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ACTION PLAN: HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Pull Your Applications Together

- Narrow your list of colleges to approximately five to eight, and review it with your counselor. Get an application and financial aid info from each. Visit as many as possible.
- Make a master calendar and note:
 - Test dates, fees and deadlines
 - College application due dates
 - Required financial aid applications and their deadlines
 - Recommendations, transcripts and other necessary materials
 - Your high school's deadlines for application requests, such as your transcript
- Ask for recommendations. Give each person your resume, a stamped and addressed envelope, and any required forms.
- Write application essays and ask teachers, family members and friends to read first drafts.

Decide Whether to Apply Early Action or Early Decision

- November 1: For early admission, colleges may require test scores and applications in early November. Send your SAT® scores.
- Ask if your college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility.

Get Financial Aid Info

- Attend financial aid info events in your area.
- Talk to your counselor about CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® and learn about completing the PROFILE.
- Use Scholarship Search, review scholarship books, and ask your counselor about local and state funding sources.

Review Application Details

- Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.

- Have your high school send your transcript to colleges.
- Contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.

Apply for Financial Aid

- You and your family should save this year's pay stubs to estimate income on aid forms that you'll file early next year.
- Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Men who are 18 years of age or older must register with Selective Service to receive federal financial aid.
- Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, apply by the priority date. Keep copies of everything you send.

Review Acceptance Letters

- You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- Use Compare Your Aid Awards to compare awards from different colleges. Talk to financial aid officers at your college if you have questions about the award offered.
- If you haven't already, visit your final college before accepting.

Make Your Final Choice by May 1

- You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Send a deposit to the college you choose.
- Wait-listed? If you will enroll if accepted, tell the admission officer your intent and ask how to strengthen your application. Need financial aid? Ask if funds will be available if you're accepted.

Take the Next Steps

- Ask your high school to send a final transcript to your college.
- Start preparing for the year ahead.