

## ELEVENTH GRADE COLLEGE TIMELINE/CHECKLIST

- Meet with your counselor to make sure you are on track** with your prerequisite courses and to make sure you're on track for graduation. When you pick your classes, don't load up on easy electives. Colleges do consider your junior year courses and grades, so stick with a schedule that challenges you. Determine if you are eligible to take advanced courses like AP or Dual Credit courses.
- Take the PSAT.** If you did not take the PSAT in the tenth grade, you should be prepared to take the exam when it is offered in October of your junior year. This will position you to take the SAT in March of the following year while the PSAT is still fresh in your mind.
- Create a plan for taking the SAT or the ACT.** Talk to your guidance counselor or your College and Career Counselor about your plan for taking these exams. They will help you organize a testing plan. It is important to give yourself plenty of time to prepare. Plan to register to for the exam and add the registration and testing dates to your calendar. Note: Some colleges are "test optional" and do not require the SAT or ACT. Others may require one over the other.
- Focus on your grades.** Maintaining your grades during your junior year is important! Colleges put a lot of weight on your academic rigor and performance this year so make sure you're challenging yourself academically. Remember, if you did not perform well the first two years, you can begin to show an upward trend in your grades which can show admissions officer that you are a hard-working and resilient.
- Meet with the College and Career Counselor to continue exploring your education and career options.** Now is the time to think more closely about what you want to do. Do you want to go to college? Do you want to pursue a two-year, four-year, or a vocational degree? Or are you interested joining the military? Your College and Career Counselor can conduct assessments and tests that will help you best determine what the best plan is for your desired path.
- Narrow down your college choice even more:** Continue gathering information about colleges based on your unique needs. Complete **Best Fit Survey** with your College and Career Counselor to help determine factors are most important to you. It is important that you have all the information you need about the colleges you are interested in. Then you can begin comparing and ranking the schools by the factors that are most important to you using the **College Comparison Worksheet**. See your College and Career Counselor to receive this form. Create a list of dream, reach, and safety schools.
- Are you an athlete? If so, make sure you're meeting any eligibility requirements.** If you want to play Division I or II sports in college, start the certification process and check with your counselor to make sure you're taking a core curriculum that meets [NCAA requirements](#). Non-core classes or those taught below the grade level are examples of classes that do not meet eligibility requirements.
- Stay involved with extracurricular activities.** Colleges want to see well-rounded students who have been consistently involved in and have taken leadership roles in extracurricular activities. It is more important to colleges that you commit to the same or similar groups than it is for you to be involved in a bunch of one time volunteer opportunities. Colleges want to see what you are passionate about, what interests you.

- Update your college planning file.** Organize your college information. Make sure you have reviewed copies of your grade reports from each year. Add to your list of potential recommenders and begin gathering their contact information. Organize the materials you received from each school and add any awards, honors or certificates that you may want to include in your college application.
- Explore financial aid.** There is so much information to be learned about Financial Aid and now is the time to begin that process. Go over your or your family's financial resources and gather information about financial aid from the schools you're interested in. Plan to attend financial aid workshops or information sessions at the high school or at a local college.
- Get a summer job.** The type of work you do in the summer may vary. Some students are more focused on making money to help support their college or career goals and may choose to work a job based solely on making money over the summer. Others may choose to use the summer to explore career interests and will choose to work in a place that may not pay as much (or in some cases nothing at all), but will provide them with an insight to that area of work. If you have time, ask about job-shadowing or interning in the summer.
- Begin researching potential scholarships** that are offered by community organizations and businesses. This takes time but can be rewarding if you stick to it. Right now you should be creating a list of scholarships, their requirements and their deadline dates so you can apply as early as possible in your senior year. Note: Your parent's place of employment is often a great and untapped source for scholarships.
- Identify your recommendation writers.** Finalize your list of recommenders and reach out to them. It is important to reach out to them as early as possible as many of them will be writing letters for other students and you want to be respectful of their time. You should ask teachers, counselors and coaches as well as bosses, for work or volunteer experiences. The letters should come from people who know you well and who can provide specific examples of activities and projects you have worked on or accomplishments you have made. Meet with your College and Career Counselor for more tips on your letters of recommendation.
- Make plans to visit colleges.** It may be impossible to visit every school you are interested in, but you should plan to visit your top three to five college choices. You will often need to call ahead to set up a campus visit ahead of time. Some colleges only do large group tours on certain days of the week and others may offer you a personalized tour led by student. Plan to meet with admissions and financial aid if you can and ask about sitting in on a class if possible.
- Attend Frisco College Fair:** This will give you a chance to meet with representatives from local and national colleges and universities.
- Begin working on your application essays.** You should begin drafting your response to the application essay questions. If you apply using the common application, you will receive seven essay prompts and will be required to respond to one. If you plan to apply to a public Texas school using the Apply Texas common application, the essay prompts will be different from the overall common application. Attend a College Essay Workshop offered by your College and Career Counselor. [Click here for more college Essay tips.](#)

- **Are you planning to apply early decision?** If you plan to apply early decision to any school, take the time to visit the school again and make sure you're willing to commit. If you elect to apply early decision, or early action, you should start working on your application as soon as possible because its deadline will be earlier than others. You should also plan to take the SAT/ACT this year!