



# 12TH GRADE TIMELINE

## TASK LIST FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

### SUMMER

---

- Draft (at minimum) or complete the Common App essay, aka personal statement.
- Revise college list, using college-specific websites, general websites such as Big Future and College Navigator, networking with family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and completing virtual or in-person tours/information sessions.
- Register for fall SAT or ACT if applicable.
- Create a spreadsheet listing high school activities, including year/s participated, approximate hours/week or season, leadership positions held, and honors earned. Include sports and clubs (in or out of school), work experience (paid or unpaid), and any other notable experience or achievement since 8th grade.
- Have fun!! Travel with your family if possible, enjoy friends, read, volunteer, develop a hobby.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

---

- Ask teacher/s for a LOR (Letter of Recommendation) at least one month before the first deadline, preferably sooner.
- Research application fee waivers or special deals for in-state or other colleges on the short list.
- Check your high school calendar for post secondary presentations and information, college rep visits, or workshops on financial aid, test prep, etc.
- Check your high school deadlines and the process for transcript requests and local scholarships provided through your school.
- Complete preliminary research on scholarship opportunities, especially at worksites (parent and teen), community, and school/school district. Start applications as applicable.
- Check out virtual tours on individual college websites and if a college of interest has its own YouTube channel, particularly if an in-person visit is not practical or possible.
- Use the family calendar to plan in-person visits between August and January.
- Create a master calendar of deadlines- application, school, etc.- and update as needed throughout fall.

# 12TH GRADE TIMELINE (CONT)- PAGE 2

## AUGUST-SEPTEMBER (CONT.)

- Student AND parent register for an FSA ID at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).
- Pick one or two high interest schools and complete (most likely a parent) the net price calculator for that school-- internet search on "net price calculator" and name of school-- to obtain a rough estimate of out-of-pocket expenses that might be necessary for that school. This will also give you a primer on information required by the FAFSA and other financial aid applications.
- FINALIZE ESSAY (do NOT wait until the weekend before the application is due!).
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## OCTOBER-DECEMBER

- Complete the FAFSA (one parent, and student if applicable) and (if applicable) the CSS Profile (both parents, including if separated or divorced) as soon as possible (and available) after 10/1.
- Finalize the list of colleges to apply to, decide on Regular Decision (RD), Early Decision (ED), or Early Action (EA) and note deadlines for each.
- If not done previously, note the following key data for each college on your shortlist before applying and/or when weighing the final decision: graduation rate (6 year AND 4 year), % of financial need met, average ACT or SAT score and note how you compare, freshman retention, housing options, especially after freshman year, career counseling availability, and hidden costs, e.g., transportation, financial aid if studying abroad, fees, etc.
- Submit applications by required deadlines, including the Common App (if applicable) or other common applications.
- Ensure standardized test scores, transcripts, and LORs are also submitted by the applicable deadline.
- Be prepared and respond promptly to requests for supplemental material and additional financial aid verification required by many colleges.
- Arrange alumni/admission interviews as needed or appropriate for some colleges.
- Continue to research and apply for scholarship opportunities.
- If rejected or deferred for Early Decision (ED), consider EDII if available or submit applications for Regular Decision (RD) for a wider variety of schools.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# 12TH GRADE TIMELINE (CONT)- PAGE 3

## JANUARY-FEBRUARY

---

- Submit remaining applications and scholarship forms.
- Parents and students (if applicable) complete taxes for the previous year as soon as possible.
- Continue to monitor email closely and respond promptly to requests for supplemental material or additional financial aid information.
- Submit fall semester grades to college/s if needed.
- Begin searching/applying for summer employment if applicable.
- Start planning spring visits for Admitted Student Days and/or for colleges accepted to which you have not yet visited or want a more in-depth visit.
- Don't take the pack off yet, but also take time to enjoy senior year and all the activities, events, and friends that hopefully come with it.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## SPRING

---

- Continue to KEEP YOUR GRADES UP!
- Attend Admitted Student Days for top 2-3 colleges admitted to if able.
- Carefully compare financial aid letters and contact the financial aid office with questions as needed; "appeal", not "negotiate" an award as warranted.
- Weigh pros and cons, review all financial information, review search information including key data mentioned above, and have several discussions with parents and other trusted people to make the final decision.
- Lock down a summer job if applicable.
- Notify the college you will be attending and send a deposit by 5/1.
- Notify other colleges you were admitted to that you do not plan to attend and thank them for their time and consideration.
- Celebrate! If you have been accepted to attend college YAY YOU! It's ok to be proud and happy, just be aware of friends and peers around you who may still be waiting and/or are not sure what they are going to do after graduation.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_