

College Planning Guide

Senior Year

August

- Register for September ACT
- Complete *Resume* and *Senior Questionnaire* on Naviance to give to counselors and teachers for letters of recommendation
- Finalize your list of colleges and add to Naviance/My Colleges
- Assemble portfolios and audition tapes, if applying to arts programs
- Request and submit NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse form if you intend to play Division I or Division II sports in college – www.ncaa.org

September

- Deadlines to register for October/November SAT and ACT
- College Night for Seniors and Parents - mandatory
- Attend College Representative visits at Mercy and Bay Area college informational sessions and campus Open Houses
- Visit College & Career Center to refine list of colleges to which you are applying
- College essay/personal statement – have teacher or counselor review essay; take after-school College Essay Workshop

October

- Priority filing period opens for CSU applications. Apply online at www.csumentor.org. Priority filing period ends on November 30. (If you are applying to more than one CSU, send your test scores to College Code 3594.)
- Attend Visual and Performing Arts College Fair, date TBA
- Continue to attend college rep visits at Mercy
- Some students apply Early Decision or Early Action
- Continue to refine your list of colleges and update Naviance.
- Request teacher/counselor letters of recommendation
- Request transcripts for private college applications.
- Apply for scholarships

November

- Submit all requests for transcripts and letters of recommendation to your counselor and teachers by November 1. (Please submit all together with due dates.)
- Complete UC application. UC filing period is November 1 - 30. Apply online at www.ucop.edu.
- Submit CSU application by November 30.
- Submit Early Decision or Early Action applications
- Registration deadlines for December ACT and SAT (November or December SAT is the last test date colleges will accept.)
- Thanksgiving – work on applications and essays
- Make sure you have sent all your colleges your test scores and all other required elements of your application!

December

- Attend Financial Aid Night for Seniors and Parents
- File the CSS Financial Aid Profile on College Board for those colleges which require it.
- Write thank you notes to counselors and teachers who wrote letters of recommendation for you
- Students may receive Early Decision/Early Action decisions

January

- File FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid) after January 1. Apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Student and parent each apply for a pin number at www.pin.ed.gov, which allows you to sign your FAFSA electronically. Deadline is March 2 for CSUs/UC's; deadline may be earlier for private and out-of-state colleges. Filing early is recommended because funding is limited.
- Submit *Cal Grant Verification Form* to College & Career Center for GPA calculation. Cal Grant filing deadline: March 2.
- Submit Mid-Year Grade Reports to those private and out-of-state colleges which request them.
- Follow up with teachers, counselors and colleges to make sure all application materials have been completed and received by your colleges.
- Continue to apply for scholarships

February

- Within 4 weeks of filing the FAFSA, expect to receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) indicating your Expected Family Contribution (EFC).
- Many colleges have February deadlines for financial aid applications.

March - April

- Continue to receive college and financial aid decisions
- Compare financial aid packages from colleges
- Visit colleges and attend "Accepted Students" weekends before making your final decision.
- Send a deposit to the college of your choice as early as possible – you may get a better choice of housing.

May

- Candidate Reply Date – May 1: deadline for submitting an Intent to Register with a deposit. * Notify all colleges to which you have been accepted of your decision – for the school's information and in case you decide to transfer later.
- Request final transcript to be sent to your college
- Complete Senior Questionnaire on Naviance – required.
- Graduation!

Summer

- Colleges mail housing contracts and loan applications. You may be in contact with future roommates.
- Attend orientation programs for new freshmen
- Enjoy your summer!

Congratulations!

Procedures for Requesting Transcripts and Letters of Recommendation

Transcripts Request official transcripts at least two weeks prior to the due date. There is no charge. Unofficial transcripts do not include the authorizing signature and seal. *Transcript Request Forms* are available in the Counseling Department. Give the completed forms to your counselor. Transcripts may be mailed or submitted electronically. California state schools do not require an official transcript during the application process, *unless requested*. Private schools require an official transcript by the application deadline. Requests for your final transcript for the college you will attend should be given to the Registrar, Mr. Laguna, before graduation.

Letters of Recommendation A strong letter of recommendation can significantly increase your chances of acceptance to the college of your choice. To ensure an effective letter, students **MUST**:

- complete the *Senior Questionnaire*, available on Naviance.
- Complete your *Resume* on Naviance.
- have your parents complete their *Parent Questionnaire*

Submit the completed *Senior Questionnaire*, and any additional materials requested by the college, to the teacher or counselor whom you have asked to write a letter. All college materials must be submitted to your counselor by November 1. If students do not adhere to these procedures, your letters could be delayed. The *Senior Questionnaire* and *Parent Questionnaire* are to be submitted to your counselor by the start of school in September of senior year.

November 1: Deadline for all requests for Letters of Recommendation.