

Junior Year Checklist

- **Keep your grades up.** This year is especially important, as college admissions officials will review your grade-point average from 9th-11th grades.
- **Select your courses carefully.** College admission requirements usually include a specific number of college-preparatory courses. Make sure that the courses you are taking have high academic content and include English, a foreign language, mathematics, science, social studies.
- **Take the ACT or the SAT.** As a high school junior, you should take the ACT or SAT between March and June. When you take the tests, be sure the testing agency sends the scores directly to the schools that interest you. Remember that if you are not satisfied with your scores, you can take the test again in the early fall of your senior year.
- **Look at other schools.** During your junior year, you should review Web sites and printed materials from several colleges and universities.
- **Establish an e-mail account for college admissions purposes and check it frequently.** Most colleges and universities will send you periodic updates on the application process and on your admissions status. Having a e-mail account dedicated to this purpose will prove very useful if you are interested in multiple institutions. However, it only works if you check the account often.
- **Compare the schools you're considering.** Create a comparison worksheet for the colleges and universities that you are considering. This will help you to see the features of each institution and how the schools compare to each other. Plus, you'll be able to compare the schools on the features that matter most to you.
- **Visit the colleges that interest you.** One of the best ways to determine if a college or university has the right "feel" is by visiting the campus. Whenever possible, take the campus tour, but it is also important to explore the area on your own. To get the most out of your campus visit, have all your questions written down in advance and bring a notebook so that you can record your thoughts. Don't forget your camera.
- **Narrow your search.** After you've researched the different schools that you're interested in, narrow your choices to three to five potential choices. Your top picks should be identified by the beginning of your senior year.
- **Select your senior courses carefully.** When enrolling in courses for your senior year, choose at least three to four academic courses per term. Ask your guidance counselor to make sure that you meet the requirements of the institutions that you are considering.
- **Ask questions.** If you are having difficulty locating the information you need about the college admissions process, don't be afraid to ask for help. Talk to your guidance counselor or contact a representative at the particular institution.