

Visit www.ICANSucceed.org or call (877) CPC-IOWA to schedule a free appointment for assistance with college planning or financial aid applications.

August

- Determine your career interests and decide which type of college best suits you.
- Obtain information on admission, scholarships and financial aid for the top schools you're considering.
- Attend a college fair in your area. Go to www.ICANSucceed.org for a list of fairs.
- Download the College Checklist on www.ICANSucceed.org. Keep a folder for each college to keep track of the information.
- Research military education benefits, if interested.

September

- If you're in the top 15% of your class, check with your school counselor about the State of Iowa Scholar Program.
- Visit with your school counselor about application deadlines, local- or state-sponsored scholarships and grants.
- Register now to take the SAT[®] and/or ACT[®] if you haven't already done so.
- Meet with college admissions counselors when they visit your high school.
- Ask teachers, employers or other adults to write letters of recommendation for your admission and scholarship applications.
- Narrow down your college choices.

October

- Talk to your admission counselors at the colleges to which you're applying to find out whether retaking the ACT or SAT would be advantageous.
- Begin writing essays for your admission applications, if required.
- Select at least three colleges to visit, if you haven't already done so. Download a *Make The Most of Your College Visits* work sheet at www.ICANSucceed.org.
- Be wary of scholarship search and financial aid companies that charge a fee. Search for free at www.ICANSucceed.org.

November

- Begin submitting your admission applications to the colleges you're most interested in. Be aware of deadlines!
- Obtain financial aid forms from the colleges, if different from the FAFSA.
- Start learning how campus life will compare to living at home.
- Attend a financial aid presentation with your parents. Ask your school counselor when they're taking place.

December

- Finalize grant and scholarship applications.
- Stay focused! Grades in your senior year can impact admittance to college.
- Print a FAFSA pre-application work sheet from www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- Parents:** Save your year-end payroll stubs if they show your earnings for the year. You may need them for the FAFSA.
- Know the priority dates for filing the FAFSA at the colleges you're applying to.

January

- Submit your completed FAFSA to the processor as soon after Jan. 1 as possible. File electronically at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- Remember to keep copies of all forms you submit to colleges and agencies.
- Ask your school counselor to send your first semester transcripts to your top colleges.
- Parents:** Get your federal income tax returns prepared early. Colleges may request copies.
- Need help filing a FAFSA? The ICAN College Planning Centers can help. Call (877) CPC-IOWA to schedule an appointment.

February

- Confirm that the colleges to which you've applied have received your first semester transcripts.
- Submit your FAFSA, if you haven't already done so.
- Begin making plans for a summer job.
- Watch the mail for letters of acceptance.
- Keep your grades up – second semester grades are important and can affect scholarship eligibility and college admittance.

March

- Watch for your Student Aid Report (SAR). Check that it lists all the colleges requiring receipt of your FAFSA.
- Be prepared to submit a copy of your federal tax forms to the college(s) of your choice.
- Find out whether you need to submit any additional financial aid verification forms.
- Ask your school counselor about local scholarships.

April

- Compare the financial aid packages from the colleges to which you've been accepted.
- Decide which college you'll attend. Send the required deposit, and sign and return the financial aid award letter, if required. Note other important deadlines (financial aid, student housing, etc.).
- Notify the other colleges where you applied that you will not be attending.
- If you're securing a student loan, complete the required promissory note.

May

- Take any AP[®]/CLEP[®] exams for which you qualify.
- Finalize your summer job plans.
- Ask your school counselor to send your final transcript to the college you'll be attending.
- Return all necessary documents, including financial aid forms, to your college.

June

- Notify the college about any outside scholarships you've received.
- Save money from your summer job. Your savings will help with college expenses.
- Attend any orientation sessions your college offers. These are great opportunities to meet people and get familiar with the campus.
- Prepare a budget for college and review it with your parents.

July

- Contact your roommate and get to know them. Decide who's bringing the TV, stereo, refrigerator, etc. so you don't pack the same items.
- Thank your family and friends for their support.
- Beware of credit card offers! Talk with your parents to consider your options.
- Continue your success in college, sign up for the ICAN e-newsletter at www.ICANSucceed.org/ignite.

The FAFSA is a free form that may be completed without professional assistance via paper or electronic forms provided by the U.S. Department of Education.