**A CHECKLIST FOR COLLEGE PLANNING
(see your counselor for more information)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **WHEN** | **WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE DOING** | **WHAT PARENTS SHOULD BE DOING** |
| **Freshman Year** | Become familiar with college requirements, costs, and majors. Choose extra-curricular activities that will help you develop your special interests and talents. Consider attending our College Night in the fall with your parents.Plan a productive summer. | Discuss 4 year plan and goals with your student. Familiarize yourself with college costs and ways to finance college.Consider attending all Career & College Nights in the fall with your child.Discuss summer plans with your child. |
| **Sophomore Year** | If possible, take the ACT PLAN Assessment. Consider taking the PSAT.Review your academic record.How are your study skills? Get peer tutoring help if you need it.Attend college night with your parents. | Discuss taking the PLAN & PSAT and realistic career goals. Discuss academic goals and achievement level.Discuss study skills and tutoring available at Central.Attend college night with your child. |
| **Junior Year**September – March December – JuneMarch – August | Take the PSAT in October for test practice. Attend College Night at Central. Think about your reasons for going to college. Identify the important factors in choosing a college – 2 or 4 year? Location? Size? Selectivity? Atmosphere? Academic Programs?Take the ACT or SAT or both.Make list of colleges to consider. | Discuss taking the PSAT. Continue dialog with your child. Attend college night. Decide on the best time for college visits – fall or spring break, preview days, summer. Decide on and discuss your family budget for college. It is our student’s responsibility to register for the ACT/SAT on-line or use the packets available in Guidance.  |
| **Senior Year**June – December November – FebruaryDecember – April | Compare the colleges on your list, and narrow it to those which best match your needs. If you have not already visited colleges, plan to attend preview days.Keep up with scholarship announcements via [Central web site](http://pcboe.net/chs/guidance/scholarships.pdf).Complete college applications. Have Central registrar send [transcripts](http://pcboe.net/chs/guidance/transcript.pdf). Request counselor and teacher recommendations required by colleges EARLY.Pick up financial aid forms as soon as they are available in Guidance.Once you have received your college acceptances, make your final choice and send letters of acceptance and decline other offers by May 1. | Encourage your child to review and update VIP file and discuss application process. Plan college visits.Keep up with all senior information via the [Central web site](http://pcboe.net/chs/guidance/scholarships.pdf).It is your child’s responsibility to meet deadines for [transcript](http://pcboe.net/chs/guidance/transcript.pdf) requests and counselor and teacher recommendations.File financial aid forms by Internet or mail as soon as possible after January 1.Talk over options with your student and make sure all colleges have been notified by May 1. |
| **RESOURCES FOR COLLEGE PLANNING**The Guidance Office has a variety of College Guides, Test Prep Books, College Catalogues, Books on Financial Aid and Scholarships, Parent Guides, Videos and CD’s. Both students and parents may sign these out. Drop by anytime to browse. **The office will be open in the summer.**Other programs, such as the My Road at <http://www.collegeboard.com>/ are available to students on the Internet. Students of all grade levels who have questions or concerns about college planning or scholarships should see your counselor.Parents are most welcome to call **any counselor** to make an appointment to talk over the specifics of their student’s college planning.The development of Internet resources has brought about dramatic changes in the college planning and application process. While individual college Web sites vary greatly in quality and capacity, there are many colleges which offer extensive admissions information, virtual-reality walking tours, on-line catalogues, current class schedules, chat rooms with students and professors, and applications which can be downloaded or filed on-line. Web site addresses are listed in College Guides, but it is also easy to find them through search engines. Listed below are just a few of the many sites useful for both students and their parents.www. collegeboard.com - College Board on-line - includes registration for and information about SAT I and SAT II, practice questions for the tests including PSAT, AP Test information, college and scholarship searches and a free financial aid on-line service to calculate a family’s estimated family contribution based on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Aid) methodology. There is a section for parents which is very useful.<http://www.act.org/>- ACT on-line - includes registration for and information about the ACT & PLAN, sample questions, information for parents, a college planning and application service and the Financial Aid Need Estimator. <http://www.fastweb.com/> - the Internet’s largest free scholarship search. It is possible to apply on-line for some scholarships. <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> - Web site to file FAFSA. \* **not to be confused with www.fafsa.com** where students pay $45 to have the free FAFSA form completed.<http://www.nacacnet.org/> - The National Association for College Admissions Counseling provides information on National College Fairs, such as one in Birmingham, on-line college fairs, and a wealth of information about the college admissions process, including “Students’ Rights and Responsibilities in the College Admissions Process”.**PARENTS BE WARY OF ANY FINANCIAL AID OR SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE WHICH CHARGES A FEE.** **ALL INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FREE FROM COLLEGES AND FROM YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS.** |