12th Grade Post-secondary Planning Timeline

September

☐ Discuss your course load, post-secondary plans, and test scores with your counselor.
☐ Continue involvement and leadership in extracurricular activities and community service.
☐ Request post-secondary application forms.
☐ Arrange campus visits.
☐ Register to retake the ACT, SAT and/or SAT II, if necessary.
☐ Submit a CSS PROFILE form if required
☐ Attend college fairs and financial aid nights.
☐ Stay organized.
☐ Search for scholarships and financial aid.
☐ Apply for scholarships.

October

☐ Narrow post-secondary choices to three to five schools, one of which is a "backup".
☐ Request application forms; locate the common application or school-specific applications online.
☐ Verify that your transcripts are accurate.
☐ Find out which financial aid applications are required by your potential schools.
☐ Ask for letters of recommendation.
☐ Work on admissions application essays
  ✔  Ask a counselor/teacher to review them.
☐ “Early decision” candidates—complete and mail applications.
  ✔  Deadline is often November 1st or 15th.
☐ Apply for scholarships.

November

☐ Continue working on post-secondary applications.
☐ Be aware of and meet all deadlines
☐ Request that transcripts, recommendations, and other supporting data be sent to post-secondary schools.
☐ Determine which financial aid forms each school requires—when in doubt contact the financial aid office.
☐ Search for additional sources of financial aid.
☐ Keep copies of everything you send.
☐ Apply for scholarships.

December

☐ Submit applications by Thanksgiving.
  ✔  Many schools award merit scholarships between December 1st and 15th.
☐ Retake ACT or SAT, if necessary.
☐ Apply for scholarships.

January

☐ Gather family tax information.
☐ Complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
  ✔  Make a copy.
  ✔  Submit FAFSA as soon after January 1st as possible. Funds are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Waiting too long can be costly.
☐ Fill out and submit required, institution-specific financial aid forms.
  ✔  Follow instructions and make copies.
  ✔  Apply for department-specific scholarships.

February – March

☐ Stay on top of important financial aid deadlines.
☐ Respond quickly to post-secondary requests for additional documentation.
☐ Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR). Check it for accuracy.
☐ Offers of admission and financial award letters start coming.
☐ Register for Advanced Placement (AP) tests.
☐ Apply for scholarships.

April

☐ Carefully analyze financial aid packages(s).
☐ Make final school choice.
  ✔  Most schools request a reply by May 1st.
  ✔  Send acceptance letter and any necessary documents and deposits.
☐ Notify the schools that you will not be attending.
☐ Mark calendar with important deadlines (housing, meals, financial aid, etc).
☐ Apply for scholarships.

May

☐ Take Advanced Placement (AP) tests.
☐ Request that a final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.
☐ Return necessary forms.
☐ Notify your prospective school of any additional funding you’ll be receiving (scholarships, etc.).
☐ Evaluate student loan lenders and take time to understand student loans.
☐ If you have questions – ASK

Summer

☐ Attend orientation.
☐ Finalize your budget.