

Hello Seniors-

I'm going to continue to send out checklists that are general for college going students- this includes trade school, or any post secondary education (certificate, diploma, degrees). If at any point in time you need individualized or group help, please stop in the Office to see me on Mondays and Thursdays.

Here is the checklist for December and January- I also included information from the email I sent regarding October and November dates in case you need to make sure you have those important details finished up. If you need help with anything, please let Mrs. Schaible or myself know! We are more than happy to help you with the college going process!

If you and your parents have not completed FAFSA yet, you are highly encouraged to do so soon. The state schools (and some other colleges) deadline is December 1st. If you do not have it done by then, you may miss out on a financial opportunity. Also, several of the next steps require you to have the FAFSA completed prior to moving forward.

DECEMBER/JANUARY TO DO LIST:

1. Start exploring and applying for scholarship opportunities- local and college. All colleges have their own scholarship page, which incoming freshmen can start applying for.
2. Watch the mail for letters of acceptance and "to do" steps for your college.
3. Watch for your Student Aid Report (SAR) if you have filed your FAFSA. Check that it lists all the colleges requiring the FAFSA.
4. Work with your parents to create a plan to finance college. Various tools can be used to help with this, such as the [Student Loan Game Plan](#).
5. Schedule a financial aid package comparison advising session with ICAN. An advisor will review your financial aid packages and help you determine your best options. [Visit here](#) for in person or virtual appointments.
6. Send in college housing applications and payment.
7. If you haven't gone on a visit already, please sign up for an official visit. This links you to important departments on campus- student services, financial aid, admissions, etc. In December, I'm taking students to [Cornell College](#), [Capri College](#), [Clarke University](#), [University of Dubuque](#), [Loras College](#), [Scott CC for AR/VR](#), [Clinton CC for pre-engineering](#), [Scott Main](#), and [ISU](#). Links are available for you to sign up if you haven't! You can request a college campus visit [here](#) for Mrs. Hansen to take you to if you don't see a college you are interested in listed above.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER TO DO LIST:

1. Complete [FAFSA](#)- It opened October 1st and offers financial aid for college. Prior to completing a FAFSA, you and your parents will both need to create a [FSA ID](#). If your parents need help with FAFSA, DeWitt is hosting a FAFSA help night on November 8th. Click [here](#) for the link and let me know if you have any questions.
2. Know the priority date for filing the FAFSA at the colleges you are interested in. Some are as early as December 1. This is the deadline for when you need your FAFSA completed. It varies by institution and if you want to know a specific college, let me know!
3. Talk to admission counselors at the colleges you're applying to and find out whether retaking the ACT/SAT would be advantageous. These scores are linked to scholarship money. In some cases, bumping your composite up 1 number can add \$1,000+ to your scholarship.
4. Research scholarship days and deadlines at the schools to which you've applied. Be familiar with your college's scholarship page and submit an application to try and earn free money towards your education! (Avoid scholarship search and financial aid companies that charge a fee- these are free services to you!) A great scholarship search site can be found [here](#).
5. Stay focused! Grades in your senior year can affect college admittance.

I know this is a long list, and it can be overwhelming, but it is a great place to start chipping away at what is needed before next Fall. This time of the year requires a lot of tasks to do to stay up to date and it will set you up to complete everything else that is required. If you need help with anything, or have any questions, please reach out!

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Holly Hansen
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Central DeWitt High School