



Saint Joseph's

CATHOLIC ACADEMY



College Search Timeline for Freshmen

SEPTEMBER:

Settle into the routine of high school.

Keep in mind that colleges look for a student with a challenging curriculum, strong grades and depth (i.e. quality) in co-curricular activities.

Visit <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/> Preparation tips for the PSAT 8/9, sample test questions, and information on what test scores really mean are included on this web site.

College fairs, hotel receptions and parent nights in your local area are great venues to meet admission representatives. Go to these programs!

Visit and tour a college online. Be sure to review requirements for admissions.

Start a file for ALL of your writing assignments. Some colleges require graded papers as a part of the application process.

Create and print a 48-month calendar and post in a highly visible area. Print important dates (testing, college tours, application deadlines, etc.) for the next four years.

OCTOBER

Take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT 8/9).

Due to recent rule changes, be mindful of NCAA requirements if you want to play Division I or II sports in college. For more information on the NCAA Eligibility Center, go to www.eligibilitycenter.org

Get to know your school counselor. The more frequent your contact with your counselor, the more assistance she can give you.

NOVEMBER

Have a family discussion regarding college costs. Research scholarships. Start looking into eligibility requirements for federal and alternative student loans.

Within their Family Connection account in Naviance, students should complete the StrengthsExplorer and other surveys and add schools to the "colleges I'm thinking about" section.

If high school alumni visit during the holidays, talk with them about their college experiences.

DECEMBER

PSAT 8/9 score reports arrive now or next month. Thoroughly review your results and identify the test skills you need to develop before taking the PSAT and SAT.

Take inventory of yourself. What subjects do you like? What outside activities give you pleasure? What areas of study might you like to explore in more depth in the next three years? Explore future options. Talk to people about their careers. Talk to older students who are in college. Ask them what they would have done differently in high school. Talk with your teachers about your future. Ask them what college they attended. Ask them why they went into the career they did.

JANUARY

Through the specific admissions website for prospective students, request to be placed on the mailing list of colleges and universities. More importantly, visit the college website regularly and conduct research on the institution.

Have at least one serious talk with your parents about your future, your plans, and what expectations they might have for you.

FEBRUARY

Start seriously investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs. Begin to research summer opportunities now. Colleges pay attention to enrichment programs, online college courses, significant community service, internships or jobs that mirror a student's interests.

Plan and review what courses you want to take and need to take as a sophomore, junior and as a senior. Take the most challenging courses you can and complete successfully.

MARCH

Begin visiting as many of the 3-5 schools that are on your interest list.

Additional hints:

Arrive the afternoon before the visit and just explore the college and surrounding area on our own. Then the next morning take the college tour and a department tour. Be sure to see dining halls, dorms, and bookstores.

APRIL

Keep notes or a folder on each college. Do this on the ride home while it is still memorable. View folders later during additional college visits.

Try to do something fun at the end of visiting colleges on the way home.

Continue to refine your college search list and visit colleges when you can. Discuss choices with parents/guardians, school counselors, peers who are in college, and your college advisor.

If you are a prospective student-athlete, go to www.eligibilitycenter.org and download the NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete.

MAY

Brainstorm for college/scholarship essay topics. Read college websites for essay questions. Start on a rough draft.

Final exams are scheduled this month so start preparing the month or two before. Review material received from colleges.

JUNE

Read a variety of books and magazines and review your math skills over the summer. This will help you to prepare for the PSAT, when you take it in the fall.

If possible, save some money from your summer job to pay for college costs.

SUMMER - Stay involved!

Review college search plans and narrow the list to an appropriate number of colleges. Work to help pay for college.

Complete community service requirements and document your work.

Attend a summer program on a college campus.

Get involved in an internship relevant to your career interest.