

College Admission & Financial Aid Checklist/Calendar

FALL of SENIOR YEAR (First Semester)

SEPTEMBER

- ✓ Make a list of important deadlines for college admission and financial aid
- ✓ Sign up to take the SAT or ACT... *with writing for UC's* (This should be seniors second test. The first test should have been taken sometime in February-June of your junior year) **(NOTE: MOST SAT/ACT TEST CENTERS ARE CURRENTLY CLOSED DUE TO COVID19 so ALL CSU's and UC's and 70% of private colleges have gone test optional for Senior Class of 2021)**
- ✓ Look into taking Advanced Placement (AP) HS courses & registering to take their exams in May for college credit
- ✓ Meet with college representatives visiting your high school **VIRTUALLY** or plan to attend **VIRTUAL** college fairs or **VIRTUAL** college tours of their campuses by visiting their websites
- ✓ Ask colleges you're applying to about their financial aid programs
- ✓ Male students will need to register with the US Selective Service at www.sss.gov so they'll be eligible for federal student aid or plan to pick up an application at any local post office.
- ✓ Check out monthly scholarships on MCS Scholarship bulletin by visiting <https://www.mcs4kids.com/district/counseling-and-guidance/college-counseling/financial-aid>
- ✓ Look into the AmeriCorps program, which can allow you to earn educational awards in return for community service <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps/join-amicorps>
- ✓ Research military branches and their educational benefits <http://todaysmilitary.com>

OCTOBER

- ✓ Complete and submit the FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1st <https://fafsa.ed.gov>
- ✓ You and one parent **MUST EACH** register for a FSA ID# at <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch> so you can electronically submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online. Or for those students who don't have a social security number, submit the California Dream Act Application online <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>
- ✓ Gather necessary tax information and documentation in preparation for filling out the FAFSA or Cal Dream Act <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out>
- ✓ Sign up to attend **VIRTUAL** financial aid workshops held after the school day is over
- ✓ Visit your top college choices by attending College Preview Days or take **VIRTUAL** tours of their campuses
- ✓ Ask your administration, teachers, counselors, employers, coaches and/or church leaders for letters of recommendations for private school college admission and/or scholarship applications (CSU's & UC's DO NOT REQUIRE THEM)
- ✓ Get started filling out forms and writing essays for college admission applications and/or scholarship applications

NOVEMBER

- ✓ MCS District will electronically submit the GPA Verification forms for the Cal Grant **after** you submit your FAFSA online
- ✓ Note which colleges require additional financial aid applications/information (such as CSS profile for private colleges)
- ✓ Submit your college admission applications. **DEADLINE to SUBMIT UC & CSU APPLICATIONS is NOVEMBER 30th**
- ✓ Begin the process of searching & applying for scholarships <https://www.mcs4kids.com/district/counseling-and-guidance/college-counseling/financial-aid>

DECEMBER

- ✓ MCS District will electronically submit GPA Verification forms for the Cal Grant **after** you submit your FAFSA online
- ✓ Keep a photocopy or printout of everything you submit for FAFSA
- ✓ Check your mailbox and email regularly for college admission letters and financial aid offers from your colleges if you applied early decision or early action
- ✓ Continue to search & apply for scholarships

SPRING of SENIOR YEAR (Second Semester)

JANUARY

- ✓ MCS District will electronically submit GPA Verification forms for the Cal Grant **after** you submit your FAFSA online
- ✓ Keep a photocopy or printout of everything you submit for FAFSA
- ✓ Be sure to meet all financial aid deadlines. **DEADLINE to SUBMIT FAFSA is MARCH 2**
- ✓ Seniors who are accepted & plan to attend a CSU, **MUST** demonstrate readiness to take college level coursework in English and Math. Visit the CSU's, EAP website for more detailed info regarding multiply measure options to help you determine if you're exempt from having to take EARLY START summer courses in English and/or Math <https://www.csustan.edu/early-assessment-program>
- ✓ Complete and electronically submit the FAFSA or Cal Dream Act Application by the MARCH 2 deadline
- ✓ Continue to search & apply for scholarships

FEBRUARY/MARCH

- ✓ MCS District will electronically submit GPA Verification forms for the Cal Grant **after** you submit your FAFSA online
- ✓ Check your mailbox, email or college portal for college admissions notifications and financial aid award letters
- ✓ Review your Student Aid Report (SAR), which you should receive within weeks after submitting the FAFSA online
- ✓ Respond promptly to any requests for additional information from your college
- ✓ Respond immediately to the Financial Aid office of your college, especially if you are selected for Verification through FAFSA <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pa7w6qX8jFw> **NOTE:** Until you've made the necessary changes, your financial aid will be put on hold. Contact your college's Financial Aid office if you have questions or need assistance
- ✓ Submit FAFSA or Cal Dream Act Application by the **MARCH 2 deadline**
- ✓ After submitting your FAFSA, create a Cal Grant account on "Web Grants for Students" at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/> then click on Award Detail to view what grants you qualify for
- ✓ Continue to search & apply for scholarships

APRIL

- ✓ Review, evaluate & compare all financial aid offers carefully. Use the following organizational sheet to help compare https://collegecost.ed.gov/shopping_sheet.pdf . Don't forget to contact your college's Financial Aid office with any special circumstances
- ✓ First consider grants, scholarships and other aid that you don't have to pay back, before accepting a student loan
- ✓ Decide on a college you've been accepted to and notify them of your "intent" to enroll by **MAY 1st**.... and don't forget to also send in your deposit to hold your spot by MAY 1st
- ✓ Make sure to sign and return your college's financial aid award letter in your college portal account, noting the awards you're accepting and the ones you're declining
- ✓ Notify the colleges that you **WON'T** be attending in the fall
- ✓ Continue to search & apply for scholarships

MAY

- ✓ To be cleared for graduation, 12th graders must take the Senior Exit Survey in Naviance from May1st -May 7th. Completing the survey is also how Downey's Records Office will know what college to send your final transcript
- ✓ If you received a Cal Grant, make sure to log on to "Web Grants for Students" at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/> and verify the date you graduated. **If you don't do this, then your grant money will NOT be released to the Financial Aid office of your attending college**
- ✓ AP Exams are typically administered in May
- ✓ Look for a summer job to help with upcoming college costs or do a summer internship
- ✓ Continue to search & apply for scholarships
- ✓ **CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATE!!!**