

Ninth Grade

This is a Transition year. You will be transitioning from middle school to high school remember to have fun, get involved and work hard to get the best grades you can.

- Make sure you are enrolled in the appropriate college-preparatory or tech-prep courses.
- Get off to a good start with your grades. The grades you earn in ninth grade will be included in your final high school GPA and class rank.
- College might seem a long way off now, but grades really do count toward college admission and scholarships.
- Explore your interests and possible careers. Take advantage of Career Day opportunities.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities (both school and non-school-sponsored).
- Talk to your parents about planning for college expenses. Continue or begin a savings plan for college.
- Look at the college information available in your counselor's office and school and public libraries. Use the Internet to check out college Web sites.
- Tour a nearby college, if possible. Visit relatives or friends who live on or near a college campus. Check out the dorms, go to the library or student center, and get a feel for college life.
- Investigate summer enrichment programs.

Tenth Grade

This is the year of Exploration. Now that you are use to being in high school and what is expected of you take classes that are interesting to you and will challenge you. Stay/get involved at school and in the community.

Fall

- In October, take the American College Testing program's PLAN (Pre-ACT) assessment test, which helps determine your study habits and academic progress and interests. This test will prepare you for the ACT Assessment next year.
- Take geometry if you have not already done so. Take Chemistry or Physics and a second year of a foreign language.
- Become familiar with general college entrance requirements.

Winter

- Discuss your PLAN score with your counselor.
- The people who read college applications aren't looking just for grades. Get involved in activities outside the classroom. Work toward leadership positions in the activities that you like best. Become involved in community service and other volunteer activities.
- Read, read, read. Read as many books as possible from a comprehensive reading list.
- Work on your writing skills—you'll need them no matter what you do. This is a good time to start writing a general paper about who you are, colleges and scholarships will ask for this.
- Find a teacher or another adult who will advise and encourage you to write well.

Spring

- Keep your grades up so you can have the highest GPA and class rank possible.
- Ask your counselor about postsecondary enrollment options and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Continue to explore interests and careers that you think you might like.
- Begin zeroing in on the type of college you would prefer (two-year or four-year, small or large, rural or urban).
- If you are interested in attending a military academy, such as West Point or Annapolis, now is the time to start planning and getting information.
- Go online to college websites and check for their academic requirements for admission.
- Read all of the mail you receive from colleges. You may see something you like.
- Attend college fairs.
- Keep putting money away for college. Get a summer job.

Eleventh Grade

Begin college selection process. Attend college fairs, financial aid seminars, general information sessions, etc., to learn as much as you can about the college application process. Make sure you are meeting NCAA requirements if you want to play Division I or II sports in college.

September

- Take the October PSAT (on National Test Day).
- Save samples of your best work for your academic portfolio (all year).
- Maintain your co-curricular record (all year).

October

- Junior year PSAT scores may qualify a student for the National Merit Scholarship Competition and the National Achievement and the National Hispanic Scholars Programs. So, even though these scores will not be used for college admission, it is still a good idea to do well on the PSAT.

November

- Junior year grades are extremely important in the college admission process, because they are a measure of how well you do in advanced, upper-level courses. Grades also are used to determine scholarships and grants for which you may be eligible. So put in the extra effort and keep those grades up!
- If you will require financial aid, start researching your options for grants, scholarships and work-study programs. Look at Nouvel's website to see what is offered and deadlines so you will be aware next year when you can start to apply.

December

- During December you should receive the results of your PSAT. Read your score report and consult your school counselor to determine how you might improve on future standardized tests. The PSAT is excellent preparation for the SAT Reasoning Test, which you may take in the spring.
- When you begin to explore different colleges and universities, double-check to see if they prefer or require the ACT, the SAT Reasoning Test and/or the SAT Subject Tests.

January

- Begin to make a preliminary list of colleges you would like to investigate further. Surf the Internet and use the college resources in the guidance office or library.
- Ask your parents for your Social Security number (required on many college applications and Standardized Tests). If you were never issued a Social Security number, contact the closest

High School Checklist

Social Security office as soon as possible to obtain a number.

- Begin test prep for the ACT portion of the MME exam which will be administered in March.

February

- Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss your preliminary list of colleges. Discuss whether your initial list of colleges meets your needs and interests (academic program, size, location, cost, etc.) and whether you are considering colleges where you are likely to be admitted. You should be optimistic and realistic when applying to colleges.

March

- Take the MME Exam. You should have your results by the end of March and if necessary register for the June test.

April

- When selecting your senior courses, be sure to continue to challenge yourself academically.
- Continue to evaluate your list of colleges and universities. Eliminate colleges from the original list that no longer interest you and add others as appropriate.
- Look into summer jobs or apply for special summer academic or enrichment programs. Colleges love to see students using their knowledge and developing their skills and interests.

May

- Attend a college fair to get more information about colleges on your list
- Get a jump start on summer activities-consider enrolling in an academic course at a local college, pursuing a summer school program, applying for an internship, working, or volunteering. If you work, save part of your earnings for college.
- Plan a summer road trip to begin visiting colleges. Phone to set up appointments. Interviews are always a good idea. Many colleges will tell you they are optional, but an interview will show interest, enthusiasm and initiative on your part and provide an excellent opportunity to have your questions answered. Do a practice interview with your counselor, teacher, or employer. Set up interviews as early as possible-interview times become booked quickly!
- Take any AP tests that you signed up for.

June

- After school ends, get on the road to visit colleges. Seeing the college firsthand, taking a tour and talking to students can be the greatest help in deciding whether or not a school is right for you. Although it is ideal to visit colleges during the academic year, going in the summer will be valuable. Admission offices employ their students to give tours and answer questions from prospective students and their parents.
- Take the ACT if you need to/want to improve your score.

July

- Visit colleges, take tours, have interviews and ask questions. Make college visiting a family event. Involve your parents and siblings in every step of your application process. Choosing the right college is a tough decision; the opinions of those who know you best can provide helpful insight into which college is best for you.

August

- Continue to refine your list of potential colleges and universities.
- Begin preparing for the actual application process: draft application essays; collect writing samples; and assemble portfolios or audition tapes if needed. If you are an athlete and plan on playing in college, contact the coaches at the schools to which you are applying and ask about intercollegiate and intramural sports programs and athletic scholarships.
- Complete the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse form if you hope to play Division I or II sports. (This form cannot be mailed until you finish your sixth semester of high school.)

Senior Year

Apply to colleges. Make decisions. Finish high school with pride in yourself and your accomplishments.

September

- Make sure you have all applications required for college admission and financial aid. Write, phone, or use the Internet to request missing information.
- Check on application and financial aid deadlines for the schools to which you plan to apply. They may vary and it is essential to meet all deadlines!
- Meet with your guidance counselor to be sure your list includes colleges appropriate to your academic and personal record. Review your transcript and co-curricular records with your school counselor to ensure their accuracy.
- If you need to take ACT or SAT tests register for the October/November SAT Reasoning Test and/or SAT Subject Tests, or September/October ACT.
- If the colleges require recommendations, ask the appropriate people to write on your behalf. At least three weeks before the due date, ask your counselor and teachers, employers, or coaches to write letters of recommendation. Provide recommendation forms, any special instructions and a stamped, addressed business envelope to the people writing your recommendation. Be thoughtful! Write thank-you notes to those who write recommendations and keep them informed of your decisions.
- Plan visits to colleges and set up interviews (if you didn't get to them during the summer or if you want to return to a campus for a second time). Read bulletin boards and the college newspaper. Talk with current students and professors.

October

- Attend a regional college fair to investigate further those colleges to which you will probably apply.
- Mail applications in time to reach the colleges by the deadlines. Check with your guidance counselor to make sure your transcript and test scores have been/will be sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- If applying for early decision or early action, send in your application now. Also prepare applications for back-up schools. Submit financial aid information if requested from early decision/action candidates.
- Register for the December/January SAT Reasoning Test and/or SAT Subject Tests, or December ACT if you have not completed the required tests or if you are not happy with your previous test scores and think you can do better.
- Have official test scores sent by the testing agency to colleges on your list.
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

November

- Be sure your first quarter grades are good.
- Continue completing applications to colleges. Make copies of all applications before mailing the applications.
- Keep all records, test score reports and copies of applications for admission and financial aid. Do not throw anything away until at least the end of your first year in college. Having detailed records will save you time and effort should anything be lost or should you decide to apply in the future to other colleges and scholarship programs.
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

December

- Have official test scores sent to colleges on your list if you have not done so.
- Consult your school counselor again to review your final list of colleges. Be sure you have all bases covered. It is a good idea to make copies of everything before you drop those envelopes in the mail. If for some reason your application gets lost, you will have a back-up copy. File your last college application.
- If you applied for early decision, you should have an answer by now. If you are accepted, follow the instructions for admitted students. If the decision is deferred until spring or you are denied, submit applications now to other colleges.
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

January

- Keep working in your classes! Grades and courses continue to count throughout the senior year.
- If you need financial aid, obtain a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) from your guidance office. Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require any other financial aid form. Register for the CSS Profile if required and obtain the college's own financial aid forms, if available.
- Request that your counselor send the transcript of your first semester grades to the colleges to which you applied.
- Parents and students, complete your income tax forms as soon as possible. You will need those figures to fill out the FAFSA. Complete and return your FAFSA as quickly as possible after January 1. Check to make sure your colleges or state does not require any other financial aid forms. If they do, consult your guidance counselor or contact the college's financial aid office. (Nouvel will host a FAFSA Workshop for parents at the beginning of January)
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

February

- Remember to monitor your applications to be sure that all materials are sent and received on time and that they are complete. Stay on top of things and don't procrastinate; you can ruin your chances for admission by missing a deadline.
- If you completed a FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks after submitting the FAFSA. Review the SAR carefully and check for any inaccuracies. If necessary, correct any items on the SAR and return it to the FAFSA processor (if a college transmitted your data directly, notify the college of any change).
- If more than four weeks have passed after sending in your FAFSA and you have not received an acknowledgment, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (319) 337-5665. To identify you, they will need your name, social security number, address, and date of birth exactly as it was written on your FAFSA.
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.
- Enjoy your final year in high school, but don't catch senioritis!
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

March

- Stay focused and keep studying-only a couple more months to go!
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

April

- Do not take rolling admission applications for granted. (Some colleges do not have application deadlines; they admit students on a continuous basis.) These schools may reach their maximum class size quickly-the earlier you apply, the more availability there may be.
- Review your college acceptances and financial aid awards. Be sure to compare financial aid packages in your decision-making process. If you are positive you will not enroll at one or more of the colleges which accepted you, please notify those colleges that you have selected another college. Keeping colleges abreast of your plans might enable those colleges to admit someone else. If you know which college you will attend, send your tuition deposit and follow all other instructions for admitted students. You must decide which offer of admission to accept by May 1 (postmark date).

May

- By May 1, decide on the one college that you will attend. By May 1, send in your tuition deposit to the college you will attend. Notify the other colleges that accepted you that you have selected another college.
- BE PROUD-you have completed a difficult task.
- If your first-choice college places you on their waiting list, do not lose all hope. Some students are admitted off the waiting list. Talk with your counselor, and contact the college to let them know you are still very interested. Keep the college updated on your activities.
- Take AP examinations, if appropriate and request that your AP scores be sent to the college you will attend.

June

- Request that your counselor send your final transcript to the college you will attend. Notify the college of any private scholarships or grants you will be receiving.
- Know when the payment for tuition, room and board, meal plans, etc., is due. If necessary, ask the financial aid office about a possible payment plan that will allow for you to pay in installments.
- Congratulations, you've made it through high school! Enjoy your graduation and look forward to college.

July

- Look for information in the mail from the college about housing, roommate(s), orientation, course selection, etc. Respond promptly to all requests from the college. August-September
- Ease the transition into college. Accept the fact that you'll be in charge of your academic and personal life. What you do, when you do it and how things get done will be up to you. You'll have new responsibilities and challenges. Think about budgeting your time and establishing priorities. Take charge of the changes that lie ahead and eliminate or minimize pressures. Go forth with confidence and enthusiasm, willingness to adapt and determination to succeed academically and personally.
- Pack for college. Don't forget to include things that remind you of friends and family. Be prepared for the new opportunities and challenges. Have a great freshman year!