



# COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS SENIOR CHECKLIST



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date: May of \_\_\_\_\_

Are you planning on....Graduating high school? ...Going to college? ...Getting a job? Make sure you are prepared by following these steps throughout your junior year.

**Update your four-year high school plan:**

- Think about what you want you'd like to accomplish your final year!.
- Take classes recommended for college preparation. Follow the recommended [core curriculum](#) for Missouri high school students. Talk to your school counselor about scheduling classes that will help you reach your goals.

**Participate in extracurricular activities, community service activities, and leadership opportunities:**

- Academics aren't everything. Explore your interest in a sport, school club, music, or drama group.
- Explore and participate in community volunteer activities.
- Explore leadership opportunities in school activities and outside organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or other community groups.
- Remember that colleges would rather see real involvement in one activity instead of a loose connection to several.
- Update your Letter of Recommendation form and Resume!
- If you participate in high school sports, review the [National Collegiate Athletic Association \(NCAA\) requirements](#) for college athletes.

**August Before Senior Year:**

- Register for the September ACT if you didn't take it as a junior, or if you aren't satisfied with your score and want to take it again (remember that your counselor can help you with fee waivers). Colleges will not be able to use scores on these tests later than December!
  - [ACT](#)
- Come up with a preliminary list of colleges that includes [reach](#), [match](#), and [safety](#) schools.
- Explore the websites of the colleges that interest you to learn about admissions requirements.
- Check your senior class schedule to make sure you are taking the English, Math, Social Science, Science, and Foreign Language classes that you'll need for your top-choice colleges.
- Look over the [Common Application](#) and begin thinking about potential topics for your [personal essay](#).
  - [Common Application Link](#)
- Visit campuses and interview with college representatives if appropriate.
- Make sure you have or will complete your 50 hours of A+ Tutoring if you are going to use your A+ Scholarship money.

**September:**

- Register for the October/November ACT and/or SAT if necessary.
  - [ACT](#)
  - [SAT](#)
- Meet with your school counselor to discuss your post-secondary plans.
- Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. Follow the process required by your high school or provide a stamped, addressed envelope, the appropriate college forms, and an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities to each person writing you a recommendation. Use the Letter of Recommendation Form that you have been updating throughout high school.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Letter of Recommendation Form](#)
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges: meeting with college representatives who visit your high schools during the fall and visiting campuses. Seniors at Sturgeon HS have one college visit day to use 1<sup>st</sup> semester and one to use 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. You can get a permission slip from the counseling office.
  - [Click here](#) for a list of questions to ask on your college visit (scroll down to find)
- Research and apply for scholarships! You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Paying for College](#)
- Narrow down your list of colleges and begin to consider [reach](#), [match](#), and [safety](#) schools. Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school. Find out if you qualify for any scholarships at these schools.
- Create a checklist and calendar to chart and keep track of:
  - Standardized test dates, registration deadlines, and fees
  - College application due dates

- Financial aid application forms and deadlines
- Other materials you'll need for college applications (recommendations, transcripts, essays, etc.)
- Your high school's application processing deadlines

#### □ **October:**

- Take the ACT or SAT as appropriate.
- Continue to research schools to narrow your list to roughly 6-8 schools.
- Apply to colleges of your choice!
  - Some colleges will have deadlines as early as this month. These would include rolling admission, priority, early decision, and early action deadlines.
  - If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.
- It is time to fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). File the form as soon after Oct. 1 as possible. In addition to determining your eligibility for federal funds, many colleges and states use the form when distributing grants, so don't delay. Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.
  - [FAFSA Link](#)
  - If necessary attend [FAFSA FRENZY's](#) to get help with filling out the FAFSA
- Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- Research and apply for scholarships! You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Paying for College](#)

#### □ **November**

- Register for the December ACT and/or SAT if necessary.
  - [ACT](#)
  - [SAT](#)
- Take the November SAT if necessary
- Don't let your grades slide! It is easy to be distracted from school work when working on applications. Senior slump can be disastrous for your admissions chances.
- Make sure you have submitted all components of your applications if you are applying to colleges with November deadlines for [early decision](#) or preferred application.
- Put the final touches on your application essay, and get feedback on your essays from your school counselor and/or teachers.
- Research and apply for scholarships! You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Paying for College](#)
- If you submitted the FAFSA, you should receive the [Student Aid Report](#) (SAR). Carefully look it over for accuracy. Errors can cost you thousands of dollars.

#### □ **December - January**

- Complete your applications for regular admissions. Many Missouri colleges have December 15<sup>th</sup> deadlines!
- Make sure you've had your test scores sent to all colleges that require them along with your mid-year transcript.
- Confirm that your letters of recommendation have been sent.
- If you are accepted into a school through an early decision, be sure to follow directions carefully. Submit required forms, and notify the other schools to which you applied of your decision.
- Continue to focus on your grades and extracurricular involvement.
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges: meeting with college representatives who visit your high schools during the fall and visiting campuses. Seniors at Sturgeon HS have one college visit day to use 1<sup>st</sup> semester and one to use 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. You can get a permission slip from the counseling office.
  - [Click here](#) for a list of questions to ask on your college visit (scroll down to find)
- Research and apply for scholarships! You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Paying for College](#)
- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers may arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

#### □ **February – March**

- Contact colleges that didn't send you a confirmation receipt for your application.
- Don't put off applying to schools with [rolling admissions](#) or late deadlines – the available spaces can fill up fast!
- While most of your applications will be complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, don't slack in the classroom. The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No Senioritis!

- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers may arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.
  - Don't panic; many, many decisions are not mailed out until April!
- Research and apply for scholarships! You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Paying for College](#)

#### □ April

- Keep track of all acceptances, rejections, and waitlists.
- If waitlisted, [learn more about waitlists](#) and move ahead with other plans. You can always change your plans if you get off a waitlist.
- Keep your grades up!
- If you have ruled out any colleges that accepted you, notify them. This is a courtesy to other applicants, and it will help the colleges manage their waitlists and extend the correct number of acceptance letters.
- Go to the student open houses/registration days of the college you have been accepted to if offered. Please try to save one of your college visit days for this activity.
- Make sure that you have requested that your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.
- If you are "wait-listed" by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.
- Research and apply for scholarships! You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
  - [Sturgeon School Counseling Website – Paying for College](#)

#### □ May – June

- Avoid Senioritis! An acceptance letter doesn't mean you can stop working!
- Most schools have a deposit deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup>. Don't be late! If needed, you may be able to request an extension.
- Have your final transcripts sent to your college.
- Send thank you letters to everyone who helped you in the application process including your parents/guardians! Let your mentors and recommenders know the results of your college search.
- Send thank you letters to everyone who gave you scholarships!
- Graduate! Congratulations!

#### □ June – August after Senior Year

- Read all mailings from your college carefully. Often important registration and housing materials is sent in the summer.
- Register for your classes as soon as possible. Classes often fill, and registration is usually on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If you get your housing assignment, take advantage of the summer to get to know your roommate (email, social media, phone). Figure out who will bring what.

#### □ General Recommendations:

- Work hard in your classes! Your GPA and class rank are factors used in college admissions and scholarships (free money)!
- Be at school every day possible. Attendance is a key factor in student academic and social success. Your attendance is also a huge factor in determining you're A+ Scholarship Program eligibility.
- If you are having difficulty in any of your classes, don't give up! Talk to your teacher, advisor, or counselor for help.
- Read as much as you can! It will give you new ideas, make you a better thinker, and build your vocabulary. It will also help improve your scores on your college prep tests such as the ACT and/or SAT.

#### **Helpful Links for College and Career Readiness Planning:**

- <http://dhe.mo.gov/ppc/12thgrade.php>
- <https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/career-education>
- <http://www.ccrscenter.org/>
- <http://collegeapps.about.com/od/admissionstimeline/tp/12th-grade-timeline.htm>