**College Planning Steps for SENIORS**

**1.** Know your current GPA, test scores and class rank ***before*** you apply for admission or scholarships.

**2.** Maintain or improve your GPA throughout the year. Avoid “senioritis”.

**3.** Update your resume—strengthen your leadership skills. Make several copies. Be sure one is included for every “borderline” school you apply. The resume is not required, by colleges, but is a GREAT way to set you apart from other applicants.

**4.** Search for scholarships throughout the year:

 [www.meritaid.com](http://www.meritaid.com) --merit scholarships offered by 4-year colleges

 A’s and B’s of Academic Scholarships by Anna Leider. In Mr. H’s office.

 Each college’s Financial Aid website—contains scholarships offered by that college.

 [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) --scholarships offered by state and regional private donors (not colleges).

 High School Library—Scholarships from local private donors (**College Notes** on LC website)

**5.** Prospective College Student-Athletes. Division 1 or 2: Register with NCAA Clearinghouse. $60 fee. Provides grades for all schools in that division, for academic standing purposes. Please register on-line: [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org) . For NAIA schools: [www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org) . $65 fee. Only need to register one time, and let Mr. H know when you register so he can send the required transcripts.

**6.** Finish all of your college visits by Thanksgiving. Know the names and contact #s of college reps.

**7.** Apply to your top 2-4 college choices by October 15th. To the rest by Thanksgiving. Follow instructions and deadlines carefully. Be sure to apply to Jackson College too, as the application is simple and free, and the school, being very inexpensive, provides a reliable safety net if your family’s finances are a concern.

**8.** Standard Application. On-line (go to college’s website) or by paper.

 **Application and Fee**, **Essay** (if required), **Personal Statement** (if required)

 **Recommendations** (if required), **Copy of your updated resume** (if “borderline” school)

**9.** Common Application. On-line ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) ) Used mainly by private colleges in the USA. *Michigan colleges*: Albion, Hillsdale, Hope, Kalamazoo, Lawrence Tech and University of Michigan. Other popular colleges: Notre Dame, St. Mary’s, U. of Dayton, DePaul, Miami (Ohio), Northwestern.

 **Application and Fee**, **School Report** (email to Mr. H), **Two Teacher Evaluations**,

 **Mid-Year Report** (done on-line), **Final Report** (done on-line), **Copy of Resume** (you upload)

**10.** Essay Tips. Answer the question posed. Don’t beat around the bush. Follow Eng. Teacher’s format.

**11.** Recommendation tips. Select people before you apply, who you get along with well, who are familiar with your work and who know your character. Recommendations can be submitted on-line or by paper. If by paper, give the person a copy of your resume (for reference only) and an addressed envelope that is pre-stamped. Politely ask the person if he/she would write and mail your recommendation in 3-4 weeks. If not, ask another person. Be sure to thank anyone who writes a letter for you. Remember, these letters are done as a favor for you.

**12.** Personal Statement tips. Write about the things that expand upon, or explain topics on the application, or topics you feel are important but are not on the application.

**13.** Parents. Financial Aid applications. Submit FAFSA between January 1—March 15. Submit CSS Profile after October 1 if required. Parents are invited to the College Financial Aid night in January, which is held in the library.

**14. Please remember that Mr. H is responsible for sending your official transcript and test scores, and a letter of recommendation to any college and scholarship you apply. Meeting deadlines is critical, so keep him in the loop at all times! Any questions?—Ask Mr. H.**

**15.** Select your college by May 1. May 1 is the universal date by which students must decide.