

Senior Checklist

During your senior year, you will finalize your post-secondary plan. In less than a year, you should be enrolled in a college, an apprentice or intern program, the military or ready to work. This year is filled with admission applications, scholarship essays, financial aid information, and the need to meet deadlines. Throughout senior year, continue to build your resume by achieving academic success, as well as participating in extra-curricular activities.

Fall

- If necessary, register to take or re-take the SAT and/or the ACT during the fall semester.
- Review your career plans and continue to research your options. List your top choices.
- Have a discussion about finances with your parents, and begin to explore your options.
- Research each school that interests you by contacting the colleges by phone, mail, or via their websites.
- Assess your grades. If your grades have suffered recently, work hard to bring them up. If you have had a semester of poor grades, write a letter explaining why, and what you learned, to include with your application.
- Attend college information nights, regional college fairs, and visits by college reps. to BLHS.
- Get Organized!
 - Consider making a “comparison” spreadsheet: include a row for each college you are considering, and columns for the things that matter most to you (size, location, cost, major, etc.).
 - Try to narrow your college list to no more than five choices. Make a folder for each.
 - Mark your calendar with registration, admission, and financial aid deadlines and fees.
 - If needed, request letters of recommendation for college applications.
 - Finalize portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent, if required for admission.
 - Contact the schools’ financial aid offices to determine which forms they require. Please note that in addition to the FAFSA, some schools also require the PROFILE form to be submitted.

- Be sure to make copies of all college and scholarship applications and notify your guidance counselor of all applications sent.
- Complete college admissions applications by their deadlines. Many schools require applications to be in by a certain date in order to be eligible for scholarship consideration. (Remember that you must allow 5-10 days for transcripts and “Counselor Pages” to be processed.)
- Visit Room 144 often, and check the Guidance webpage for updates on scholarship information.
- 21st Century Scholars – attend a mandatory Affirmation Night.
- Urge your parents to file their taxes as soon as possible after January 1st ; this will ease the financial aid process.

Spring

- Attend the College Financial Aid Meeting at Bishop Luers High School (typically in January.)
- Submit your FAFSA:
 - Sign up for a PIN at www.fafsa.ed.gov. This will be needed to complete your online FAFSA. (Parents also need to sign up for a separate PIN)
 - As soon as possible after January 1st and when tax forms are complete (you can use estimates), complete the FAFSA online. Keep copies of all documents including your PIN in a file.
 - If necessary, attend College Goal Sunday for assistance in completing the FAFSA.
 - **Submit FAFSA by March 10th to qualify for financial aid.**
- Students enrolled in AP classes must place their intent to take the exam in writing and pay the fees.
- Rank your top school choices. Narrow your list and make final campus visits.
- Check with your college(s) financial aid offices to make sure your paperwork is complete.
- Watch for e-mail notice indicating your Student Aid Report (SAR) is ready. Review it for errors and make any corrections.

- Compare financial award letters.
- Make your final school decision and mail deposits as required. Mark your calendar with important dates: registration, orientation, housing contracts, etc.
- **May 1st is the final deadline to have deposits to your school of choice, and to notify the schools you have chosen NOT to attend.**
- Follow up with the financial aid office to ensure all paperwork is complete.
- Notify Guidance of your college selection and request (in writing) that your final transcript be sent to your chosen school.
- Notify guidance of any scholarships received.
- Register for summer orientation programs.
- Set up your college email account, and check often over the summer for important messages.

Advice for Parents:

Yes, there are things you can do to help your seniors prepare for continuing their education after high school:

- It is important to attend financial aid presentations and career day functions with your student.
- Ask them monthly, “What are you working on and what scholarships have you applied for?”
- Sit down with your student and help prepare a list of what he/she is looking for in a college, and then help sort through the information they receive.
- Proofread applications and essays for your student.
- In January, register for a FAFSA “PIN” for you and your student so that you can assist with financial aid forms.
- In January/February, help your student complete the FAFSA.
- In March, the financial aid notices will start coming in. Look at the financing carefully and contact the schools with any questions.
- Go on trips with your students to as many of his/her top school choices as possible. A visit to the campus is invaluable in making a decision.
- Hug them, send them on their way, BUT don’t change the locks – ***they’ll be back!***

