

THE COLLEGE FUNDING TIME LINE ©

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COLLEGE ADMISSIONS/FINANCIAL AID EXPERT & AUTHOR

1. FRESHMAN YEAR

It's time to begin to guarantee your edge in the admissions process:

(a) Take A Foreign Language

This is crucial because any student with only three years of a language will be deemed a quitter. All things being equal, having 4 years of a language will give the student a decided advantage over students who have less.

(b) Enroll In AP And Honors Classes Whenever Possible

A 'B' or 'C' in an AP or Honors class has more value to an admissions officer than the same grade in a regular class, as the challenge perceived is more important than the grade received.

(c) Negotiate For Better Grades

A student can significantly increase their GPA by following the instructions outlined in my book, *How To Pay For College Without Going Broke*

(d) Join Clubs, Groups And Organizations

Better still, become an officer or start your own fund raising organization, as it will demonstrate that the student can handle responsibility even at this early stage.

(e) Begin To Accumulate Community Service Hours

Start accruing hours now with the YMCA, Red Cross, or Special Olympics, just to name a few. A shortfall in the GPA can be overcome with a whopping amount of community service hours – ideally 500 or more, but 1,000 is far better.

(f) Begin Career Planning And College Selection

Meet with guidance counselors for direction.

(g) Visit Colleges In The Summer And/Or During School Holidays

Take an early tour of campuses to see whether they suit the student. Develop relationships with administrators so they can put a face to the name when the student's application is reviewed. Discovering in the 12th grade that the college of choice is unsuitable can be a very harrowing experience. Don't let this happen to you!

(h) Examine Your Financial Fingerprint To Determine If Income Planning And/Or Asset Repositioning Are Necessary

Meet with a financial aid expert. Planning now will eliminate any red flags when it comes time to apply for financial aid. This will save you thousands of dollars in avoidable assessments from the federal government and the schools.

2. SOPHOMORE YEAR

(If you didn't start in the 9th grade you've got some catching up to do.)

- (a) **Continue Negotiating For Better Grades**
- (b) **Take More AP And Honors Classes**
- (c) **Continue Club Participation, Community Service, or Start Your Own Organization**
- (d) **Register To Take The PSAT**

This prelude to the SAT can result in the student becoming a National Merit Scholar, and that is much more significant than the scholarship money.

- (e) **Meet With Guidance Counselor(s) And Select 8-10 Schools To Apply To**

Continue career planning and college selection. The input of your school counselors can be invaluable.

- (f) **Begin/Continue College Financial Planning Before The Spring Break**

Re-examine your financial profile to determine if income planning and/or asset repositioning are necessary. If the student is applying to a college that requires the CSS Financial Aid Profile (CSS), and there are any assets that need to be *legally* repositioned, it should be completed by December 31st to avoid *any* assessment in the financial aid formulas. Failure to do this could cost you thousands!

3. SUMMER BEFORE JUNIOR YEAR

- (a) **Begin Planning For The Admissions Process**

If you haven't started yet, a career direction is most helpful in selecting the right colleges. Students should begin writing practice essays, compiling their resume, adding to their community service hours and continue their participation in clubs. Never turn down admission to the National Honor Society.

- (b) **Begin, Or Better Yet, Continue Planning For The Financial Aid Process**

It is at this point that the family should have had an initial consultation with a financial aid expert/advisor to determine whether or not income planning and/or asset repositioning are necessary. If either one is, then caution must be employed to make sure that everything is done within the letter of the law, and make sure that all repositioned assets are guaranteed, safe, insured, will grow, not be subject to any assessments in the financial aid formulas, and have liquidity.

- (c) **Begin or Continue College Visits**

4. FALL OF JUNIOR YEAR (If you're just starting, there's a lot of catching up to do!)

- (a) **Begin Or Continue Negotiating For Better Grades**
- (b) **Begin Or Continue AP And Honors Classes And Take A 3rd Year Of A Language**
- (c) **Begin Or Continue Club Participation And Community Service**

By now you should be an officer.

- (d) **Meet With Guidance Counselor(s)**

If not already done so, meet with school counselor(s) for career and college planning.

(e) Take The ACT, SAT, and/or SATII's

It is recommended that the student take the SAT, and/or SATII's and the ACT at least twice. Consult with school counselors to determine the best dates, and review college applications to determine which tests a specific school requires.

(f) Second Meeting With Financial Advisor

Reevaluate your financial profile to determine if income planning and/or asset repositioning are necessary.

(g) Students With Disabilities:

Such students must complete the Student Eligibility Form – consult with school counselors.

5. January – June Of Junior Year

- (a) Narrow school choices to 6-8 and continue what you should have been doing for the past two years.
- (b) Time to make “official” visits to schools.

6. By December 31st Of Junior Year

- (a) If the student is applying to schools that *only* require the FAFSA, any asset repositioning should be completed by December 31st to avoid *any* assessment in the financial aid formulas.

7. SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

- (a) Continue visiting colleges

8. FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

(If you're just starting now, it's still not too late – but you must take immediate action!)

(a) Register For And Complete The CSS, If Necessary

(b) Contact Guidance Counselor To Determine Whether To *Retake* the SAT, SATII's, or ACT

(c) Complete And Submit/Mail College Applications

Register for the Common App to complete most applications online, otherwise, I strongly suggest priority mail with signature conformation.

(d) Reevaluate Financial Profile

Legally reposition assets if necessary.

(e) Obtain 2 PIN's For FAFSA As Soon As They Are Available

Complete as soon *after* January 1st as possible. Don't wait until you've completed your income tax return to file the FAFSA. You can always make corrections later.

9. FEBRUARY – MAY OF SENIOR YEAR

(a) The Student Aid Report (SAR)

Review for errors, update, and correct if necessary.

(b) Notifications Are Received

😊 Acceptance 🙄 Rejection 😐 Deferred or Wait-listed

Students who were rejected should keep in mind that all of America's colleges and universities combined don't have room for every *qualified* student who applies. If you're deferred or wait-listed, you can still *negotiate* for a position in the general applicant pool.

10. MARCH – JUNE OF SENIOR YEAR

(a) Financial Aid Award Letters Will Be Received

Don't accept the first award letter! It's now time to appeal *unappealing* financial aid offers and *negotiate* for more aid!

11. AUGUST – SEPTEMBER OF SENIOR YEAR

(a) Finalize Negotiations With Schools

12. AUGUST – SEPTEMBER OF THE FRESHMAN YEAR

CONGRATULATIONS! You've worked hard and earned the right to attend the college of your choice!



13. JANUARY OF THE FRESHMAN YEAR

(a) The *College Financial Aid Process* begins all over again and continues for the next three years.

Since 1979, noted financial advisor, Reecy Aresty, has helped thousands of high school and college families obtain the American Dream; a superior education at a cost far less than they ever dreamed possible. He is the author of the highly acclaimed admissions and financial aid manual, *How To Pay For College Without Going Broke*. For further information on admissions and financial aid, please visit: www.paylessforcollege.com.