

Mapping Your Future: Senior Year at a Glance

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

The preparation that takes place during your senior year is filled with a lot of details and paperwork. It is very important that you involve your parents with this process.

Calendar

August

- Review your career plans and **decide which type of postsecondary school** is best for you.
- List your top college choices.
- Request admissions information and school catalogs.
- Go on college visits and pay attention to dates when college representative visit your school.
- Obtain registration materials and test dates for the **Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)** and/or **ACT assessment**.
- Compare costs of 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 poor grades write a letter explaining why and what you learned to include with your application.

September

- Mark your calendar with registration admissions, and financial aid deadlines and fees.
- Determine if the schools that interest you have online admission applications. If not, request them by mail now.
- Meet with school representatives who visit your high school.
- Look at virtual tours of college campuses online.
- If you haven't already taken the **SAT** and/or **ACT**, register for the test(s).
- Attend college information nights and college fairs.
- Ask employers, teachers, and guidance counselors for letters of recommendation to accompany your admissions and scholarship applications.

October

- Take the **SAT** and/or **ACT**.
- Attend the college fair **at IPFW Oct 13, 2009 6-7:30 P.M.**
- Visit your top school choices. If possible, make appointments with faculty, staff, and students.
- Visit Room 144 often to check on scholarships
- Be sure to make copies of all applications and scholarships.
- Make a folder for each of your college choices.

- Contact the schools' financial aid offices to determine which forms they require. Some schools may require special forms.
- Finalize portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent if require for admission.

November

- Complete admission applications by their deadlines.
- If you haven't already done so, attend college planning information nights and college fairs.
- If necessary, register to retake the **SAT** and/or **ACT**.
- Request financial aid forms and applications. **Double check the deadlines for submission.**
- Follow up to ensure your employers, teachers, and guidance counselors send letters of recommendation.
- Schedule interviews or auditions if necessary.

December

- **Sign up for a PIN**, to complete your FAFSA online. (Also let your parents know that they will need a PIN. www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- Finalize admission applications. Look for early decision letters
- Urge your parents to file their taxes as soon as possible after January 1st. This will ease the financial aid process.
- **Research and apply for other financial aid.** Including grants and scholarships.
- Watch for early admissions notices (they tend to arrive in December or January).

January

- **Attend Financial Aid Meeting – January 13th in the Cafeteria at 6:30 P.M.**
- As soon as possible after January 1st and when tax forms are complete (you can use estimates), complete your FAFSA online (or go to www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov to download a PDF version of the FAFSA). Keep copies of all documents including your PIN, in a file. **FAFSA are due on March 10th.**
- Contact the U.S. Department of Education at 800-4-FEDAID for assistance completing the FAFSA

February

- Be mindful of deadlines. Always submit information on time.
- Research Advanced Placement (AP) or College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams.
- Rank your top school choices.
- **Attend College Goal Sunday for help with completeing the FAFSA.**

March

- **Submit FAFSA by March 10th to qualify for State Aid.**
- Check with the financial aid offices to ensure your paperwork is complete. Submit tax forms if the request them.
- Narrow your school choices and make campus visit.

April

- Watch for the e-mail notice indicating your **Student Aid Report (SAR)** is ready.

- Review your SAR for errors and make any corrections as indicated.
- Students enrolled in AP classes must place in writing their intent to take the exam and pay the fees.
- Compare financial aid award letters.
- Make your final school decision and mail deposits as required.
- Check with the school you've chosen about returning financial aid award letters.
- Plan for registration, orientation, and housing, and mark your calendar with important dates.

May

- May 1st – Notify the schools you have chosen not to attend.
- Be aware of any summer orientation sessions that you must attend at the school in which you will enroll, and make plans accordingly.
- Prepare a realistic student budget.
- Notify your high school guidance office of your college selection and any scholarships received.
- Follow up with the financial aid office to ensure all paperwork is complete.

Congratulations! It's time to get ready to start college.

Advice for Parents

Yes, there are things you can do to help your senior 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 prepare a list of what he/she is looking for in a college and then help him/her sort through the information they receive from the different institutions to decide which ones offer what's on the list.
- Proof Read applications for you student.
- In November, **register for a PIN** so you can assist your student with financial aid forms.
- In January or February, you will need to help your student complete the FAFSA. Your PIN will help speed up the process.
- In March, the award notices will start coming in. Look at the financing carefully and contact the schools with any questions. Make comparisons!
- Go on trips with your student to as many of his/her top school choices as possible. A visit to the campus is invaluable to making a decision.
- Hug them, send them on their way **BUT** don't change the locks – *they'll be back!*