

Suggested Timeline

High School To-Do List

- Take a challenging core course of study:** *If you undertake a rigorous core course of study and challenge yourself to do your best work during your high school career, you may enjoy a wider range of postsecondary options after graduation.*
 - Four years of English
 - At least three years of math (some majors have a minimum requirement of pre-calculus or calculus)
 - At least three years of a lab science
 - Three to four years of social studies
 - Two years of a foreign language (some colleges require three consecutive years)
- Participate and get involved in school, community or work:** *Do things that foster your sense of community, responsibility, time management, and leadership to demonstrate these key aspects of your character.*
- Schedule regular meetings with school counselors and attend college night events at your high school:** *Go to nhheaf.org/events to find a current list of Center for College Planning events at your high school.*

Helpful Checklist for Successful College Preparation



- Begin exploring career and major options:** *Try job shadows, volunteer opportunities, informational interviews and career assessments.*
- Talk with your school counselor:** *Stay connected to your school staff and share your postsecondary goals to ensure you are on the correct academic path and meeting all college prep requirements.*
- Begin creating a college résumé:** *Create a format for your college résumé that you can continue to update as you engage in new activities.*
- Considering playing an NCAA eligible sport in college?** *Begin researching NCAA guidelines and high school academic requirements to ensure your eligibility by visiting eligibilitycenter.org.*
- Begin preparing and studying for the PSAT or PreACT:** *The summer between 10th and 11th grade is a perfect time to start using FREE tools to prep for the practice versions of the SAT and ACT.*

JUNIOR YEAR

Fall

- **Attend a college fair:** To see a list of both local and regional college fairs go to neacac.org.
- **Take the PSAT or PreACT:** These are practice versions of the college entrance exams.
- **Continue studying for the spring SAT or ACT:** If you do even 30 minutes of prep twice a week you will be ready to face the test this spring!

Spring

- **Attend Destination College at Plymouth State University on Saturday, March 20th, 2021:** For details on this FREE Center for College Planning event for high school juniors, go to destinationcollege.org.
- **Take the SAT or ACT:** You will take the SAT through your school. Check to see if the colleges you're considering require SAT Subject Tests. Spring of junior year is a great time to take them, if necessary.
- **Begin researching and developing a list of colleges you are interested in:** You can utilize college search engines, visit campus websites, or take campus tours.
- **Interested in Architecture, Art, Dance, Theater or Music?:** Inquire with each college to determine if a portfolio or audition is required. Both can be extensive, so the more time you have, the better.
- **Interested in Nursing?:** You may need to take the ATI TEAS exam (atitesting.com). Inquire with each college to determine if it is required for admission.

Winter

- **Register for senior year courses:** Remember colleges will see your senior year classes. Continue to challenge yourself to the best of your ability.
- **Consider special academic programs to get college credit while still in high school:** Advanced Placement (AP), Running Start or e-Start, SNHU in the High School, etc.

Summer

- **Visit college campuses:** Look for opportunities to get on different types of campuses; rural and urban, small, medium, and large. Get a feel for what you like and remain open to a variety of options.
- **Consider using the FAFSA4caster or a net price calculator to estimate financial aid:** Go to fafsa.gov to use the FAFSA4caster tool to get an idea of the federal financial aid your family may be eligible to receive.
- **Begin a family conversation about a college budget and each family member's realistic ability to contribute financially:** Getting on the same page about what your family can afford can help you choose your list of schools and ensure you have viable financial options to choose from in spring of senior year.
- **Start working on your college essay:** Utilize the summer to get your thoughts organized and start your essay so you won't have to "cram" it all in during the fall.
- **Attend a College Boot Camp:** Many high schools offer a "boot camp" in the summer to get students started on the college application process. If your school does not offer one, consider attending one presented by the Center for College Planning (For more information contact the CCP at **888.747.2382, x119**).

SENIOR YEAR

Fall

- **Narrow down your list of colleges:** Try using the 2-2-2 approach.
- **Retake the SAT or ACT:** You are responsible for sending your scores to ALL schools that require them. Go to collegeboard.org or act.org to learn how to send your scores.
- **Get organized!** Create a list that includes important information for your colleges of choice. Include deadlines, financial aid requirements and forms needed.
- **FAFSA online application and CSS Profile become available October 1st:** If a FAFSA is required by your college of choice, you simply need to file by the college's specified deadline. To make an appointment for free assistance filing your FAFSA, contact the Center for College Planning at **888.747.2382, x119**.
- **Work on college applications:** Colleges use many different online applications. Check with each of your colleges to determine which they use.

Spring

- **Once you have been accepted, the college will send you a financial aid award package:** For help interpreting your award package, attend a *Paying for College 101* program at your high school or meet with a Center for College Planning Counselor by calling **888.747.2382, x119**.
- **Compare award packages and calculate your estimated loan debt:** Go to the "Student Loan Calculator" at nhheaf.org for help estimating your future loan payment(s).
- **Make one last visit to your school of choice before sending your deposit:** Many colleges offer "admitted student days" where accepted students can visit the campus, meet faculty, and sample campus life one more time. If you can't visit, revisit the website and call admissions with any last minute questions.
- **MAY 1st – National Candidate Reply Day:** Accepted students must send in their admission deposit by this deadline in order to secure their spot in the upcoming freshman class. Planning to live on campus? A housing deposit may also be due at this time.

Winter

- **Submit completed college applications:** Deadlines can vary.
- **Apply for scholarships:** There are scholarships from national, regional and local sources, but in order to receive any scholarship, you need to apply! Don't limit your options; apply, apply, apply!
- **College decision letters arrive:** Every college has their own "turn around" time from when you apply to when their decision is sent, but a realistic time frame is four to eight weeks from when you apply.