

# SENIOR PLANNING POINTERS

Congratulations on the completion of your junior year! Whatever your summer plans involve, please be sure to invest time in your college and career searches over your summer break. Below, you will find some pointers that have been designed to help you work through the college search and application process. If you can complete all of the suggestions over the summer, you will be in excellent shape in September.

To view this document online, with active links, please visit: <https://www.lkgeorge.org/domain/154>

Things to do this summer:	Pre-Senior Year Survey Continue developing your list of colleges Explore <i>The Common Application</i> Identify recommendation writers Complete college recommendation packet Create/Update your resume Begin developing your college essay Register for summer/fall SAT/ACT (if appropriate)
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**Pre-Senior Year Survey** Take this brief survey to provide me with information about your background and your college and career planning. Link: <https://forms.gle/PMhUouteEVeSJgKv7>

**College List** Developing an appropriate list of schools is at the heart of any successful college planning process. Follow these three steps:

1. Identify the criteria that you are looking for. For example: "I'm looking for a four-year college located in NY, VT, MA, or NH that offers majors in electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. I want the college to be looking for SAT scores in the 1300 range (ERW + M). It needs to have a study abroad program as well."

2. Identify schools that match your criteria Using on-line resources, produce a list of colleges that offer what you're looking for. Numerous web sites provide search tools that will generate a list of colleges based on the criteria you select, for example, the College Board's **Big Future website** ([www.bigfuture.org](http://www.bigfuture.org)). Using this site, you can save searches (if you log into your Collegeboard account), research schools that match your criteria, and much more. (Entering the criteria in #1 above produces a list of 28 colleges to explore.)

3. Research these colleges With each of your colleges, demonstrate interest: build a relationship with the admissions counselor who reads application from LGHS, join their mailing list, open the emails they send you. Schedule visits to as many campuses on your list as possible. If actual visits aren't possible, or to decide if a campus is worth making a trip to see firsthand, take virtual visits online. Visit their web sites. Learn about their admissions policies and application procedures. The more you can learn about your schools, the better able you will be to compare their strengths and weaknesses. Create a chart or table that organizes the information so you can quickly compare colleges to each other. One website, [www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org) creates charts for you. Identify similar colleges and research them, too. Begin to be aware of preferences you have between colleges. Take into account cost and financial aid information. Use a "net price calculator" to estimate your cost of attendance for different colleges.

**Try to narrow down your list of colleges to between five and ten schools by September. This will allow you to focus your time and energy early in senior year on applying so your applications can be ready to submit in October/November. (If you are considering applying Early Decision, application deadlines can be as early as October 1<sup>st</sup>.)**

**The Common Application** Depending on your list of colleges, filing your applications using Common Application may be a huge help. Visit [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) to learn more. Getting familiar with the Common Application over the summer is a great idea that will save you

time once your senior year begins. You can create an account and begin filling out your Common Application on August 1<sup>st</sup>. If you want to begin sooner, [read more about “rolling over” a Common App account](#).

**Recommendations** Many colleges and scholarship organizations require teacher recommendations as part of their application process. Identify the two teachers that would provide the most favorable recommendations on your behalf. Take into account what they’ve seen regarding the quality of your work, your work ethic, and your personality. Ask each person on your list if they would write a recommendation for you. **Plan ahead** by asking the writer at least 3-4 weeks before you need the letter. Don’t make the process stressful by asking them close to an application deadline. Be sure to send them a thank you note once the recommendation is finished. In addition, many colleges also want a recommendation from your school counselor. To help me learn more about you, [complete and return the college recommendation packet](#) early in the summer.

**Resumé** Make sure you have updated your resumé to include any junior year information. **Please give me a copy of your updated resumé**—having your resumé helps me match you up with potential scholarships and helps me write a better recommendation. Your resumé can also be included in college and scholarship applications and given to those who you’ve asked to write a recommendation (see above). For more help developing your student resumé, visit the [counseling department’s college planning webpage](#).

**Begin Developing your College Essay** Read this application essay-related blog entry from [Bestcollegefit.org](#). Review the [essay prompts you’ll find on the Common Application](#) and start generating ideas. Read real essays that John Hopkins University says worked, [here](#).

**Register for the SAT or ACT, if appropriate** If you want to retake either the SAT I or ACT, or if you didn’t take either one junior year, plan to take the test(s) early in the school year—Aug. 24 (SAT), Sept. 14 (ACT), Oct. 5 (SAT) or Oct. 26 (ACT). **Registration deadlines for these test dates are July 26 (SAT), Aug. 16 (ACT), Sept. 6 (SAT), and Sept. 20 (ACT), respectively.** WHY WAIT! You can register on-line anytime at [www.collegeboard.org](#) (SAT) or [www.act.org/student](#) (ACT). If you plan to apply to colleges that require or recommend SAT Subject Tests, you can take up to three Subject Tests on any of the SAT test dates listed above. Students who use **testing accommodations** (extended time, etc) should be sure to include their SAT SSD number or ACT accommodations request form. **Fee-waivers** are available to students who meet income guidelines. Please call the guidance office or email [preusss@lkgeorge.org](mailto:preusss@lkgeorge.org) with your questions.

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Research and planning over the summer will make your senior year more **manageable!** I [highly recommend](#) using the planning and informational resources available through <http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org> to learn about additional steps and issues related to your college search.

**Mark Your Calendar Now...** On September 24, LGHS is hosting an evening informational program covering the details of the college application process. Also, I’ll be scheduling a senior conference for you and a parent to be held in late September or early October. At that conference, we’ll review your specific graduation requirements. We’ll also talk about your college/career plans and what your next planning steps should be. In the meantime, I hope your summer is enjoyable and provides both time to relax as well as time to plan for your future. See you in September!

Sincerely,  
Mr. Preuss