

SENIOR ORGANIZATIONAL HINTS FOR COLLEGE (OR HOW TO HOLD SENIOR STRESS TO A MINIMUM)

College Application Process

- Attend College Night in September of your senior year. (September)
- Finalize your list of colleges and finish making campus visits. (September)
- Use your counselor! Meet frequently and use his or her expertise with college applications. (Fall)
- Go online to www.facts.org or www.collegeboard.com to find college websites to apply online. Remember that these applications can usually be saved and then visited several times until finished. Once a student hits "Submit" no further editing may be done. Be careful! (Fall)
- Check to see if the application requires an essay. Write it carefully as this portion of the application can make a significant difference. Have a teacher assist with editing. (Fall)
- If references are required please give teachers and counselors a few weeks notice for completion. Supply a brief resume of clubs, activities, community service hours, etc.
- Pick up transcript request form from guidance office, complete and have parent sign, return to guidance with \$1.00 per transcript requested. (Fall)
- Remember to allow plenty of time in order to meet college application deadlines. The earlier you apply, the better your chance of securing acceptance. (Fall)
- Make sure you have taken your last round of SATs and ACTs. (September/October)
- After applications are submitted, transcripts and test score sent, please stay in contact with the university admissions counselors to ensure they have received all necessary application materials. (October-June)
- Submit request for final transcripts to guidance the week of graduation. (May/June)

Scholarship Application Process

- Stop by the career/scholarship center to establish a relationship with Ms. Daniels, the scholarship coordinator. (September)
- Ms. Daniels will help you draft your initial scholarship essay. Please complete this task early in the year. (September)
- Keep checking the career center (once a week/twice a week) for additional scholarships and complete those applications. (September-June)
- Use the scholarship searches at www.facts.org, www.fastweb.com, www.nelnet.net and other sites on the Internet. (September-June)
- If references are required please give teachers and counselors a few weeks notice for completion. Supply a brief resume of clubs, activities, community service hours, etc.
- Apply to every scholarship for which you realistically may qualify. There is a lot of \$\$ out there for college bound students! (September-June)
- Return all completed scholarship applications to Ms. Daniels. (She will review her specific instructions with you when you begin applying.)
- In February/March, counselors will call you down to fill out the Florida Student Financial Aid Application for the Bright Futures Scholarship. This application opens in December. You may wait for your counselor to call you down to apply or you may do so at www.myfloridastudentfinancialaid.org. (December-March)

Financial Aid Application Process

- You and your parents should attend one of the three financial aid workshops held in January. West Zone financial aid night will be held in January. →

- After January 1st, go to the website www.fafsa.ed.gov to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. (January/February)
- Make certain you and you parents complete the income tax forms as soon after January 1st as possible in order to complete the FAFSA. (January/February)
- Check each institution's FAFSA deadline so you submit before those deadlines. Each college has a different deadline for aid. (January)
- Contact the university/college/high tech financial aid office to see if an institutional financial aid application is required in addition to the FAFSA. (January/February)
- When the Student Aid Report (SAR) is received, contact the financial aid office of the school of your choice to get an idea of a tentative award package. (Upon receipt)
- Beginning December 1st, you may complete the State of Florida Student Financial Aid Application as mentioned in the scholarship section above. Or, you may wait to complete the state application when your counselor calls you down in the spring. The state of Florida application determines your eligibility for state aid including the Bright Futures Scholarship Program (December-June)

Student Athlete Requirements

- Student Athletes must see Mrs. Marzonie, our athletic counselor, for advising. (September)
- Any student who will participate in Division I or II athletics in college needs to pick up an NCAA Clearinghouse form in the guidance office or register online through the website www.ncaaclearinghouse.org or www.facts.org. (September)
- Complete a transcript release form (printed from the NCAA Clearinghouse website when you apply) and submit it to the guidance office indicating that the transcript should be sent to the Clearinghouse. (You will need to include \$2.00 for a current transcript and a final transcript to be sent at graduation.) (September)

Test Information

- Take the SAT or ACT for application to a community college or four-year university.
- Indicate the schools to receive test scores on the registration form.
- Indicate 9999 on the SAT or ACT registration form if the results of your tests should go to the NCAA Clearinghouse.
- The SAT contains math, critical reading, and an essay. There is a penalty for guessing.
- The ACT contains math, reading, English, social sciences, and an essay. There is NO penalty for guessing.
- See your counselor for test taking strategies before the taking the SAT or ACT. A review of these strategies is helpful as you approach each test. These strategies are also detailed in the sample test booklets available to students in the guidance office.
- SAT and ACT prefer that students register online for the tests.
SAT website: www.collegeboard.com. ACT website: www.actstudent.org.

Bright Futures Scholarship

- Check with your school counselor immediately to see if you meet qualifications (you are ultimately responsible). Students can also check eligibility on www.facts.org.
- Starting December 1st fill out the state financial application (mentioned in previous sections) at www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org or at www.facts.org under the financial aid tab.
- Tentative notification for awards will be made after the first semester of the senior year and continues through July.
- The Florida Academic Scholarship requires 75 hours of community service. See your counselor for acceptable locations at which to complete community service hours and then submit proof of completed hours to your counselor.