

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

When should
I do what?

Freshman and Sophomore Years

- Work hard and keep your grades up!
- Begin your college search
 - Visit [CollegeBoard.org](https://collegeboard.org) and [CFNC.org](https://cfnc.org) to research colleges
- Explore your interests
 - Class choices, volunteering, working, etc.
- Get involved
 - Extracurricular activities, sports, clubs, etc.
- Prepare for the PreACT (administered here at AFHS) and PSAT

TIPS: GET ORGANIZED!

● Create a College List

- Include “realistic” schools, “reach” schools, and at least one “safety” school
- see list of NC Colleges’ average GPAs, SAT and ACT scores to help

● Create a Master Calendar

- Include open house dates, application deadlines, financial aid deadlines, scholarship deadlines, ACT and SAT test dates, and whatever else applies to you!

JUNIOR YEAR: FALL

- ① Keep your grades up!
- ① Meet with your counselor
- ① Take the PSAT (to qualify for National Merit Scholarships)
- ① Find SAT and ACT dates and plan when to take them

JUNIOR YEAR: SPRING

- Keep your grades up!
- Sign up to take the SAT or ACT at least once in the Spring and again next Fall
 - All Juniors at AFHS will take the ACT on February 28
 - Register online at CollegeBoard.org (SAT) or ACTstudent.org (ACT)
- Register for Senior year classes (check college entrance requirements to plan any necessary classes)
- Ask Junior teachers to write a letter of recommendation (because senior teachers will still be new to you)

JUNIOR-SENIOR YEAR SUMMER

- ① Visit campuses of colleges on your list - know what you are looking for
 - Admissions requirements
 - Examples: Do I need a Fine Arts credit to apply? Do I need to create a portfolio to apply?
 - Programs of study offered
 - Examples: Does this college have the major I want? Do I need to be accepted to the school before applying to the major I want?
 - Location
 - Size
 - Campus Life
 - Academic Life
 - Cost

JUNIOR-SENIOR YEAR SUMMER, cont.

- If taking the SAT or ACT in the Fall, study to improve scores
- Prepare drafts of application essays and a resume while you're not busy with other schoolwork
- Create a calendar of all deadlines and goals for college applications
- If you are an athlete planning to continue playing a sport in college, register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EARLY ACTION AND EARLY DECISION

- **Early Action:** admissions procedure to notify student of early acceptance; students are not obligated to accept offer of admission
- **Early Decision:** candidates submit credentials early to one college (usually by October 15) and are notified of their status by December; students must go to college if accepted.

How to Apply

- CFNC (All North Carolina colleges and universities)
 - Common App (15 North Carolina colleges and universities use it)
 - College or University Individual Website
 - Paper
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- There are application fees with EACH college application you submit.
 - College Application Week (November of your senior year!)

SENIOR YEAR: FALL

- Know that you must ask teachers and counselors for recommendations **at least two weeks** in advance of deadlines
 - When asking for recommendations, turn in your student and parent “Brag Sheet”
- Finalize college choices and update your calendar
- Prepare Early Decision and Early Action applications ASAP
- Write drafts of application essays and ask teachers and others to proofread them
 - For Early Decision and Early Action deadlines, finish essays NOW!
- Remember to have your SAT and ACT test scores sent to colleges! You are responsible for having them sent!!

SENIOR YEAR: SPRING

- Pay Attention to the AFHS Student Services Website for scholarship and financial aid opportunities
- We will have a Financial Aid Advisor next year! Schedule an appointment with them for extra assistance with financial planning.
- Submit your FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)! It opens October 1st!
- Keep your grades up! Colleges will see them!
 - *Check with colleges before changing your **spring semester, senior year class schedule.***

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!