

# College Planning Checklist for Juniors



*"If I held the magic wand for education, my wish would be that students might approach the college search, as well as their day-to-day learning, with a greater appreciation for the long view: It is not about the race to the end, but instead what you learn from each step in the journey. "*

~ Martha O'Connell, Executive Director of Colleges That Change Lives



## Complete college planning surveys and matching inventories

- ✓ [Naviance SuperMatch](#)
- ✓ [Qualities That Will Make A College Right For You](#)
- ✓ [Self-Survey For The College Bound](#)
- ✓ Recommended to complete additional online inventories, such as: [College Board's Big Future College Search](#) (additional inventories linked in LiveBinder)



## Build Your College List

- ✓ By the end of junior year, you want to have a list of about 15 to 20 prospective colleges that you will research in more depth and decide whether or not you will apply to the school in the fall.
- ✓ By the beginning of senior year, you should have finalized your list of fit schools to apply to, with 2 to 3 schools in each category:
  - Reach** - college standards exceed your scores
  - Target** - college standards comparable to your scores
  - Safety/Likely** - your scores exceed the college standards
- ✓ Use the "colleges I'm thinking about" page in Naviance to compile your list of prospective schools:
  - Go to College tab at the top of your home page → click on "Colleges I'm Thinking About" → then click "Add to this list"
  - You may add up to 10 colleges at once by clicking "look up" next to each line. Once you have entered up to 10 colleges of interest, click "Add Colleges" at the bottom of the screen. Your colleges will now appear on your "I'm Thinking About" list.
  - Use the drop down menu to select your level of interest in each college. Then click "Update Interest" at the bottom.



## Testing Plan

- ✓ “Working” Goal: complete all college admission testing by June of junior year
- ✓ Can take SAT/ACT in the fall of senior year if necessary (would need to take October test if applying Early Decision)
- ✓ Research the testing requirements of the schools you are considering:
  - ❑ Did You Know that more than 800 four-year colleges and universities do not require the SAT or ACT for undergraduate college admissions. [See the list](#)
  - ❑ Some colleges either recommend or require Subject Tests as part of their application. Example - All of the Ivy League colleges require 2 or more subject tests. Many STEM-based majors / programs also require them



## College Knowledge

- ✓ Extensively research the schools that you're interested in
- ✓ Consider Early Action & Early Decision options
- ✓ Learn about the college admissions and application process in LEAP & beyond w/the [College Knowledge LiveBinder](#).

### **Suggested Sources for Information About Colleges:**

Campus Visits	College Fairs	Information Sessions	Interviews
Contact local admission reps	Regional bus tours of campuses (over summer)	Admission rep visits at BTHS (in fall)	Virtual campus tours
Official College Websites	Online Directories	Brochures / mailings	Student review websites
Naviance	Talk to friends and family	Social Media	Lists & rankings
Organizations (ie: <a href="#">Colleges That Change Lives</a> )	Books (ie: <a href="#">Fiske Guide</a> )	BTHS Alumni Binder (in guidance office)	LiveBinder Search Tools tab



## Letters of Recommendation

- ✓ Request two teachers to write letters of recommendation on your behalf (additional details to be provided in late April)
- ✓ Research the letter of recommendation requirements of the schools you are considering - 1 humanities & 1 science/math teacher is most common
- ✓ Complete brag sheets for teacher and counselor recommendations in Naviance
- ✓ Homework for parents: complete the parent brag sheet in Naviance (counselor will use these as a reference when writing recommendations)



## Demonstrated Interest

- ✓ Demonstrated Interest - the quality & quantity of contact that a student has with a prospective college. Indicates the likelihood of an applicant enrolling if accepted.

## Suggested Ways To Demonstrate Interest

Visit campus	Apply early	Interviews - Admissions or Alumni
Speak with reps at college fairs & BTHS visits	Send a thank you note to the rep after speaking with them	Wow them with the "Why (this college) Essay"
Email the local admissions counselor	Sign up for a college's email/mail list	Interact with college's social media profiles



### College Essays

- ✓ Through the application process, expect to write at least 15 to 20 essays (ranging from 250 to 1,000 words each)
- ✓ Draft 1 of your Common App Personal Statement will be due by the end of junior year and your counselor will provide you with feedback.
- ✓ The best time to work on your college essays (Common App Personal Statement, supplements and additional essays for non-Common App schools) is the summer between junior and senior year.



### Create an updated version of your resume

- ✓ LEAP Assignment: [Naviance Resume](#) (teachers and counselor will refer to this when writing your letters of recommendation)
- ✓ Consider developing an Activities Resume (if needed, see resume section of LiveBinder for info/directions)



### Practice your interviewing skills

- ✓ LEAP Activity: Mock College Interviews
- ✓ Begin scheduling college interviews for over the summer



### Summer Plans

- ✓ Participating in meaningful activities this summer is crucial for your own personal growth and can significantly increase your chances of getting accepted to selective colleges.
- ✓ The [opportunities page of the Guidance Website](#) is a good starting point for exploring your options.
- ✓ Aim to have your plans for the summer finalized by the end of May

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## Important Dates

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| <input type="checkbox"/> April 20 - Ranney School College Fair   | <input type="checkbox"/> May 8 - Registration deadline for June SAT & ACT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> April 23 - Monmouth County College Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> June 6 - SAT                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> April 28 - Rising Senior Night at BTHS  | <input type="checkbox"/> June 13 - ACT                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> May 2 - SAT                             | <input type="checkbox"/> August 1 - 2015-16 Common App available          |