

ARCHBOLD HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE/CAREER PLANNING GUIDE

A Publication of the Guidance Department

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CAREER PATHWAYS

Students today have many options available to them beyond high school. Students are encouraged to explore their career options and identify the pathway that will best prepare them for success beyond high school. Below are several pathways that students will choose to take after high school. Each pathway has its advantages and students need to make career decisions that will best suite their interests, skills and goals. Students are also encouraged to recognize that their career is a lifelong journey and may go down several pathways over time.

- **4-Year College:** 4-year institutions are those that lead towards a Bachelors degree. These schools typically provide a liberal arts approach to education that not only focuses on specific career majors but also provides for a well-rounded education in all areas. These institutions also offer Masters and Doctoral degrees for professions requiring additional schooling.
- **2-Year College:** 2-year institutions also commonly referred to as community colleges lead towards an Associates degree. Many of the degrees are aligned with technical careers. These institutions are more career-focused and often require fewer general education courses as the 4-year institutions. Many 2-year institutions also offer a variety of programs that are linked with technical programs and 4-year colleges leading to additional education, degree completions and certifications.
- **Technical School:** These institutions provide technical training that often leads to certification, but not a degree. Examples would be cosmetology, massage therapy, heavy equipment operators, etc.
- **Armed Forces:** Enlisting in one of the branches of the armed forces provide students with opportunities for service to country, job training and college education. The five branches of the armed forces include the Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Air Force. Service to ones country builds discipline and a strong work ethic. For some, the armed forces may be a lifelong career and for others, it may be something they are involved in for a few years. Students pursuing the armed forces are encouraged to also think long term about their career options when their service ends.
- **Apprenticeship Programs:** An apprenticeship is a program that is tied with a specific field, that provides on-the job training and education courses over a specific period of time while paying the person involved a wage. Employers or labor unions often run these as a means of training and getting individuals working in specific companies or the work force.
- **Employment:** Some students choose to enter the workforce directly after high school. Working provides valuable on-the-job experience and helps develop a strong work ethic. Be sure to check with your employer about any available opportunities for advancement or support with furthering your education.
- **Gap Year:** This refers to postponing continued study after high school for a brief period. It also can be a break during or after college or graduate school. It provides students with time to choose activities and experiences that will be helpful for them in determining their future direction. Many students will use this time to work, take a college course, volunteer, go on mission trips or travel. Popular programs such as Job Corps (www.jobcorps.gov) and Peace Corps (www.peacecorps.gov) offer structured gap year opportunities while providing life and career training.

IN DEMAND JOB SKILLS

Regardless of pathway a student chooses, employers are looking for employees that possess a core set of skills. Below is a list of in demand job skills that are appropriate for any work environment.

- **Strong Work Ethic.** Employers want employees who are reliable, dependable, and self-motivated.
- **Time Management Skills.** Time management involves planning and following a schedule: listing what tasks need to be accomplished, estimating how long each will take, and determining the sequence in which the tasks should be done. Every profession requires good time management skills.
- **Problem-Solving Skills.** Virtually all employers look for employees who can identify a problem and develop and implement a solution.
- **Verbal Communication Skills.** Verbal communication skills include both speaking and listening skills. Communication is a two-way street; you must be able to listen to communicate effectively.
- **Written Communication Skills.** The ability to write clearly and concisely is vital in the workplace. Writing in the working world often comes in response to a request for information or to brief others.
- **“People” Skills.** The ability to work well with others and build good working relationships is important in any field. Good working relationships require trust and mutual respect and help employees work more efficiently and effectively.
- **Technical Skills.** At a minimum, technical skills include the use of a word-processing program (like Microsoft Word) and a spreadsheet program (like Microsoft Excel). The ability to search the Web to gather reliable information is also important.

VOTER REGISTRATION

You are eligible to vote as of your 18th birthday. You may register to vote prior to any general election so long as you will be 18 on or before the date of said election. We encourage all students to exercise this right. For a registration form, go to www.sos.state.oh.us.

SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION

All young men **MUST** register for the Selective Service 30 days prior or 30 days after their 18th birthday. Failure to do so will affect your eligibility to apply for financial aid. You can apply online at www.sss.gov.

SETTING UP A PERSONAL EMAIL ACCOUNT

You will be completing a lot of applications and setting up a lot of accounts as you begin your post-secondary planning. It is necessary for you to have a personal email account, separate from your school email, to use when completing these tasks. Popular email services include Google, Hotmail and Yahoo. Make sure your email account is professional and appropriate.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Whether it is a 4-year, 2-year or technical school, choosing a college is a big decision. It is a decision that impacts all areas of your life. As such, it is important that you feel comfortable as a person and as a student with where you attend. You should begin as soon as possible to learn more about what is actually involved in attending college. Below are some factors to consider.

- What is your personality like?
- What is your top reason for attending college?
- What kind of student are you? What are your learning strengths and weaknesses?
- How hard are you willing to work to get good grades?
- What majors does the college offer?
- How many years of college do you plan to complete?
- Are you looking for a certificate, associates, bachelors degree or more?
- What size of college do you want? (small college or a large university)
- Do you want to attend a private or public college?
- Do you want to attend a college with a church affiliation?
- What campus activities do you want to be involved in?
- Is there an active Greek life? (Sororities and Fraternities)
- What type of career services/counseling is available?
- What type of academic services/tutoring is available?
- What is the average class size for courses?
- What percent of classes do graduate assistants versus professors teach?
- How far away from home do you want to be?
- Do you want to go to school in a small town or a large city?
- Do you want to live on campus or commute?
- Will the cost of college be an important part of your decision? How much is too much?
- Will having your parents' approval of your choice be a factor to consider?
- Will you need to find part-time employment while in college?
- How much financial aid/scholarship money is available?

MEETING WITH COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELORS

Each fall, many college admissions counselors schedule site visits at the high school to meet with interested students. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to learn about different colleges and to make a personal connection with admission counselors. Admission reps are often involved in the admission decision, so it is to a student's advantage to ensure an admission rep is able to put a face with a name. Students are also able to connect with their admission counselors virtually via social media, video conferencing and instant messaging.

A calendar of all scheduled admission reps can be found on the AHS guidance website homepage. If interested in meeting with an admission counselor, students simply need to register online at the guidance website and make sure they record the day and time in their planner.

COLLEGE VISITS

Visits to colleges are highly encouraged. You would not want to buy a car you have never driven or wear a dress you have never tried on, so why attend a college you have never seen? Visits are often arranged through the Office of Admissions (either online or by calling) and can be large group tours or private if requested. Many colleges also host special visitation days as well. In addition to the campus tour, students can customize their visit by requesting additional opportunities such as sitting in on a class, meeting with an advisor, touring facilities, eating in dining halls, attending an athletic event and more. Students are also encouraged to tour the college town. Explore where you may be living and all the area has to offer.

The school is supportive of students going on college visits. Typically, juniors and seniors are allotted 2 approved absences per year, although additional days can be approved. If you want to go on a college visit, it is important that you follow the correct procedures. An appointment with the admissions office must be scheduled. Whenever possible, it is asked that these appointments be made when school is not in session. Once an appointment has been made, pick up a College Visitation Form in the main office at least **two days prior** to your scheduled visit. This form must be completed (with parental signatures) and returned to the secretary for verification **one day before your visit**. You must have someone from the Admissions Office sign the form and bring it back to the high school office after the visit.

Another option is to visit colleges through “virtual tours.” Two recommended websites are www.youvisit.com and www.ecampustours.com.

Questions to Ask on a College Visit

- What is the average class size for an introductory course?
- Who does the teaching? (professors or graduate students)
- How is the academic calendar year set up? (quarters/semester)
- How is admission to the college determined?
- When is the application deadline?
- Does the college have a Career Planning Program?
- What is the school's overall placement rate?
- What are the basic costs (tuition, room, board, books and fees)?
- What kinds of financial aid programs are available? Deadlines?
- Can freshmen have cars on campus?
- What types of housing is available?
- What varsity and intramural sports are available?
- What opportunities exist for part-time employment on campus?
- Will a faculty advisor be assigned to me?
- Are there college placement tests for certain classes?
- What course of study is offered for _____ (your career choice)?
- Are there travel abroad opportunities?

DEVELOPING YOUR COLLEGE LIST

As you research and visit schools, begin to develop a list of schools you plan to apply to. Consider the following:

Evaluation of Self:

- Grades
- Level of Maturity
- Test Scores
- Leadership Experience
- Class Rank
- Recommendations
- Special Talents
- Ability to Travel
- Community Service
- Faith/Religion
- Work Experience
- Strength of Curriculum

Evaluation of Potential Colleges:

- Location
- Overall Size
- Retention Rate
- Class Size
- Major/Programs
- Academic Reputation
- Environment
- Social Atmosphere
- Campus Activities
- Living Arrangements
- Internship Placement
- Graduation Rate

The colleges on your list should **match** as many of these elements as possible! Your “College List” should also contain several types of colleges. The type of colleges should be the following:

1. **Safety Schools:** These are colleges you have an extremely high chance of being admitted. Safety schools are not to be considered schools that are “easy” to get into, but rather schools you are certain would be a good fit for you.
2. **Possible/Likely Schools:** These are colleges that you would be happy to attend, and that you have somewhere between a 50-70% chance of getting into. These are schools your academic profile and test scores may be slightly below, but you still have a good chance your recommendations and activities will help boost your admission prospect.
3. **Reach Schools:** These are colleges you may “dream” of attending, but your academic profile and the profile of students the school usually admit do not align. Any school that is a highly selective school (admission rate falls below 15-30%) is a school where admission for **anyone** is highly difficult!

Your college list should consist mainly of “Safety” and “Possible” schools, with one or two “Reach” schools. Be sure that all schools on your list are places you would be happy to attend. These schools are places you would like your family and friends to visit, that you have visited or plan to visit, and that provide the opportunities you seek.

ADMISSION DEADLINES

The biggest priority concerning the college process will be to pay attention to **deadlines**. You can locate college application deadlines online. College deadlines are important! Usually an application deadline is a “post-mark” deadline, meaning as long your materials have been postmarked by their deadline, you’ve met their requirement.

In addition to the application deadline, there are other important deadlines a student may also need to take into consideration.

1. **Scholarship Deadline:** Some colleges will only calculate and award scholarships at one time during the application process. This is most common with larger, state schools. If a college does have a scholarship deadline, it is typically several weeks, even months before the regular application deadline.
2. **FAFSA Priority Deadline:** Every college receives federal and state aid that they may disburse out in the form of financial aid. This aid is often above and beyond what a student receives directly from the federal government. Many colleges have a FAFSA Priority Deadline that must be met in order for students to be considered for this additional aid. Missing these deadlines could mean the loss of grants and workstudy.
3. **Major Application Deadline:** Some colleges have competitive majors and degrees that may have an application in addition to the application for the college.

When a student applies to a college, they are a variety of “decision” options a student can make. Some of these decisions are binding and equivalent to a signing a contract while others simply let a college know that a student is a little more serious about attending. It is imperative that students understand these options and know what they are agreeing to.

Non-restrictive Application Plans:

- **Regular Decision:** Students are able to submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision from the college in a reasonable, specified amount of time. Students do not have a binding commitment to the college.
- **Rolling Admission:** Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render decisions throughout the admission cycle on an on-going basis. It is to the student’s benefit to apply in early fall for rolling admission schools. Students do not have a binding commitment to the college.
- **Early Action (EA):** Students apply early to college and receive a decision well in advance of the college’s regular response date. Students do not have a binding commitment to the college.

Restrictive Application Plans:

- **Early Decision (ED):** Students make a commitment to their first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline both occur early. **This commitment is binding.**
- **Restrictive Early Action (REA):** Students apply to an institution of their preference, and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED, EA or REA from other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 (or other deadline) to confirm.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

Once you have narrowed your list down to 2-5 colleges, your next step will be completing the applications. This information and more can be found on the colleges' website, specifically on their undergraduate admissions page. Most applications are now completed online, although some colleges may still offer a paper application. In general, the following are 6 steps you can follow to be sure you're on the right track.

6 Easy Steps

1. Whenever possible, complete the college application online. This reduces the chance of human error. Typically, prior to starting the application, you will need to create a user account with the college. You often can start an application, save it and come back to it later. Once completed, submit your application.
2. Gather all related documents that may be needed by the college. See "Application Components" below. It is the responsibility of the student to determine what is needed and to provide copies of those documents.
3. Obtain a blue **Application Processing Form** from the counseling office. One blue form must accompany each application you wish to send. If you apply to 7 schools, you must turn in 7 blue forms.
4. Turn in a signed and completed blue form with all necessary attachments to your counselor at least **TWO WEEKS** before you want your application materials sent out.
5. Have official ACT or SAT test scores sent directly from the testing agency to your colleges if you have not already marked them to receive your scores. This can easily be done online by logging into your testing account. Colleges typically will not accept the scores that are on the high school transcript.
6. Let your counselor know the outcome of your application. After all that work, your counselor is eager to hear about the admission outcome.

Application Components

While many college applications require no additional documentation, there are colleges that may request additional paperwork in addition to the application. Almost every college will want a transcript. The following pieces may also be requested from the college to which you are applying before your application is complete:

- High School Transcript
- Official Test Scores from ACT or SAT
- Essay
- Supplement to the Common Application (when using the Common Application)
- Teacher Letter of Recommendation
- Counselor Letter of Recommendation
- Secondary School Report/Counselor Report
- Resume or Activity List

As the person who may be attending a college, it is your responsibility to locate the college application, know what is needed to finalize the application and to complete it. It is not the responsibility of your parents or the school counselor to complete these tasks for you. **Take responsibility to research ahead of time!**

Please Note: Fee waivers are available for both the ACT and the SAT for students who qualify. See your counselor.

THE COMMON APPLICATION (www.commonapp.org)

The Common Application is a not-for-profit organization that serves students and member institutions by providing an online admission application that may be use at multiple, participating colleges. There are now hundreds of colleges across the country using the Common Application. See the sample Common Application included in this guide.

Once completed online, the Common Application can be sent to any number of participating colleges. The Common Application consists of a Student Information section (with essay questions), Secondary School Report, and Teacher Evaluation. When the guidance office at AHS processes common applications, we ask that students complete the following steps:

1. Complete the common application online and submit to desired schools. **Please note that it is imperative that you correctly input all information, including your name. Any incorrect information can delay processing of your applications.**
2. Input the **correct email address** for the teacher to complete the Teacher Evaluation and for the counselor to complete the Secondary School Report. Be sure to ask the teacher you want to add as your recommender if you can add them prior to submitting your application. For AHS staff, the email should end with @archboldschools.org.
3. Obtain a blue *Application Processing Form* from the guidance office. On this form, indicate your college(s) and mark the Common Application box.

Note: Counselors will upload your transcript to your Common Application account and will complete a mid-year and final year report on your behalf.

WRITING COLLEGE ESSAYS

Various colleges will ask you to write one or more essays as part of the application. Look upon these essays as golden opportunities for you to talk directly with the Admissions Office staff. Through your essays, you can show admission counselors that you are an actual person and not just a set of test scores and GPA's. Essays are your opportunity to share your thoughts, insights and personality, to highlight your accomplishments and to convey your maturity. If you view college essays in this way, then they are clearly worth the extra effort and time. The essay needs to show what your application can't. Admission reps read thousands of essays. **Make yours unique!**

What is the purpose of the essay? The essay allows admissions officers to evaluate your communication skills. Some admissions officers even mark essays in the same way your English teacher does. Clear thinking and excellent form are a must. Essays also help admission officers get to know you as a person: your attitudes, feelings, personal qualities, ideas, and creativity.

What makes a good essay? Write on topics about which you know a lot. Begin by brainstorming possible ideas. Be as specific as possible. Use a central idea or thesis. Once you have written an essay, give it to someone else to read. Spend time revising it so that it is clear, logical, and specific. Spend time on organization, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and tone. Be sure that the "voice" in the essay is yours! A thoughtful, well-written essay can affect the final decision in a very positive way.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

College applications may request one or more recommendation letters from people who know you in and out of the classroom. Read each college's information carefully to find out what their specific requirements are. Generally speaking, if a college asks for recommendations, they will be sure to take the time to read them. There are yellow *Senior Recommendation Info Sheets* in the guidance office that will help you communicate to your recommenders what you need. Before giving anyone the *Senior Recommendation Info Sheet*, you must complete the related Google Form on the guidance homepage.

Whom should I ask? Read the application carefully. Often colleges request letters of recommendation from an academic teacher (sometimes a specific subject) and/or your school counselor. You should use a teacher who has known you long enough to form an opinion. It is best not to go back too many years, as colleges want current perspectives on their potential candidates. If you get a recommendation from a teacher who's also been involved with you outside the classroom, make sure they will also speak to your academic achievements and potential.

When should I ask? Make sure to give your recommendation writers plenty of time - at least 2-4 weeks before letters are due - to complete and send your recommendations. Many teachers like to be reminded that you need a letter from them, so let them know when you're one week away from sending your applications.

Helpful Tips

- Don't be shy. Recommenders are usually happy to help you, as long as you respect their time constraints.
- Provide recommenders with deadlines for each recommendation that you are requesting, especially noting the earliest deadline. **Do not write that your application and letters should be sent "ASAP"**.
- **Make sure you always mark on applications and supplemental forms that you want to "waive the right to view recommendations"**. This gives more credibility to the recommendation in the eyes of the college. If you are worried about what a recommender may write about you, perhaps he/she is not the person you should ask for a recommendation.
- Follow up with your recommenders a week or so prior to your first deadline, to ensure recommendations will be completed in time.
- Be sure to write a thank you letter to anyone who writes you a letter of recommendation.
- Finally, letters of recommendation are not the duty of teachers to write. It is a privilege to receive a letter from teachers and your counselor.

So, when all else is equal between two applicants, a recommendation letter can pull a lot of weight.

NCAA & NAIA

Students interested in playing college athletics are encouraged to meet with a counselor and their coach to review the eligibility requirements for the various leagues. Students playing at division I or II NCAA schools must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse and meet academic and amateurism eligibility standards. Students playing for NAIA school must register with their website. NCAA division III and community colleges do not have an online registration portal.

ACT/SAT INFORMATION

ACT and SAT are two college admissions/placement tests used by colleges to assess a student's potential for college success. Colleges typically do not place preference on one test over the other, but be sure to research their requirements.

Both tests will be used in making admission and scholarship decisions. Sometimes an increase of a few points can mean the difference between thousands of dollars in scholarships. Students are encouraged to take the test multiple times and to even take both tests. It is possible that a student can score significantly better on one test versus the other. There are many books and online programs to help students prepare for these tests.

2018-2019 ACT Test Dates & Deadlines

Test Date	Registration Deadline
September 8	August 10
October 27	September 28
December 8	November 2
February 9	January 11
April 13	March 8
June 8	May 3
July 13	June 14

Register online at www.actstudent.org. Students are strongly encouraged to take the ACT Plus Writing at least once as a select number of colleges require a writing score. Archbold is a test site for all ACT testing dates except July.

2018-2019 SAT Test Dates & Deadlines

Test Date	Registration Deadline
October 6	September 6
November 3	October 3
December 1	November 1
March 8	February 7
May 4	April 5
June 1	May 2

Register online at www.sat.collegeboard.com. Archbold is not a test site for the SAT.

Our school code is 360200

Please Note: Fee waivers are available for both the ACT and the SAT for students who qualify. See your counselor.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Students are able to obtain financial aid through the federal government while enrolled in college by completing the FAFSA each year. The FAFSA opens on October 1 each year and students and parents will complete their FAFSA using prior-prior year taxes. Students can link their FAFSA to as many as 10 colleges and institutions. Students are encouraged to know when the FAFSA priority deadline for their colleges is, as failing to meet this deadline can impact the amount of financial aid awarded.

The federal government awards a variety of types of aid.

- **Subsidized Student Loans:** This is an interest-bearing loan that begins collecting interest the day it is disbursed.
- **Unsubsidized Student Loans:** This is an interest-bearing loan that does not begin collecting interest until 6 months after a student completes their degree.
- **Grants:** This is free money, similar to a scholarship. Grants are typically awarded to students who demonstrate the greatest financial need.
- **Workstudy:** This is a program that allows students to obtain employment on a college campus and to earn a wage that can either be applied to their education or used for living costs.

FSA ID

Before students can complete a FAFSA, they and their parents/guardians must have an FSA ID. FSA ID's can be created at <https://fsaid.ed.gov>. The FSA ID allows students and parents/guardians the ability to electronically sign the FAFSA. It is extremely important that students create their own FSA ID and use a personal email that is different than their parent/guardian's email. See the attached handout for instructions on setting up an FSA ID.

SAR & EFC

Upon completion of the FAFSA, students will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). This report will either be sent electronically or by mail. The SAR will list your FAFSA information. It is important that you review the SAR for any errors and that errors are corrected immediately. If all the information provided is correct, the SAR will list your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is the dollar value the government determines your family should be able to contribute to your education for that year. The lower the EFC, the greater the chances you will qualify for better aid and grants. The SAR will also have your Data Release Number (DRN), which will be needed if you allow your college to change information on your FAFSA.

What if I have an issue with my financial aid?

It is imperative that students be fully involved with the financial aid process because the aid belongs to them. Issues with financial aid should be directed to the college financial aid office and must be communicated by the student. Parents do not have legal rights to financial aid information. It is also important that students communicate any changes in their financial situation with the financial aid office. A parental death, divorce, remarriage, loss of employment, disaster, etc. that is not reflected on the FAFSA due to the tax return can be adjusted by the college affecting a student's aid.

SUGGESTIONS IF GOING INTO THE ARMED FORCES

Joining the armed forces is a serious decision and one that should require a lot of thought. Below are some suggestions to assist you in making that decision.

1. You will need to meet the following requirements:
 - be a US citizen
 - be at least 17 years old
 - undergo a physical examination
 - graduate from high school (students graduating from an online high school are looked upon less favorably as those from a brick and mortar school)
 - be prepared to participate 2 years in the program
2. Think about whether you want this for a short period of time or as a career.
3. Recruiters frequently are available at college fairs or at AHS during lunch to talk with you. In addition, all branches of the service have recruiting offices in Northwest Ohio.
4. The military is a viable route to obtain further education or training, including opportunities for both vocational skills and college education.
5. The military offers the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) to high school seniors without charge. This is required of all recruits and is used as a career placement test.
6. If you are interested in attending one of the military academies, the application process should have been initiated during your junior year. If interested, see a counselor.
7. In addition to active service, explore ROTC, Reserves and the National Guard.
8. Before you make any final decisions, discuss your ideas thoroughly with your family, counselor, and/or teachers. **Before you sign, make certain that all offers and plans are in writing!**
9. If you go with a recruiter to take the ASVAB or to take a physical exam, you must complete a "College/Military Visitation" form at least 24 hours prior to your absence. **Failure to comply with this procedure will result in an unexcused absence!**
10. Visit the website www.todaysmilitary.com to read about the 4,000+ careers available in the military.

SUGGESTIONS IF GOING DIRECTLY FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO A JOB

For some students, entering the workforce after high school is a viable option. Below are some suggestions to consider.

1. Take an online Interest Inventory to determine which careers hold potential for you.
2. Consider taking classes after graduation on a part-time basis at a community college or a vocational training school.
3. Temporary Employment Services can be useful to graduates interested in trying a variety of work experiences in such areas as industry, clerical, and computers.
4. Commercial employment agencies may be a possible route to a job. Be careful of fees!
5. Read the want ads in the newspapers.
6. Look into on-the-job training or apprenticeship program possibilities.
7. Network your need for a job with your most valuable contacts: friends, parents, relatives, teachers and former employers.
8. Have a complete, updated, resume available.

SENIOR YEAR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- Schedule your senior/parent conference with your counselor.
- Verify your transcript is accurate.
- Begin working on college applications.
- Become familiar with the AHS guidance website and check it regularly.
- Complete a Senior Data Sheet.
- Read your email daily.
- Register to take one of the college admission tests.
- Register with one of the online scholarship search websites.
- Meet with admissions representatives that visit the school.
- Browse through college websites.
- Develop a list of your top 3-5 college choices.
- Compare costs of each school that interests you.
- Investigate careers of interest.
- Mark your calendar with admissions, scholarship and financial aid deadlines.
- Attend nearby college fairs.
- Register with NCAA or NAIA if planning to play college athletics.

OCTOBER

- Complete college applications by Thanksgiving.
- Attend Financial Aid presentation at Archbold High School with your parents.
- Complete the FAFSA online.
- Arrange campus visits with your narrowed list of colleges.
- Ask employers, teachers, counselors and coaches/advisors for letters of recommendation if needed.
- Investigate all scholarship possibilities.
- Check the AHS guidance website for updates and announcements.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- Seek help from teachers if you are struggling in a class.
- Watch for the email notice indicating your Student Aid Report (SAR) is ready. Revise your SAR for errors and make any corrections as indicated.

- Register to take another college admission test if needed.
- Check the guidance website and Internet for possible scholarships.
- Investigate sources of financial aid.
- Download the FAFSA Worksheet.
- Prepare for final exams.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

- Finalize college plans.
- Complete tax forms as soon as possible.
- Continue to look for scholarships.
- Check the guidance website for monthly updates.
- Follow up with your colleges to see if they have all of your application materials.
- Check AHS guidance website for updates.
- Rank your top school choices. Make any final campus visits.

MARCH/APRIL

- Apply for local scholarships. Local scholarships are due April 1 each year.
- Compare financial-aid packages from colleges. Talk with the college financial aid office if you have questions.
- Make your final decision and mail deposits as required.
- Notify the colleges you have chosen not to attend.
- Plan for registration, orientation and housing.
- Start looking for summer employment/opportunities.

MAY/JUNE

- Take AP exams.
- Send thank-you notes to individuals who wrote you recommendation letters.
- Attend summer orientation sessions.
- Complete Senior Exit Survey.
- Finalize summer job plans.
- Prepare a realistic student budget.
- Graduate high school!

JUNIOR YEAR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

- Become familiar with the AHS website and check it regularly.
- Register for and take the October PSAT.
- Start a data sheet listing awards, activities, leadership, employment, etc.
- Meet with admissions representatives when they visit the school.
- Attend nearby college fairs.
- Develop a plan for when you will take college admissions tests.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- Maintain good grades.
- Start researching colleges online.
- Research financial aid options.
- Participate in the Junior Job Shadow Experience.
- Review your PSAT results.
- Prepare for first semester exams.
- Attend mandatory College Credit+ meeting if interested in earning college credit while in high school.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH

- Develop a preliminary list of colleges you are interested in.
- Develop a system for organizing college planning materials.

- Register to take a college admissions test during second semester.
- Schedule your senior classes.
- Take the state mandated ACT in March.
- Do some ACT/SAT test prep.
- Go on college visits during spring break.

APRIL/MAY

- Schedule a meeting with your counselor during Junior Conference Week.
- Attend nearby college fairs.
- Look into summer employment/opportunities.
- Prepare for second semester exams.
- Take AP exams.
- Register with an online scholarship search engine.

SUMMER

- Schedule additional college visits.
- Organize your academic records, test scores, community service completed, leadership positions, honors/awards, etc.
- Complete the NCAA Initial-Eligibility form if you hope to play Division I or II sports.