COLLEGE PREP CHECKLIST – DON'T FORGET ABOUT THESE!

Many high school students make the mistake of preparing for college during their junior or senior year. That's contrary to one of our favorite adages here at Reality Changers: "victory loves preparation."



Ready to start? Let's begin at your freshman year. During 9th grade, you should:

- [ ] Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss possible career choices.
- [ ] Try to take academically challenging courses – this is the perfect way to prepare for college's rigorous and challenging schedule.
- [ ] Talk to professionals that work in the fields you're interested in.
- [ ] Start a log of all your accomplishments and accolades; continue this until your senior year.

For sophomores, it's all about keeping the momentum going:

- [ ] Start looking into grants and scholarships; next year at this time, you'll be eligible for actual college money!
- [ ] Take practice tests for the SAT, PSAT and other college-level entry exams.
- [ ] Follow up with your guidance counselor and look at additional career choices.
- [ ] Sign up for AP (advanced placement) courses, if you haven't already done so.

For many high school students, their college checklist is busiest during their junior year. Here are some things you can do:

- [ ] Fill out the Common Application; this single app allows you to apply to hundreds of colleges, both private and public.
- [ ] Sign up for the PSAT. If you're following this college checklist, you've already completed a few practice rounds.
- [ ] Take a few informal visits to colleges.
- [ ] Go to as many college fairs as you can, especially ones sponsored by your high school.
- [ ] Register for the ACT and SAT tests.
- [ ] Talk to your parents or guardians about how you'll pay for college.

One more year to go! Seniors should focus on the following tasks:

- [ ] Narrow down college choices to less than five.
- [ ] Visit all the colleges on your wish list.
- [ ] Contact college admission representatives to make sure your application isn't missing any information.
- [ ] Ask as many questions as you can – your guidance counselor, parents, mentors, etc.
- [ ] Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form.
- [ ] Apply for as many scholarships (especially local grants) as possible.
- [ ] Ensure your high school graduation requirements are on track.
- [ ] Firm up your financial aid; find out how much grant & scholarship money you'll getting, what types of loans you need, and

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