

# Prepare Yourself for College

## Build Your Portfolio – Explore Your Options – Start Early!!

### 9th Grade:

- Create a file with: a list of your skills, talents, goals and needs.
- Meet with your high school guidance counselor and develop an academic plan for high school.
- NOW is when your G.P.A. (Grade Point Average) is being established. Starting out with a decent G.P.A. is easier than playing catch up your senior year.
- Copy and save ALL important documents. For example, reports, certificates, poems, art projects, etc. You may wish to included some of these documents in your portfolio.
- Join clubs, organizations or associations in areas of interest to you because that will always reflect when you fill out scholarship, and college applications.
- Volunteer in areas of interest to you because again these will reflect well on your college and scholarship applications.
- Begin building your portfolio!
- Find mentor(s). Check out [www.semy.org](http://www.semy.org) & discover what featured role models have to say about themselves and their experiences.

### 10th Grade:

- Talk to your high school guidance counselor. Make sure you are scheduled to take appropriate assessments (WASL) and practice college admission tests (PSAT and PLAN). Review you four year academic plan to make sure you are on track.
- Begin looking into career fields. Talk with professionals in fields that catch your interest.
- Keep your classes well balanced.
- Parents and students should discuss options about post secondary activities.
- Participate in leadership activities in school and in your community.
- Update your resume and portfolio.

### 11th Grade:

- Contact your high school guidance counselor to make sure you are making progress in your academic plan. Ask about scholarships, grants and other financial aid options. Be sure to note deadlines and requirements.
- Take the SAT and the ACT.
- Research and apply for private scholarships, grants, and other sources of financial aid.
- Begin visiting colleges. See what is out there!
- Start asking for letters of recommendation from teachers and employers.
- Update your resume and portfolio. Include all acheivements and awards this year!

### 12th Grade:

- Meet with you high school guidance counselor. Check your academic plan progress and make sure you are on track to meet all of the graduation requirements.
- Plan time to complete your culminating (senior) project.
- Get copies of transcripts and take college placement tests (if applicable).
- File for FASFA (Free Application for Student Financial Aid). This is the application all students must file for to be considered for federal assistance. Visit FASFA on the web: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> or call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).
- Secure 5 letters of recommendation for admittance to college and for scholarships.
- Update your resume!
- Complete and submit your college and scholarship applications early!!
- Contact the college financial aid office for deadlines and ask for all required financial aid forms and if other documents are required.

## Junior & Senior Timelines by Month

### Juniors

### Seniors

| Juniors   |  | Seniors  |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Fall</b> (September – November)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with your high school guidance counselor to review your academic plan for high school.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review your transcript-make sure all grades are on track for graduation. Make sure summer school credits are posted on your transcript.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modify class schedule to agree with credit accrual needs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Look for volunteer or community service opportunities. Be sure to document your time. Mentor and/or supervisors at volunteer or community services sites are great resources for letters of recommendation. Be sure to update your resume.</li> </ul> | <b>F<br/>A<br/>L<br/>L</b>             | <p><b>Fall</b> (September – November)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with you high school guidance counselor to review.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Your June SAT/ACT score – determine if you should retake tests. If so, when is the next test date?</li> <li>✓ Look at your academic plan for highschool.</li> <li>✓ Be sure summer school credits have been posted on your trascript.</li> <li>✓ Review your final college/university list, including admission deadlines and requirements.</li> <li>✓ Ask about upcoming scholarship opporuties.</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend financial aid information session.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Apply for scholarships. Be sure to keep a copy of the material you submitted and notes with the date submitted.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin preparing college/univseristy applications</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Winter</b> (December - February)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Formally pre-arrange extended absences and work with you teachers to obtain homework.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make a list of colleges/university you would like to know more about. Think about your career interests. Does the college meet your needs? Resources: Internet, library, high school counseling center.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Start preparing for SAT or ACT (practice test are available on-line).</li> </ul>   | <b>W<br/>I<br/>N<br/>T<br/>E<br/>R</b> | <p><b>Winter</b> (December - February)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Formally pre-arrange extended absences and work with you teachers to obtain homework.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Submit you Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Track FAFSA deadlines.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep t ract of all of your college/univeristy applications.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to research and apply for scholarships.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Spring</b> (March - May)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Register to take SAT/ ACT exams. See you counseling center for more information and deadlines.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend college/career fairs. Request more information about the schools or careers that interest you the most.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with your high school guidance counselor to plan your senior class schedule.</li> </ul>   | <b>S<br/>P<br/>R<br/>I<br/>N<br/>G</b> | <p><b>Spring</b> (March - May)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with your high school guidance counselor to review your college/university admissions and finanacial aid.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to research and apply for scholarships.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make your college/university attendance decision.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> When you receive a scholarship, report private scholarhips to the financial aid office and send a thank you note to the donor.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Summer (June - August)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take SAT/ ACT exams.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for the scholarship process. Make a list of scholarship that you plan to apply for.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with your high school guidance counselor to plan your senior class schedule.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a final list of colleges/universities that you wish to apply to for admission. Begin collection admission application information such as deadlines, etc.</li> </ul>  | <b>S<br/>U<br/>M<br/>M<br/>E<br/>R</b> | <p><b>Summer</b> (June - August)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRADUATION!!</li> <li>• Request your final high school transcript.</li> <li>• Make plans to attend your college/university orientation.</li> </ul>   |