

## *Junior Conference Overview 2021-2022*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Transcript Review**

- Check for accuracy
- Current GPA
- Academically competitive schedule
- NCAA Eligibility Review

### **Graduation Status**

- Total credits to date
- Senior Year Schedule
- Community Service hours
- Testing/NJDOE status

### **Post HS Plans**

- 2 year college
- 4 year college
- Military
- Trade/Technical
- Employment
- Other

### **Standardized Tests**

- SAT
- ACT

### **Recommendations**

- School Counselor
- Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_
- Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **College Search**

- Early decision/Early action candidate?
- Possible Major:
- Location(s):
- Public / Private / Doesn't Matter

#### *Size*

- Small (fewer than 2,000)
- Medium (2,000 – 15,000)
- Large (more than 15,000)

#### *Setting*

- Urban (in a city)
- Suburban (near a city and/or larger town)
- Rural (small town)

#### *Special Features*

- Athletics:
- Clubs:
- Religious affiliations:
- Other:

### **Miscellaneous**

- Use Naviance for visits, scholarships, transcripts (start now!)
- EA/ED deadlines; regular; rolling
- Essay
- College visits (demonstrated interest)
- Interviews
- Instant Decision Days (on campus; at UHS)
- Clubs and activities
- Summer programs/activities

Junior Conference Calendar Link

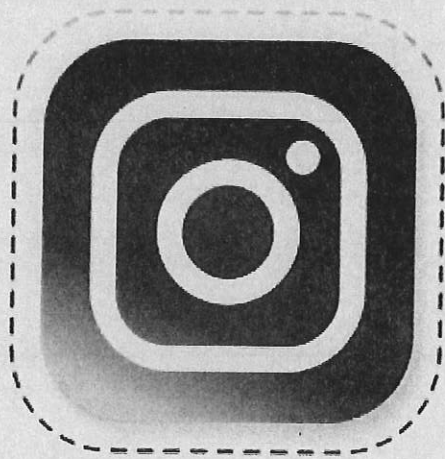
**2021-2022 JUNIOR CONFERENCE  
COUNSELOR CALENDAR SCHEDULING LINK**

Please schedule your appointments here, we ask that you also email the counselor to let them know in advance.

Please email Ms. Padden with any issues: [lpadden@twpunionschools.org](mailto:lpadden@twpunionschools.org)

Counselor	Scheduling Link	Phone #	Email
Christina Birstler I, K, L, Z	<a href="#">Birstler Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-6810	<a href="mailto:cbirstler@twpunionschools.org">cbirstler@twpunionschools.org</a>
Megan Bohse B, W	<a href="#">Bohse Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-4435	<a href="mailto:mbohse@twpunionschools.org">mbohse@twpunionschools.org</a>
Pat Bridges D, T	<a href="#">Bridges Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-6812	<a href="mailto:patbridges@twpunionschools.org">patbridges@twpunionschools.org</a>
Linda DeGeorge N, O, R	<a href="#">DeGeorge Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-6507	<a href="mailto:ldegeorge@twpunionschools.org">ldegeorge@twpunionschools.org</a>
Thomas Demetriou G, S	<a href="#">Demetriou Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-4991	<a href="mailto:tdemetriou@twpunionschools.org">tdemetriou@twpunionschools.org</a>
Michael Mayes F, J	<a href="#">Mayes Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-4434	<a href="mailto:mmayes@twpunionschools.org">mmayes@twpunionschools.org</a>
Diana Prieto H, P	<a href="#">Prieto Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-6565	<a href="mailto:dprieto@twpunionschools.org">dprieto@twpunionschools.org</a>
Ingrid Soares A, E, Y	<a href="#">Soares Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-4436	<a href="mailto:isoares@twpunionschools.org">isoares@twpunionschools.org</a>
Narisa Svetvilas M, Q, U, V, X	<a href="#">Svetvilas Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-4437	<a href="mailto:nsvetvilas@twpunionschools.org">nsvetvilas@twpunionschools.org</a>
Amanda Volturo C	<a href="#">Volturo Calendar Link</a>	(908) 851-4992	<a href="mailto:avolturo@twpunionschools.org">avolturo@twpunionschools.org</a>

Instagram



Follow the School Counseling Department!

**@uhs\_counseling**

# HOW TO CREATE A FSA ID



The FSA ID is a username and password you use to log in to U.S. Department of Education (ED) online systems, including the myStudentAid mobile app and StudentAid.gov. The FSA ID is your legal signature and shouldn't be created or used by anyone other than you - not even your parent, your child, a school official, or a loan company representative. You'll use your FSA ID every year you fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form and for the lifetime of your federal student loans.

▶ **1**

## How to get Started

Go to [www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing](http://www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing)  
Click the "Create Your FSA ID Now" button.

▶ **2**

## Create Your FSA ID (Username and Password)

**Email:** Optional but strongly recommended. An email address can be associated with only one FSA ID (you and your parent cannot use the same email address). You must have access to this email account.

**Username:** Don't include personal info such as date of birth or name. If you see a message "The username you entered is already in use," then someone has already used that username.

▶ **3**

## Provide Personal Identification Information

Enter your name, date of birth, Social Security number, contact information, and challenge questions and answers. Make sure your Social Security number (SSN), date of birth, and name match what's on your Social Security card. You must have an SSN to create an FSA ID.

▶ **4**

## Provide Profile Information

Confirm information you entered previously and provide additional information. Make sure your information is correct; any errors could result in a delay or problem in your receiving financial aid (or in the repayment of your federal student loans).

▶ **5**

## Verify

If you provided a mobile phone number, you'll be taken to the "Mobile Phone Number Verification" page.

If you provided an email address, you'll be taken to the "Email Verification" page.

▶ **6**

## Your FSA ID is created!

Your FSA ID was created. If you provided an email address, you'll receive a confirmation email. You may immediately use your FSA ID to sign an original (first-time) FAFSA form. Your information will be sent to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for confirmation. SSA review will take 1-3 days. Until your info is verified, you won't be able to take certain actions, such as correcting your FAFSA form, submitting a renewal FAFSA form, or signing a Master Promissory Note.

# 2021-22 SAT Dates

Deadlines expire at 11:59 p.m. ET, U.S.

<b>SAT Date</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>	<b>Late Registration Deadline</b>	<b>Deadline for Changes</b>
<b>August 28, 2021</b>	July 30, 2021	August 17, 2021 (for registrations made online or by phone)	August 17, 2021
<b>October 2, 2021</b>	September 3, 2021	September 21, 2021 (for registrations made online or by phone)	September 21, 2021
<b>November 6, 2021</b>	October 8, 2021	October 26, 2021 (for registrations made online or by phone)	October 26, 2021
<b>December 4, 2021</b>	November 4, 2021	November 23, 2021 (for registrations made online or by phone)	November 23, 2021
<b>March 12, 2022</b>	February 11, 2022	March 1, 2022 (for registrations made online or by phone)	March 1, 2022
<b>May 7, 2022</b>	April 8, 2022	April 26, 2022 (for registrations made online or by phone)	April 26, 2022
<b>June 4, 2022</b>	May 5, 2022	May 25, 2022 (for registrations made online or by phone)	May 25, 2022

SAT

ACT

<b>Why Take It</b>	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
<b>Test Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Writing &amp; Language</li> <li>• Math</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Science Reasoning</li> </ul> <p>Essay (Optional)</p>
<b>Length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay)</li> <li>• 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	5 reading passages	4 reading passages
<b>Science</b>	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)
<b>Math</b>	<p>Covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Algebra I &amp; II</li> <li>• Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis</li> </ul>	<p>Covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Algebra I &amp; II</li> <li>• Geometry, Trigonometry, and Probability &amp; Statistics</li> </ul>
<b>Calculator Policy</b>	Some math questions don't allow you to use a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
<b>Essays</b>	None	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
<b>How It's Scored</b>	Scored on a scale of 400–1600	Scored on a scale of 1–36

## 2021-22 ACT Test Dates & Registration Deadlines

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Estimated Score Release
June 12, 2021	May 7, 2021	May 21, 2021	June 22-August 6, 2021
July 17, 2021*	June 18, 2021	June 25, 2021	July 27-September 10, 2021
September 11, 2021	August 6, 2021	August 20, 2021	September 27-November 5, 2021
October 23, 2021	September 17, 2021	October 1, 2021	November 9-December 30, 2021
December 11, 2021	November 5, 2021	November 19, 2021	December 21, 2021-February 4, 2022
February 12, 2022	January 7, 2022	January 21, 2022	February 25-April 7, 2022
April 2, 2022	February 25, 2022	March 11, 2022	April 12-June 23, 2022
June 11, 2022	May 6, 2022	May 20, 2022	June 21-August 5, 2022
July 16, 2022*	June 17, 2022	June 24, 2022	July 26-September 9, 2022

# ONE OPPORTUNITY. LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.

If you want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II school, start by registering for a Certification Account with the NCAA Eligibility Center at [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org). If you want to play Division III sports or you aren't sure where you want to compete, start by creating a Profile Page at [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org).

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS


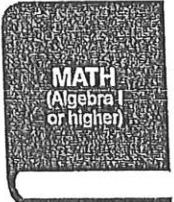
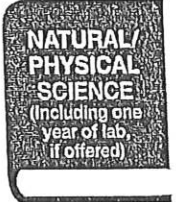
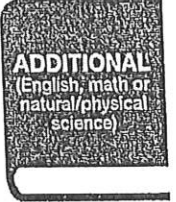
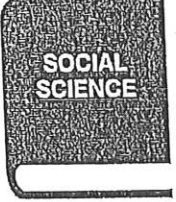
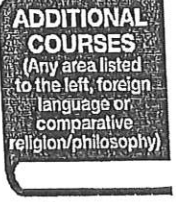
To play sports at a Division I or II school, you must graduate from high school, complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses, earn a minimum GPA and earn an ACT or SAT score that matches your core-course GPA.

## CORE COURSES


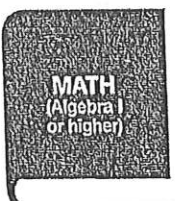
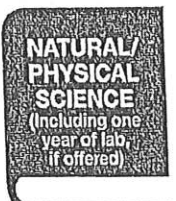
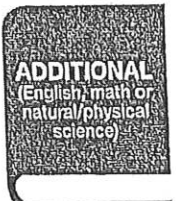
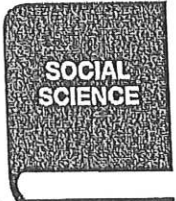
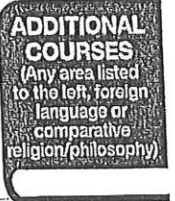
Only courses that appear on your high school's list of NCAA core courses will count toward the 16 core-course requirement; visit [eligibilitycenter.org/courselist](http://eligibilitycenter.org/courselist) for a full list of your high school's approved core courses. Complete 16 core courses in the following areas:

### DIVISION I

Complete 10 NCAA core courses, including seven in English, math or natural/physical science, before your seventh semester.

					
<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>MATH</b> (Algebra I or higher)	<b>NATURAL/ PHYSICAL SCIENCE</b> (Including one year of lab, if offered)	<b>ADDITIONAL</b> (English, math or natural/physical science)	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCE</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL COURSES</b> (Any area listed to the left, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy)
4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

### DIVISION II

					
<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>MATH</b> (Algebra I or higher)	<b>NATURAL/ PHYSICAL SCIENCE</b> (Including one year of lab, if offered)	<b>ADDITIONAL</b> (English, math or natural/physical science)	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCE</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL COURSES</b> (Any area listed to the left, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy)
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

## GRADE-POINT AVERAGE

The NCAA Eligibility Center calculates your grade-point average based only on the grades you earn in NCAA-approved core courses.

- DI requires a minimum 2.3 GPA.
- DII requires a minimum 2.2 GPA.

## SLIDING SCALE

Divisions I and II use sliding scales to match test scores and GPAs to determine eligibility. The sliding scale balances your test score with your GPA. If you have a low test score, you need a higher GPA to be eligible. Find more information about test scores at [ncaa.org/test-scores](http://ncaa.org/test-scores).

## TEST SCORES

You may take the SAT or ACT an unlimited number of times before you enroll full time in college. Every time you register for the SAT or ACT, use the NCAA Eligibility Center code 9999 to send your scores directly to us from the testing agency. We accept official scores only from the ACT or SAT, and won't use scores shown on your high school transcript. If you take either test more than once, the best subscore from different tests are used to give you the best possible score.





# HIGH SCHOOL TIMELINE

**9<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**



- Start planning now! Take the right courses and earn the best grades possible.

- Find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses at [eligibilitycenter.org/courselist](http://eligibilitycenter.org/courselist).
- Sign up for a free Profile Page at [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org) for information on NCAA requirements.

**10<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**

REGISTER



- If you fall behind academically, ask your counselor for help finding approved courses you can take.

- Register for a Profile Page or Certification Account with the NCAA Eligibility Center at [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org).
- Monitor your Eligibility Center account for next steps.
- At the end of the year, ask your counselor at each high school or program you attended to upload your official transcript to your NCAA Eligibility Center account.

**11<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**



- Check with your counselor to make sure you are on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved courses and graduate on time with your class.

- Take the ACT or SAT and submit your scores to the NCAA Eligibility Center using code 9999.
- Ensure your sports participation information is correct in your Eligibility Center account.
- At the end of the year, ask your counselor at each high school or program you attended to upload your official transcript to your NCAA Eligibility Center account.

**12<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**



- Complete your final NCAA-approved core courses as you prepare for graduation.
- Take the ACT or SAT again, if necessary, and submit your scores to the NCAA Eligibility Center using code 9999.

- Request your final amateurism certification beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your NCAA Eligibility Center account at [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org).
- After you graduate, ask your counselor to upload your final official transcript with proof of graduation to your NCAA Eligibility Center account.
- *Reminder:* Only students on an NCAA Division I or II school's institutional request list will receive a certification.

How to plan your high school courses to meet the 16 core-course requirement:

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

**9<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Science and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

**10<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Science and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

**11<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Science and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

**12<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Science and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

For more information: [ncaa.org/playcollegesports](http://ncaa.org/playcollegesports) | [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org)

Search Frequently Asked Questions: [ncaa.org/studentfaq](http://ncaa.org/studentfaq)

Follow us: @NCAAEC @playcollegesports @ncaaec

# **2021 COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION** **SESSIONS & INSTANT DECISION DAYS**

## **NOVEMBER**

**3RD: RUTGERS NEWARK INFO SESSION**

**9TH: NJCU INFO SESSION**

**16TH: SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY (IDD)**

**18TH: STOCKTON UNIVERSITY INFO SESSION**

**19TH: FDU (IDD)**

**22ND: UCC & UCC AMERICAN HONORS INFO SESSION (10AM)**

**RUTGERS CAMDEN INFO SESSION(1PM)**

**23RD: WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY (IDD)**

**29TH: LINCOLN UNIVERSITY (IDD)**

## **DECEMBER**

**1ST: RAMAPO (IDD)**

**7TH: NJIT (IDD) & BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE INFO SESSION**

**8TH: NJCU (IDD)**

**9TH: HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE CULINARY ARTS INFO  
SESSION (9:30AM)**

**10TH: CALDWELL UNIVERSITY (IDD)**

**13TH: KEAN UNIVERSITY (IDD)**

**14TH: UTI INFO SESSION (9:30AM)**

**15TH: SETON HALL UNIVERSITY (IDD)**

**16TH: SAINT ELIZABETH COLLEGE INFO SESSION (9AM)**

**17TH: FELICIAN (IDD)**



# Campus Visit Checklist

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit \_\_\_\_\_

Tour Guide Name \_\_\_\_\_

Below are some tips that both parents and students can use during a campus visit to learn more about any college campus:

- VISIT the career center
- ASK the tough questions until you get answers
- PLAN at least one half day at each school and stay overnight, if possible
- VISIT when the school is in session
- BRING a journal to jot down your impressions
- ARRANGE an interview with an admissions officer
- TAKE a campus tour
- TALK with students and faculty, preferably from a major that interests you
- PICK UP a student newspaper or activities calendar
- ATTEND an extracurricular activity (sports, theatre, etc.)
- CHECK out the dorms, libraries, student union, bookstore, etc.
- EAT a meal on campus
- GET names and business cards of people you meet for future contacts
- SAVE a map of the campus for future reference
- GO to a class or two
- TOUR the community surrounding the campus
- TALK to a student or counselor in the career center
- FIND out about campus activities
- IMAGINE attending this college for 2/4 years

NOTES:

# TRANSCRIPT RELEASE FORM

**\*\* FILL OUT THIS FORM FOR COLLEGES YOU ARE APPLYING TO. THEN SUBMIT IT TO YOUR COUNSELOR\*\***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gr./Sec.: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Highest SAT: V \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_

**\*YOU MUST ALLOW A MINIMUM OF TWO SCHOOL WEEKS FOR YOUR APPLICATION TO BE PROCESSED \***

Effective November 15, 1974, Federal and State Law prohibit the release of pupil records without parent or adult student written authorization. The school cannot release records without this written permission. Ref. New Jersey Administrative Code #6:3-6.1 et seq. states, "Organizations, agencies and persons from outside the school shall have access to pupil records if they have written consent of parent or adult pupil (age 18)".

I have read the above statement and pursuant to the law, I hereby authorize the release of a copy of the transcript (school record) concerning the student named above, to the following outside school agencies that bear my signature.

NOTE: Any other organizations, agencies, and persons from outside the school will have to secure written authorization for the release of such transcripts. A copy of this authorization shall be considered as effective and as valid as the original. In order to ensure the integrity of Union High School's permanent records, as a matter of practice, we will not release "official" transcripts directly to students or parent/guardians. If there are extenuating circumstances, the following message will appear on the transcript "This official transcript has been released directly to the parent/guardian."

Parent/Adult (Age 18) Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_




Name of College <small>(if not main campus, please specify)</small>	CHECK ONE!			APPLICATION TYPE			I REQUEST MY COUNSELOR SEND:		DATE SENT
	Envelope	Naviance	Deadline	Regular	Early Action	Early Decision	Transcript	Rec Letter	OFFICE USE ONLY

 = PAPER Transcripts       = ELECTRONIC Transcripts

**For every college that DOES NOT accept Electronic Transcript Submission, you must attach a stamped (3 stamps) addressed (to the college/university) envelope to this form.**



**HOW TO FILL OUT AN ENVELOPE**

(Leave Blank)		  
Name of College Address City, State, Zip Code		

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Date/Time Received** \_\_\_\_\_

# UNION HIGH SCHOOL

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## STUDENT BRAG SHEET

(You may attach a separate sheet of paper and your Activities Sheet if you need more space to answer any questions)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. List the activities you have participated in at school.
2. Which school activity had the greatest impact on you? Why?
3. What do you consider your most important activities outside of school?  
Explain why these activities are significant to you.
4. Describe situations where you have been a leader.
5. Describe the academic accomplishment (major paper, science experiment, artistic project) you are most proud of, and tell why you take pride in it.

## UNION HIGH SCHOOL

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6. What kind of learner are you? Which academic setting or assignments make you thrive? What interests you?
  
7. What would your favorite teacher say is an area that is difficult for you (Examples: has trouble getting started, not always consistent)?
  
8. What would your friends say are your three best qualities (examples: a good listener, funny, reliable)?
  
9. What do you hope to accomplish in college and after? Consider your career goals and broader goals.
  
10. What colleges/universities are you thinking about applying to? Why do those schools appeal to you?
  
11. Are there unusual circumstances which have affected your educational or personal accomplishments? If so, please explain.

# UNION HIGH SCHOOL

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## PARENT BRAG SHEET

Note to Parents: Please complete this form so that your child's counselor will have information, which may be helpful in writing letters of recommendation. Feel free to use additional pages, if necessary, or to email your responses. This form and your answers should be returned to your child's counselor as soon as possible.

All requests for letters should allow at least 10 work days.

Student's Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

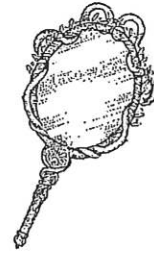
1. What do you consider to be your child's most outstanding accomplishments in the past 3 to 4 years? Why?
2. In what areas has your child shown the most development and growth since entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade?
3. What are his or her most outstanding personality traits? Describe a situation in which these qualities were present.
4. If you had to describe your child with five adjectives, what would they be? Please give an example to illustrate each one.
5. Based on your observations over the past 3-4 years, which classes has your child enjoyed the most? What do you think this says about his/her approach to learning?
6. Describe an activity (extracurricular, athletic, community, school-related and other) to which s/he has devoted extensive time and effort. What do you think s/he gained from this experience?
7. Describe a particular challenge which s/he handled effectively.
8. Are there unusual circumstances which have affected your child's educational or personal accomplishments? If so, please explain.
9. Please list specific colleges s/he is considering.
10. What can s/he contribute to these colleges, if selected?

# FINDING THE RIGHT COLLEGE

- It is a process!

- Self-Reflection

- Interests/aptitudes
- Career goals
- Academic strengths and weaknesses
- GPA and standardized test scores

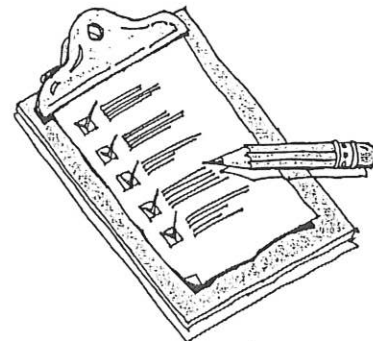


- Weigh the options

- Majors desired
- States preferred
- Size and setting preferred
- Activities desired
- Academic standards you can match
- Costs your family can meet

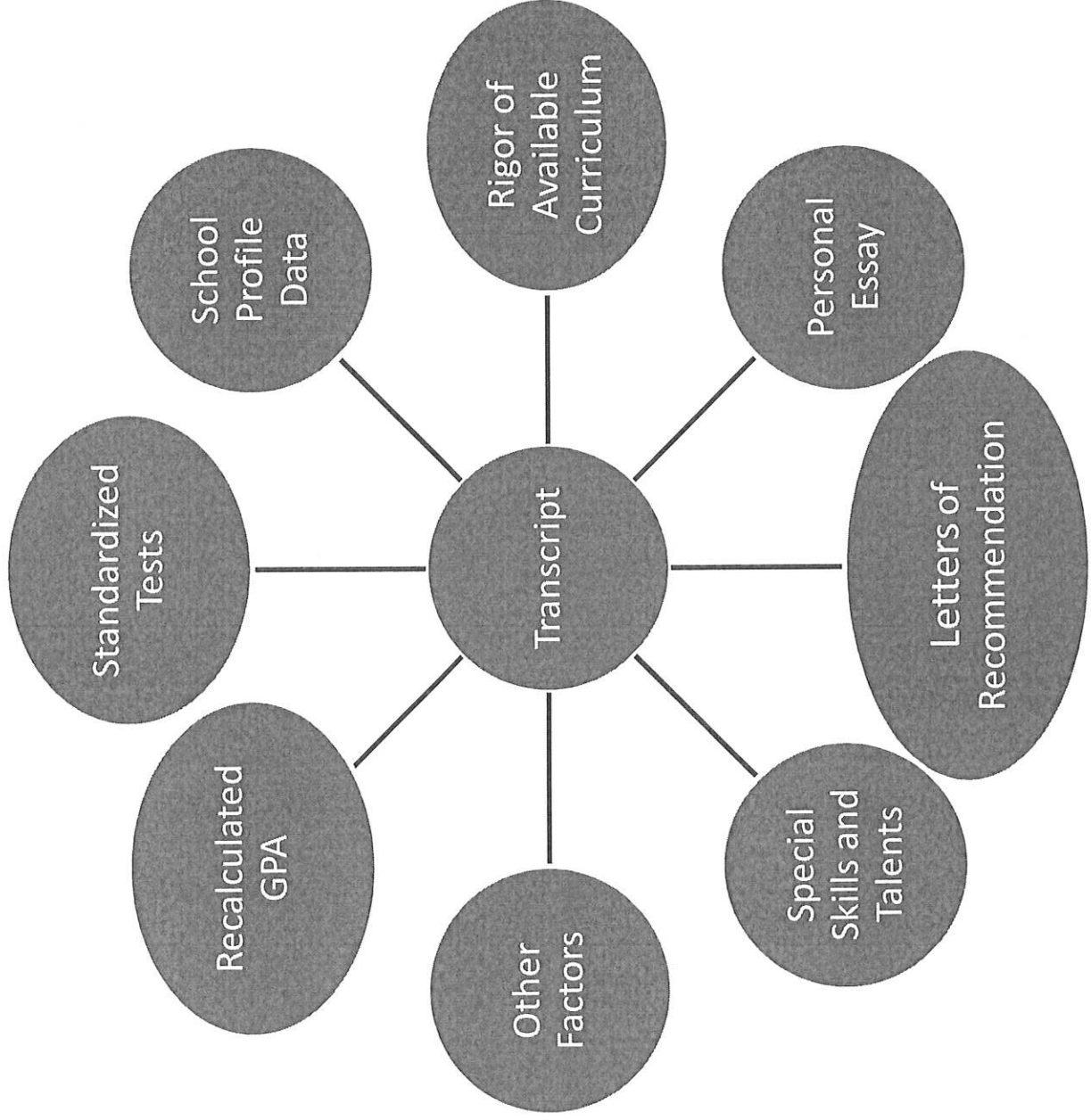
- Refine your list

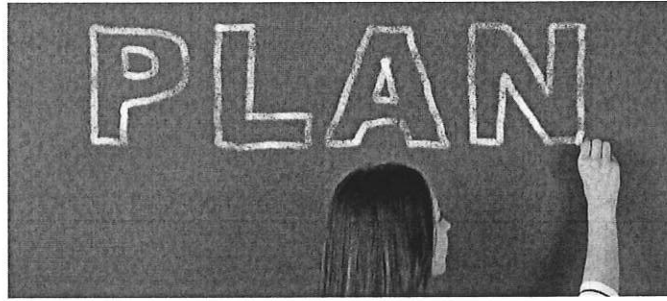
- Review available materials from colleges (Websites, virtual tours, view books, etc.)
- Visit different types of campuses. Attend campus tour days, open houses, financial aid workshops, etc.
  - Plan ahead (prepare questions to ask, research “the features” of each college)
  - Arrange an interview, if possible
  - Check out classes (sit in on one or several)
  - Explore all the facilities (dorms, athletic facilities, library, research areas, etc.)
  - Stay overnight
  - Talk to students on campus
  - Check out safety issues
  - “Do” the town





# HOW DO COLLEGES EVALUATE THE APPLICATION?





# 10 Things High School Juniors Need To Do Now For College

By Amy Steinhoff

It might feel like there's plenty of time before high school juniors need to start worrying about college. Unfortunately, that's just not true. Junior year is the perfect time to start prepping and planning for college application success. Here are 10 things every high school junior should be doing now.

## 1) Collect free SAT/ACT study guides

Embrace hand-me-downs--they're back! Not goofy clothes this time, but books. You don't necessarily have to buy an entirely new set of standardized test study guides. Ask around to see who's willing to pass along any used copies, and look for free test-taking survival guides online.

## 2) Get an appropriate email address

Let's face it, it may be time to get a new (...cough...more mature...cough...) email address. Still have something you picked in elementary school? Consider a simple, straightforward one. And get in the habit of checking it regularly!

## 3) Take the tough classes

Challenge yourself both inside and out of the classroom. Admissions offices are looking to see that you took rigorous classes, even if you didn't ace every one. They also want to see that you can balance your time with some activities outside of class. Whether it's sports, work, or taking care of family, it's all important to mention.

## 4) Visit colleges -- even if they're not your top choice

Try out some college tours. Is there a college or university in your neighborhood? Go on a tour just to get a feel--even if it's not your top choice, it'll help you realize what you're looking for. For further away schools you can't travel to, attend some virtual tours. Exploration is a major part of finding your dream school.

## 5) Say "hello" to FAFSA

Memorize what the FAFSA stands for and put the due date on your calendar. Start researching and gathering all the information you need to apply for financial aid.

## **6) Ask seniors about EVERYTHING**

Play interviewer: Ask your friends in the senior class what advice they'd give on the college process: what did they do well and what do they wish they did while they had more time?

## **7) Practice personal essays**

Write 500 words about whatever you're most interested in. No topic is too ridiculous, just have fun with it. Once you're done, start over and see if you can do even better. It'll be good practice for the college essay. Here are [8 more tips to help you write an amazing college application essay](#).

## **8) Pick your standardized test dates**

If you plan to take or re-take any standardized tests, pick the dates! Both the [SAT](#) and the [ACT](#) publish their dates online, and registration deadlines, far in advance. You don't want test dates to sneak up on you, so put them on the calendar ahead of time.

## **9) Go to every college event you can**

Check out listings of college events and college prep activities. Save the date for your local college fair, and keep an eye out for admissions representatives that visit your high school. These kinds of events can help you figure out [how many colleges you should apply to](#).

## **10) Cultivate your recommenders**

Think about who you'll want to write recommendation letters for you. Make sure you're [impressing your teachers in the classroom](#). Use this year to make sure they have lots of good things to say about you.

**What are the things you're doing right now to prepare for college? Let us know in the**

# 13 TASKS FOR COLLEGE BOUND JUNIORS



College might seem far off, but if you're a high school junior, it's right around the corner. Unfortunately, many students wait until senior year to really focus on college. However, waiting until senior year can bring a lot of additional stress that you just don't need. Therefore, you may want to consider doing these 13 things now to help you prepare for your college admission journey.

## 1. Do well academically

The grades you receive during your junior year may be the most important in college admission. Your junior year grades will be the colleges' first impression of your academic ability. You will eventually submit your senior year grades. However, when you submit your admission applications, your senior year grades will not be available. Do well in your classes and strive to do even better than you did before. Upward grade trends can work in your favor, especially if you might not have done as well at the beginning of your high school career.

## 2. Choose challenging classes

As you begin thinking about your senior year schedule, make sure you're not going easy on yourself. While college admission decisions may be made without senior year grades, the colleges will know what classes you are enrolled in during your senior year. Colleges are expecting you to continue on the academic path you started and they do not want to see you **slacking off** senior year. Continue taking challenging academic classes, even if they are not required courses. College admission officers want to see students who challenge themselves academically. Plus, challenging classes can better prepare you for your future college courses.

## 3. Connect with your counselor

Your school counselor is a great resource when it comes to college admission. Counselors can provide recommendations for colleges you may (or may not) want to consider. In addition, they can provide admission strategies that can work for you. Plus, many colleges need a recommendation letter from your counselor. Connecting with your counselor will allow them to get to know you so they can provide a personal recommendation rather than a generic form letter.

## 4. Get to know your teachers

Colleges want recommendation letters from teachers as well. Let your future recommendation writers get to know you a little better. Once you have chosen a teacher or two to write your recommendations in the future, let them know before leaving for the summer. While they will not be able to submit the recommendation letters yet, they can start thinking about it and have it ready once your official request for a recommendation is submitted.

## 5. Test Preparation

Many colleges still require SAT and/or ACT scores. In addition to coming into play in admission, test scores can be used when determining financial aid and class placement. Take time to **prepare for the tests** before you take them. Some students choose to pay for test prep, but there are also many free test prep resources available online.

## 6. Prepare your resume

Your **resume or brag sheet** should include your extracurricular activities, volunteer work, awards, and other accomplishments. It is a great way to inventory your activities so you can determine if you need to do more as you head into senior year. Some recommendation writers may also request a resume to help them craft their letters.

## 7. Create a professional email address

If your current email address has anything questionable in it, **create a new email address**. You will be giving out your email address to colleges, scholarship providers, and other individuals and organizations related to college admission and financial aid. Your email address may be the first impression you make on these individuals. Therefore, you will want to avoid references to alcohol, drugs, profanity, etc. In addition, anything that may seem immature might not make the best impression. Therefore, I recommend creating an email address that uses your name or a variation of your name if your name is already taken.

## 8. Build your college list

**Get to know yourself** and everything you are looking for in a college. Start **adding colleges to the list** that meet your criteria. Do further research of the colleges to determine if they have everything you are looking for in a college or not.

## 9. Connect with colleges

Attend **college fairs** or college nights if they are happening in your area. If the college visits your school or area, attend their information session to learn more about what the institution has to offer and come prepared with questions you may have about the college. Join college mailing lists. In addition to getting more information about the colleges, it also shows the colleges you are interested in. Demonstrated interest can play a role in college admission in the future. Follow the colleges on social media to get updates, as well as getting to know the personality of the colleges.

## 10. Visit colleges

If you have a real interest in a college and you have not visited yet, **make plans to visit**. Every college will look very attractive to prospective students. However, visiting the college is the only way to get a real feel for the college and the personality of the campus. It is also the only way to find out if the college feels right for you.

## 11. Discuss finances with parents

Full ride scholarships sound amazing, but they are not common. Most students will have to pay some of the cost of their education. The FAFSA gives students the Expected Family Contribution (EFC), but because colleges award **financial aid** differently, the EFC is not always the best indication of how much you will have to pay to attend a college. Therefore, have a **conversation with your parents** to discuss how much the family can contribute to your education and use that information as you are researching colleges. Fill out the net price calculators at the colleges you are considering and see how much financial aid you may receive if you attend that particular college.

## 12. Apply for scholarships

Dedicate some time every week to search for and apply for **scholarships**. Scholarships are a great way to help pay for the cost of your education.

## 13. Plan summer activities

Many students see the summer as a time to relax and have fun. However, the summer is a great time to focus on things that can help with college admission. Learn more about summer programs, internship opportunities, or volunteer work. Your grades and test scores will play a big part in college admission, but your activities will be the things that can set you apart from the crowd.

Don't wait until senior year to start thinking about college admission. Check off some of these college admission tasks during your senior year so you can focus on college applications in the summer and fall.

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