the selective service to receive federal financial aid.

6. Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, apply by the priority date. Keep copies of everything you send.

Spring

When the Letters Start Rolling In

1. You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
2. Compare financial aid awards from different colleges. Questions? Talk to financial aid officers. Not enough aid? Ask if other financing plans are available.
3. If you have not already, visit your final college before accepting.
4. By May 1: Making Your Final Choice
5. You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Send a deposit to the college you choose.
6. Wait-listed? If you will enroll if accepted, tell the admissions director your intent and ask how to strengthen your application.

Summer

Next Steps

1. Ask your high school to send a final transcript to your college.
2. Start preparing for the year ahead.