

SENIOR YEAR COLLEGE/FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST

At any point - ask for help

- From your high school counselor
- From College OPTIONS (245-1845)
- From the college you applied to; don't hesitate to call the Admissions, Financial Aid or Housing office—they want to help!

September

- Attend the Financial Aid Information Night at your school. (check with your counselor for your school's date) www.collegeoptions.org
- Attend a Cash for College workshop (check with your counselor for your school's date) for free help completing the FAFSA or the CA DREAM Application. www.calgrants.org
- Estimate your Expected Family Contribution <https://www.ecmc.org/students/my-EFC-calculator.html>
- US Citizens and eligible non-citizens: Complete the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet, at www.fafsa.gov You and one of your parents should each create a Federal Student Aid ID so you can e-sign the FAFSA for faster processing. <https://fsaid.ed.gov>
- DREAM Application worksheet at www.caldreamact.org
- Create a personalized electronic or paper calendar of deadlines for college admission and financial aid applications.
- Start drafting essays for college and scholarship applications.
- Sign up for the SAT and/or ACT (www.sat.collegeboard.com or www.actstudent.org) if you haven't taken them.
- Memorize your Social Security number. If you do not have a Social Security number, talk to your counselor.

- Apply for a driver's license or state ID card if you don't already have one. You may need one for financial aid verification purposes.
- Research career options thoroughly; the better informed you are, the more effective your college search will be. www.onetonline.org
- Research colleges online. www.californiacolleges.edu www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator
- Attend local college fairs and meet college representatives visiting your school.
- Ask teachers, counselors, employers, and/or coaches for letters of recommendation (at least 2 weeks before a deadline).
- Your e-mail address should be appropriate for communicating with colleges, lenders & employers. Example: firstnamelastname@_____.com

October

- Oct 1:** FAFSA and CA Dream Applications are available online (www.fafsa.gov or www.caldreamact.org). Submit the appropriate application as early as possible. Be sure and use the DRT (Data Retrieval Tool) from FAFSA to report your reported income from the IRS. Provide required e-signatures and email address for faster processing. Due March 2 if you want to be considered for Cal Grant.
- The College Board's CSS PROFILE is an additional financial aid application that some private colleges require. Research if you need to complete this application. profileonline.collegeboard.org
- Oct 1** CSU & UC applications available. Check other colleges for app availability.
- Visit colleges or take a virtual tour online.
- Planning to live on-campus? Research what your potential colleges' housing application processes are; some have application deadlines as early as October.

November

- Nov 30** CSU & UC applications due. Check other colleges for deadlines. Priority application deadline for CSU campuses' Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).
- Start researching and applying for scholarships. Some have early deadlines.
- Review your FAFSA Student Aid Report and make corrections at www.fafsa.gov if necessary. If you don't receive your report within three weeks of submitting your FAFSA, call toll free 800-433-3243.

December

- Confirm official SAT/ACT scores were sent to colleges.
- Apply for scholarships at the colleges you have applied to; some deadlines are as early as December.

January

- Check your online portal at each college you applied to and your email on a **weekly basis**. Respond to colleges' requests for information promptly.
- Ask your counselor how your high school submits seniors' Cal Grant GPA (paper forms or electronic upload). If paper, fill out a paper Cal Grant GPA Verification form and turn it in to your counseling office by March 2nd. www.calgrants.org
- Keep a copy of everything you submit (paper or electronic copy).
- Watch for application confirmation emails from your college(s); create a "portal" for each college you applied to. Monitor each portal for admissions decisions.
- Apply for scholarships!

February

- Manage your Cal Grant status online using WebGrants for Students at www.webgrants4students.org