

TIMELINE FOR PLANNING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Get off to a good start with your grades. The grades you earn in ninth grade will count towards college admission and scholarships.
- Explore clubs and activities in and outside of school that will offer you the chance to develop your unique interests and abilities and your leadership skills. Consider becoming a volunteer in your community.
- Visit your counselor to plan out a four-year academic plan that will meet college entrance requirements and put you in the most challenging courses you can handle. If you expect to take Advanced Placement courses later, you may need to sign up for prerequisites now.
- Look into National Collegiate Athletic Association if you think you may want to participate in sports in college. Visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>
- Begin to research careers and talk to your parents about your interests and goals. Find opportunities to meet people working in fields that interest you.
- Begin compiling a resume of activities, honors, leadership positions, and job experience. Continue with this throughout high school because you will need this information for college applications and scholarship forms.
- Read for pleasure.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Consider registering for the PSAT. This test will help prepare you for the SAT I and help identify weaknesses in time to address them. Registration occurs in September – October in the counseling center. Test is given in October.
- Begin using *Naviance Family Connection*. *Naviance* is a web-based service designed especially for students and families. *Naviance* is used to help track and analyze data about college and career plans so it provides up-to-date information that's specific to our school. *Naviance* will allow you and your parents to stay ahead of the college process and receive communication from our school. You will be introduced to the program with your counselor where you will complete a career inventories.
- Continue to research colleges and become familiar with general college entrance requirements.
- Look into National Collegiate Athletic Association if you think you may want to participate in sports in college. Visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>
- Meet with your counselor to discuss post-secondary options.
- Attend the Council Rock College Information Night in Spring to hear important admissions information.
- Get involved in activities outside of the classroom. Work toward leadership positions in the activities you like best. Become involved in community service and other volunteer activities. Colleges like to see focus and commitment.
- Take Advanced Placement exams if eligible.
- Keep your grades up.

JUNIOR YEAR

- Get serious about your schoolwork if you haven't already. Junior- year grades are extremely important in the college admissions process, as is the rigor of your coursework.
- Stay involved with your activities.
- Take the PSAT in October to practice for the SAT I and to qualify for scholarships offered by the National Merit Corporation.
- Attend the college visitation sessions offered at the high school can be found on Naviance.
- Continue using *Naviance* to access college information and admissions statistics.
- December/January attend meetings with counselor in small groups to discuss the college search and application process.
- Discuss with your parents the information presented in the junior college group meetings. Share with them the information that was distributed.
- Review PSAT test results with your parent or counselor and decide whether you would benefit from an SAT I preparation course.
- Do individual research into colleges best suited to your needs by using computer programs and/or writing to colleges for information. Don't forget about using *Naviance* for critical college information.
- If still interested in participating in college athletics, become familiar with eligibility requirements by visiting. <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>
- Check with schools to see if they prefer or require the SAT or ACT. Most colleges accept either test. Many are becoming **test-optional**.
- Take the SAT I at least **twice** in the spring. Register online at www.collegeboard.org.
- Consider taking the ACT exam. Register online at www.act.org.
- Attend Council Rock College Information Night in the Spring.
- In the spring meet with your counselor to develop a preliminary list of college choices. Identify the characteristics of a college that matter to you – size, location, distance, cost, academic rigor, social environment, diversity, major. Use *Naviance* to do a college search and view college information. Visit specific college's websites for the most accurate information.
- Ask teachers for letters of recommendation.
- Take Advanced Placement exams if eligible.
- Make college visits in spring and summer.
- Over the summer narrow list of college choices to a minimum of one "reach", one "best match" and one "likely."
- Update resume of activities, honors, leadership positions, and job experience. This information will be requested on college applications and scholarship forms.

SENIOR YEAR

- Schedule a college planning conference with counselor to answer any questions, review transcript, and ask about process for letter of recommendation, if needed.
- Narrow down college list.
- Finish any campus tours.
- Work on college essay.
- Start working on college applications. Most applications become available **August 1st**. Most students will use Common App www.commonapp.org or the application for the college's website.
- Use *Naviance* to access college information and request transcripts be sent electronically.
- Register for fall SAT/ACT testing before December if needed. List colleges who should receive scores at time of registration. Most colleges are going test-optional but double check schools/programs.
- Keep an eye on Naviance for fall College Visits. Times will be during the school day.
- If plan on participating in athletics in college you need to register with the NCAA clearinghouse at: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>
- In the fall attend the Financial Aid night offered at Council Rock.
- File financial aid forms after October 1. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov for more information.
- Check to see if you need to send the CSS profile for financial aid and scholarship opportunities. Check out www.collegeboard.org. for more information.
- Research scholarships.
- File your applications, electronically, early in your senior year in order to receive the most favorable consideration from the colleges. Early November is suggested as a good general deadline for most applications. All other applications should be completed prior to December vacation (deadline for transcript requests is usually mid-December). **It is your responsibility to pay attention to deadlines.**
- Request SAT/ACT scores be sent directly to the colleges if required. For more information go to www.collegeboard.org or www.act.org. Failure to do so will delay your application process.
- Students will receive more information about the Transcript Request Process from the Counseling Office.
- If a college requires you to obtain recommendations from teachers, it is your responsibility to ask the teacher if he/she would be willing to write one for you. Remember the teacher's teaching responsibilities come first, so allow plenty of time before deadlines. Teachers will submit through Naviance. Ask teachers who know you well and who will write positive letters. Letters from a coach, activity leader, or adult who knows you well outside of school are also valuable.
- Mid-year grades will be sent to colleges by the counseling office upon request. They are not automatically sent to all colleges to which you have applied.

- Inquire about personal interviews at your favorite colleges.
- Follow up to make sure colleges have received all application information including recommendations, transcripts, and test scores.
- Watch your email/mail for acceptances from colleges.
- Watch email/mail for notification of financial awards.
- Make final choice and notify all schools of your intent by May 1.
- Complete Senior Survey in Naviance so your counselor knows where to send transcript.
- At anytime during this process do not hesitate to ask your counselor questions.