

College Application Process - Student Timeline

When to complete	Administrative Docs	Where might I find this?
Freshman - Junior Year	Visit college campuses! Go on tours, learn what you like and don't like about different colleges	
September - April	Application Tracker	Make a list of where you're applying and required documents for each application
August - October	Personal Statement Essay	
September	Both parent and student complete FSA ID	FSAID.ed.gov
October	FAFSA opens October 1st - complete ideally by Oct. 30th	FAFSA.ed.gov
October - December	Supplement Essay Questions	College applications
October - December	Send ACT/SAT scores to colleges if they are not on your transcript	https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/scores/sending-scores
October - March	Complete scholarship applications specifically for the colleges you apply to	College websites
January - March	Complete outside scholarships	Check annual CPS scholarship publication
January - March	If schools require it, complete CSS Profile, IDOC, and other financial verification forms	College online portal CollegeBoard
January - May	Check mail and colleges' online portals to receive decisions and final financial aid awards	College online portal
March	Resume	
May	May 1st - deadline to submit enrollment deposit for colleges! (except community colleges)	College online portal
May	Send immunization records to college	High School or doctor
May	Complete loan entrance counseling, sign master promissory note, and accept loans if required	Studentloans.gov
May - July	Sign up for orientation	
May - July	Submit Housing forms and deposit	

Financial Aid Process Outline

Below is the general outline for the college financial aid process. If you have any questions at any point, please do not hesitate to reach out to your student's counselor. As you begin the financial aid process, collect all financial documentation from the prior-prior tax year - for example, if your student will be starting college in fall of 2018, financial aid will ask for 2016 documents.

Financial Aid Process	When to complete	Required for all students?	Notes
Create student and parent FSA IDs <i>FSAID.ed.gov</i>	September	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Used to electronically sign the FAFSA ● If parent already went to college or has another student in college, you have an FSA ID already!
FAFSA <i>FAFSA.ed.gov</i>	October (opens Oct. 1)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete this as close to October 1 as possible to maximize aid ● Make sure to add all colleges you are applying to ● If parent or student files taxes, use the Data Retrieval Tool to decrease potential verification ● Must be completed every year
Verification Forms	Ongoing	No, depends on the college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Either sent home in the mail, listed on a student's online portal for that college, or emailed to student. Encourage student to check these frequently! ● Complete every box so it is not sent back! ● If these are not sent to the college, student will NOT receive an award
Tax Return Transcript <i>irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript</i>	December	No, depends on the college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More colleges are asking for copies of tax return transcripts for students and parents who file taxes ● If student or parent does not file taxes, they may request a non-filer statement from the IRS (4506-T)