



# COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE & CHECKLIST



A step-by-step family guide for 11th grade students

## OVERVIEW

Planning for college doesn't have to be overwhelming. Use this checklist to stay on track through junior year. Each action item brings your family closer to a well-prepared, stress-free college application journey.

## JUNIOR YEAR (11TH GRADE)

Junior year is all about continuing to build a strong academic and extracurricular portfolio while beginning the college search. This is the year to focus on grades, test preparation, and early research so that senior year feels more manageable.

### September – December

- Review academic performance and confirm course selection with counselor
- Begin SAT/ACT preparation (practice tests, study schedule)
- Deepen extracurricular involvement and pursue leadership roles
- Start building an activities résumé to track honors, jobs, and service

### January – May

- Take the SAT or ACT for the first time
- Begin visiting nearby campuses
- Explore majors and potential career interests
- Create a preliminary list of reach, match, and safety schools
- Identify teachers or mentors who can write strong recommendations and request this prior to the end of the school year (before everyone starts asking them!)

### June – August

- Refine your college list with family input
- Brainstorm essay topics and draft early ideas
- Continue campus visits and attend information sessions
- Research scholarships and financial aid opportunities

## Next Steps With CBRG

- **Schedule your consultation with our team** today and give your family peace of mind about the road ahead.
- **Register here** for one of our upcoming **FREE** online college planning workshops.

College Benefits Research Group

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