

## Senior Year Countdown Keeping Your College Admissions Process On Track

BY ED-GENUITY CONSULTANTS

**M**ost high school seniors are now choosing and applying to college. Yet many find themselves dazed and confused by the admissions process. You just need to get organized to keep it all under control. Here is an admissions timeline to help you through this intense and often baffling process.

### Now-December

Narrow your college choices down to three to six schools. Collect admissions packets from each of your choices. Create a master calendar. Record all admissions, financial aid and scholarship deadlines. Include any application and test fees on the calendar as well. Your parents should be part of this process. They need to know when money is due well in advance. Go over your high school transcript with your counselor. Check it for accuracy. Make sure you have the credits you need to graduate on time. Most colleges will ask for recommendation letters. Inform counselors, teachers and employers about those due dates. Provide them with stamped, college-addressed envelopes. Choose people who can write about your character, leadership, community service, determination or special talents. Their letters are meant to help you stand out from the crowd.

Reflect on your high school years. Start pulling together your academic and extracurricular profile. Jot down your courses, outside activities and job experiences. Note your accomplishments as well as any challenges. What are your strengths, talents, interests, favorite classes and career goals? Don't forget any relevant summer or volunteer activities. Let someone who knows you well review your profile. They can ensure that you don't leave out anything important. You want to have an in-depth profile at your finger tips. It will make completing applications and writing college and scholarship essays so much easier. Start working on any applications due late December or early January. Keep on top of any scholarship deadlines. Begin drafts of your essays. Have someone knowledgeable critique your essays before you submit them. Take or retake the SAT/ACT college admission tests. Test dates, test registration deadlines and fees should also appear on the master calendar.

### January-May

Your final semester is not the time to slack off.

If you are struggling in a class, talk with the teacher. Find out how to improve your grade. Resist the temptation to take it easy. Get out your applications that are due around the first of the year. Remember that a completed application packet includes the application form and fees, your transcript, essay, SAT/ACT scores and recommendations. Remind your teachers and counselors what needs to be turned in and when. Keep copies of all admissions, financial aid and scholarship materials you submit.



Contact the college admissions offices to make sure they have received all your application materials.

After January 1, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on paper or online. That is the U.S. Department of Education financial aid form. You don't need to be accepted by a college to fill out the FAFSA. However, you should list your preferred colleges on the FAFSA form. The District also offers financial assistance through the DCTAG and DCLEAP programs. You should apply for those funds as well. Continue to research and

apply for private scholarships. Check with the college financial aid offices to confirm that they have received all your financial aid materials. Let them know of any private scholarships that you receive.

Review admissions and financial aid offers carefully and make your final choice. Pay close attention to acceptance, deposit, housing and financial aid deadlines. Add them to the master calendar to keep track of them. Send in deposits, required freshman forms and final transcripts. You may be accepted by more than one college. Let the colleges you are not attending know. Don't forget to thank your counselors, teachers and all those who helped you through the college application process.

### June-September

Find out when payments are due and if installment plans are available. Check with the financial aid office at your college to confirm your financial aid package. Complete and submit your health forms. Save summer earnings for college expenses. Review freshman orientation materials. Get ready for your great college adventure!

Here are some additional resources to keep the admissions process on track.

### Local Resources

#### College Info Center (CIC)

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G St., NW; 202-393-1100 or [www.reach4success.org/page/page/2249889.htm](http://www.reach4success.org/page/page/2249889.htm)

Offers advisors to help with any questions or with completing admission and financial aid applications on a walk-in basis. Also contains extensive print and online college, career, financial aid and scholarship resources.

#### National College Fair

Sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling on Sept. 29 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center in Hall C. Visit with representatives from hundreds of colleges from across the country.

Admissions Tests (late registration includes an additional fee).

**Upcoming ACT Tests** - 319-337-1270 or [www.actstudent.org/regist/index.html](http://www.actstudent.org/regist/index.html); Sept. 12 (available only in Maryland), register by Aug. 7, late

registration Aug. 8-21; Oct. 24, register by Sept. 18, late registration Sept. 19-Oct. 2; Dec. 12, register by Nov. 6, late registration Nov. 7-20.

**Upcoming SAT Tests** - 866-756-7346 or [www.collegeboard.com/testing/](http://www.collegeboard.com/testing/); Oct. 10, register by Sept. 9, late registration to Sept. 23; Nov. 7, register by Oct. 1, late registration to Oct. 15; Dec. 5, register by Oct. 30, late registration to Nov. 12.

### Financial Aid Resources

#### DC OneApp Application

DC has one application process for DC students to apply for:

**DCTAG (DC Tuition Grant Program)** - Within certain limits, DCTAG allows DC residents to pay in-state tuition at all public US universities. DCTAG also provides up to \$10,000 per school year to attend local colleges or historically black private colleges and universities.

**DCLEAP (DC Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program)** - DCLEAP is for students who demonstrate financial need while attending college. DCLEAP provides up to \$1,500 per school year.

**FAFSA** - 1-800-4-FED-AID or [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). You need to complete your FAFSA before filling out the DC OneApp Application

*Ed-Genuity offers a team of education consultants. They have worked extensively with schools, colleges, community organizations and churches. You can email the Ed-Genuity team at [ed\\_genuity@yahoo.com](mailto:ed_genuity@yahoo.com). ★*

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w | [www.olvschooldc.org](http://www.olvschooldc.org)

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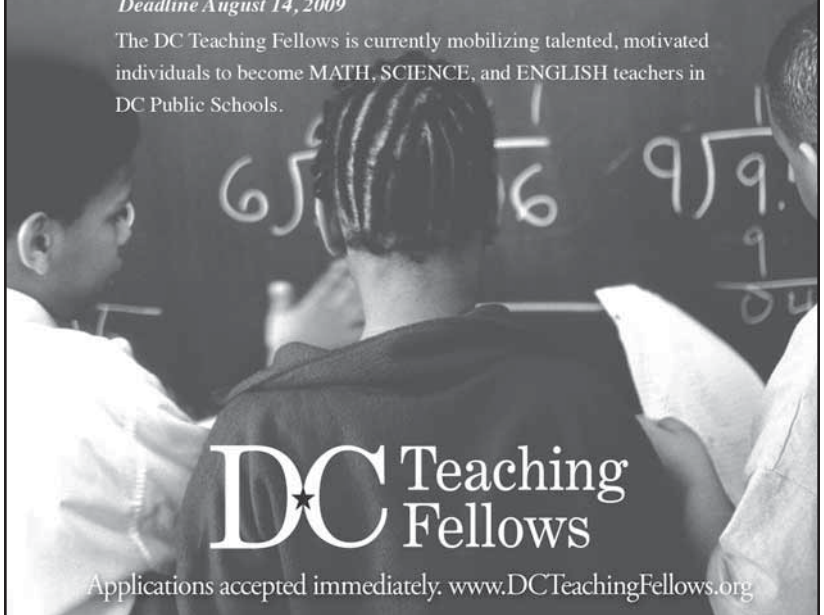


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