



IT'S A PLAN: 12TH GRADE CHECKLISTS

The senior year is critical for students to meet deadlines and complete forms as part of the college application and financial aid process. Therefore, Oregon GEAR UP created a series of comprehensive checklists for educators, students and families that address key action items for each month. In addition, there are printable handouts, links to resources, and communication tools like weekly text messages and Facebook posts.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Get a team.** It's important to provide a network of support. Include administrators, teachers, parents and students to help share these messages.
2. **Make a communications plan.** Determine when and how you will share information to students and families; consider more than one method. Make sure you have students and families cell phone numbers, e-mails or mailing addresses if you plan to communicate in those ways.
3. **Download** each month's checklists and communication tools as one PDF file and any additional resources; print the resources that you want to use.

APRIL RESOURCES

CHECKLISTS

- Educators [page 2](#)
- Students [page 3](#)
- Families [page 4](#)
- Familias (Spanish) [page 5](#)

COMMUNICATION

- Text Messages [page 6](#)
- Announcements [page 7](#)
- Posters [page 8](#)
- Facebook facebook.com/oregongoestocollege

HANDOUTS

- Comparing Colleges, Costs and Financial Aid
- Decision Day oregongoestocollege.org/dd/coordinators

Download handouts and other months:

oregongoestocollege.org/itsaplan/educators/downloads

APRIL

1 Look for decision letters.

- Encourage your students to share their responses with you so you can offer support.

2 Compare financial aid award letters.

- Provide assistance in comparing financial aid award letters.

3 Sign up for and attend Preview Days.

- Give students information about Preview Days on college campuses and/or organize field trips to popular schools.

4 Decide where to attend.

- Celebrate seniors' post-high school plans! Hold an event or events for seniors with certified acceptance letters to college, the military or a job training program, and display acceptances prominently for the school to see.
- Remind students to send in their acceptances – many colleges have May 1 deadlines.

NOTES:

APRIL

1 Look for decision letters.

- They're coming this month! Be sure to share your acceptances with counselors, parents and friends.

2 Compare financial aid award letters.

- Financial aid award package letters usually arrive shortly after acceptances. Go over these carefully and ask an adult if you have questions.

3 Sign up for and attend Preview Days.

- Whether you're deciding between two colleges, or just want to get more familiar with your first choice, make sure you sign up for prospective student weekends.

4 Decide where to attend.

- Decision time! Think carefully and critically about the pros and cons for each school – consider size, academics, cost, extracurricular options and more.
- Many colleges require a confirmation and initial deposit on May 1.

KEY TERMS:

As long as you've listed them on your FAFSA, you'll receive a **FINANCIAL AID AWARD** or **FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE** from every college that has admitted you. The award is a list of the different types and amounts of financial aid they are able to offer you. The letter should also include the "total cost of attendance," but it might not list the total amount you and your family will be responsible for paying. Take time to do the math!

NOTES:

NEXT MONTH: Plan a budget and start making lists of what you'll need!

APRIL

If your student hasn't heard from colleges already, this is the month when acceptance letters are sent out. Very exciting! In addition, colleges also send out financial aid award letters that will give the amount of federal, state and institutional money available to your student. **Review the financial aid award letters carefully and ask for help if you have any questions.**

We are so proud of all of our seniors who are making plans for after they graduate – we celebrate all of their accomplishments!

1 Look for decision letters.

- Celebrate acceptances with your student, and be supportive if he is put on the wait list or denied.

2 Compare financial aid award letters.

- Colleges send financial aid award letters soon after sending acceptance letters. Review these carefully with your student and make sure she understands how loans, grants and scholarships work. Compare the cost of attendance and how much aid is given at each school.

3 Sign up for and attend Preview Days.

- Many colleges have days or weekends specifically for admitted students – your student can take advantage of these to help decide between colleges or get to know one better. Some colleges might offer sessions specifically for parents as well.

4 Decide where to attend.

- Help your student think through the process and consider all of the factors in choosing a college like distance from home, cost, academics, and more. Be supportive in his final decision and celebrate!
- Many colleges require a confirmation and initial deposit on May 1.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Which things are most important to consider in making a decision about which college you'll attend?

When you are away from home, what things do you miss most?

ABRIL

Si su estudiante aún no recibido noticias de los colegios no se preocupe este es el mes cuando los colegios mandan sus cartas de aceptación. ¡Que emoción! Los colegios también envían las ofertas de ayuda financiera donde explican que tipos de fondos su estudiante recibirá tanto como dinero federal, estatal, y institucional. **Revisa la ofertas de ayuda financiera de cada colegio y pida ayuda si tiene alguna pregunta.** Estamos muy orgullosos de todos nuestros estudiantes en su ultimo año de preparatoria que están haciendo planes después de graduarse- ¡celebre todos sus logros!

1 Mantente al pendiente sobre las decisiones.

- Celebre las aceptaciones con su estudiante y bríndeles su apoyo si ha sido negado o puesto en la lista de espera.

2 Compara las ofertas de ayuda financiera.

- Los colegios/ universidad enviaran cartas con ofertas de ayuda financiera pronto después de enviar las cartas de aceptación. Revise las ofertas cuidadosamente con su estudiante y asegúrese que entienda como funcionan los prestamos, subvenciones, y becas. Compare el costo de asistencia y cuanta ayuda se le esta brindando en cada escuela.

3 Visita los colegios.

- Muchas de los colegios/universidades tienen días o fines de semana específicamente para estudiantes que han sido admitidos- su estudiante puede aprovechar de esta oportunidad para decidir entre los colegios. Algunos colegios/universidades ofrecen sesiones específicamente para los padres también.

4 Decide donde quieres ir.

- Ayude a su estudiante con el proceso de elegir un colegio/universidad considere todos los factores como la distancia de casa, costo, el rigor académico y mucho más. Apoye la decisión final de su estudiante y celebre con ellos.
- Muchos colegios/universidades requieren una confirmación y un deposito inicial el 1 de mayo.

TEMAS DE CONVERSACIÓN

¿Cuáles son las cosas más importante de considera cuando estás tomando una decisión en cual colegio vas a asistir?

¿Cuándo estás lejos de casa, que cosas extrañas mas?

APRIL TEXT MESSAGES

Use a free text messaging service like [remind.com](https://www.remind.com) to connect with seniors and their families. Schedule messages ahead of time and customize them with information from your school. You can also tweet these if Twitter is popular at your school.

week	student text message	family text message (English)	family text message (Spanish)
1	Make friends with your letter carrier! If they haven't already, decisions from colleges will arrive by the end of the month.	Admission decisions should be in hand by the end of the month. Help your student prepare for both good and bad news.	Las decisiones de admisión llegaran al finales del mes. Ayuda a preparar a tu estudiante para alas buenas y malas noticias.
2	Decisions! You're about to make a big one. Take time to understand financial aid offers before signing on the dotted line.	Make time to sit down with your child to understand, compare, and discuss financial aid awards from each college.	Haga tiempo para sentarse con su estudiante para entender, comparar y conversar sobre las ofertas de ayuda financiera de cada colegio.
3	If you can, visit campuses you've been admitted to. Meet students. Talk to professors. Go to class. Soak in the feel of the place.	Visiting campus is an important way students choose their college home. Consider joining them – parents can go, too!	El visitar el campus es una forma importante para que los estudiantes elijan su colegio. Considere acompañarlos- los padres también pueden ir.
4	May 1 st is the national reply date for college admissions. Submit a deposit to your chosen college & let the others down easy.	Most colleges expect decisions by May 1 st . Enrollment deposits and a "yes" response are due to hold a spot in the class.	Mayoría de las universidades esperan decisiones el 1 de mayo. El deposito de inscripción y una respuesta "si" son necesarias para apartar un espacio en la clase.

APRIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Help seniors stay on track with weekly school announcements outlining the key steps to preparing for life after high school.

week	school announcement
1	If you submitted your college applications by the stated deadlines, then you can expect to have all of your admission decisions in hand by the end of the month. Be sure to check both snail mail and email for responses.
2	By the end of this month, you'll be making a decision about where you'll go to college next year. One important factor to consider is your out-of-pocket cost. Sit down with your financial aid award from each college that admitted you and calculate the amount you'll be paying next year, the amount you'll be paying in the future, and how many hours per week you'll need to work. Use these numbers to help you make an informed decision.
3	Now that you know what options you have for next year, it's time to make a decision. Visiting campus is one important way to have your final questions answered and get a feel for which college will become your second home. When you visit, be sure to meet students and professors, go to class, check out the residence hall. Explore!
4	Congratulations! At the end of this month, you'll know where you plan to begin your college journey. Tell your chosen school "yes" by submitting your enrollment deposit and any other required forms. Then, let any other colleges that admitted you know that you'll be attending another school. Nice job – you've done well!

SENIOR TO DO

— **APRIL: DECIDE** —

1
**Look for
decision letters.**

They're coming this month! Be sure to share your acceptances with counselors, parents and friends.

Learn more: oregongoescollege.org/itsaplan



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SENIOR TO DO

APRIL: DECIDE

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SENIOR TO DO

APRIL: DECIDE

Visit campus.

Whether you're deciding between two colleges, or just want to get more familiar with your first choice, make sure you sign up for prospective student weekends.

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SENIOR TO DO

APRIL: DECIDE

4 DECIDE!

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