

SENIOR'S Checklist FOR COLLEGE PLANNING

2026-2027



SEPTEMBER 2026

- ☐ Start a College Planning Folder for important notes and documents.
- ☐ Create your FSA ID account at studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account. Save it in your College Planning Folder.
- ☐ Register for Lela's \$1,000 FAFSA Completion Scholarship at lela.org/completed_fafsa/. 
- ☐ Meet with your School Counselor to review high school transcripts and to evaluate your top three college choices.
- ☐ Register for the ACT at actstudent.org and/or the SAT at collegeboard.org.

OCTOBER 2026

- ☐ Attend a College & Career Fair in your area
- ☐ Complete the 2027-2028 FAFSA at studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa on or after October 1st for access to federal grants, work-study, and student loans.
- ☐ Complete admissions and scholarship requirements and meet deadlines.
- ☐ Devote time, energy, and thought to writing required essays.
- ☐ Schedule a free virtual FAFSA session using this QR code. 

NOVEMBER 2026

- ☐ Request letters of recommendation from teachers and mentors if required for admission and scholarship applications.
- ☐ Continue your scholarship search.
- ☐ Review your FAFSA Submission Summary for accuracy and review your Student Aid Index (SAI).

Note:
This Checklist is current
as of 8/21/26.

DECEMBER 2026

- ☐ Visit myact.org to compare colleges and research careers.
- ☐ Register for Lela's \$1,000 CHOOSE Louisiana Scholarship at lela.org/register if you plan to attend a college in the state of Louisiana.
- ☐ Follow Lela college resources on Instagram and Facebook for important financial aid tips and scholarship announcements.



JANUARY 2027

- ☐ Call Lela's FAFSA HELpline at (844) 463-2372 to speak with a Lela representative if you have questions about the college financial aid process.
- ☐ Participate in the George Rodrigue Foundation Scholarship Contest at georgerodriguefoundation.org.
- ☐ Track your TOPS status at mylosfa.la.gov/applications/student-hub/.
- ☐ Take this career test to determine six major job areas to guide your career planning - <https://www.truity.com/test/holland-code-career-test>.

FEBRUARY 2027

- ☐ Follow up with your college admissions representatives if you applied for an early decision.
- ☐ Attend a financial aid event at your school or in your area.
- ☐ Register for Advanced Placement Exams.

MARCH 2027

- ☐ Check with your colleges for FAFSA submission deadlines. March 1st is recommended at many schools.
- ☐ Respond to financial aid offers from your colleges once you've completed your FAFSA and completed admissions requirements.
- ☐ Visit [LelaCHOICE.org](https://lelacheoice.org) to apply for a supplemental education loan if you need to fill a funding gap.

LelaCHOICE
LOUISIANA'S NONPROFIT EDUCATION LOANS

APRIL 2027

- ☐ Compare your college financial aid offers at awardadvisor.org and decide which college is best for you; then notify each college with your decision.
- ☐ Review your financial aid offer with your parents, making sure you understand the terms and conditions that apply to each type of aid offered.

MAY 2027

- ☐ Use Lela's new Award Advisor™ app to compare financial aid offers. Accept the offer from the college of your choice.
- ☐ If your offer includes student loans, only borrow what you NEED to complete the academic year.
- ☐ Apply for a summer job and save a portion of your earnings to pay for college expenses.
- ☐ Arrange housing and a meal plan at your college, if you plan to live on campus.
- ☐ **GRADUATION - Congratulations!**

JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 2027

- ☐ Respond to all requests from your college admission and financial aid offices.
- ☐ Meet deadlines for payment of school charges such as tuition, fees, room and board.
- ☐ Schedule and attend Freshman Orientation at your college or university.

 **HAVE QUESTIONS?**
CALL LELA'S HELPLINE.
844-463-2372
INFO@LELA.ORG
LELA.ORG