

Pre-College Calendar and Checklist

SENIOR

AUGUST

- Enroll in high school classes that will make you eligible for admission to colleges you are considering
- Review your career plans and decide which type of school is right for you
- Narrow your college list to 3-5 schools
- Request college catalogs and admissions information or go online and download
- Make plans to visit college campuses
- Go to <http://actstudent.org/regist/dates.html> for ACT test dates, or for SAT, go to <http://sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-dates> Register if you need to for your college choices
- Go to www.fastweb.com or www.scholarships.com to review scholarships available to you
- Research taking College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams

SEPTEMBER

- Make a list of test names, dates, fees, registration deadlines, and college admission deadlines
- Remember that you must take the ACT or SAT at least 6 weeks before the deadline for scores to be submitted to colleges
- Begin asking school staff, employers, community members for letters of recommendation to include with your admissions and/or scholarship applications. Provide them with a resume of accomplishments and activities you've been involved in.
- Find out which financial aid and scholarship applications your college choices require and when the forms are due. Submit them as early as possible

OCTOBER

- Take the ACT or SAT exam if necessary
- Work on admissions applications essays
- Visit your top school choices. Interview some students, faculty, and staff
- Attend special programs such as college fairs and activities at your top school choices, if able
- Begin preparing your college applications. Verify with the colleges when materials must be postmarked or submitted online

NOVEMBER

- Take the ACT or SAT exam if necessary.
- Obtain financial aid applications from your college choices. Read carefully to determine what information is required and when the applications are due
- Begin preparing your college applications. Check with the colleges to find out when materials must be postmarked or submitted online

DECEMBER

- Request a PIN for applying for federal aid online for both you and a parent/guardian by going to www.pin.ed.gov
- Print the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Worksheet available at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Begin filling out with your parents help. This will help when you fill out the online application in January. **DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR FAFSA BEFORE JANUARY 2nd**
- **PARENTS:** Save your year-end payroll stub if it shows your earnings for the year. You may need it for financial aid eligibility reviews by schools

JANUARY

- Complete and submit your FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Try to submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1st as possible. Use previous year's taxes to estimate parent's income. It's better to estimate and be early than exact and be late
- **PARENTS:** It's helpful to get your income tax returns prepared early – schools may request them to prove eligibility for financial aid
- Request copies of your high school mid-year transcript and send them to schools to which you have applied
- Verify college admission deadlines. Contact admissions to confirm they have received all required documentation, etc.
- Contact each financial aid office. Make certain your application is complete. Find out what else you need to establish and maintain your eligibility for financial aid
- **Keep copies of all forms you submit to the admissions & financial aid office**
- Make a list of registration deadlines

FEBRUARY

- Submit your FAFSA if you have not already done so
- Remember that you must take the ACT or SAT at least 6 weeks before the deadline for scores to be submitted to colleges
- Research taking College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams
- Rank your finalized list of colleges

MARCH

- **SUBMIT YOUR FAFSA IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO.** If you have submitted your FAFSA, you should receive information about how to access your Student Aid Report (SAR) via email within 5-7 days or receive a paper version of your SAR within 3-4 weeks. You can also check the status of your FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov or by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243

APRIL

- Watch your mail and your college email account for college acceptance and financial aid award notifications. Compare the financial aid awards you receive and the costs of the offering school
- Keep up your grades so that you maintain academic standing for the school(s) you are seeking entrance
- Check with the college you've chosen about the details of accepting or declining your financial aid
- Make your final decision and send a deposit by the deadline
- Write "Thanks, but no thanks" letters to the schools whose acceptance you choose to decline.
- If you are on a waiting list, write "pleading letter" and send any supporting material you can. Ask teachers and coaches to help.
- Watch for important deadlines at your chosen college (housing, financial aid, etc.)

MAY

- Stay on top of grades for final exams
- Send final documentation (ie. Transcripts, etc) to the school you plan to attend or ask personnel that stay at your high school during the summer if they will
- Finalize summer school or summer job plans

TOP TIPS

- Take the ACT or SAT... and at least 2, if not 3 times. Scores generally improve 1-3 points overall when retaking
- Don't pick a college based only on what you hear! Do your research!!
- If meeting with school officials, dress, behave, and prepare yourself and your paperwork in a professional manner
- Apply to at least 3 schools: Pie in the Sky School, 2nd Choice School, and a Back-up School just in case
- If the schools to which you are applying require additional application forms for financial aid, or request copies of your family's income tax returns for verification, **submit them immediately**
- Establish a professional e-mail address to communicate with college officials. Sweetchick@yahoo.com or brawnieboy@hotmail.com leaves a lasting impression – not in your favor