



SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

Senior year is the gateway to his/her adult life, and the choices s/he makes and actions s/he takes this year will greatly impact his/her future. Your help during this process is crucial! The steps below outline some ways in which you can help your child make the wisest choices possible and provide him/her with the right support during the college application process. Thank you for your participation!

SEPTEMBER

College Lists

Sit down with your child to research and create a list of colleges for application. Your local library can provide useful tools, such as college resource books and the internet, to facilitate the process.

- Make sure that your child's list includes:
- At least one state college or university
- At least one or two "safety" schools
At least one or two "reach" schools
- Register for the SAT/ and ACT by visiting www.collegeboard.com and www.act.org

OCTOBER

College Application Forms

- Make sure that your child has completed application forms for each of the colleges on his/her list.
- Check each application form to make sure that the information is complete and accurate.
- Create a list of application deadlines for each school.
- Please note that application fee waivers are available online and at the counseling office.

NOVEMBER

Personal Statement

- Make sure that your child has completed his/her personal statement
- Check with your child to make sure that s/he is aware of the standardized test requirements for each school to which s/he's applying.
- Please note that fee waivers for standardized tests are available.

Letters of Recommendation

- Students must submit a resume to teachers
- Apply for FAFSA pin at www.pin.ed.gov . The student and parent must have a pin. You will need your social security number available. This pin is your electronic signature. Do not misplace it!!!!
- Private College Application Packets
- Make sure that your child submits his/her private college application packets on time.
- Pay attention to deadlines!
- Before s/he sends the application packets, check to see whether all of the necessary components are listed below, are included in the packets:



- College application form
- Personal statement
- Transcript
- Letter(s) of recommendation
- Any additional information or documents requested by a specific school
- Congratulate your child and celebrate!!! With your help, s/he has completed some major steps beginning in December 1.

JANUARY

Income Tax Information

Complete your income tax return information as soon as possible after January 1. While you may not usually complete your taxes at this time of year, doing so can help you receive more money! Your current tax return information is requested when your child applies for financial aid to pay for college. And, the earlier you apply for financial aid, the more money available to help you pay for tuition. You should have your 2014 income tax ready and available because we will be completing the FAFSA after winter break.

Financial Aid

Complete your section of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)—the parent section. Completing the FAFSA is the first—and most important—step towards receiving financial aid to pay for college. The federal government determines the amount of money your family is able to contribute towards your child's college tuition, based on the information you provide on the FAFSA. Submitting the FAFSA is free and the earlier you submit it (after January 1, 2009), the more money available to help pay for college. You and your child are encouraged to complete the FAFSA online because you will receive results faster and it is often a more accurate approach to completing the FAFSA than using the paper version of the form. To complete your section of the FAFSA, you will need:

- Your Social Security Number
- Your Alien Registration Card (if applicable)
- A current bank statement
- Your most current income tax return information, W-2 forms, and 1099 folios
- Mortgage information (if applicable)
- Records of untaxed income, like Social Security, welfare, disability, and veterans' Benefits
- Records that describe any unusual family circumstances (e.g. medical and dental bills not by health insurance, loss of employment, etc.)
- Business and farm records (if applicable)
- To complete the parent section of the FAFSA, you will need your most current tax
- Make a copy for your records.
- Submit the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1 and no later than February 15. Deadline to receive aid in the state of Maryland is March 1st!

For additional information on completing the parent section of the FAFSA, call the U.S. Department of Education at (800) 4-FED-AID, and/or access online help at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.



FEBRUARY

Addressing Senioritis

- Congratulations! Your child is a second-semester senior and you have helped him/her Successfully navigate the hardest parts of the college application process!
- Remember though: It's not over yet! Colleges pay close attention to a candidate's second Semester grades—college acceptance can even be revoked if an already-admitted student
- Profiles poorly—so make sure that your child remains diligent about his/her grades. Acknowledge your child's hard work up to this point, but prompt him/her to continue to excel.
- Don't allow him/her to jeopardize his/her future by slacking off. Just as a sprinter doesn't slowdown before crossing the finish line, don't allow your child to do so either.

Scholarship Searches

- There are several thousand scholarships available each year: some are given to students who exhibit certain traits, while others are given to students who belong to certain groups, are of a certain heritage, live in a particular city or neighborhood, or belong to a certain faith. Your child is likely to find at least one scholarship that matches his/her qualifications.
- Make sure that s/he has researched and applied for at least two scholarships.
- Pay attention to deadlines and make sure that your child submits his/her scholarship applications on time.
- For more information on searching for scholarships, checkout www.fastweb.com, www.uncf.org (United Negro College Fund) <http://www.hsf.net/> (National Hispanic Fund)

MARCH

Review the SAR with your child to make sure that you reported accurate information and that the Department of Education did not make mistakes in calculating your EFC. Check for accuracy around your:

- Family income figures
- Student income figures
- Student and family tax contribution
- Number of immediate family members currently enrolled in college
- Family and student savings- and interest-earned figures
- Be sure to look at the third page of the SAR for your next steps, tax filing information, and additional sources for help.
- If there is no BFC on your SAR, the Department of Education will instruct you to provide more information.
- If you notice a mistake in the figures reported on your SAR, contact the Department of Education as soon as possible at (800) 433-3143.

APRIL



Financial Aid Offers

- Determine a bottom-line financial contribution—the absolute largest amount of money per school year that your family is able to contribute to your child's college tuition.
- Review all of your child's financial aid offers with him/her. Make sure that all of the information is accurate.
- Review and choose loans carefully. Some have lower interest rates and are subsidized, meaning that they accrue interest only after your child has graduated from college. If your family is not able to contribute enough money to cover the whole EFC or if certain colleges require you to pay more than your bottom line, you and/or your child may rely on loans and scholarships to cover the gaps, or your child may need to consider enrolling elsewhere.
- Make sure you have applied for housing and completed and sent all paperwork to the University

MAY

College Preparation Congratulations!!! Your child will be attending college!!!

- Make sure student has submitted his/her letter of intent to the college he/she will be attending in the fall.
- Help him/her create a budget for the upcoming school year so that s/he can successfully manage His/her money. Help your child collect and pack the items that s/he will need for college.
- Reflect on and celebrate your child's accomplishments!
- Acknowledge yourself for having successfully helped your child navigate the college application process!