



# Lighthouse for Learners

## Facilitating Success in School

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## *Going to College?*

Here is a working plan for high schoolers to keep you on track as you focus on getting into college.

### **September to December**

#### **Seniors**

- Check in with your college advisor the first week of school to see about what you need to do for your college application and when. (Watch the deadlines! Early decision deadlines are generally in November.)
- Finish college visiting.
- Ask teachers to write recommendations, if you have not yet done so.
- Finish writing your college essay. (Have an English teacher read it.)
- Edit your social media accounts.
- Keep up with your school work and maintain good grades.

#### **Juniors**

- Arrange to meet with your college advisor/counselor before the middle of October. The sooner the better. Discuss what needs to be done by when and put those dates on your calendar.
- Begin/strengthen relationships with teachers so that you will have someone you can ask to write a college recommendation next year.
- Position yourself to take a leadership role in an extra-curricular activity you are involved in.
- Prepare for the PSATs in October by taking a practice test, if you did not study in the summer.
- Visit at least one college you are interested in attending.

#### **Freshmen and Sophomores**

- Now is the time to adopt good study and organizational habits, if you have not yet begun!
- Work hard. If you are struggling in a class, ask for help early.
- If you are new to your school, identify the adults and services in your school that will help you make a successful transition. Make new friends.

## **December to March**

### **Seniors**

- Maintain your good grades and continue to behave responsibly, especially in cyberspace.
- Keep a positive attitude as those notification letters come in from colleges. The world will not end if you are rejected from one of your choices. It's okay to be sad, but then pick yourself up.
- Sit down with your parents and decide which of the colleges that did accept your application, you will attend.
- Meet with your advisor/counselor to make sure all is well.
- Write thank-you notes to those teachers who wrote recommendations on your behalf. Write one for your advisor/counselor as well.

### **Juniors**

- Register to take the ACT/SAT.
- Continue adding words to your vocabulary daily.
- Consider taking an SAT II subject test.
- Advance college visiting. (Spring Break is a good time to do this.)

### **Freshmen and Sophomores**

- Begin formally adding two more words to your vocabulary each day.
- Continue to work hard. If you are struggling in a class, ask for help early.

## **March to June**

### **Seniors**

- Maintain your good grades and continue to behave responsibly, especially in cyberspace.
- If you did not apply to a college for early consideration,

--keep a positive attitude as those notification letters come in. The world will not end if you are rejected from one of your choices. It's okay to be sad, but then pick yourself up.

--sit down with your parents and decide which of the colleges that did accept your application, you will attend. Consider financial aid, the list of things you want from a college, your feelings about being in that particular college culture. You may want to consult with your college advisor/guidance counselor as well.

- If you have made a decision about the college you will attend,

--re-visit the campus, if you can.

--notify the institution you have selected and honour the stated deadlines required to complete the acceptance process.

--notify the institutions you are not attending, by sending them a note. Remember to thank them for their offers!

- In April, meet with your high school advisor/counselor to make sure all is well, with regards to graduation.
- Write thank-you notes to people who have been instrumental in your success throughout your K-12 years and/or whose efforts helped your college application.

### **Juniors**

- Register to take the ACT/SAT.
- Continue adding words to your vocabulary daily.
- Consider taking an SAT II subject test in June.
- Advance college visiting.

### **Freshmen and Sophomores**

- Begin formally adding two more words to your vocabulary each day.
- Continue to work hard. If you are struggling in a class, ask for help sooner rather than later.

## **June to September**

### **Seniors**

- After you have sufficiently relaxed and celebrated the end of your high school years, think about what you will need to pack for dorm life. Learn the date you will need to report to campus, then begin shopping and packing a month ahead. Will you need to ship anything? Is there an address you can ship things to for pick up when you arrive? Plan ahead.

### **Juniors**

- Use some of your summer to research college scholarships and other financial aid. Make a note of various deadlines for financial aid applications. By mid-August, acquire college applications forms. All are now available on-line.

### **Sophomores**

- Spend some of your summer getting ready for the PSAT by increasing your vocabulary and improving your math, verbal and writing skills. The higher you score on your PSAT, the less preparation you will need to do to get ready for the SAT when you take them in the spring of your junior year.

### **Freshmen**

- If you can, spend some of your summer with students who will be attending your new school. Often, schools offer summer classes for fun or remediation. Taking one of these classes will allow you to meet students who attend or will be attending that school and afford you the opportunity to make a friend or two. As well, you will be able to learn the layout of your school's building or campus which is sure to remove most first-day jitters.