

College Planning Timeline

SENIORS

August

- Confirm you have all the credits you need to graduate.
- Resolve to keep your grades up. Colleges look at cumulative GPA *and* improvement. Many colleges require or will ask you to send your 7th semester (1st semester senior year) grades.
- Schedule your senior conference with the college counselor (required).
- Learn the Vanguard High School CEEB code: **060-249**. It is required for college applications.
- Check college testing requirements. If needed, register to take the ACT, SAT, or SAT Subject Tests.
- If you need to improve your score or meet your college test requirements, register for the ACT, SAT, and SAT Subject Tests now.
- Get in the habit of checking your Naviance and the weekly E-mail Blasts. **This is how College Counseling communicates with students about important scholarships, college visits, and senior announcements!**
- Have a family talk about financing college. Check out Managing College Costs <http://www.collegecountdown.com/promotions/managing-college-cost-welcome.html> and College Net Calculator <http://netpricecalculator.collegeboard.org/>
- Identify three or four people whose judgment you trust to review your application materials. Do this early so that they have the time to give you helpful feedback and so that you can make use of it.
- At least three weeks before they are due, ask for any letters of recommendation for colleges that require them. Provide your sources with forms, your resume, and stamped, pre-addressed envelopes if necessary.

September

- Complete your Senior Questionnaire on Naviance and ask a parent to complete the Parent Questionnaire (Brag Sheet).
- Narrow down your list of schools. Do you have a “safety” school that you would be happy attending?
- Decide if you will be applying to any schools under an Early Action (non-binding) or Early Decision (binding) plan. Check deadlines and application requirements!
- Research scholarships, their application requirements, and deadlines.
- Check college financial aid and scholarship websites. Do they require FAFSA forms and/or CSS Profile? Is there a “Priority Deadline” for in-house scholarship consideration?
- Work on application essay(s). Essay help is available from any Vanguard English teacher. Take advantage of their willingness to edit your essays.

October

- Finalize your list of schools.
- Check individual college websites and the Common Application <https://www.commonapp.org/Login> to confirm application requirements.
- Check Naviance to see if your teacher letter(s) of recommendation has been uploaded. Go to: Colleges Tab > Colleges I am Applying to.
- Attend college fairs and workshops happening in early October. The Out-of-State College Fair and the Christian College Fair visit Colorado Springs every October.
- Visit with college admission representatives that come to Vanguard. Check Naviance and the bulletin board for updated information.
- Finalize college and scholarship essay(s) for Early Decision and Early Action deadlines. Essay help is available from all Vanguard English teachers. Choose one to edit your essays.
- Visit college campuses when possible.
- Submit requests for transcripts and letters of recommendation to the College Counseling Office at least fifteen working days prior to the college's application deadline.
- October 8** – Transcript request forms due in the College Counseling Office for **November 1 college deadlines.**
- If you haven't already done so, register for the College Opportunity Fund (COF) https://www.collegeincolorado.org/Home/COF/College_Opportunity_Fund.aspx .
- If required, contact ACT or College Board to officially send test scores to the colleges where you will apply.
- Make sure your guidance counselor sends your transcripts to colleges that require them.

November

- Finalize college applications and college/scholarship essays for December Application deadlines. The Vanguard High School CEEB code is **060-249**
- Complete in-state public college applications. (CU Boulder and CSU Fort Collins Early Notification/Early Action deadlines are 12/01. All other public in-state colleges offer rolling admissions where applications are reviewed and applicants are notified of their admission decision within weeks of their submitted application.)
- November 8** – Transcript request forms due in the Post Grad Center **for December 1 college deadlines.**
- November 26** – Transcript request forms due in the College Counseling Office **for December 15 college deadlines.**
- Early Action and Early Decision applicants – Begin checking your email and “applied student” portals regularly for updates from college admissions departments regarding your application status.
- Thank teachers who have written you letters of recommendation.**
- Check on housing options at the colleges to which you are applying. Some colleges allow for housing choice and deposits to be made before acceptance.**

December

- Finalize applications and college/scholarship essay(s) for January application deadlines. Essay help is available from all Vanguard English teachers. Choose one to give you feedback on your essays.
- December 3** – Transcript request forms due in the College Counseling Office **for January 1 college deadlines.**
- December 11** – Transcript request forms due in the College Counseling Office **for December 15 college deadlines.**
- Visit www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov (provides an early estimate of your eligibility for federal student aid).
- If you were admitted to a college under and ED – Early Decision (binding) plan, notify all other colleges you applied to and withdraw those applications.
- Meet with college friends returning for winter break and ask for their suggestions on preparing for the first semester of college.

January

- Complete a final check of your classes and credits for graduation. See your counselor with any questions.
- In the College Counseling Office, request your seventh semester transcript(s) to be submitted to your colleges that require or request them. Seventh semester transcripts will be sent out the third week of January.
- Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> online beginning as early as January 1.
- Check Naviance for a schedule of upcoming college visits.
- Complete applications with February and March deadlines.

February

- Check your college application accounts often and always open emails from schools to which you have applied! This may be the ONLY way you know if your application is complete.
- If you need assistance with your financial aid forms, attend College Goal Sunday (various locations in Colorado) for help and information completing financial aid forms such as FAFSA. www.collegegoalcolorado.org
- Register for the College Opportunity Fund (COF) https://www.collegeincolorado.org/Home/COF/College_Opportunity_Fund.aspx . This is money to reduce the cost of attending college in Colorado. All students are eligible!

March

- Keep your grades up. Colleges can and have rescinded offers of admission for a significant drop in grades or attendance.
- Begin reporting scholarship awards to the College Counseling Office.
- Visit colleges over spring break.

April

- Expect to hear from colleges regarding admissions decisions by mid-April.
- If a college offers you a place on their “waitlist,” you can accept or deny this offer. In addition, be sure you also accept and make a deposit at a college that has accepted you.
- Evaluate financial aid packages from schools that have admitted you.
- Prepare for the AP exams held in the first two weeks of May. If your scores qualify, you can earn course credit at many colleges.

May

- May 1 is the National Candidate Reply Date.** You MUST let colleges know if you are attending by this date or your spot will be given away.
- Notify your counselor of your decision.
- Keep your grades up. Colleges can and have rescinded offers of admission for a significant drop in grades or attendance.
- Take AP exams and arrange with the College Board to have your score(s) sent to the college you are attending.
- If you plan to attend community college in the fall, apply now.
- Look early for summer job opportunities.
- If you have been wait-listed, contact the admissions director and express your continued interest in the school.
- During the last weeks at Vanguard, be sure to say “thank you” to teachers, coaches, parents, and friends who have been important to you throughout high school.
- Take the time to truly enjoy the senior traditions of the spring.

Summer and Beyond

- Confirm that your final transcripts have been sent to the college you will attend in the fall.
- Finally, keep in touch. Let your college counselor know how you’re doing in college. Knowing whether or not your college is a good match for you helps us to successfully guide future students through the college process. Besides, we’re proud of you, and we will miss you!