

Family Action Plan: 12th Grade

Senior year is a whirlwind of activities. This is a big year for your child as he or she balances schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and the college application process. Use the suggestions below to help you and your child successfully navigate this important time.

SUMMER

- **Visit colleges together.** If you haven't already, make plans to check out the campuses of colleges in which your child is interested. Use the [Campus Visit Checklist](#) to learn how to get the most out of these experiences.
- **Ask how you can help your senior finalize a college list.** You can help him or her choose which colleges to apply to by weighing how well each college meets his or her needs, for example. Find out more about [how to finalize a college list](#).
- **Find out a college's actual cost.** Once your 12th-grader has a list of a few colleges he or she is interested in, use the [Net Price Calculator](#) together to determine the potential for financial aid and the true out-of-pocket cost — or net price — of each college.
- **Encourage your child to get started on applications.** He or she can get the easy stuff out of the way now by filling in as much required information on college applications as possible. Read about [how to get started on applications](#).
- **Help your child decide about applying early.** If your senior is set on going to a certain college, he or she should think about whether applying early is a good option. Now is the time to decide because early applications are usually due in November. Read about the pros and cons of [applying early](#).
- **Gather financial documents.** To apply for most financial aid, your child will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You'll need your most recent tax returns and an FSA ID to complete the FAFSA, which opens Oct. 1.

FALL

- **Encourage your child to meet with the school counselor.** This year, he or she will work with the counselor to complete and submit college applications. Learn more about [the counselor's role in applying to college](#).
- **Create a calendar with your child.** This should include application deadlines and other important dates. Your child can find specific colleges' deadlines in [College Search](#). If your child saves colleges to a list there, he or she can get a custom online calendar that shows those colleges' deadlines.
- **Help your child prepare for college admission tests.** Many seniors retake college admission tests, such as the SAT®, in the fall. Learn more about helping your 12th-grader [prepare for admission tests](#).
- **Help your child find and apply for scholarships.** He or she can find out about scholarship opportunities from the school counselor. Your high school student will need to request and complete scholarship applications and submit them on time. Learn more about [scholarships](#).