Dear High School Senior,

It is probably hard to believe your senior year is finally here. With it comes planning for what you will do after graduation. As you know, education beyond high school is important in today’s economy. You have spent the last twelve years in school preparing for life after high school—now is the time to put those plans into motion!

It’s officially time for you to apply to college. There are a lot of options out there and it can be a little overwhelming. This checklist, in conjunction with your Student Success Plan, is designed as a tool to help you sort through all of that information and we’ve included important factors to consider as you decide which college is right for you.

In a few weeks, you will have the opportunity to apply to the colleges of your choice during College Application Month. Your school counselor will help you get ready for this opportunity and provide you with the specific date(s) of the event at your school.

Deciding on a college is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Explore this checklist, ask questions, and prepare to apply to college during your school’s College Application Week.

We wish you the best of luck as you begin this exciting time in your life!

Sincerely,
The College Application Month Planning Team
Choosing a College Major

Your major is the specific subject area you will study. Typically, between one-third and one-half of the courses you’ll take in college will be in your major or related to it.

Choosing a major can be daunting! Here are some questions to help narrow down your choices:

1. What are your interests?

2. What type of work do you enjoy?

3. Which subjects did you enjoy studying the most in high school?

4. What type of career can you see yourself in?

5. What careers are offered in the area you would like to live?

Remember that it’s not uncommon for college students to change majors one or more times after they enroll in college, so you may want to explore colleges that offer more than one of your preferred majors.

List YOUR top three college major choices:

1<sup>st</sup> Choice: _______________________________________

2<sup>nd</sup> Choice: _______________________________________

3<sup>rd</sup> Choice: _______________________________________
Exploring Postsecondary Schools

There are hundreds of postsecondary colleges and universities to which you have the opportunity to apply, but it’s important to answer some important questions to figure out the best fit for you. Here are some things to think about as you explore!

**Size**
- Large or Small Campus?
- Everybody Knows You or Anonymity of a Crowd?
- On or Off-Campus Living?
- Large or Small Class Size?
- Professors or Teaching Assistants?
- Lots of Extracurricular Activities or Just a Few?

**Type**
- 2-year or 4-year School?
- Single Sex or Coed?
- Religious Affiliation?
- Public or Private?

**Geography**
- City or Rural Area?
- Close to Home or Far Away?

**Cost**
- In-State or Out-of-State Tuition?
- Scholarship Opportunities or No?
- Work Study Programs Available or Not?
- Less or More Expensive than National/State Average?

You also may want to find someone who attended each of the schools of your choice. Interview them and find out more about their college experiences.

**Questions you may want to ask:**
- What was your major?
- Did you change majors while in school?
- What did you like/dislike about the school?
- Did you stay on campus?
- Were you the first in your family to go to college?
- Were you involved in any campus activities?
- Do you think this school is a good fit for me?
When you want to start searching, we recommend that you visit [https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/). You can supplement your research with the following as well – [www.nces.edu.gov/collegenavigator](http://www.nces.edu.gov/collegenavigator) or [http://www.collegeresults.org/](http://www.collegeresults.org/) or [http://www.imfirst.org/](http://www.imfirst.org/). This will allow you to gather information about a variety of colleges and universities. Use the table on the bottom of this page to keep track of college admission requirements for your top three colleges.

Based on your research, list YOUR top three colleges:

1st Choice: ____________________________________________

2nd Choice: __________________________________________

3rd Choice: __________________________________________
✓ “Top 3” Information

Top three colleges and universities to which you wish to submit an application:

1. ____________________________________________
   Deadline for application: ________ Cost to apply: ________ Payment option: ________
   Deadline for scholarship or institutional financial assistance: ________________________

2. ____________________________________________
   Deadline for application: ________ Cost to apply: ________ Payment option: ________
   Deadline for scholarship or institutional financial assistance: ________________________

3. ____________________________________________
   Deadline for application: ________ Cost to apply: ________ Payment option: ________
   Deadline for scholarship or institutional financial assistance: ________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Comparison Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission/Placement Test Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Enrolled Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Graduation Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Housing Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Fee Waiver Available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition (yearly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room and Board (yearly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Yearly Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants (Does the school participate in federal/state grant programs?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Undergraduates Receiving Aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparing to Apply

There are many components of a college application. You can prepare for College Application Week at your school by ensuring you have access to the following:

Official Transcript

- Your transcript is the record of all the courses you have taken for high school credit, your grades, and credits earned. Other information that might be included on a transcript: GPA, class rank, standardized test scores, course in progress. This is normally sent directly from your high school to the college.

Standardized Test Scores

- SAT or ACT scores

Application Forms

Many colleges accept The Common Application. Regardless of the school or application, these will be important components:

- Personal and Educational Data
  - Name
  - Address
  - Phone number
  - E-mail
  - Citizenship and residency information
  - High schools you have attended
  - College credits you have earned
  - Parental information
  - Senior-year schedule
  - Standardized test scores

- Honors and Awards

- Extracurricular, Personal, and Volunteer Activities

- Employment, Internships, and Summer Activities (Some colleges allow you to submit a resume in addition to the activity section of their application.)

- Essays – Both Short Answer and a Longer Personal Essay

- Disciplinary Information

- Application Fee (Many colleges will accept fee waivers that can be obtained from the guidance office if you are eligible.)

- Signature

- Audition or Portfolio (For certain majors, students might be required to audition or asked to submit a portfolio of artistic work.)
Recommendation Forms

- Most colleges and universities will require at least one recommendation form or letter of recommendation. Some schools may stipulate that these have to come from a counselor, teacher, or community member who knows you well.

- Remember, colleges are not only interested in hearing from teachers who taught courses in which you’ve received a top grade, but from teachers (and other individuals) who know you well and can talk about your work ethic, inquisitive nature, and motivation to learn.

*It is strongly recommended that you write your essays and personal statements well in advance of College Application Week. Bring a final, edited electronic copy on a flash drive.
✓ College Application Worksheet

Complete this information before the College Application event and keep it in a safe place.

Personal Information

Full Name (First, Middle, Last) ___________________________________

Permanent Address (where all mail will be sent) __________________________

City, State, ZIP _____________________________________________________

Home Phone Number _________________________________________________

Mobile Phone Number _______________________________________________

E-Mail Address _______________________________________________________ 

Bring your social security number or memorize it. You will need it!

Driver’s License Number ______________________________________________

Date Issued _________________________________________________________

Date of Birth _______________________________________________________

Place of Birth _______________________________________________________ 

Citizenship (check one) _________ U.S. Citizen

___________ Permanent Resident

___________ Other, give visa type

If not a U.S. citizen, are you a legal immigrant (permanent resident alien of the U.S.)?

___________ Yes

___________ No *

*If you answered “no,” be prepared to answer the following:

Country of Citizenship ________________________________________________

Permanent Residence__________________________________________________

Resident Alien Number_________________________________________________

Country of Birth______________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent/Guardian #1</th>
<th>Parent/Guardian #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Name (First, Middle, Last)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to You</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, State, ZIP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Mail Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Highest Level of Education Completed
(Unknown, K-8, High School, 2-Year College, 4-Year College, Graduate School)

Institution/Degree

*You also may want to familiarize yourself with your parent/guardian’s job (company/organization name, occupation, and job title). Some applications may ask for a salary range.

Educational Information

Name of Current High School

Mailing Address

Telephone Number

Date Entering High School

Anticipated Graduation Date

*If you have attended any other high schools, you will need the above information for the other high schools you have attended.*

List any colleges you have attended for which you expect to receive college credit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City, State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of Attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Volunteer Handbook | 9
List the courses you are taking during your senior year. Please indicate any that are Honors, AP, IB or Dual Enrollment (college courses):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Testing Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAT Test Date (Month/Year)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reading Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Test Date (Month/Year)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List your extracurricular, community and family activities, and hobbies. Be prepared to include specific events and major accomplishments such as musical or artist talent or volunteer services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Approx. Time Spent</th>
<th>When?</th>
<th>Positions Held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 10 11 12</td>
<td>Hours per Week</td>
<td>Weeks per Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List any work experience that you may have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Held</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Dates of Employment</th>
<th>Hours/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Apply for Your FAFSA PIN

Applying for college is a HUGE step toward your future, but college can seem out of reach because of the cost of attending. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can help by providing grant and loan opportunities for students who qualify. Before you can submit a FAFSA, you need to apply for a PIN. It is highly recommended that you apply for your FAFSA PIN at your College Application Week event.

2. At the toolbar at the top of the screen, click “PIN Site” to be directed to another page.
3. On the new page, find the button on the right side of the screen that says “Apply Now” and click on it.
4. Follow the prompts on the subsequent pages to apply for your FAFSA PIN.
   NOTE: Be sure to keep track of any security questions that you establish for the protection of your account.
   a. Security Question
      ____________________________________________________________
   b. Answer
      ____________________________________________________________

5. You will be prompted to create your own PIN if you so choose. Your PIN must be four numbers. Choose a PIN that you can remember easily, but that others can’t guess. If you don’t create your own PIN, one will be randomly generated for you.
   a. Your PIN _______________

6. Follow the rest of the prompts to agree to not share your PIN with others and choose how you’d like to receive your PIN (instantly or receive an email).
7. You have successfully submitted your FAFSA PIN application!
8. Keep your FAFSA PIN in a safe location. You will need it to complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid.