



Senior (12th Grade) Guidance Timeline

Senior year is often an extremely busy time with schoolwork, activities, and special events. Be sure to stay on track with the college admissions process. Get organized, be aware of deadlines, and don't procrastinate. Here is a helpful list of things to think about as you go through your year!

Fall

Continue to visit schools.

Fall is a great time to look at colleges because classes are in session, and you are better able to meet and talk with students and professors. You may even be able to sit in on a class or two.

Finalize your college list.

Use the information you've gathered from visits, interviews, and your own research to decide which schools you will apply. It's okay to apply to colleges that you think will be more difficult to get into. But it's also important to put a few safety schools (where you're sure you'll get in) on your list. Talk to counselors, teachers, and parents about your final choices. Stay on track with your grades and cocurricular activities.

Colleges will look at what you've done in your senior year; so, stay focused on doing well in your classes and maintaining a commitment to other activities at the same time.

Take standardized tests.

Register for and take the ACT as soon as possible, if you haven't yet taken it. Be sure you have requested (either by mail or online) that your test scores be sent to the colleges of your choice.

Keep track of deadlines.

You'll be filling out lots of forms this year. It's important to know what form is due when and where. Make a calendar showing the application deadlines for admission, financial aid, and scholarships.

Ask for letters of recommendation.

Give requests for recommendation letters to the teachers and others you have chosen. Discuss your goals and ambitions with them so they'll be more prepared to write about you. Give teachers and others ample time to write recommendations, don't tell them you need it by tomorrow! A great idea is a Brag Sheet that helps share what you have done.

Here is a sample: [Sample Brag Sheet Template](#)

Communicate with the Guidance Department

Your counselor can help you stay on track with admissions requirements. Please allow a week to process the requests, keep this in mind when looking at application deadlines.

Complete applications/Send Transcripts

Before submitting your application online, proofread and check carefully for accuracy. The Guidance office will complete the Counselor Recommendation Form and electronically send it along with unofficial test scores, recommendation letters, transcripts, essays and any other necessary materials. Make sure each college received ALL your application materials. Transcripts should be sent via [Parchment](#).

Submit FAFSA and financial aid forms.

Request a PIN (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>) fill out the FAFSA online.. No matter what your family's income level is, the FAFSA is your main priority for financial aid purposes because it will determine how much you're expected to pay. Submit the information online as soon as possible. FAFSA opens on October 1st. . Later, review your Student Aid Report (SAR) from the U.S. Department of Education to see if corrections are necessary.

Continue your scholarship search.

Apply for scholarships with deadlines in mind, and keep searching for more scholarship and grant opportunities. .Ask colleges about what scholarships for which you may qualify. The downtime after applications have been sent is a great time to focus on financial aid. Remember scholarships are not just going to show up in your mailbox, you have to do a little research and leg work!

Winter

Act on the results of early decision applications.

If you applied for early decision, you'll soon find out if you were accepted. If you get in, you likely have to withdraw your applications from other schools. If not, keep your other applications out there, and focus on those colleges.

Follow up on your applications.

Verify with your counselor that all forms are in order and have been sent out to colleges. Check with the schools to make sure they have received all your information, including test scores, transcripts, and recommendations.

Send mid-year grade reports.

Some schools will ask for transcripts after Semester 1, and then again after Semester 2. Remember that the schools will continue to keep track of your grades; so, it's important to keep working hard throughout your senior year. "Senior-itis" may lead to your admission being canceled.

Spring

Watch your mail/email for notification from colleges.

If you applied under the regular application process, you should receive an admissions decision within 2-4 weeks. Notifications of financial aid awards should arrive by the end of April. Check out your options if you're put on a waitlist.

Being put on a waitlist is not a rejection. Keep watching your mail.

You should receive a decision by May. In the meantime, keep your options open in case you don't get in. Check out schools that have late or rolling application deadlines.

Compare financial aid packages.

Make sure to consider each financial aid award carefully. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact the financial aid office of the college to get more information. Financial aid is a key factor in deciding where you will attend and includes scholarships and grants, work-study, and loans (borrow as little as possible).

Prepare for any last standardized tests.

You may be taking AP or CLEP tests to earn some college credit as the school year winds down.

Make your final college decision.

Notify all schools of your intent by May 1. If you're not sure which offer to accept, make one more campus visit to the schools you're considering. Make sure to send your deposit to your chosen school and request your final transcript from the guidance counselor.

Follow up on financial aid information.

Make sure you have received a FAFSA acknowledgement. If you were offered a Pell Grant, you will receive a Student Aid Report statement. Review this notice, make a copy for your records, and send the original to the college you plan to attend. If necessary, apply for loans.

Complete enrollment paperwork for the college you will attend.

Once you accept an offer, you should receive information from the college about course scheduling, orientation sessions, housing arrangements, and other necessary forms. Be sure to complete all required paperwork by the appropriate deadlines.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me as we go through the year!
Remember that Senior Pictures are due by the end of December.