

Action Plan: Seniors

FALL

Pulling Your Applications Together

- Narrow your list of colleges to between 5 and 10 and review it with your counselor. Get an application and financial aid info from each. Visit as many as possible.
- Make a master calendar and note:
 - Test dates, fees, and deadlines
 - College application due dates
 - Required financial aid applications and their deadlines
 - Recommendations, transcripts, and other necessary materials
 - Your high school's deadlines for application requests, such as your transcript
- Ask for recommendations. Give each person your resume, a stamped, addressed envelope, and any required forms.
- Write application essays and ask teachers, parents, and friends to read first drafts.

Applying Early Action or Early Decision?

- November 1: For early admissions, colleges may require test scores and applications in early November. Send your SAT® scores at collegeboard.com.
- Ask if your college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility

Get Financial Aid Info

- Attend financial aid info events in your area.
- Talk to your counselor about CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® and learn about it with Completing the PROFILE.
- Use Scholarship Search at collegeboard.com, review scholarship books, and ask your counselor about local and state funding sources.

WINTER

Application Details

- Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.
- Have your high school send your transcript to colleges.
- Contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.

Financial Aid: Apply Early. Apply Right.

- You and your family should save 2005 pay stubs to estimate income on aid forms that you'll file in early 2006.
- Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Men 18 or older must register for the selective service to receive federal financial aid.
- Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, apply by the priority date. Keep copies of everything you send.

SPRING

When the Letters Start Rolling In

- You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- Use Compare Your Aid Awards to compare awards from different colleges. Questions? Talk to financial aid officers. Not enough aid? Ask if other financing plans are available.
- If you haven't already, visit your final college before accepting.

May 1: Making Your Final Choice

- You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Send a deposit to the college you choose.
- Wait-listed? If you will enroll if accepted, tell the admissions director your intent and ask how to strengthen your application. Need financial aid? Ask if funds will be available if you're accepted.

SUMMER

Next Steps

- Ask your high school to send a final transcript to your college.
- Start preparing for the year ahead.

