

COLLEGE TIMELINE

Freshmen Year

September

•To get off on the right foot, you should meet with the guidance counselor, who can help you determine your college entrance path.

October

•Attend college fairs in the area. Visit www.nacacnet.org for dates and locations. You can also check with the guidance counseling office for local or regional college fairs.

November

•Research pre-college programs or classes. Many colleges and community colleges offer high school students opportunities to take college classes as early as freshman year through dual enrollment programs.

December/January

•Stay on the right track by seeking help if your first semester report card is not up to expectations.

February/March

•Start discussing possible college majors with your counselor. Explore different careers and opportunities, such as unpaid or paid internships, classes or informal job shadowing with an adult family member or friend.

April

•Start exploring financial aid options for college—it's never too early!

SOPHOMORE YEAR

September/October

•Register for PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), a practice SAT for sophomores and juniors.

•Attend any college fairs in the area. Meet with representatives that come to your school.

•Start researching scholarships, both online and through the guidance counseling office.

November

•Research pre-college programs in areas of interest to you, including dual-enrollment programs at area colleges and community colleges.

December/January

•Continue to explore financial aid options and be aware of FAFSA deadlines.

•Evaluate your academic progress with your guidance counselor.

February/March/April

•Investigate summer tutoring programs to help you overcome school problems, raise grades or even enrich your studies.

•Talk with the high school Advanced Placement (AP) coordinator to explore opportunity for AP classes the next two years.

•Consider visiting colleges over spring break.

May

•Begin exploring summer SAT/ACT/PSAT preparatory programs.

JUNIOR YEAR

August – June

Plan which test dates you will take the SAT or ACT

September

•Meet with your guidance counselor to ensure you are taking the right courses and aware of all college-related deadlines including registration for the PSAT and financial aid paperwork.

October

•Attend fall college fairs at school or in the area.

•You should develop an "A" list and "B" list for colleges of interest. Consider visiting colleges over fall or holiday break. Call the admissions office to ask about tours.

•Take PSAT/NMSQT at school.

November

•Contact the financial aid offices at colleges of interest to begin to explore your family's financial aid options: loans, grants, scholarships and work-study programs.

February

•Explore scholarships with the help of the guidance counselor to ensure you all application deadlines.

March/April

•Schedule and visit colleges. Contact schools for available tour dates.

•Take SAT or ACT test
•Prep for AP finals in May.

May

•Talk with your guidance counselor to learn more about SAT Subject Tests and whether the colleges in which you are interested require or recommend them.

•Schedule visits to colleges this summer.

•Consider registering you for a summer SAT or ACT exam preparation program to help raise your SAT or ACT score.

•Request letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches and others, especially if applying to early decision/early action programs.

June-August

•Retake SAT or ACT as needed

SENIOR YEAR

August-December

Plan which test dates you will continue to take the SAT or ACT

September

•If applying to early decision or early action programs with October or November deadlines, begin the college application process, including application essays.

October

•If needed, you should retake the ACT or SAT to improve your score.

October-November

Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Learn more and see deadlines at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

November

•Pay attention to application deadlines. Many colleges require freshman applicants to complete and turn in all paperwork as early as December 31.

February

•Register for AP exams in May.

January-February

•Receive your Student Aid Report (SAR), 4-6 weeks after FAFSA submission. Schools listed on the FAFSA will also receive a copy and will use that to develop your financial aid package of scholarships, grants, loans and work-study.

•Keep an eye out for college acceptance letters. Colleges should notify accepted students by April 1. Respond as soon as possible and be aware of enrollment deadlines.

May

•Take AP Finals

July/August – Pack for college!

