

**MARIN CATHOLIC**  
**College Planning Calendar**

**FRESHMEN**

*This year's focus is about becoming a high school student and making the transition a good one. At the same time, there are a few things to keep in mind that you can start with now.*

**August (Right from the Start)**

- Get involved and participate in extracurricular activities. Explore the clubs at MC, learn about service opportunities and sign up for the clubs and service you might enjoy.
- You will start a resume in Family Connection where you will list your extracurricular activities and achievements so you will have it all in one place when needed for college applications Senior year.

**March/April**

- Begin planning your schedule for next year. Meet with counselor, and talk with teachers and other students. Create a course plan for the next 3 years.
- Consider summer service projects

**SOPHOMORES**

*This year's emphasis is to continue to achieve the best grades possible, and to prepare for the college process: continue your resume, and later in the year, become familiar with testing, Family Connection, and take a first look at colleges.*

**August**

- Continue to participate in your extracurricular activities, clubs or other organizations during the year-- or make a change and sign up for new activities

**October**

- You will take the PLAN (Pre-ACT test) at MC. No registration required.

**February**

- Attend Sophomore Planning Night

**March/April**

- Begin planning your schedule for next year. Meet with counselor, talk to other students and teachers. Sign up for challenging courses to the extent possible. Student athletes should make sure you are on track to take the 14-16 core courses (based on your intended graduation date) that are consistent with NCAA requirements for Division I and Division II schools. Many universities accept the NCAA academic requirements (see NCAA manual in appendix).
- Depending on your courses, consider if this spring would be the best time to take an SAT Subject Test. Speak to counselor if unsure. Register for June test date at [Collegeboard.com](http://Collegeboard.com). (For more info on subject tests, see Handbook)
- Research and consider summer enrichment programs and/or service opportunities (See Handbook for examples)

**May**

- Update your High School activities resume in Family Connection, begun in Freshman year.

## During the Summer

- Research colleges to determine which schools fit your academic and athletic abilities. Check out college web sites and ask for their literature if you'd like to know more.
- Start visiting colleges. Get a feel for what works for you: large or small, public or private. (See the handbook for what questions to start asking yourself)
- Purchase College guides such as *Fiske's Guide to Colleges* or *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges* to begin getting a feel for colleges' admission requirements and which colleges or types of colleges might be appealing to you. (See more complete list of references in the college handbook.)

## **JUNIORS**

*Junior year is a critical year for grades, activities, college searching, and testing. By the end of the year, Juniors should have a pretty good idea of the colleges they are interested in, have visited schools and have taken their first SAT and/or ACT tests.*

### August (Right from the Start)

- Continue to participate in extracurricular activities, clubs or other organizations during the year.
- If you don't already have a social security card for work or college, apply for one now.

### September

- Improve study skills; identify school staff to assist you.
- Begin/continue researching colleges. Develop a list of colleges to contact or visit. If looking at colleges in colder climates consider a winter or early spring visit.
- Begin keeping notes about events or experiences that have an impact on you. These can become the basis for your college personal statements.
- Check the college representative visit schedule in Family Connection, and local open house schedule. Sign up for those that interest you.

### October

- Explore your interests and skills. Go online to research future careers.
- You will take the PSAT at MC. No registration required. Check "yes" for Student Search Service on the test.

### November

- Develop an initial list of "Colleges I'm considering" and add to Family Connection.
- Complete your Game Plan and Personality Survey in Family Connection.
- Begin considering which teachers you might ask for recommendations next fall.
- If you are interested in attending a Service (Armed Forces) Academy, contact a representative and plan to explore the Academy's summer programs.

### December

- Students and parents attend College Night for Juniors.
- Review PSAT scores.
- Parents attend Financial Aid Night.
- Consider visiting colleges over winter break.

### January

- Take Mock SAT and ACT Exams, usually given at MC

- Map out your strategy for taking the SAT or ACT and the subject tests. Things to consider are AP exam dates, finals, Easter break, proms, spring plays, music concerts and sports playoffs.
- Research options and decide whether to sign up for SAT and/or ACT test preparation.
- If registered for the January SAT, take SAT. Register for the March SAT if you plan to take the March SAT.
- Discuss PSAT scores with your counselor and prepare for SAT/ACT.

### **February**

- Take ACT if enrolled in February test. Register for the April ACT if planning to take ACT in April.
- Update Family Connection resume and colleges sections.
- Research scholarships available for Juniors.
- You will start receiving mailings from colleges. Create a file system for information you receive from colleges that interest you and for copies of everything you will submit to your colleges.

### **March**

- Begin planning your schedule for next year. Meet with counselor, talk to other students and teachers.
- Decide which SAT subject tests to take. Research which tests are required for your intended major.
- Register for May SAT or Subject tests.
- Plan your summer activities: school, work, internship or community service. Explore and consider summer enrichment programs (See Handbook for examples).

### **April**

- Register for June SAT and Subject Tests.
- Prepare for AP Exams.
- Students and parents attend Case Studies Night.
- Attend WACAC College Fair @ Dominican University if interested in participating colleges.
- Visit campuses during Easter break.

### **May**

- Update your activities resume in Family Connection and continue to note any experiences that could be used in your college essays.
- Take AP exams, SAT and/or Subject tests.
- Complete your Junior Class College Project.

### **Early June**

- Take June SAT, SAT Subject or ACT tests as planned.

### **Summer**

- Finalize your list of colleges.
- Tour college campuses during summer vacation.
- If necessary, take test prep courses to improve test scores. Check your colleges' websites to learn if they have test requirements (i.e., SAT or ACT) and whether they require subject tests.
- Get a job and save your earnings.
- Research early decision/early action deadlines.
- Contact your congressional representative to apply for a military academy.

- Begin thinking about college personal statements.

## **SENIORS**

*Senior year is all about maintaining your grades, the work of taking SAT and ACT tests for the last time, applying to schools, applying for scholarships, awaiting notification and- finally- graduating!*

### **August**

- Register for the September or October ACT and/or October SAT tests if planning to take.
- Parents and students attend the College Night for Seniors.
- Check the college representative visit calendar in Family Connection weekly and sign up for visits from colleges you are interested in.
- The Common Application is online by the middle-end of August. Begin filling out your application forms AFTER the College Night for Seniors.

### **September**

- Maintain strong study skills.
- Finalize your college list and discuss it with your counselor.
- Decide whether to apply early action, early decision or regular decision.
- Update Family Connection and the Common Application with colleges that you're interested in and colleges you are applying to.
- Request a personal copy of your high school transcript.
- Begin or continue working on college personal statements.
- Take the September ACT test if signed up.

### **October**

- Develop an application and financial aid/scholarship deadline calendar for your colleges.
- Take SAT, ACT or SAT Subject tests or register for the November or December test dates if planning to take tests then. December is the last month to take SAT or ACT tests for UCs or CSUs.
- If letters of recommendation are required, identify staff who can write strong letters for you. Request letters of recommendation.
- Update Family Connection and Common Application college lists.
- Attend college representative visits.
- CSU filing period opens.
- Begin to research scholarships.

### **November**

- Submit admission applications to UC and/or CSU systems online by their November 30 deadline. (note: try to finish at least a week before the deadline to avoid web site connection problems)
- Submit early action/early decision applications if applicable.
- Continue working on college applications.
- Send SAT or ACT and SAT subject test scores via College Board to the colleges to which you're applying.
- Request recommendation letters by November 15.

### **December**

- Finish all college applications.

- Take SAT or ACT tests if registered.
- Parents attend Financial Aid Night.
- Visit college campuses during break.
- Download a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) worksheet and, if qualified, Cal Grant GPA Verification Form.
- Begin CSS Financial Aid PROFILE, if required.

### **January**

- Parents gather tax information for financial aid forms- FAFSA and CSS profile.
- File FAFSA and Cal Grant forms after January 1 and ideally before February 1. Some schools award aid on a rolling basis so filing early is worthwhile. The deadline for California public schools is March 2.
- Research scholarships.

### **February**

- Continue scholarship search. Ask about scholarships from parents' employers.
- Follow specific college guidelines regarding housing.
- Ensure that you send your GPA Verification Form to the Cal Grant office.

### **March**

- Begin receiving college acceptances.
- Use Easter break to visit prospective colleges. Consider attending an accepted student weekend at a college you have been accepted to. Some private schools offer these on one weekend in April.
- Take placement exams in English and math for community college, UC, or CSU (unless you are exempt).

### **April**

- Return intent to register forms with deposits to your chosen campus before May 1. (Note: Some colleges require this be done by mail not online so calendar accordingly.) Notify the colleges you are not attending.
- Notify MC of any scholarships or grants that you were awarded or received.
- Plan summer activities: school, work or community service.

### **May**

- Prepare for AP exams and finals.
- Update Family Connection with selected school so MC knows where your final transcript should be sent.
- Return forms for on-campus orientation programs and housing to your college.
- Thank those who have helped you in the college process including your counselor, teachers and family.

### **June**

- Graduate! We wish you all the best! Enjoy the summer