

Preparing for College: Senior Checklist

CLASS OF 2017



August/September

- **“Kick Off to College Applications/Financial Aid” Presentation**
 - **Wednesday, August 31, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.**
 - **Auditorium - Schaumburg High School**
- Register for ACT if you didn’t take it as a Junior, or if you aren’t satisfied with your score and want to take it again. (remember that your counselor can help you with fee waivers)
- Take a look at some college applications and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.
- Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges:
 - meeting with college representatives who visit SHS – announcements/website
 - Request a pass from Mrs. Mariano in Student Services
 - attending local college fairs
 - visiting campuses
 - **2 visits “excused absences”**
- Narrow down your list of colleges and begin to consider “probable”, “reach,” and “realistic” schools. Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school. Find out if you qualify for any scholarships at these schools.
- **DISTRICT 211 – First Generation College Night**
 - **Wednesday, September 14, 2016 - 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**
- **Palatine High School**

Create a checklist and calendar to chart:

- Standardized test dates, registration deadlines, and fees
- College application due dates
- Financial aid application forms and deadlines
- Other materials you’ll need for college applications (recommendations, transcripts, essays, etc.)
- Be aware of SHS deadlines for transcripts, letter of recommendations, etc...

**[AN EXCEL SPREADSHEET CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM SHS WEBSITE
TO KEEP TRACK OF APPLICATIONS](#)**

- Some schools require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Ask the colleges to which you are applying for their deadlines. You can register as early as September. See your counselor about fee waivers.

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October

- The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) will be available for families on October 1. This is the form you will complete to find out what financial aid you are eligible to receive from the government. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov Complete this form online.
- The sooner you complete the FAFSA, the sooner you will have an idea of your financial aid options. Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.
- **FAFSA Completion Workshop – at SHS - ISAC Representative to assist in completion**
 - **Saturday, October 8 – 10:00 a.m. – Room 213s**
 - **Tell your counselor if you would like a Spanish speaking rep available that day**
- **DISTRICT 211 – COLLEGE NIGHT**
 - **Wednesday, October 19, 2016 - 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**
 - **Palatine High School – Free bus shuttle available from SHS**
- Some colleges will have deadlines as early as October 15. These would include rolling admission, priority, early decision, and early action deadlines.
- If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.
- Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. Provide your references with an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities. (Form available in Student Services) **Please give your recommenders at least 2 – 3 week notice that you need a letter of recommendation.**
- **Complete a TRANSCRIPT REQUEST ONLINE AT PARCHMENT.COM** – check student email account for additional information.
- Research possibilities of scholarships. Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should *never* pay for scholarship information. Local scholarships are posted on the SHS website under SCHOLARSHIPS.

November

- Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month. Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- Make sure testing companies have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.

December

- Organize/finalize regular decision applications
- Finish your 7th semester on a strong note by preparing for final exams

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January

- Many popular and selective colleges will have application deadlines as early as January 1. Others have deadlines later in January and February. Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- If necessary, register for the February ACT (some colleges will be able consider it).
- You may need to request first semester transcripts to schools where you applied.

Feb/March/April

- While most of your applications will be complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, don't slack in the classroom. The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No Senioritis!
- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

May

- **May 1** is the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit. Send in your deposit by the postmark date of **May 1**. If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.
- Make sure that you have requested that your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending and report scholarships you have been awarded (used for Honors Convocation). Forms will be given to you with your senior graduation information to begin this process; these forms are **DUE MAY 2, 2016 in Student Services**

May 24 – GRADUATION!!!!