

Bishop Rosecrans High School College Planning Timeline Checklist: Senior Year **CEEB code: 365-750**

A time when everything comes together, and you get to see the results of your hard work and planning.

The year is filled with admission applications, scholarship essays, financial aid information, and the need to meet deadlines.

The following timeline is a tool that should be helpful in successfully managing your efforts on the road to college admissions.

August

- In English class compose college essays. Check colleges of interest for their essay requirement and take them to your English class. Finalize a resume of activities.
- Obtain registration materials and test dates for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and/or ACT assessment.
- Create an appropriate email account; review your Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites to ensure it is suitable for viewing by potential employers, scholarship selection committees, etc.
- Review your career plans and finalize which type of postsecondary school(s) are best for you.
- Stay focused on maintaining or increasing your GPA in addition to keeping up with your service hours and extracurricular activities.
- Compare costs of each school that interests you by contacting the colleges by phone, mail, or via their websites.
- Visit Going2College <http://going2college.org/> for information about career, college, and financial aid resources in your state.

PARENTS:

- Parents, utilize the FAFSA4caster <https://fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cForm?execution=e1s1> to get a general idea of what your eligibility may be for federal aid next year.
- Sit down with your student and prepare a list of what he/she is looking for in a college and then help him/her sort through the information they receive from the different institutions to decide which ones offer what's on the list.

September

- If you haven't already taken the SAT and /or ACT, register for the test(s).
- Review your transcript and co-curricular records to ensure you are meeting all academic graduation requirements.
- Complete college visits and request college catalogues, applications, and financial aid information.
- Make an appointment to visit Scholarship Central prior to Thanksgiving. Contact Heather Sands 740-453-5192; www.mccf.org
- Mark your calendar with registration, admissions, and financial aid deadlines and fees.
- Make an appointment with your school counselor to be sure to complete the "Senior Self-Appraisal" form available on the BRHS website, under the Guidance page. Return the completed form to Mrs. LaPlante or the School Counselor in-person.
- Request letters of recommendation and allow 4 weeks prior to deadline, if required. Ask teachers*, coaches, ministers, employers, etc. for recommendations. *The Senior Self-Appraisal form will be provided to each designated BRHS Staff with whom you request a reference.

PARENTS:

- Parents complete Senior Parent Questionnaire which will be sent home during the first day of school. These forms will also be available on the BRHS website, under the Guidance page.

October

- Complete and submit college applications by October 31st; begin checking status online after 2 weeks.
- Arrange for your best ACT and SAT score to be sent directly to colleges. The high school does not send out scores.
- Watch for deadlines and allow 10 business days for the School Counselor to complete designated parts of the application.
- Complete your visit(s) your top school choice(s), if needed. If possible, make appointments with the school's faculty, staff, and students.
- Finalize portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent if required for admission.
- Research and begin to complete applications for every scholarship and financial aid opportunities (including grants) for which you are eligible.
- Understand the FAFSA better by watching the videos in the "FAFSA: Apply for Aid" playlist at www.YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid

PARENTS:

- Explore <https://studentaid.ed.gov/resources/parent> for information on saving for college, borrowing for college, applying for financial aid, getting tax benefits to help make college affordable, and more.

November

- Stay focused on maintaining and increasing your GPA.
- Register for your own FAFSA pin number at www.pin.ed.gov
- Continue to submit applications and checking online for status of application materials.
- If necessary, register to retake the ACT and/or SAT.
- Follow up to ensure your teachers, school counselor, and other identified individuals send letters of recommendations.

PARENTS:

- Go to www.pin.ed.gov to register for a PIN so you can assist your student with financial aid forms. While a parent needs only one pin number (no matter how many children they have in college), each student needs his/her own number.

December

- Finalize admissions applications.
- Watch for early admissions notices (then tend to arrive in December or January).
- Urge your parents to file their taxes as soon as possible after January 1. This will ease the financial aid process.

PARENTS:

- Save all end-of-the-year pay stubs, bank account, stock account or any other statements or documents that indicate year-to-date earnings. You will need these to fill out your FAFSA, since not all of them will be sent to you in time to meet FAFSA deadlines.

January

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> after January 1 and BEFORE February 15th.
 - Be sure to check your colleges' dates to be sure you aren't late. Some have moved their due date to February 10th.
- Read your colleges' information about their in-house scholarships and request applications and/or the website for online applications.
 - Be aware of due dates.
- Request to have first semester transcripts sent to colleges, if needed.

PARENTS:

- Help your student complete the FAFSA.

February

- Rank your top school choices in order of preference.
- Begin filling out scholarship applications.
- Attend a FAFSA Preparation Event (College Goal Sunday...2015 date and location TBA)
- Remember to get university/college housing requests in as soon as possible.
- Watch for the email notice indicating your Student Aid Report (SAR) is ready.
- Be mindful of deadlines. ALWAYS submit information on time.
- Make informed decisions about student loans; find important information at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/>

PARENTS:

- Help your student complete the FAFSA, as needed.
- Help your child learn about the responsibilities involved in accepting a student loan by reviewing <https://studentaid.gov/types/loans#considerations> with him or her.

March

- Continue working on scholarship applications. Many local scholarship deadlines are in March/early April.
- Make an appointment to have a physical in early June. By then you should have your college housing information. Gather documentation of all vaccinations.
- Check with the financial aid offices to ensure your paperwork is complete. Submit tax forms if they request them.
- Be on the lookout for acceptance letters.
- Research on campus work-study opportunities

PARENTS:

- As financial aid award letters come in, look at the financing carefully, make comparisons, and contact the schools with any questions.

April

- Acceptance forms are typically this month. Send replies out early enough to arrive no later than May 1. Visit college campus to help make final decisions (if necessary). Be sure to mail deposits (i.e. housing and/or additional fees), if required.
- Compare financial award letters.
- Notify your high school counselor of your college selection and any scholarships received.
- Plan for college registration, orientation, and housing, and mark your calendar with important dates.
- Complete scholarship applications, if needed.
- Make a copy of both sides of parent's insurance card if student will remain covered under parental health insurance while in college. NOTE: Student health centers cover minor illnesses/mishaps, but not everything. Most colleges require proof of health insurance.
- Thank the teacher(s) who wrote your college recommendation letters and let them know the results.

PARENTS:

- Go to www.irs.gov and read *IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education* to see how you might benefit from federal income tax credits for education expenses.

May

- Send your college housing contract in as early as possible. At some colleges, preference is given by date of receipt of the contract.
- Fill out final transcript request envelope. You will complete this in your English class.
- Prepare a realistic student budget available on the BRHS website, under the Guidance page.
- Notify the other schools that you will not be attending
- Final check with your School Counselor to ensure that your final transcripts are forwarded to the college you plan to attend.
- Arrange for final transcript to be sent to student's school of choice (final transcripts are not sent automatically, student must request).
- Local Scholarship Awards are typically awarded this month

MAY 30TH Commencement Write a thank you note to all schools/clubs/agencies who have given you scholarship money and to each person who wrote a recommendation for you.

June/July

- Maintain copies of your financial aid forms, health forms, etc. for your files to aid in resolving future issues.
- Register for your Fall Semester college courses.
- Save money from your summer job.
- Prepare for the new adventures that await you on campus. Remember it is not as much where you go to college, as what you do when you get there.

PARENTS:

- Hug your student, send him/her on his/her way, BUT don't change the locks—he/she will be back©