

Navigating your senior year and postsecondary options can feel overwhelming. Being organized and keeping up with deadlines can help ease the stress you may be feeling over getting it all done. Your school counselor is here to assist you through this process and can answer questions that you may have. Please stop by or send your counselor an email with any questions or concerns you have.

## What should I do when I “grow up?”

You may already know what you want to do for a career or you may not. Either way, taking a career interest inventory is a great way to explore career options, those careers' growth rates, salary estimates by your location, and education requirements. This information can assist you in determining your postsecondary educational needs and institutions that will lead you to the career you desire. O\*Net Online and Career OneStop are two excellent resources that provide extensive information on careers as well as interest inventories that can provide you with your top 20 careers and the above referenced information on those careers based on your answers to the inventory.



## Suggested timeline for your Senior Year

Adapted from  
Educationcorner.com

**Summer before Senior year:** Begin working on composing a list of colleges that you are interested in. Create a Common Application account and get familiar with it. Work on an application timeline and begin brainstorming for your college essay. Register to take the SAT and/or ACT in the fall if you're looking to increase your scores. Visit some colleges if you are able to before your senior year begins and you get super busy.

**September:** Ask for letters of recommendation from your school counselor or teachers you are very familiar with. Register for the SAT and/or ACT if you haven't already done so. Begin writing your college admission essay. Keep your grades up and explore leadership opportunities at school and in the community.

**October:** Narrow down your list of colleges- know the requirements and how your grades measure up. Attend college fairs; NACAC is in the fall in Jacksonville. Work on your applications and essay- some colleges are due this month. Request your transcripts via Parchment and verify their accuracy. Apply early through early decision/early action if appropriate and be familiar with those deadlines. Submit your FAFSA and Bright Futures/FFAA applications which open October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**November:** Make time to complete applications and have someone review for errors; submit applications in accordance with their deadlines- most Florida schools are in/before November. Begin exploring and applying for financial aid and scholarships. Sign up to retake SAT/ACT if necessary. Keep your grades up. Make sure you are on track to graduate.

**December/January:** Send mid-year reports as appropriate by sending your transcript via Parchment to the school(s) you applied to. Check on your volunteer hours and volunteer over break if necessary. Keep your grades up.

**February/March:** Bright Futures Early Evaluation is posted in early March. Review your Student Aid Report for accuracy if you already filed a FAFSA. Acceptance letters/emails may start coming in February or March. Keep your grades up.

**April:** You should have heard from each school you applied to. Weigh all of your options before making your final decision, discussing with your parent/guardian, school counselor, teachers, and other mentors; take into consideration the financial aspect of those decisions. Notify the other schools that you are declining admission to about your choice so that waitlisted students can have your seat. Check with your college to see if there is a deposit deadline; this information should be included in your acceptance letter.

**May/June:** Once you have graduated, be sure to request and send your final transcript via Parchment to your college of choice. Colleges will put a hold on registration if you haven't sent your final transcript.

**Summer before college:** Verify housing arrangements. Make contact with your roommate. Know when registration begins for fall semester and register for classes. Congratulations- you made it to college!!!

# Navigating Your Senior Year

Resources to assist you in achieving success in your senior year and reaching your postsecondary goals.



## Transcripts

Order your transcript and check it for accuracy. Make sure that it has the correct information. Check to be sure the following are present:

- Your **Social Security Number** (this is needed to connect your transcript to Florida Bright Futures to determine your eligibility).
- **Virtual Courses**- Be sure the courses you have completed online are on your transcript. If they are not, talk to your counselor.
- **Recovery Courses**: If you recovered courses, either just a semester or the entire course, be sure that they are reported correctly on your transcript. If they are not, talk to your counselor.

### How to order your transcript:

1. Create a Parchment account.
2. Add a Destination (if necessary).
3. Provide consent.
4. Track status of your order.

### Requesting a paper copy:

If you would like a paper copy, please fill out the transcript request form and return it to Mr. Jenkins with your \$2 fee. Please allow up to 5 business days for processing.



## Letters of Recommendation

Your school counselor is happy to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf. Teachers are an excellent source to seek a letter of recommendation from. Please allow 2 weeks from the date of request. It's a great idea to send a thank you note to your counselor/teacher who wrote your letter.

A resume can assist the recommender in writing your letter. Some universities may ask for one, so begin working on it as soon as possible.

## Applying to College

The application process can seem overwhelming. Check the website of the university that you are applying to for deadlines, essay prompts, and other pertinent application information. Some universities begin accepting applications July 1<sup>st</sup>. Create a document to keep track of deadlines.

### The Application Process:

Some universities utilize the **Common Application**. The Common Application allows you to apply to multiple universities with one application.



**Coalition** is another application platform that some universities and colleges utilize. There are video tutorials to assist you on their website.



### Tours:

Visit the universities that you are interested in to get a feel for the campus atmosphere and to determine if it is a good fit for you. Tours allow you the opportunity to talk to current students and get answers to questions you may have. Check the university's website to access their tour schedule.

### Writing your essay:

Your essay can give the admission committee a more in depth look at who you are. Make sure you utilize relevant circumstances or qualifications that have not been communicated elsewhere in your application. Your essay will also showcase your writing skills- be sure to have someone proofread your essay.

## SAT and ACT

Plan to take each at least once in your junior year. Whichever one you score better on, try to take it again. You can link your SAT score to the Khan Academy, which will customize learning practice to your needs. ACT also has free prep materials. Prep courses are also available to help you improve your scores, if necessary.

## Financial Aid

### FAFSA:

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid must be completed to apply for financial aid for college. Most universities require the FAFSA to determine the amount of financial aid they can award you. This application must be completed parent/guardian and you- it requires the prior year's tax returns information to be reported as well, both your parent's/guardian's and yours (if you are working). There are deadlines for FAFSA submission based on the academic year you intend to attend college- familiarize yourself with these in the fall of your senior year so that you submit it on time. Applications open October 1, 2020.



### Bright Futures scholarships:

Florida has a scholarship program funded through the lottery for students with high academic achievement. Eligibility requirements and the application process can be found via Florida Financial Aid. Applications open October 1, 2020. Apply during winter break if you desire early evaluation which will be posted in early March



**Scholarship information:** Can be found on the Creekside website under Guidance: Scholarships.



### Checking Bright Futures Eligibility:

You can check your eligibility status via Florida Shines. This resource will tell you what you are missing and/or what is needed for you to qualify. Your SSN must be on your transcript for your information to be available for review. This website also has great resources for the college application process.

