**List of steps our students take for applying to and attending college:**

**Junior Year – Spring**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Completed** | **Step/Activity** |
|  | Establish a personal email you will use for all your college and financial aid communication. |
|  | Do SAT Prep work (prepare using online prep resources) |
|  | Sign up for SAT and ACT (in advance, by deadlines)* Go to counselor to get fee waiver (can use for two tests)
* Print out all appropriate IDs and test ticket
 |
|  | Visit colleges and go to college fairs* Speak to counselors, Ms. Grande, AVID teachers about possible college visits and fairs
 |
|  | Create of list of colleges to apply to* You MUST speak to counselors, Ms. Grande, AVID teachers and get their input on colleges; do not try to put this list together all by yourself.
* Start with 20 – 30 colleges, and then gradually narrow down to approximately 15 colleges.
 |
|  | Write a solid draft for essay for the Common App and other college applications. Get others to read it and provide suggestions for editing (have teachers, counselors, other students, other adults read it and help you edit it).  |
|  | Contact your teachers and counselor for letters of recommendation |
|  | Complete and submit the Senior Packet* Complete a resume and list of activities
* Answer questions about you and your parents (your interests, what you do in free time, etc.)
 |
|  | Begin understanding the financial aid process, including gathering information for the FAFSA. This includes talking to your parents about gathering the following:* Get copies of parents’ tax records (1040, etc. for 2019; the forms they are filling out this spring for taxes)
* Get parents social security numbers
* Know their date of marriage and other important personal information FAFSA asks for
 |

**Summer before Senior Year**

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| --- | --- |
| **Completed** | **Step/Activity** |
|  | Continue activities listed above from Junior year (SATs, research on colleges, work on Common App, visit colleges) |
|  | Gather information for the FAFSA (see below)* Get copies of parents’ tax records (1040, etc. for 2019; the forms they are filling out this spring for taxes)
* Get parents social security numbers
* Know their date of marriage and other important personal information FAFSA asks for
 |
|  | Begin to finalize your list of colleges |
|  | Continue writing your Common App essay and any supplemental essays colleges require. Get others to read it and provide suggestions for editing (have teachers, counselors, other students, other adults read it). |

**Senior Year – Fall Semester**

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| **Completed** | **Step/Activity** |
|  | Continue activities from Junior year and the summer. |
|  | Finish writing your Common App essay and any supplemental essays colleges require. Get others to read it and provide suggestions for editing (have teachers, counselors, other students, other adults read it). |
|  | Confirm letters of recommendations are completed |
|  | Communicate with college admissions officers (in person or via e-mail) as needed. Schedule interviews (for colleges that offer them) |
|  | Complete and submit your FAFSA (October 1 is when FAFSA opens for registering)* Sign up for your parents and your FAFSA
* Attend
 |
|  | Know college application deadlines. Decide which colleges you’ll apply to for Early Decision, Early Action, Regular Decision. Also, know “merit scholarship” deadlines for Virginia colleges.* Early Decision/Early Action – Usually November 1, November 15, or December 1.
* Merit Scholarship Deadlines (for some VA colleges) – Usually November 1 or December 1
* Regular Decision – Usually some time between January and February 1.
 |
|  | Turn in transcript request form (30 days in advance of deadlines) |
|  | Some colleges (for example, Virginia Tech) as for a Self-Reported Academic Record (SRAR) instead of doing transcripts |
|  | Check e-mails from colleges regarding application and financial aid information. |
|  | Check for e-mails on FAFSA, confirming its been processed and look for your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). |
|  | Complete CSS profile (another financial aid form some colleges require)* Check deadlines for colleges for CSS profile.
* Gather all the things you needed for FAFSA plus other additional financial information from your families.
* For some students, get letters confirming non-custodial parent status.

  |
|  | If you receive an email or letter from colleges requesting “verification” of your FAFSA information, make sure to gather additional financial information (such as an IRS transcript) and send it to colleges by the date they request. |
|  | Apply for scholarships* Use Naviance to search for scholarships.
* Speak to Ms. Grande, your counselor, AVID teachers about possible scholarships.
* Write essays for scholarship applications.
* Get PDF copies of your transcript (non-official) and your FAFSA Student Aid Report, or request additional transcripts sent to scholarship organizations.
* Get letters of recommendations for scholarships (you can use the same people you used for your college application recommendations).
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**Senior Year – 2nd Semester**

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| **Completed** | **Step/Activity** |
|  | Keep up on communications with colleges on applications and financial aid. Contact colleges as needed. |
|  | Continue to apply for scholarships.* Get a copy of your updated transcript with semester grades.
* Confirm letters of recommendations are sent to scholarship organizations.
 |
|  | Finalize your decision for which college you’ll attend (the final deadline for this is May 1).* Visit colleges to help finalize your decision.
* Review financial aid information and compare and contrast offers.
* Complete the acceptance forms to confirm you’re attending the college you choose (do this by May 1).
* Submit your deposit (usually $250 - $1000) to confirm your attendance at that college.
 |
|  | Complete all registration forms for the college you’re attending.* Housing forms.
* Attending orientation.
* Make necessary payments to college you will attend and complete all financial aid forms to confirm acceptance of aid and any loans you may take.
 |
|  | Go to scholarship awards events where you are receiving a scholarship.Provide scholarship organizations the name of the college you will attend, information on where to send the money for the scholarship, and any other information they’ll need. |

\*\*\*A BIG THING TO REMEMBER: **Deadlines matter!** You MUST get things for college done in advance so you meet all the deadlines.