



12th Year Campaign

Junior/Senior Student Workbook

A Guide for Navigating College Admissions and Financial Aid

Preparing for College: Junior/Senior Checklist¹

Juniors

October/November/December

- **Talk to your school counselor about the year ahead.** Confirm that your courses will put you on the right track for college admission. Ask about test dates for the ASPIRE, PSAT, ACT, and SAT. You'll need to register up to six weeks ahead of time.
- **Start developing a resume.** A resume is a record of your accomplishments, activities, and work experiences. It will be an important part of your college application.
- **If you haven't participated in many activities outside of class, now is the time to start.** Consider school clubs, team sports, leadership roles, or becoming involved in religious or civic community groups.
- **Take the PSAT.** Taking this test as a junior will qualify you for some scholarship consideration and identify you as a potential applicant to colleges. When you receive the results (usually in December), review them to learn more about your strengths and weaknesses. Discuss the results with your family and school counselor.
- **Begin to prepare for the ACT or SAT.** Free test preparation may be available at your school, your local community colleges, and community-based programs; in addition, there are many free resources online. If you don't know which websites to trust, ask your school counselor. You should plan to take at least one of these tests in the spring and again in the fall of your senior year. It costs money to take these tests, but there are fee waivers available. Ask your counselor if you qualify.

January/February

- **Meet with your school counselor to develop your schedule for senior year.** Make sure you enroll in the most challenging courses for which you are qualified.
- **Register for a spring offering of the SAT and/or ACT.** Ask your counselor about taking an SAT subject test.
- **Ask your counselor about summer opportunities on college campuses.** This can be a great way to find out what college life is like and may make you a more attractive candidate for college admissions.

¹ Adapted from National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2014). *Step By Step: College Awareness and Planning for Families, Counselors and Communities*. Available from: <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/student/Pages/GuidingEducation.aspx>

March/April

- ❑ **Begin taking a more serious look at colleges and universities.** Go to college fairs and open houses and learn as much as you can online about the colleges.
- ❑ **Begin planning college visits.** Spring break is a good time to visit. Try to visit colleges near you and include a large, medium size, and small campus.
- ❑ **Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you.** Write or email to request a viewbook and additional information. Make a file for each college you're interested in and gather information about academics, financial aid, and campus life.
- ❑ **Think about lining up a summer job or internship.**

May

- ❑ **Make a list of teachers, counselors, employers, and other adults you might ask to write your college application letters of recommendation.**
- ❑ **Make a profile on TheWashboard.org** and begin searching for and applying to scholarships.
- ❑ **Create an FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov** An FSA ID gives you access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and can serve as your legal signature. You must have a FSA ID in order to apply for the FAFSA.

Summer

- ❑ **Continue investigating colleges.**
- ❑ **Begin thinking about your applications.** Generally, colleges will have their applications online by the beginning of August. Work on the essay(s) before you return to school.

Seniors

August/September

- ❑ **Register for the SAT and/or ACT.** Your counselor can help you with fee waivers if needed.
- ❑ **Take a look at some college applications** and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile to complete them.
- ❑ **Visit your school counselor to make sure you are on-track to graduate** and fulfill college admission requirements.
- ❑ **Take every opportunity to get to know colleges.** Meet with college representatives who visit your high school in the fall, attend local college fairs, and visit campuses if possible.

- **Narrow down your list of potential colleges** and begin to consider “reach,” “target,” and “safety” schools. Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school.
- **Create a checklist and calendar to chart:**
 - Standardized test dates, registration deadlines, and fees.
 - College application due dates.
 - Financial aid application forms and deadlines.
 - Other materials you’ll need for college applications (recommendations, transcripts, essays, etc.).
- **Some colleges and universities require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile.** Ask the colleges to which you are applying for their deadlines. Register as early as September. See your school counselor about fee waivers.

October

- **File the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid).** The sooner you complete your financial aid application, the more aid you could potentially receive from colleges. For information about the FAFSA, go to www.fafsa.gov. Eligible students without legal immigration status can get more information and apply for the WASFA at readyssetgrad.org/wasfa.
- **Some colleges will have deadlines as early as this month.** These would include Rolling Admission, Early Decision, and Early Action deadlines.
- If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, **ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.**
- **Finalize your college essay.** Many schools require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- **Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers.** Provide a stamped, addressed envelope, the appropriate college forms, and an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities to each person writing you a recommendation.
- **Research scholarships.** Ask your counselor, colleges, and religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. Keep your TheWashboard.org profile updated and keep applying for scholarships. Remember, you should never pay for scholarship searches or information.

November

- **Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month.** Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- **Every college will require a copy of your transcript from your high school.** Follow your high school’s procedure for sending transcript.

- **Make sure testing companies (ACT or SAT) sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.**

December

- **Many popular or selective colleges have application deadlines as early as January 1.** Others have deadlines later in January and February. Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- **Register for the January SAT (if needed).** It is the last one most colleges will consider for a senior.

January

- **If necessary, register for the February ACT (some colleges will be able to consider it).**
- **Ask your high school in January to send first semester transcripts to the colleges to which you applied.** At the end of the school year, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.
- **Apply for scholarships.** Ask your counselor, colleges, and religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. Keep your TheWashboard.org profile updated and keep applying for scholarships. Remember, you should never pay for scholarship searches or information.

February/March/April

- **No Senioritis!** Even if you've already submitted most of your applications, don't slack in the classroom. The college that you choose to attend will want to see your second semester transcript.
- **Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive.** Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

May

- **In most cases, the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit by May 1.** When you've made your college decision, notify your counselor and the college. If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify the colleges you will not attend of your decision.
- **Make sure that you have requested that your final high school transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.**

- **If you are waitlisted by a college you really want to attend, visit, call, and write.** Ask how you can strengthen your application and make your interest clear to the admissions office.

Summer

- **Summer jobs** can help pay some of your college expenses and give you great career preparation.
- **If you are going to live on campus, make a list of what you will need to take with you for your dorm room.** Check your college's "Housing" or "Residence Life" webpage for further information.
- **You will most likely get a roommate assignment** from your college. Call, write, or email to get acquainted.
- **Some colleges offer a summer orientation/registration.** Attend to meet fellow students and other people on campus, and to familiarize yourself with your new school. This is often when you will sign up for your fall courses.

Resources

Ready Set Grad: www.readysetgrad.org

College Bound Scholarship: www.collegebound.wa.gov

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): www.fafsa.gov

FSA ID: <https://fsaid.ed.gov/>

Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA): www.readysetgrad.org/wasfa

The Washboard Scholarship Search: www.washboard.org

Federal Student Aid: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>

The College Board's Big Future: www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org

ACT Profile: www.act.org/profile

Frequently Asked Questions during Application Completion

Enrollment Information

What is my "entering term" and "year?"

Most students will select the fall semester following senior year; however, choose the summer option if you plan to attend summer school prior to fall enrollment.

What is my entrance status?

The following are definitions for each status.

- ✓ First-year/Freshman: This will be the first college in which you enroll after graduating high school (most high school seniors will have this status). Check this even if you have advanced placement (AP) credit, Running Start credit, or have earned college credit in high school. (Most students will have this status.)
- ✓ Transfer: A transfer student is a student who starts at one college, and then decides to attend another.
- ✓ Non Degree: You want to take college course(s) but are not seeking a degree.

What is my desired major?

A major is the academic area you are most interested in, like math, English, or biomedical engineering. Under "First Choice," you can choose your first choice of majors. You may check "Undecided," however, some colleges want you to declare a major upon applying. You can change your major once you're in college no matter what you put in this section now.

Address

Can I list a Post Office Box?

You will need to include a physical address even if you use a Post Office Box for your mailing address. Make sure this information is correct. The date the address became your permanent mailing address is the month and year you moved to this location (which may even be your date of birth).

Personal Information

What types of personal information will I need to provide?

You may be asked to enter your nine-digit Social Security Number, so that the college can determine what type of tuition you will be charged if admitted. If you do not have a nine-digit Social Security Number, please enter all zeroes in the application. You may want to read information in this packet about HB 1079 and WASFA.

School Information

If your high school can submit your transcripts electronically, you will need the high school code to put on the application. To find your school code, go to this website: <https://sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-code-search>.

College Information

What should I list for current college courses in progress or planned, including the term (to be) taken, course subject and number (example: BIO 1001), credit hours, and college/university?

Please note that dual enrollment (Running Start, College in the High School) may be added here; however, do not list AP courses.

Family Information

What family information am I required to submit?

You will need to answer the following required question: Are your father and/or mother living? Also, *Legal Guardian Information* is the same information requested for father and mother, and *Emergency Contact Information* is required if it is other than parent or guardian.

Activities and Interests

Do I have to list all my activities and interests for each college application?

Colleges are more likely to accept students who have been involved in their school and community, so it is to your advantage to list them. Remember to include both school and non-school activities and interests. If you have a significant number of activities and interests that you wish to include, you might consider listing them in a Word document or an email so you can copy and paste the list into your applications.

Campus Specific Information

What additional information will I need to include for each college application?

This information varies by educational institution. You can find more information by looking at the campus website. For this reason, it's a good idea to look at each school's actual application prior to sitting down to complete it.

Miscellaneous Information

What types of questions will I be asked about my past criminal activity?

Most schools require students to answer questions about legal infractions. Answering "yes" to one or more of the questions will not necessarily preclude your being admitted. However, your failure to provide complete, accurate, and truthful information can be grounds to deny or withdraw your admission, dismiss you, or subject you to disciplinary sanctions after enrollment. Some campuses have a process for conducting criminal background checks on applicants which may or may not happen with regard to your application.

On your applications, complete honesty is expected.

College Application Checklist

Please work with your family to complete the College Application Checklist if you plan to submit a college application during the College Application Campaign. You will need the same information for all applications, even those submitted after the College Application Campaign.

Student Information

If you have already created any online application accounts, write your user names and passwords on the line above.

Full Name (First, Middle, Last)

Permanent Address (where all mail will be sent) City, State, Zip

Home Phone Number

Mobile Phone Number

E-mail Address

Social Security Number

Driver's License Number & Date Issued

Date of Birth

Place of Birth (City, State, Country)

Academic Area of Study

Parent/Guardian Information

First Parent/Guardian Full Name (First, Middle, Last)

Street Address, City, State, Zip

Telephone Number

Mobile Phone Number

E-mail Address

Second Parent/Guardian Full Name (First, Middle, Last)

Street Address, City, State, Zip

Telephone Number

Mobile Phone Number

E-mail Address

High School Information

Name of Current High School

Phone Number

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip

Date You Entered High School

Expected Graduation Date

Counselor Name

Counselor Contact Information

Please list any other high schools you have attended.

High School Name (Use full name)

Phone Number

Mailing Address

Dates of Attendance

Counselor Name

Counselor Contact Information

Previous Colleges and College Credit Earned

List any colleges you have attended for which you expect to receive college credit.

College Name

City, State

Dates of Attendance

List any college-credit courses you are taking during your senior year. Please indicate whether they are Advanced Placement (AP), Running Start, or another Dual Enrollment option (College Courses).

Fall Semester

Spring Semester

List any other courses (summer school, online, etc.)

SAT Test Date (month/year) Math Score Verbal Score Writing Score

ACT Test Date (month/year) Composite Score

College Counseling Resume²

Use this worksheet to reflect on your individual goals and accomplishments. This information can help you find a college that is a good match.

Section 1: Family

	Parent/Guardian 1	Parent/Guardian 2	Siblings
Name(s)			
Educational Background (high school, two-year college, four-year college, etc.)			
Occupation			

Section II: Academics/School

1. Check the following:

	English	History/Social Studies	Foreign Language	Math	Science	Arts	Electives
Which subjects do you like?							
In which subjects have you done the best?							
Which subjects are more difficult for you?							

² Adapted from National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2014). *Step By Step: College Awareness and Planning for Families, Counselors and Communities*. Available from: <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/student/Pages/GuidingEducation.aspx>

2. How would you describe your academic record? Are your grades above, below or consistent with your ability? Why?

3. Describe your finest academic moment.

Section III: Activities

List the activities in which you have participated. Make a check mark for each grade in which you participated, and make sure to note any leadership positions you held.

Athletics (list sport and level--JV, varsity, etc.)	9	10	11	12

Clubs and Organizations	9	10	11	12

Employment and Summer Activities	9	10	11	12

Religious Organizations/Community Service	9	10	11	12

Section IV: College/Career Interests

1. List the college majors that most interest you:
2. In which profession(s) do you see yourself working?

Section V: Factors Affecting Your College Choices

1. Besides getting an education and preparing for a career, why are you going to college?
2. What type of college environment will challenge you to grow the most academically and personally?
3. What are your top four to six criteria in selecting a college?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.

7. In college, what extracurricular activities do you want to continue or begin?

8. What pressures, if any, are you feeling from yourself or others about going to college?

9. What are your major concerns about attending college?

10. Circle your preferred college type(s):

Two-year

Four-year

Private

Public

Career or Technical School

11. In what regions or specific states are you interested in attending college?

12. Circle all types of communities in which you might be interested in attending college:

Small town

Large town

City

Rural

Near the mountains

Near the coast

Undecided

No preference

13. College size – circle all that apply:

Under 1,000 students

1,000 – 2,000

2,000 – 5,000

5,000 – 10,000

More than 10,000

No preference

14. If there is anything else you would like to share about yourself on a college application, note it here.

Selection Criteria Chart³

Use this chart to compare different colleges based on the selection criteria that's most important to you. You may want to refer to Section V on the College Counseling Resume to determine what is most important to you in choosing the colleges you want to apply to.

Your Criteria	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

You may wish to consider the following factors as selection criteria:

Location

Urban or rural
Size of nearest city
State

Size

Physical enrollment
Physical size of campus

Environment

Co-ed or single sex

Admission Profile

Average test scores, GPA

Academics

Majors
Accreditation
Student-faculty ratio
Typical class size

College Expenses

Cost of Attendance
Scholarships

Housing

Residence halls
Food plan
On/off campus

Facilities

Academic
Recreational

Activities

Clubs, organizations,
Greek life
Athletics

Type of College

Public or private
Two-year
Four-year
Technical

³ Adapted from National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2014). *Step By Step: College Awareness and Planning for Families, Counselors and Communities*. Available from:

<http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/student/Pages/GuidingEducation.aspx>

Application Personal Statement and Essay Tips

Choose a topic that will highlight you.

Don't focus on the great aspects of a particular college, the amount of dedication it takes to be a doctor, or the number of extracurricular activities you took part in during high school.

Do share your personal story and thoughts, take a creative approach, and highlight areas that aren't covered in other parts of the application.

Keep your focus narrow and personal.

Don't try to cover too many topics. This will make the essay sound like a résumé and won't provide any additional details about you.

Do focus on one aspect of yourself so the readers can learn more about who you are. Remember that the readers must be able to find your main idea and follow it from beginning to end. Ask a parent or teacher to read just your introduction and tell you what he or she thinks your essay is about.

Show, don't tell.

Don't simply state a fact to get an idea across, such as "I like to surround myself with people with a variety of backgrounds and interests."

Do include specific details, examples, and reasons to develop your ideas. For the example above, describe a situation when you were surrounded by various types of people. What were you doing? Whom did you talk with? What did you take away from the experience?

Use your own voice.

Don't rely on phrases or ideas that people have used many times before. These could include statements like, "There is so much suffering in the world that I feel I have to help people." Avoid overly formal or business-like language, and don't use unnecessary words.

Do write in your own voice. For the above example, you could write about a real experience that you had and how it made you feel you had to take action. And note that admission officers will be able to tell if your essay was edited by an adult.

Ask a teacher or parent to proofread.

Don't turn your essay in without proofreading it, and don't rely only on your computer's spell check to catch mistakes. A spell-check program will miss typos like these:

- "After I graduate *form* high school, I plan to get a summer job."
- "From that day on, Daniel was my best *fried*."

Do ask a teacher or parent to proofread your essay to catch mistakes. You should also ask the person who proofreads your essay if the writing sounds like you.

*Adapted from [The College Application Essay](#) by Sarah Myers McGinty.

WA Colleges' Contact Information

Public Four-year Colleges and Universities

* indicates branch campus

College	City	Website	Admissions Office
Central Washington University	Ellensburg	www.cwu.edu	509-963-1211
Eastern Washington University	Cheney	www.ewu.edu	509-359-2397
Evergreen State College	Olympia	www.evergreen.edu	360-867-6170
University of Washington – Seattle	Seattle	www.washington.edu	206-543-9686
University of Washington – Bothell*	Bothell	www.uwb.edu	425-352-5000
University of Washington – Tacoma*	Tacoma	www.tacoma.washington.edu	253-692-6742
Washington State University – Pullman	Pullman	www.wsu.edu	888-468-6978
Washington State University – Spokane*	Spokane	www.spokane.wsu.edu	509-358-7978
Washington State University – Tri-Cities*	Richland	www.tricity.wsu.edu	509-372-7250
Washington State University – Vancouver*	Vancouver	www.vancouver.wsu.edu	360-546-9779
Western Washington University	Bellingham	www.wvu.edu	360-650-3440

Private Four-Year Colleges and Universities

College	City	Website	Admissions Office
Antioch University	Seattle	www.antiochseattle.edu	888-268-4477
Art Institute of Seattle	Seattle	www.artinstitutes.edu/seattle	855-261-7831
Bastyr University	Kenmore	www.bastyr.edu	425-602-3330
Cornish College of the Arts	Seattle	www.cornish.edu	800-726-2787
DigiPen Institute of Technology	Redmond	https://www.digipen.edu/	866-478-5236
Gonzaga University	Spokane	www.gonzaga.edu	509-313-6572
Heritage University	Toppenish	www.heritage.edu	509-865-8508
Northwest University	Kirkland	www.northwestu.edu	800-669-3781
Pacific Lutheran University	Tacoma	www.plu.edu	800-274-6758
Saint Martin's University	Lacey	www.stmartin.edu	360-438-4596
Seattle Pacific University	Seattle	www.spu.edu	800-366-3344
Seattle University	Seattle	www.seattleu.edu	206-220-8040
University of Puget Sound	Tacoma	www.ups.edu	253-879-3211
Walla Walla University	College Place	www.wallawalla.edu	800-541-8900

Western Governors University	Online	http://www.wgu.edu/	866-225-5948
Whitman College	Walla Walla	www.whitman.edu	509-527-5176
Whitworth University	Spokane	www.whitworth.edu	509-777-4786

Public Two-Year Colleges⁴

College	City	Website	Admissions Office
Bates Technical College	Tacoma	www.bates.ctc.edu	253-680-7302
Bellevue College	Bellevue	www.bellevuecollege.edu	425-564-2222
Bellingham Technical College	Bellingham	www.btc.ctc.edu	360-752-8345
Big Bend Community College	Moses Lake	www.bigbend.edu	509-793-2061
Cascadia College	Bothell	www.cascadia.edu	425-352-8000
Centralia College	Centralia	www.centralia.edu	360-736-9391
Clark College	Vancouver	www.clark.edu	360-699-6398
Clover Park Technical College	Lakewood	www.cptc.edu	253-589-5800
Columbia Basin College	Pasco	www.columbiabasin.edu	509-547-0511
Edmonds Community College	Lynnwood	www.edcc.edu	425-640-1459
Everett Community College	Everett	www.everettcc.edu	425-388-9219
Grays Harbor College	Aberdeen	www.ghc.edu	360-538-4026
Green River College	Auburn	www.greenriver.edu	253-333-6000
Highline College	Des Moines	www.highline.edu	206-592-3181
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	Kirkland	www.lwtech.edu	425-739-8104
Lower Columbia College	Longview	www.lowercolumbia.edu	360-442-2311
Northwest Indian College	Bellingham	http://www.nwic.edu/	360-392-4269
North Seattle College	Seattle	www.northseattle.edu	206-934-3663
Olympic College	Bremerton	www.olympic.edu	360-475-7479
Peninsula College	Port Angeles	www.pencol.edu	360-417-6340
Pierce College	Puyallup	www.pierce.ctc.edu	253-840-8400
Renton Technical College	Renton	www.rtc.edu	425-235-5840
Seattle Central College	Seattle	www.seattlecentral.edu	206-934-5450
Shoreline Community College	Shoreline	www.shoreline.ctc.edu	206-546-4611
Skagit Valley College	Mount Vernon	www.skagit.edu	360-416-7697
South Puget Sound Community College	Olympia	www.spscc.ctc.edu	360-754-7711
South Seattle College	Seattle	www.southseattle.edu	206-934-7943
Spokane Community College	Spokane	www.scc.spokane.edu	509-533-7000
Spokane Falls Community College	Spokane	www.spokanefalls.edu	509-533-3500
Tacoma Community College	Tacoma	www.tacomacc.edu	253-566-5001
Walla Walla Community College	Walla Walla	www.wvcc.edu	509-522-2500
Wenatchee Valley College	Wenatchee	www.wvc.edu	509-682-6806
Whatcom Community College	Bellingham	www.whatcom.ctc.edu	360-383-3030
Yakima Valley College	Yakima	www.yvcc.edu	509-574-4600

⁴ The majority of two-year colleges have “rolling” admission deadlines, meaning that the college will evaluate your application and make a decision shortly after it gets sent in. Make sure you meet priority financial aid deadlines when applying to rolling admissions colleges.

College Application Tracking Chart⁵

Instructions: Use this chart to keep track of what you've done and what you have left to do on your college applications.

Section 1: List application deadlines and required application materials.

College	Application Deadline	Application Fee Amount	SAT or ACT required?	Recommendation letter required?	Financial Aid Deadline

Section 2: Use this chart to keep track of what parts you have completed, and what you have left to complete.

College	Transcript Sent (date)	Test Scores Sent (date)	Recommendations Sent (date)	Financial aid forms filed	Application Submitted (date)

⁵ Adapted from National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2014). *Step By Step: College Awareness and Planning for Families, Counselors and Communities*. Available from: <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/PublicationsResources/Marketplace/student/Pages/GuidingEducation.aspx>

Information for DREAMers

Resident Tuition

At public colleges and universities in Washington State, students who are not citizens may be eligible for lower in-state tuition rates instead of the more expensive non-resident tuition rates.

To qualify for in-state tuition, there are three criteria you must meet

1. Graduate from a Washington State high school (or obtained a GED or equivalent).
2. Lived in Washington for at least three years prior to earning the high school diploma or equivalent and continuously since.
3. Sign an affidavit (written promise) affirming eligibility and promising to become a permanent resident/citizen of the United States when eligible to apply.

You must include the HB 1079 affidavit (<http://readyssetgrad.org/residency-citizenship>) with your public college applications in order to qualify for resident tuition rates.

I Applied. Now What?

Applying is one of the first steps on your path to attending to college. Keep in mind that it may take a couple of months for the college or university to get back to you. Once you've submitted your application, make sure that you've turned in everything you need in order for the college to consider you as a potential student. Have you:

- ✓ Submitted your application fee (if the college charges a fee)?
- ✓ Asked your high school counselor to send your transcript to the college?
- ✓ Submitted your letters of recommendation (if required by the college)?
- ✓ Submitted your essay (if required by the college)?
- ✓ Sent any college transcripts you might have (from dual-credit courses)?
- ✓ Sent your AP scores (if you have taken AP courses)?
- ✓ Confirmed that the college received everything?

Even after you're accepted to a college, there's still a lot of work to do to make your final decision and get ready. You'll want to consider what financial aid is available to you at the colleges you're considering, and you'll want to decide if you want to live on campus or commute. Of course, once you decide on a college, you'll need to register as a new student and enroll in classes. Some colleges offer a summer orientation/registration. Of course you will also want to apply for Financial Aid!

Financial Aid⁶

Financial aid is money to help pay for college. It comes from the federal and state governments, colleges and universities, banks, and organizations. Applying for financial aid is a separate process from applying for admission to a college. You have to do both. To receive financial aid, you must apply for it using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA (www.fafsa.gov) or the Washington Application for State Financial Aid or WASFA (<http://readysetgrad.org/wasfa>). Colleges use the results of the FAFSA or WASFA to create a financial aid package. There are dozens of College Goal Washington events throughout the state in October and November if you need help filing your financial aid application. Visit readysetgrad.org/educators/grad/college-goal-washington for a list of dates and locations.

State Financial Aid for DREAMers

Eligibility for several Washington State financial aid programs has expanded to include students who are ineligible for federal financial aid due to immigration status. Students who meet individual program, income, or residency requirements for the State Need Grant, the College Bound Scholarship, State Work Study, or Passport Scholarship should complete the free WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid) to apply for state financial aid. For more information please go to www.readysetgrad.org/wasfa

The FAFSA requires students to have a valid Social Security Number. It can be filed by U.S. citizens or U.S. nationals, U.S. permanent residents (those with a green card), and some non-residents. Please check the Federal Student Aid website (fsa.ed.gov) to see if you are eligible. Students granted refugee statuses are eligible to file the FAFSA. The WASFA is for non-citizen students who do not fall into any of the above referenced non-citizen categories.

Qualifying for Aid

Need-based financial aid programs are designed with the assumption that students and parents have a responsibility to pay a share of educational costs. The amount you and your family are expected to pay will vary based upon factors including:

- Income.
- Assets.
- The number of children in the family.
- The number of children attending college.

⁶ Adapted from GEAR UP Washington. (2016). *Financial Aid 101: 2016-2017*. Available from: http://www.gearup.wa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/financial_aid_101.pdf

The process for determining your eligibility for financial aid establishes what you and your family can reasonably be expected to pay. This is called your **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)** and is used to identify your financial need.

CALCULATING YOUR FINANCIAL NEED

Cost of Attendance (COA)

– Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

= Financial Need

Federal and state need-based financial aid is offered only if your **EFC** is not enough to cover the cost of attending a particular school. Although your Expected Family Contribution will stay the same, your financial aid eligibility may increase when you apply to higher-priced colleges.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

To qualify for financial aid, you must apply. The most important application is the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid. All federal financial aid programs, most programs offered by the State of Washington, and many programs offered by colleges require you to complete and submit the FAFSA. *If you do not have a Social Security Number, you should complete the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) instead of the FAFSA.* You should aim to complete the FAFSA or WASFA as close to October 1st as possible because financial aid dollars are limited and often are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis

Important FAFSA facts

- Make sure you visit the official FAFSA webpage at fafsa.gov. It is **FREE** to file the FAFSA! Be cautious of websites requesting you to pay a fee.
- At fafsa.gov, you can complete, submit, and track your application. However, if you do not have Internet access, you can get a paper copy by calling 1-800-4-FED-AID (433-3243).
- To learn more about how to complete the FAFSA correctly, visit www.studentaid.ed.gov/fafsa-fillingout
- You will need to fill out the FAFSA to qualify for the Federal Pell Grant program. Pell Grants are need-based grants given to help meet the cost of college. Last year, Pell awards ranged from \$588 to \$5,775. To learn more about Pell, visit studentaid.gov.

- You must file the FAFSA for every year you attend school. For example, if you are currently a college freshman, you should complete the 2016-17 FAFSA to receive aid for your sophomore year.
- Check the status of your FAFSA at www.fafsa.gov by clicking on the FAFSA follow-up. There is also an online chat function to answer any questions students or parents might have.

Important WASFA facts

- Make sure you visit the official WASFA webpage at www.readysetgrad.org/wasfa. It is **FREE** to file the WASFA!
- You will need to fill out the WASFA to qualify for the State Need Grant.
- If you are planning to attend college for the first time, or as a returning student, during the 2017-2018 academic year, complete the 2017-2018 WASFA.
- You must file the WASFA for every year you attend school. For example, if you are currently a college freshman, you should complete the 2016-17 WASFA to receive aid for your sophomore year.

Types of Aid

Very few students get all of their financial aid for college from one source. When you are searching for financial aid, consider a wide variety of options and apply to as many programs as possible.

Grants

- Grants do not have to be repaid *if you successfully complete the courses in which you were enrolled*. They are given to the students who have high financial need. Most grants come from the federal and state governments.

Scholarships

- Scholarships do not have to be repaid *provided that you successfully complete your coursework*. They are awarded for good grades, cultural or religious background, sports and special talents. Most scholarships come from organizations and colleges.

Work Study

- Work study helps you to earn money to pay for your education by working a part-time job offered through the college. There are federal, state, and institutional work study programs

Loans

- Loans for students have lower interest rates than most other types of loans. Unlike grants or scholarships, loans must be repaid with interest when you finish college, *even if you do not graduate*. Student loans are offered through banks, colleges, and other institutions.

Before you begin...

For FAFSA Filing:

- Beginning with the 2017-18 FAFSA, you can report income information from an earlier tax year. You and your parents will use your completed 2015 tax information to submit the FAFSA, rather than using estimated income and updating it later in the spring.
- You can save time by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, which automatically takes information from your tax return and fills in required information on the FAFSA form.
- Create a FSA ID. This is a username and password and allows you to gain entry to certain U.S. Department of Education websites. This FSA ID also acts as your online signature, which will allow you to submit your FAFSA once you have completed it online. This ID will also allow you to check the status of your FAFSA later and to file again for next year. You can create your FSA ID by going to fsaid.ed.gov.

For WASFA Filing:

- Beginning with the 2017-18 WASFA, you can report income information from an earlier tax year. You and your parents will use your completed 2015 tax information to submit the WASFA, rather than using estimated income and updating it later in the spring. The WASFA also is available starting October 1.
- Before getting started, review the WASFA instructions at <http://www.readysetgrad.org/wasfa> and gather any documents or other information you may need.

Steps to Create an FSA ID

1. Go to fsaid.ed.gov or, if you are ready to begin your FAFSA, start at [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov) and click on the *Create an FSA ID* link.
2. Create a username and password, and enter your email address.
3. Enter your name, date of birth, Social Security number, contact information, and challenge questions and answers.
4. Review your information, and read and accept the terms and conditions.
5. Confirm your e-mail address using the secure code, which will be sent to the e-mail address you entered when you created your FSA ID. You can use your FSA ID immediately to file and sign the FAFSA even if you aren't able to confirm your email with the secure code.

Each student needs an FSA ID. If parent information is required on the FAFSA, one parent will also need an FSA ID to sign the student's FAFSA. Each student and parent must create their FSA ID separately at fsaid.ed.gov.

Tips To Remember When Creating an FSA ID

Be sure to enter your information accurately.

Your information will be verified by the Social Security Administration and making a mistake, especially with your social security number, birthdate or name, will cause delays.

Keep in mind that an email address can only be associated with one FSA ID.

Students and parents cannot use the same email address.

If you have an email other than your high school email address, use that alternate email. You may even want to create one especially for financial aid and college application purposes.

Your high school email access will likely expire after you graduate. You will need to use your FSA ID for years to come so link it to an email address that you will continue to use.

It is important to have access to your email when creating your FSA ID.

A secure code will be sent to your email that you will need to retrieve when creating your FSA ID. Entering this secure code will confirm your email address, which is very important if you forget your username or password, and it will allow Federal Student Aid to communicate with you electronically.

Your FSA ID can be used immediately to access and sign the FAFSA.

However, you won't be able to use it to update or correct the FAFSA or enter any other FSA websites until it has been verified with the Social Security Administration (one to three days).

Your Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID)

Creating an FSA ID is the first step to completing your FAFSA. An FSA ID gives you access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and serves as your legal signature. Only create an FSA ID using your own personal information and for your own exclusive use. If you had a PIN, having that number available will make this process easier.

To create an FSA ID, go to fsaid.ed.gov. Complete this form to keep track of important information related to your FSA ID. **This information should be kept confidential and stored in a secure location.** Please bring this document to your College Goal Washington event. You can find events that provide assistance with completing your FAFSA at <http://readyssetgrad.org/educators/grad/cgw-students-families>

Student Information

Email Address: _____

Username: _____

Password: _____

Answer to Challenge Questions (answers are case sensitive):

Challenge Question Answer 1: _____

Challenge Question Answer 2: _____

Challenge Question Answer 3: _____

Challenge Question Answer 4: _____

Significant Date Answer (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Parent Information (if appropriate)

Email Address: _____

Username: _____

Password: _____

Answer to Challenge Questions (answers are case sensitive):

Challenge Question Answer 1: _____

Challenge Question Answer 2: _____

Challenge Question Answer 3: _____

Challenge Question Answer 4: _____

Significant Date Answer (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Scholarships

TheWashBoard.org

The Washboard is a free web-based resource for Washington students attending college in and outside of Washington. It helps students quickly identify scholarships for which they are eligible by showing only those scholarship opportunities that match their profile data. Students' private information is kept confidential.

Scholarships listed on theWashBoard.org are diverse and support a wide variety of student interests and accomplishments.

- One-third of listed scholarships require a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- More than half of scholarships are not based on financial need.
- 32% of scholarships listed are renewable, which means you may be eligible for continued scholarship funding as you continue your education.
- The scholarships listed in 2014-15 represented 3,023 individual awards totaling \$41.6 million dollars!

When should I create an account?

It is never too early to create an account on TheWashBoard.org! Pay attention to deadlines and note that some may be early in your senior year.

College Bound Scholarship

Established by the Legislature in 2007, the College Bound Scholarship program provides financial assistance to low-income students who want to achieve the dream of a college education. This early promise of financial aid is intended to alleviate the financial barriers that prevent low-income students from considering higher education as a possibility.

The scholarship is available to 7th and 8th grade students whose family income meets the guidelines, or who are in foster care. The deadline to sign up is June 30 of the students' 8th grade year. The scholarship covers tuition (at comparable public colleges), some fees, and a small book allowance.

In 2015, 91 percent of the Class of 2019 (8th graders whose deadline was June 30, 2015) submitted complete applications. This year, 110 districts had sign-up rates of 92 percent or higher. Of these, 77 school districts saw 100 percent of their eligible students sign up.

Since the program's inception, almost 215,000 students have applied. Foster youth in 7th to 12th grade, up to age 21, who have not graduated from high school, are automatically enrolled in the College Bound Scholarship. Learn more about the College Bound Scholarship by going to www.collegebound.wa.gov



College Goal Washington is part of the 12th Year Campaign, an initiative administered by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) with support from the Washington State GEAR UP and College Bound programs, and from the Washington State Employees Credit Union. For more information and resources to help with your college preparation, visit www.readysetgrad.org.

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