

# Senior College Planning Guide

2021-2022

**Reminders about College and Scholarships** will be pushed out through CANVAS and Remind

**AHS Guidance Website** Tons of information on Colleges, Careers, Scholarships, and Financial Aid Go to:  
<http://arrowsguidance.weebly.com/>

## **AT-A-Glance College Application Process**

Colleges generally prefer applications to be done online. If you are completing a paper application, check with your counselor first. For online applications:

**1. Fill out and submit your part of the online application 2. After submitting it, look to see if the school requires a counselor form, recommendation, or secondary school report. If no form is needed, continue on to step 3. If any form is required, print it out, fill out your information at the top, and bring it to your counselor.**

**3. Stop in and let your counselor know you have applied so that we can complete any necessary paperwork and send in your transcript.**

a. You should allow 2 weeks for the guidance office to process your forms, transcripts, and any letters of recommendation.

b. Plan ahead if deadlines are coming up and be sure to let your counselor know of any important deadlines. Do not assume we know them.

c. Unless you inform your counselor, they will have no other way of knowing you applied online.

d. Your test scores will normally be on the transcript we send for you. However, there are some schools that want the score directly from ACT or SAT. You will have to send the score from your online ACT or SAT account.

**4. Keep communicating with your counselor. We want you to be successful in the college admission process!**

# WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING MY SENIOR YEAR?

## SEPTEMBER

- Register for the ACT if you haven't taken it. If you've already taken the ACT, decide whether you want to retake it. The **CEEB code for Ashland High School is 360210**. Register online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) . Remember that students on Free or Reduced lunch are eligible for a fee waiver through their counselors.
- To prepare for the ACT or SAT, you can use free online test prep websites Click the test prep tab on the guidance website to see a list.
- Start narrowing your choices to around three to six schools. At least one school should be a “safe” choice, meaning that you know you'll get in and you can handle the cost. Use Naviance/Family Connection or [www.cappex.com](http://www.cappex.com) to see what your chances are of getting into your “reach” schools.
- Sign up in the Guidance Office for meetings with college representatives. Stop in and see the visit calendar or check it out online. Sign up by writing your name on the list in the Guidance Office (or online) and we'll send a pass down on that day to your class. You are limited to three meetings if you are missing a class to attend. (If you wish to attend more, see your counselor.) COVID UPDATE: COLLEGE REP MEETINGS ARE TBD AND MAY HAPPEN VIRTUALLY
- If you are planning on playing NCAA Division I or II sports, or playing at an NAIA school make sure you register with the NCAA or NAIA eligibility centers, and let your school counselor know your intentions. NCAA – [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org) NAIA – [www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org)
- Get a head start on the financial aid process by checking out <http://studentaid.ed.gov/> It has the best information on applying for financial aid through the **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

## OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

- **FAFSA filing opens up on October 1st!** You need to complete the FAFSA to be eligible for any federal or state financial aid! This is a big change from past years; make sure your parents are aware, especially if they have filled out the FAFSA before and are used to the old deadlines.
- If you plan on attending a highly selective college or university outside of the Midwest, you may also want to take the SAT. Register online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). See the “Test Prep” tab on the Guidance website to help you get ready.
- Check the Guidance Website and Family Connections for links to scholarship search sites. Use [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) , [www.cappex.com](http://www.cappex.com) , or [www.bigfuture.org](http://www.bigfuture.org) to look for scholarships on the national level.
- Remember to schedule some (virtual or in person) college visits this fall. Many colleges have special visit days

where they have special programs for potential students. Check out the schedule of special visit days on the Guidance website.

- October and November are the best months to apply to college. Because of the change in FAFSA many schools have moved their honors or preferred scholarship application deadlines up during these months. Applying online is generally preferred. Make sure you let your counselor know to send a transcript after applying online. Also look for any counselor or teacher recommendation forms your college may require to be filled out.
- Students on Free and Reduced lunch may ask their counselor for a fee waiver form for college applications. In a few cases, this may require a paper rather than an online application.

## **DECEMBER**

- Stay VERY aware of deadlines that are close to the holidays. **Waiting until the day before a holiday break to request a transcript, form, or letter is generally notadvisable.**

## **JANUARY & FEBRUARY**

- Ashland County Community Foundation scholarships open this month. While not due until March 15, **don't procrastinate**, and get them done early! Check the Guidance website for details beginning in January and don't forget to make sure you're signed up for our text reminders

Text @c4hbggd to 81010

- If you and your parents need a lot of help with filling out the FAFSA, financial aid officers will personally walk you through the application process.

## **MARCH & APRIL**

- Colleges will notify you of the financial aid they are willing to offer you. Compare offers and make a smart decision about your future.
- Don't give in to senioritis. Your senior courses and grades matter. Colleges have been known to reject students they had accepted earlier in the year because their final grades were much lower than anticipated.

## **MAY**

- These months are when the majority of scholarships are due. Apply for everything you are eligible for and don't discard a scholarship just because it asks for an essay.

May 1<sup>st</sup> is final date to notify a school that you intend to enroll. Please be courteous by notifying other schools you applied to that you have decided not to attend.

## ***HOW CAN I RESEARCH COLLEGES?***

*Take advantage virtual tours and virtual representative visits!*

*Research online* at the college's website or other websites specializing in college searches. The Guidance website is a good place to start. Look under the College and Career tab for info on college searches.

*Visit!* Research is good but it shouldn't replace actual visits. Don't be afraid to visit a place you liked twice to make sure you know how you really felt about it. The Guidance website has a list of all the websites and phone numbers of Ohio schools. Use the list to schedule your visit. Remember you have two days to use. Stop in the Guidance Office or go online to get our college visit form. You'll need to have it signed by your counselor and handed in to the attendance office two days before your visit.

### ***WILL I NEED COUNSELOR OR TEACHERS RECOMMENDATIONS?***

Most colleges do not require teacher recommendations. The application information will tell you if a recommendation is required. **If you do need a letter, ask your teacher well in advance of the deadline.** Give your teacher a copy of your resume of activities, achievements, goals, etc, plus any forms the college requires.

The college's application information will tell you if a counselor recommendation is required. In some cases, this is just a form that asks for rank, GPA, etc. In other cases, a letter may be required as well. Please follow the same guidelines as listed above for teachers

It is always a good idea to let the people who have taken time to write you a letter know that you appreciated it with a short note or card that thanks them.

### ***IS AN ESSAY REQUIRED?***

Some colleges, particularly selective ones, will require a sample of your writing ability. You will make a strong impression by avoiding vagueness in your essay. Use anecdotes and examples to individualize your work. Don't simply list your achievements; decide on a theme that sums up the impression you want to make, and write about experiences that develop that theme. Be sure to proofread carefully.