

High School Sophomores

FALL

- Plan for the Year Ahead---Help your mentee to schedule a meeting with their counselor to discuss their college plans. Review their schedule to make sure they enrolled in challenging classes that will help them prepare for college. Colleges prefer four years of English, as well as history, math, science and a foreign language.
- Help them to use College Search to find out the required courses and tests for colleges that they might be interested in attending.
- Help them start a calendar with important dates and deadlines.
- Encourage them to get involved with extracurricular activities.
- Go with them to college fairs in their area.
- Talk to them about taking the PSAT/NMSQT®
- Help them to sign up for the PSAT, which is given in October. Have them ask their counselor for the date. Get free online PSAT practice.
- If they are taking the PSAT/NMSQT, help them to sign up for Student Search Service® to learn about colleges and scholarships.

WINTER

- Help your mentee to prepare for tests---They can use the access code on their PSAT score report to sign in to My College QuickStart™. With this personalized planning kit, they can prepare for the SAT using a study plan based on their PSAT results and explore lists of suggested colleges, majors and careers.
- Suggest that they talk to their counselor and teachers about taking SAT Subject Tests™ in their strong subjects this spring. They can take Subject Tests such as World History, Biology E/M and Chemistry while the material is still fresh in their mind.
- Help them to learn about college costs and how financial aid works.
- Help them to use the College Savings Calculator to see how much money they'll need for college, whether they're on track to save enough, and what they will need to do to reach their goal. Suggest that they talk to their family about college financing.
- Visit a college campus with them while they're in session.
- Help them to interview five people who are currently in college or who have recently graduated in order for them to find out about the real life highs and lows of college life.

SPRING

- Help your mentee to stay focused
- Encourage them to sign up for college preparatory courses for next year.

- Help them to look for a great summer opportunity — job, internship or volunteer position.
- Suggest that they check with their counselor and search online for summer learning programs.

SUMMER

- Encourage your mentee to make the most of their break
- Help them to start a summer reading list. Suggest that they ask their teachers to recommend books or check with the public library.
- Plan to visit college campuses with them to get a feel for their options. Start with colleges nearby.

High School Juniors

FALL

- Encourage your mentee to take the PSAT---At school, help them to sign up early to take the PSAT in October. They have access to PSAT tips and a free practice test. When taking the PSAT, they can sign up for Student Search Service® to hear from colleges and scholarship programs.
- Help them to start their College Search
- Have your mentee start with him/herself: Help them to make lists of their abilities, preferences and personal qualities. List things they may want to study and do in college.
- Encourage them to take a career planning test to get an idea of what career field might interest them. There are free ones on line.
- Jump-start their college planning by reading about majors and careers with them.
- Explore College Search with them to find colleges with the right characteristics.
- Help them to begin thinking about Financial Aid---Most college educations will require a mix of grants, scholarships and personal contributions (savings, students loans, student job).
- Encourage them to talk to their counselor about their college plans. Attend college night and financial aid night with them at their school. Help them to use financial aid calculators to estimate their aid eligibility and college costs.

WINTER

- Help your mentee to get ready for the SAT
- Help them to use the access code on their PSAT score report to sign in to My College QuickStart™. With this personalized planning kit, they can prepare for the SAT using a study plan based on your PSAT results and explore lists of suggested colleges, majors and careers.
- Help them to prepare for the SAT by encouraging them to take a free full-length official practice test. Then get a score and skills report. Learn which skills they need to improve. Be sure they sign up for The Official SAT Question of the Day™ for daily practice.
- Help to schedule their spring testing

- They can take either the SAT® or up to three SAT Subject Tests™ on one test day. Help them to plan their testing schedule carefully if they want to take both, and register for two separate test dates. Guide them to the SAT schedule of test dates and register online for the SAT.

SPRING

- Start visiting local colleges with your mentee: large, small, public and private. Help them to get a feel for what works for them. Help them to develop an initial list of 15-20 colleges that interest them. They can narrow it down later. Help them to search for colleges and use My College List.
- Help them to Prepare for AP® Exams
- Help them to do well on AP Exams and receive credit, advanced placement or both at most colleges for qualifying scores. Prepare for AP Exams.
- Encourage them to plan ahead for the Summer & Senior Year
- Encourage them to review their senior year class schedule with their counselor. Help them to challenge him/herself with honors and AP classes. Read with them about how to select their courses.
- Help them to plan summer activities early. Encourage them to enrich him/herself by volunteering, getting an interesting job or internship, or signing up for special summer learning programs.

SUMMER

- Help your mentee to keep up their momentum
- Visit colleges with them. Take campus tours and, at colleges they're serious about, help them to schedule interviews with admission officers. Be sure they bring their campus visit checklist.
- Help them to request applications from the colleges they're planning to apply to. Check important dates; some colleges have early dates or rolling admission. Have them consult the College Application Calendar and the Financial Aid Calendar for a basic idea of the applications timeline.

High School Seniors

FALL

- Help your mentee to pull their applications together
- Help them to narrow their list of colleges to approximately five to eight, and suggest that they review it with their counselor. Have them get an application and financial aid info from each. Visit as many as possible.
- Help them to make a master calendar and note:
 1. Test dates, fees and deadlines

2. College application due dates

3. Required financial aid applications and their deadlines

4. Recommendations, transcripts and other necessary materials

5. Their high school's deadlines for application requests, such as their transcript

- Encourage them to ask for recommendations. Have them give each person their resume, a stamped and addressed envelope, and any required forms.
- Encourage them to write application essays and ask teachers, family members and friends to read first drafts.
- Help them to decide whether to apply Early Action or Early Decision
- November 1: For early admission, colleges may require test scores and applications in early November. Help them to send their SAT® scores.
- Encourage them to ask if their college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility.
- Help them to get Financial Aid Info and attend financial aid info events in their area.
- Encourage them to talk to their counselor about CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® and learn about completing the PROFILE.
- Help them to use Scholarship Search, review scholarship books, and ask their counselor about local and state funding sources.

WINTER

- Review application details with your mentee.
- Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Have them keep copies of everything they send to colleges.
- Help them to have their high school send their transcript to colleges.
- Encourage them to contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.
- Help them to apply for Financial Aid
- Talk to them about how they and their family should save this year's pay stubs to estimate income on aid forms that they'll file early next year.
- Help them to submit their FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Men who are 18 years of age or older must register with Selective Service to receive federal financial aid.
- Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, help them to apply by the priority date. Have them keep copies of everything they send.

SPRING

- Review acceptance letters with your mentee.
- They should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- Help them to use Compare Your Aid Awards to compare awards from different colleges. Have them talk to financial aid officers at their college if they have questions about the award offered.

- If they haven't already, encourage them to visit their final college before accepting.
- Help them to make their final choice by May 1
- Remind them that they must tell every college of their acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Have them send a deposit to the college they choose.
- Wait-listed? If they will enroll if accepted, have them tell the admission officer their intent and ask how to strengthen their application. Need financial aid? Ask if funds will be available if you're accepted.

SUMMER

- Help your mentee to take the next steps
- Have them ask their high school to send a final transcript to their college.
- Help them to start preparing for the year ahead.