

SENIOR CHECKLIST

The end is in sight and you are counting down the days to graduation! Before you get an extreme case of “senior-it is”, map out the remaining steps for getting into the college of your choice. Here’s a checklist of what needs to be done to ensure that you’re ready to hit the campus next fall.

THIS FALL

- ✓ Review your class schedule, test scores and college plans with your counselor to make sure you are meeting all of your requirements. Continue to challenge yourself and take solid elective courses.
- ✓ Continue your involvement in activities. Take on leadership roles and stay or get involved in volunteer and community service experiences.
- ✓ Narrow down your list of potential schools and gather information from them. Research that info to make sure you’re aware of admission requirements and application deadlines. If you haven’t already done so, plan to visit those campuses.
- ✓ Evaluate your finances. Need extra money for tuition, books or rent? Begin researching student loans online and plan to attend the financial aid workshop in October. If you did not make it to the workshop, be sure to pick up the information from your guidance counselor.
- ✓ Attend college information sessions and visit with the college admission representatives that come to Baker High School.
- ✓ Register to take the ACT and/or the SAT again.(Repeat as necessary)
- ✓ Apply for the scholarships that you have found online and that your guidance counselor will give you.
- ✓ Make it a goal to have all of your college applications done and sent in by Thanksgiving. But, be aware that some colleges have deadlines as early as October.
- ✓ Every college will require a copy of your high school transcript. You can get your transcript from the high school office, free of charge.
- ✓ Build a polished, professional looking resume that includes your activities, honors, work experience and volunteer efforts. You can use the template on MCIS or create your own.
- ✓ Create files in which to keep copies of your applications and scholarships.
- ✓ Request letters of recommendations from teachers and community members for scholarships and college applications.

THIS WINTER AND SPRING

- ✓ Apply for scholarships
- ✓ Remember, second semester grades are important and can affect your scholarship eligibility.
- ✓ Financial Aid: Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) online as soon as possible after Jan. 1.
 - Priority deadline for most colleges is March 1st, however some colleges like the U of M have a Feb. 15th deadline.
 - Collect the prior year's year-end financial information (such as tax forms and bank statements) for both you and your parents. You will need the information to fill out the FAFSA.
 - The FAFSA should be processed in about four weeks. At that point look for your Student Aid Report online. When you get it, verify the information and make any necessary corrections. Make sure your colleges of choice receive the form.
 - Be prepared to submit a copy of your federal tax forms to the college(s) of your choice.
 - Financial Aid Award letters will usually arrive before May 1. Financial aid administrators at the colleges that accept you will verify the information from your FAFSA, determine your aid eligibility and send you a financial aid awards letter. This letter will state the amount of aid for which you are eligible and the types of aid that make up your aid package.
 - Evaluate your options and make your college selection. Sign and return the financial aid award letter, if required. Let the schools know what you decide – even if you don't plan to attend. That will free up a place for another student.
 - If you qualified for student or parent loans, get the right forms (promissory notes) and review lenders to see which one is right for you.
- ✓ Apply for housing if you plan to live on-campus.
- ✓ Finalize your summer job plans.
- ✓ You will be asked by the office and/or your guidance counselor where you would like your final transcript(s) sent.
- ✓ Write thank you notes for any scholarships you've received and for all graduation gifts.
- ✓ Learn what it takes to be successful in college. Consider a first year experience course to learn how to study and be academically successful.

THIS SUMMER

- ✓ Be aware of your freshman orientation dates. Do not miss your orientation- you may not be able to register for class until you attend.
- ✓ Save money from your summer jobs. You'll be glad you did! And, prepare a realistic student budget for the fall.
- ✓ Shop carefully for everything you will need for college. That will help you avoid last-minute, expensive buying decisions.
- ✓ Keep in touch with your college financial aid office to check the status of your finances. Make sure everything is going according to plan.
- ✓ Try to meet or talk to your new college roommate. Discuss your expectations of each other (and decorating preferences), so you'll have an easier time living together.
- ✓ Make sure to take a tour of your classes before school starts so you won't get lost or look foolish on the first day of class.
- ✓ Any last minute details you need to wrap up? If you've followed the above guidelines, you should be ready for college! Your education is something no one can take away from you! Make the most of it!