

Checklist for College Planning

WHEN TO BEGIN	WHAT TO DO	HOW TO DO IT
<i>Freshmen and sophomore years</i>	Learn about college requirements and continue exploring careers. Which high school courses satisfy college requirements? Have you taken ACT's tenth grade test, PLAN? Are you involved in extracurricular activities?	Create a four-year high school curriculum plan with your enrollment advisor. Review your PLAN test results. Try job shadowing. Get involved at school and in your community.
<i>September-March of junior year</i>	Think about your reasons for going to college. What are your goals? What learning opportunities are most important? Do your college plans include career plans?	Talk with your parents, counselors, teachers, and friends. Investigate possible career options and degree level required.
<i>January-March of junior year</i>	Identify important factors in choosing a college. Two-year or four-year? Location? Cost? Kind of atmosphere? Variety of study programs available? Entrance test required?	Focus on your goals and career interests. Consult college guidebooks. Explore colleges on the Internet. Prepare for your college admission test.
<i>March-August of junior year</i>	List colleges you are considering and collect information. Have you included all possible choices? What information do you need? How can you get it?	Attend college fairs and college night programs. Prepare for and visit colleges. Take appropriate college admission tests.
<i>August-December of senior year</i>	Compare the colleges on your list. Have you weighed the pros and cons carefully? Which college will meet your needs?	Continue visiting colleges. Organize information into detailed useful comparisons.
<i>September-December of senior year</i>	Apply for admission to your "choice" colleges. Do you have all the necessary forms? Are you sure of the application deadlines?	Obtain application forms. Observe deadlines. Submit transcripts and test scores (retest if necessary).
<i>January-February of senior year</i>	Apply for financial aid. Have you investigated all possible resources of aid? When should you apply?	Consult financial aid offices. Secure forms and note deadlines. Complete the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1st.
<i>November-May of senior year</i>	Make some final decisions. What additional preparation might be helpful? Should you consider summer school? Do you feel comfortable with your final choice?	Confer with parents and counselors. Confirm your decision, and decline other admission offers. Show initiative.