



SMHS Guidance/College Information
Your Four-Year Road Map
www.smhscs.org

Freshman Year

- September/Oct: counselor will introduce and discuss transition to high school and options during your high school career, the path to college
- Establish your study habits, maintain good grades and get involved in and out of school
- Enroll in Family Connection to begin familiarizing yourself with this powerful college search tool
- Stop by and see your counselor, get to know her/him
- Consider optional PSAT test in October
- December attend Link Crew study session for finals
- February: your counselor will meet one-on-one to discuss sophomore schedule

Sophomore Year

- September/Oct: counselor will discuss pathways to college
- Make time to get to know your counselor
- Use Family Connection to continue college exploration; get information about what GPA and standardized test scores prospective colleges require
- October PSAT Seminar – optional course to prepare for the PSAT held at SMHS
- Consider optional PSAT test in October; receive study guide for PSAT
- October mandatory PLAN test
- January evening explanation of PSAT results
- Continue to maintain good grades, get involved and find a volunteer activity you're passionate about
- Take challenging courses
- February/March: meet one-on-one to discuss junior schedule
- Stay organized with the college information you may be receiving in the mail
- Begin writing a resume; save the document to update over the next two years

Junior Year

- September: Junior Parent College Admission Night (students encouraged to attend)
- October PSAT Seminar – optional course to prepare for the PSAT held at SMHS
- Strongly encourage ALL juniors to take optional PSAT test; get study guide
- Continue to do well academically and get involved!
- Check Family Connection frequently to sign up for information visits at SMHS by college admission counselors
- Look for information on off campus college fairs on Family Connection and Counseling e-blasts
- Get to know your counselor better; meet with counselor in fall
- Request additional information from colleges you are most interested in; get information about what GPA and standardized test scores prospective colleges require
- You will begin receiving college information, create folders/files of your information
- Prepare to take SAT and/or ACT in spring; schedule SAT Subject Tests if your prospective college(s) require them
- January evening explanation of PSAT results
- January/Feb: meet one-on-one discuss SMHS graduation requirements and senior schedule
- Review post-secondary plans
- Review college application and scholarship process with your counselor
- February: start military academy and ROTC application process



SMHS Guidance/College Information Your Four-Year Road Map www.smhscs.org

- February/March: ACT prep class offered at SMHS
- Take ACT, SAT and SAT Subject Tests in spring and summer if necessary
- March ACT prep class at SMHS
- Spring Break: visit colleges you are interested in
- April: register with the NCAA Clearinghouse if you think you might play sports in college; request transcripts from counselor to be sent to NCAA
- Continue to update your resume to include honors, leadership activities, community outreach opportunities
- May: Take appropriate AP exam
- Summer: continue to visit schools you are interested in, make an appointment with an admissions counselor. Take your completed resume and unofficial transcript. Consider the visit as an interview! 2
- Start thinking about your college admission essay.
- Common Application opens 1 August, and most college applications are available in late July/early August. Begin completing applications on line. Know what forms and letters of recommendations your colleges require. Stay on top of all deadlines!

Senior Year

- August: Congratulations! It is your senior year!
- This year counts, don't get lackadaisical! Continue to strive to do your best and you will succeed
- Meet with your counselor within the first few weeks of school. Discuss your plan for requesting letters of recommendation. Confirm deadlines for all forms and letters with your colleges.
- Provide your counselor and teachers with resume and letter of recommendation request form
- Use Family Connection for requesting all transcripts for colleges and scholarships (\$3/transcript)
- Sign up for college information visits by admission officers on Family Connection
- Look for information on off-campus college fairs on Family Connection and in the counseling E-Blast
- Look for scholarship information in E-blast information; check scholarship binder in the counseling office.
- Register for ACT, SAT and/or SAT Subject Tests if still needed, no later than November
- Complete all military academy and ROTC applications by December (Sept/Oct preferred)
- Turn in all college applications by Thanksgiving break; all applications for early admission/early decision due by November 1 usually
- Nov to May: turn in copies of all letters of college acceptance and scholarship offers to counseling office
- December: do the preliminary work on the financial aid application, FAFSA
- January: complete the FAFSA or CSS Profile
- April: review your acceptances and financial aid awards; call the college financial aid offices if you need clarification of your award or need to discuss the amount of your aid package
- May: take appropriate AP exam
- May 1st: Deadline to notify colleges of acceptance; notify counseling of final decision