



## Parent Checklist

We've compiled a short checklist of ways you can help your child prepare for college. Your child will also receive an Admissions Timeline to help him or her take the steps needed to prepare for college. For a copy of the Admissions Timeline, please call 1-800-460-1DBU.

### FRESHMAN YEAR

#### ACADEMIC PREPARATION

- Encourage your child to get to know his/her high school counselor.
- Monitor your child's academic progress and the selection of courses that your student will be taking this year. Make a plan with your child and his or her high school counselor to take courses that adequately prepare students for college. Dallas Baptist University along with most universities currently require: 4 years of English, 3 years of Math, 2 years of History, 2 years of Science (1 year must be a lab science), 3 years of Social Studies, and 2-3 years of Foreign Language.
- Encourage your child to become involved in a wide variety of school, church, and community activities.
- Help your child plan meaningful summer activities. Mission trips, volunteer service, leadership camps, summer jobs, and even SAT/ACT test preparation classes can help your child excel in the future.
- Encourage your child to begin a summer reading list and read for pleasure. Sample reading lists that will help boost your child's vocabulary and prepare them for college are available at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com), under "Plan for College."

#### ADMISSIONS PREPARATION

- Find out about college requirements by exploring college web sites or comparing schools on the College Board's web site at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).
- Start to make a list of colleges of interest with your child's input.

#### FINANCIAL AID PREPARATION

- Discuss how your family plans to finance your child's college education with your child. This will help avoid false expectations on both you and your child's part.
- If you haven't already done so, start a college savings account or a 529 college savings plan. Learn more at [www.savingforcollege.com](http://www.savingforcollege.com).
- Seek out articles and tips on saving for college. Register online at [www.whyDBU.com](http://www.whyDBU.com) to receive articles and tips on college preparation.

#### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

- Pray for your child and this decision in his or her life. God cares about the decisions we make and wants us to follow Him – even as we help our children choose a college. (Jeremiah 29:11-12)

### SOPHOMORE YEAR

#### ACADEMIC PREPARATION

- Continue to monitor your child's academic progress and selection of courses.
- Encourage your child to be involved in activities that develop leadership skills.

#### ADMISSIONS PREPARATION

- Consider having your child take the PSAT to become familiar with the exam. You can register your child for the PSAT at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or help them prepare for the ACT at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

- Encourage your child to use the practice tests on these web sites. These tests can help identify weaknesses in time to address them.
- Discuss the reasons people attend college, which may have a huge bearing on where your child belongs. If your child is struggling to zero in on possible careers, encourage them to try to take a career assessment, such as the Career Key ([www.careerkey.com](http://www.careerkey.com)) or Campbell Interest and Skill Survey ([www.pearsonassessments.com](http://www.pearsonassessments.com)).
- Encourage your child to attend college fairs at his or her school or in your community. High school guidance counselors can tell you when these are scheduled.
- Help your child narrow his or her college of choice to a list of 3-5 colleges. Then encourage your child to contact these colleges to let them know that he or she is interested. Doing so will ensure that you will receive plenty of information by mail and via e-mail for the next couple of years from these schools.

#### **FINANCIAL AID PREPARATION**

- Start investigating your options for grants and scholarships. Begin searching web sites such as [www.finaid.com](http://www.finaid.com) and [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) for free scholarship searches. Do not be fooled by scholarship search services that charge for their searches.
- Continue to invest money into a college savings account.

#### **SPIRITUAL PREPARATION**

- Pray that God will provide your child with discernment (Psalm 119:125) as he or she begins to narrow the schools in which he or she is interested. Pray that your child will be obedient to God's leadership in his or her life. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

### **JUNIOR YEAR**

#### **ACADEMIC PREPARATION**

- Continue to monitor your child's academic progress and selection of courses. The grades your child earns during his or her junior year are extremely important in the college admissions process.
- Encourage your child to take Advanced Placement (AP) tests if they are eligible. Talk with your child and his or her high school guidance counselor or visit The College Board at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) to find out how to register for these tests.
- Continue to encourage your child to be involved in leadership and service activities.

#### **ADMISSIONS PREPARATION**

- Help your child prepare to take the SAT or ACT tests. Log on to [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and look at their SAT Preparation Center or look up [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) and check out their ACT Online Prep area. Be an active part in quizzing your child, asking them new vocabulary words or assisting them with taking a preparation course.
- Make sure your child registers for the PSAT in September and takes the test in October. Results may qualify your child for the National Merit Scholarship. The PSAT is offered throughout the year at various testing sites. You can register online at the sites mentioned earlier in this article.
- Visit colleges and attend preview events with your child when possible.
- Organize admissions materials for the colleges in which your child is interested. Make a calendar that lists important deadlines for admissions, scholarships and financial aid for the coming year.
- Find out which schools require the ACT and/or SAT and make sure your child's scores are sent to the universities in which he or she is interested.
- Assist your child in completing admissions applications. Proofread his or her answers and essays!
- Help your child come up with a list of people he or she might ask for recommendations for use in scholarship applications. Help your child compile important contact information for these individuals.
- Ensure that courses taken through dual/concurrent enrollment programs at community colleges transfer to his or her colleges of interest.

#### **FINANCIAL AID PREPARATION**

- Research finance options to pay for your child's education by logging onto [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). This site will help you learn more about costs, financial aid and scholarships. They even have a tool that can help you predict what type of federal financial aid you will receive called the "FAFSA4caster" ([www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov)).
- Continue an open dialogue with your child about college financing expectations. It is important that they understand what you expect of them.
- Continue to invest money into a college savings account.

#### **SPIRITUAL PREPARATION**

- Pray for provision from God for college finances for your child. Pray for patience as you prepare to make financial decisions and trust that God is able to help you with college preparation details. (Ecclesiastes 7:12)

## SENIOR YEAR

### ACADEMIC PREPARATION

- Check your child's course list for his or her senior year to check for missing credits required by colleges to which your child is applying.

### ADMISSIONS PREPARATION

- Help your child set up a calendar for the year that includes test dates, admission and scholarship application deadlines, and college visitation days.
- Continue to assist your child in obtaining materials to complete college applications in the fall.
- Verify that your child has met the priority deadlines for admission, scholarship, and housing applications. Remember that these are separate applications.
- Make sure that your child has registered for college entrance exams (SAT and ACT) and determine if your child needs to retake these exams based on his or her junior year scores.

### FINANCIAL AID PREPARATION

- Continue researching scholarships. Begin assembling tax documents and other information for aid applications. Visit [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) or [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com) for tips on what documentation you will need.
- Start working on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form as soon as you receive your W-2s in the mail. You can apply online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Finalize your child's FAFSA in February after your tax return is finalized.

- Apply for any state or university-specific aid. For example, at Dallas Baptist University, students can apply for additional aid by completing the "DBU Supplemental Application for Financial Aid" available on the DBU web site at [www.dbu.edu/financialaid](http://www.dbu.edu/financialaid). Most colleges, including DBU, set a March 1 deadline for priority in receiving financial aid awards.
- Notify the financial aid office if there have been any changes in your family's circumstances that might make you eligible for additional aid.
- Evaluate your child's financial aid offers. Make a decision with your child about where he or she plans to go and have your child notify that college by May 1. Advise your son or daughter to let other colleges to which he or she has applied know of their choice decision.
- Know when tuition and room and board payments are due.

### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

- Pray that God will prepare you and your child for the changes ahead as he or she moves from home. Trust that God cares for you and your son or daughter and will protect and guide you over the next year. Praise God for the fun of the senior year! (Psalm 5:11)

**"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you." Jeremiah 29:11-12 (NIV)**

**Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)**