

Kingwood High School

College Planning Guide

Junior and Senior Year

Preparing for College - Parent/Student Action Plan

Junior year is a vital time to start the college planning process. It takes time and energy, but with careful planning, the college process can be painless. Here are a few things you can do this year to support your child and give him/her the very best options.

Summer prior to Junior Year

- Get the facts about college costs. Collegeboard.org has some useful information on [Understanding College Costs](#).
- Explore financial aid options. These include grants and scholarships, loans, and work-study programs that can help pay for college costs. Find out more about how financial aid can make college affordable.

Fall of Junior Year

- Make sure you are enrolled in courses that are academically challenging and meet the needs of graduation and admission to multiple institutions of higher learning.
- Set goals for the school year. Working toward goals can help your child stay organized, motivated, and focused. Help your child stay organized and develop time management skills. Take a look at collegeboard.org and [8 Ways to Take Control of Your Time](#).
- Sign up for the PSAT. This test awards national merit recognition to students who earn top scores in their Junior year. Registration begins in September, and the test is given in mid-October. Pay attention to the website, emails, and announcements. You will want to check “yes” on the student search service. Sign up for the free account on [collegeboard.org](#) and register with My Organizer. Obtain SAT testing dates and locations on the College Board website.
- Register for ACT test and obtain ACT testing dates and locations at [act.org](#).
- Prepare for the PSAT using study guides sent home, TestGear on [bridges.com](#), Khan Academy, and any other online testing tools.
- Attend College Night. This occurs mid-October. This is a great time to get information about various schools and meet with representatives from different colleges and universities. These college representatives are often those that review your application so introduce yourself to them.
- Begin to make a list of possible schools. Your list may start off fairly large. Then begin to eliminate based on your interest of study, financial considerations, and what you would like in a school. Use [bridges.com](#) as a tool to assist with that search.

Important Websites

[www.collegeboard.org](#)

[www.act.org](#)

[www.bridges.com](#)

[www.fafsa.gov](#)

[www.fastweb.com](#)

[KHS Counselor Webpage](#)

[KHS Testing Webpage](#)

[KHS College Resource](#)

Fall of Junior Year (cont)

- Visit the College & Career Room and decide which colleges most interest you. Research information about admission requirements, financial aid, and deadlines.
- Make a folder for colleges. Include information you find, log-in and passwords you create for schools, a portfolio/resume of works you are proud of (art, writings, projects, etc.).
- Explore financial aid. Register with fastweb.com.
- Plan College visits. See an admission officer, tour campus housing, seek out financial aid information.
- Athletes – send coaches letters of interest, an athletic resume and play schedule prior to your “season.”
- Military Academy – check with your representatives to determine what you need to be nominated.
- Get involved in various activities. Volunteer and keep track of all volunteer hours
- Study, Study, Study.... This year really counts!

Spring of Junior Year

- Take advantage of Practice SAT or ACT that are offered at a discount. These can be very useful tools for preparing for the actual test and are very affordable. Check the KHS website, emails, and announcements.
- Schedule dates to take the SAT and ACT. Register and begin to prepare using online study tools, bridges.com/TestGear, Khan Academy, or other study prep.
- Take the SAT and /or ACT.
- Determine if you will need to retake the test, and if there is any additional need to prepare (study classes, workshops, etc.).
- Apply now if interested in Military Academy
- Athletes will need to register with the eligibilitycenter.org if you plan to participate in NCAA Sports in college.
- Plan and attend College visits. You are allowed two your Junior year and two your Senior year. Talk to students, tour campus and housing, pay attention to the town, ask lots of questions.
- Meet with your counselor to ensure you are on track to graduate and if you know of your chosen school that you will meet all their requirements.
- Begin the college application process. Most use similar applications, but follow the links on their websites. Pay attention to the essays that are released late spring/early summer for the [Common Application](#) and [Apply Texas](#).

Summer prior to Senior Year

- Begin to prepare essays for college applications.
- Complete Senior information sheets for recommendations. This is useful whether they are needed for the application or not, because at some point it will likely be required for a scholarship, etc.
- Go to summer school if needed
- Visit schools. Begin to eliminate those schools that do not meet your criteria.
- Start applying for admission. In August, many applications open. Pay attention to dates and deadlines. [Common Application](#) and [Apply Texas](#) are the most common. Start early!
- Look for financial aid opportunities. Look for availability from federal, state, local, and private sources.
- Investigate scholarships provided by corporations, labor unions, professional associations, religious organizations and credit unions. Information on these can be found in the College/Career room or online under the [College Resource Center](#) on the KHS Counseling Website.

Fall of Senior Year

- Visit College/Career Room, [bridges.com](#), research schools online, continue to gather data on colleges. Use Bridges.com. Finalize your list of schools.
- Pay attention when colleges visit KHS. Talk to their representatives. Find out about all aspects of the campus.
- Determine if there is a need to retake SAT or ACT and do so early!
- Begin applications. Pay attention to due dates for all aspects of the application (admissions, deadlines, housing, financial aid, etc). These are very strict.
- Request letters of recommendation early from teachers, principals, counselors, coaches, and employers. Be sure to bring a copy of your Senior Information Sheet, a stamped addressed envelope, and a thank you note.
- Attend College Night in mid-October. Remember that these college representatives are often those who will be reviewing your application. Introduce yourself.
- Plan college visits. Make sure to ask questions and tour housing, etc. You get two your Senior Year. College Days taken after Spring Break must have prior Principal approval
- In November, apply for a FAFSA PIN number at <https://pin.ed.gov/PINWebApp/pinindex.jsp>

Spring of Senior Year

- Try to get your parents income taxes filed quickly. You will need this to complete the FAFSA or any financial aid. This application is on fafsa.gov. Do not wait until your taxes are filed as you will miss many financial aid deadlines.
 - Pay attention to letters of admission and financial aid award letters. Complete any necessary information by the deadline (acceptance, housing, scheduling of orientations) These fill up quickly, so if you want your choice of housing and orientation dates, get it completed on time.
 - Continue to push hard through your courses. Even after the freeze of rank, you **MUST** pass your classes to graduate.
 - Inform your school of financial awards, scholarships, grants, etc., that you have received.
 - Check with your institution of higher learning to determine if you need to take any type of placement exams. Take care of this early.
 - Request your final transcript to be sent to your school following graduation. The link is on the KHS webpage and the cost is \$2.
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