

NAVIGATING YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE

FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

February-March
2026

Fall Checklist for High School Seniors

During your senior year, you will finalize your college choice. This year is filled with admission applications, scholarship essays, financial aid information, and the need to meet deadlines. Throughout your senior year, continue to build your resume by achieving academic success, as well as participating in extracurricular activities. Colleges are interested in well-rounded students.

The college preparation that takes place during your senior year is filled with many details and paperwork. It is very important that you involve your parents with this process.

Below are the tasks you should complete during the fall term:

- ☐ Take the ACT, Classic Learning Test (CLT), and/or SAT.
- ☐ Continue working on your admissions essays.
- ☐ If you haven't already done so, sign up for an FSA ID to complete your FAFSA online. Remind your parents that they will need an FSA ID, too. Make sure to protect your FSA ID and keep it in a secure place so that you will have it later when you need it. Keep copies of all financial aid and enrollment documents in a file. Contact the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-4FED-AID or 1-800-433-3243 for assistance.
- ☐ Plan to attend a FAFSA preparation event (free FAFSA advice) near you.
- ☐ Complete your FAFSA online to determine your financial aid eligibility.
- ☐ Watch for an email notice indicating that your FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS) is ready.
- ☐ Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) for errors and make corrections as indicated.
- ☐ Attend college planning and/or financial aid information nights and college fairs. If you cannot attend, ask if you and your parents can borrow a video of the presentation from your counselor.
- ☐ Visit your top school choices. If possible, make appointments with faculty, staff, and students.
- ☐ Meet with your counselor to develop a college admission and financial aid application plan.
- ☐ Contact the schools' financial aid offices to determine which forms they require. Some schools may require special forms.
- ☐ Finalize portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent if required for admission.