

# College Planning Timeline – KnowHow2Go - Ohio

## TIMELINE: Freshmen

### FALL

- If they haven't already done so, make sure your student enrolls in a college preparatory curriculum, with special attention to taking geometry or algebra .
- Help your teen create a college information folder.
- Start the school year off right by helping your student get organized and practice good study habits.
- Meet with your student's counselor and/or college access advisor(if applicable)
- Encourage your student to meet new people by signing up for extracurricular activities and trying something new!
- Explore careers on the Web on your home computer or at the library.
- Help your teenager find job shadowing opportunities in the community, where they spend a day shadowing someone at work and watching what he or she does.

### SPRING

- Sit down with your student to plan sophomore year.
- Talk about summer vacation. Explore summer programs or camps to attend at local colleges and universities. Look for volunteer or service opportunities in the community. Some may be sponsored by a local church, synagogue or mosque.
- Begin to explore financial options for meeting college expenses.

## TIMELINE: Sophomores

### FALL

- Support your student in preparing for and taking the Ohio Graduation Test- this is a requirement to get a diploma.
- Get your student to start sophomore year by polishing study skills. Advise your son or daughter that if he or she needs to improve in some subjects, this is the time to do it. Reinforce the idea that colleges and future employers look at high school transcripts and are impressed with regular attendance and improving grades.
- Check to see if your student has taken a career interest inventory.
- Students should take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude test PSAT - the preliminary version of the SAT - or the PLAN, the preliminary version of the ACT. Taking the PSAT now is practice for the PSAT test in junior year which allows your student to be considered for a National Merit Scholarship. Find dates and more information about the PSAT from your high school's guidance office.
- Surf the Web with your teen to check out colleges, technical schools and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Encourage your teen to begin or to continue job shadowing.

### SPRING

- Begin exploring financial aid and scholarships options.
- Encourage your teen to use the Internet to explore different careers.
- Help your student select five to ten colleges to contact for brochures and applications.
- Arrange for your student to visit colleges while on any family outing.
- Plan a productive summer for your teen. The summer before 11th grade is a good time to have a part-time job to prepare for a future career and save money for college..
- Choose a summer camp or help find volunteer service programs to jumpstart your teen's skills.
- Remind your teen to sign up for the most challenging classes for next year.

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## TIMELINE: Juniors

### FALL

- Verify that your student is on track for college and take time to discuss college interests.
- Encourage your student to enroll in rigorous course options such as Advance Placement courses or explore Ohio's Post Secondary Enrollment Option(dual enrollment program).
- Encourage your student to begin a college information folder.
- Be sure your teenager participates in a remediation program if he or she did not pass one of the sections of the Ohio Graduation Test(OGT)
- During school breaks, visit colleges.
- Encourage your teen to take the PSAT to prepare for the SAT and qualify for the National Merit Scholarship program.
- Participate in college nights and college fairs at school or local community centers.
- During winter break, suggest meetings with friends who are home from college and arrange campus visits.

### SPRING

- Double check to make sure your teen is registered to take the SAT I or ACT. Find books or software resources to help prepare. Consider which colleges should receive the scores. Meet with your student's school counselor to learn what colleges and scholarships are available based on the test results.
- Begin actively searching for scholarships and financial aid.
- Continue encouraging your student to stay on course to complete all core courses necessary for graduation, plus any required for college admission.
- Encourage more college visits during the summer and talk with admissions counselors regarding what can be done to increase chances of being admitted.
- To gain a feel for college life and to explore possible careers, encourage participation in a pre-college summer program.

## TIMELINE: Seniors

### FALL

- Encourage your student to enroll in classes that offer college credit such as Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment.
- Become aware of any college access programs and the services they provide to students in your area. [Click here to see if there is an access program in your area.](#)(Link to OCAN Map and Program List)
- Help your senior narrow college possibilities and collect applications. Make a checklist of the admission requirements, transcripts, application fees, test scores, letters of recommendation, essays and financial aid applications.
- Have your senior make a list of all school and community service along with high school classes and awards. This list will help when it's time to start filling out admission applications.
- Have your student complete their college admission applications and any required essays. Request teachers to write recommendation letters for college admissions and scholarships
- Visit schools your teenager is considering. Call ahead to schedule appointments with admissions and financial aid officers.
- Keep track of application deadlines. Note that early admission deadlines may require sending in an application by Nov. 1.
- Work with your student to complete college applications approximately two weeks before they are due. Note that most colleges have their admission application available on line. If your student completes an online application, verify that the school guidance office is sending transcripts and test scores to the colleges your student has chosen.
- If your teen is not satisfied with SAT scores, suggest taking the SAT or ACT a second time. Check college policies. Many admissions offices focus only on the best score.
- Attend as many college fairs and financial aid workshops as possible.
- Help your teenager search online for scholarships and for general information about financial aid issues.

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## **WINTER**

- Help your student fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) required of all applicants for financial aid. This form will determine your eligibility for grants, scholarships, work-study and loans to help cover the costs of college. You may begin to file the form on January 1st of your student's senior year. Many colleges will have a deadline to receive the form. Check with the colleges your student applied to in order to meet the deadline(s).

## **SPRING**

- Make sure mid-year grades are forwarded, if needed, to selected colleges. Ask your student's school counselor to send the scores.
- Celebrate acceptance letters with your student and begin plans for his or her freshman year. Remind him or her to keep up grades and attendance.
- Continue encouraging your student to stay on course to complete all core courses necessary for graduation, plus any required for college admission.
- Review and evaluate financial aid offers. When your student makes a final college pick, check the deadlines for sending in the required deposit, housing application or any other items the school requests. Notify the other schools that he or she will not be attending.
- Complete an application for funding from the college access program in your area(if applicable)
- Help your teenager start looking for a summer job.

## **SUMMER**

- Make sure your student's final grades are forwarded to the selected college.
- Help your son or daughter plan for the coming year in college by developing a budget, schedule and a list of telephone numbers for important services and support.