**Senior Checklist**

**August / September**

* Register for the SAT and/or ACT if you didn’t take it as a junior, or if you aren’t satisfied with your score and want to take it again.
  + This will be your last opportunity to take the SAT and ACT before November Early Action and Early Decisions deadlines.
* Take a look at some college applications and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.
* Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.
  + If you’re ahead of schedule, consider taking courses at a local university or community college to get a jumpstart on college credit.
* Take every opportunity to get to know colleges. Meet with college representatives who visit your high schools during the fall, attend local college fairs, visit campuses (if possible).
  + Ask your counselor if they know of special campus visitation programs.
* Narrow down your list of colleges and begin to consider “safety,” “match,” and “reach” schools.
* Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school.
  + Find out if you qualify for any scholarships at these schools.
  + Create a checklist and calendar to chart:
    - Standardized test dates
    - Registration deadlines and fees
    - College application due dates
    - Financial aid application forms and deadlines
    - Other materials you’ll need for college applications - recommendations, transcripts, essays, etc
    - Your high school’s application processing deadlines
  + Some schools require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Ask the colleges to which you are applying for their deadlines.
    - Register as early as September.

**October**

* Some colleges will have deadlines as early as this month. These would include Rolling Admission, Early Decision, and Early Action deadlines.
* It is time to file the FAFSA. State funded grant programs have limited funds, so the earlier you apply, the better your chances of getting the grant money. And the sooner you complete it, the sooner you will have an idea of your financial aid options.
  + Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed or watch your email if you filed electronically.
* Ask your counselor to help you determine if you are eligible for an application fee waiver.
* Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
* Request letters of recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers.
  + Follow the process required by your high school or provide a stamped, addressed envelope, the appropriate college forms, and an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities to each person writing you a recommendation.
* Research possibilities of scholarships.
  + Ask your counselor, colleges, and religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities.
  + There are also some good scholarship websites, including Fastweb (www.fastweb.com) and The College Board (http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search).
  + You should never pay for scholarship information.

**November**

* Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month.
  + Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
* Every college will require a copy of your transcript from your high school. Follow your school’s procedure for sending transcripts.
* Make sure testing companies (ACT or SAT) have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.
* The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) will be available this month, but cannot be completed before Oct. 1. Visit www.fafsa.gov to complete this application.

**December**

* Begin to organize regular decision applications and financial aid forms, which will be due in January and/or February.

**January**

* Many popular and selective colleges will have application deadlines as early as Jan. 1. Others have deadlines later in January and February. Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
* If necessary, register for the February ACT (some colleges will be able consider it).
* Ask your counseling office in January to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied.
  + At the end of the school year, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.

**February/March/April**

* Don’t slack in the classroom while most of your applications are complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions. The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No senioritis!
* Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive.
  + Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven’t already.

**May**

* May 1 is the date when the college you plan to attend may require a commitment and deposit.
  + When you have made your college decision, notify your counselor and the colleges.
  + Send in your deposit by the postmark date of May 1.
  + If you have been offered financial aid, decide which offer to accept and follow the instructions given.
  + Also notify schools you won’t attend of your decision.
* Make sure you have requested that your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.
* If you are “waitlisted” by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.

**Summer**

* Enjoy your summer. It’s been a long journey through high school and to college.
* Summer jobs can help pay some of your college expenses and give you great career preparation.
* Make a list of what you will need to take with you for your dorm room.
  + The suggested list of items, room, and furniture dimensions and many other questions can usually be answered by visiting your college’s website and searching under “Housing” or “Residence Life” for further information.
* You will most likely get a roommate assignment from your college. Call, write, or email to get acquainted in advance. In your conversations and communication, you should be able to figure out who will bring what for your room.
* Some colleges will offer a summer orientation/registration. Make sure to attend to meet fellow students and other important people on campus and to familiarize yourself with your new school.
  + This is often the time you sign up for your fall courses.