El Camino Fundamental High School  
College Planning Calendar for Seniors

Senior year is often an extremely busy time, with schoolwork, activities, and special events. Be sure to stay on track with the college admissions process. Get organized, be aware of deadlines, and don’t procrastinate.

**Fall – September thru November**

**Finalize your college visit**  
Use the information you’ve gathered from visits, interviews, and your own research to decide which schools you will apply to. It’s okay to apply to colleges that you think will be more difficult to get into. But it’s also important to put a few safety schools (where you’re sure you’ll get in) on your list. Talk to counselors, teachers, and parents about your final choices.

**Take standardized tests**  
Register for and take the ACT, SAT, or SAT Subject Tests as necessary. Be sure you have requested (either by mail or online) that your test scores be sent to the colleges of your choice.

**Ask for letters of recommendation**  
Give recommendation forms to the teachers you have chose, along with stamped, addressed envelopes so your teachers can send them directly to the colleges. Be sure to fill out your name and address and the school name on each form. Discuss your goals and ambitions with your teachers so they’ll be more prepared to write about you.

**Keep track of deadlines**  
You’ll be filling out lots of forms this year, so it’s important to know what form is due when. Make a calendar showing the application deadlines for admission, financial aid, and scholarships.

**Complete applications**  
Finish your online applications or forms for the schools you’re interested in. Proofread them and make copies before you submit or send them. Make sure you have sent all necessary materials, including test scores, recommendations, transcripts, and essays. Your ACT and SAT scores must be sent directly to your college from the testing agency, not by El Camino.

**Meet with your guidance counselor (before or after school)**  
Your counselor can help with admissions requirements. Make sure they know which colleges you want letters sent to. Give your counselor any necessary forms 4 weeks prior to the actual deadline so they’ll have time to send them in.

**Stay on Track with your grades and extracurricular activities**  
Colleges will look at what you’ve done in your senior year, so stay focused on doing well in your classes and maintaining a commitment to other activities.

**Continue to visit schools**  
Fall is a great time to look at colleges because classes are in session and you are better able to meet and talk with students and professors. You may even be able to sit in on a class or two.

**Continue your scholarship search**  
Apply for scholarships whose deadlines are approaching and keep searching for more scholarship and grant opportunities. Using a scholarship search tool is a great way to find potential aid. Ask colleges about what scholarships you may qualify for. The downtime after applications have been sent is a great time to focus on financial aid.

**Fall/Winter – December thru February**

**Act on the results of early decision applications**  
If you applied early decision, you’ll soon find out if you were accepted. If you get in, you have to withdraw your applications from other schools. If not, keep your other applications out there and focus on those colleges.

**Finalize your applications**  
Make sure everything is in order and has been sent out to colleges. Check with the schools to make sure they have received all your information, including test scores from SAT/ACT, transcripts as required, and recommendations.
Attend College Financial Aid Workshops
El Camino Fundamental High School will be holding a College Financial Aid Workshop on Tuesday, December 7\textsuperscript{th} from 6:30 – 8:30 pm in the school cafeteria.

Submit financial aid forms
Fill out FAFSA, Cal-Grant GPA verification, and if necessary, the PROFILE. The FAFSA and PROFILE can be submitted online, the GPA verification form can be obtained from your school’s counseling office. No matter what your family’s income level is, the FAFSA is your main priority for financial aid purposes because it will determine how much you’re expected to pay. Don’t submit the forms until after January 1, because they can’t be processed before then.

Send mid-year grade reports
Ask your counselor to send mid-year grade reports to the colleges that you applied to. Remember that the schools will continue to keep track of your grades, so it’s important to keep working hard throughout your senior year.

Spring – March thru June
Watch your mail for notification from colleges
If you applied under the regular application process, you should receive an admissions decision by March or April. Notifications of financial aid awards should arrive by the end of April.

Check out your options if you’re put on a waitlist
Being put on a waitlist is not a rejection. Keep watching your mail; you should receive a decision by May. In the meantime, keep your options open in case you don’t get in. Check out schools that have late or rolling application deadlines.

Compare financial aid packages
Make sure to consider each financial aid award carefully. You can use an award analyzer tool at www.nelnetsolutions.com to enter your award information and easily calculate any unmet need for each school. If you have questions, don’t hesitate to contact the financial aid office of the college to get more information. Financial aid is a key factor in deciding where you will attend.

Prepare for any last standardized tests
You may be taking AP or CLEP tests to earn some college credit as the school year winds down.

Follow up on financial aid information
Make sure you have received a FAFSA acknowledgement. If you applied for a Pell Grant, you will receive a Student Aid Report statement. Review this notice, make a copy for your records, and send the original to the college you plan to attend. If necessary, apply for loans.

Make your final college decision
Notify all schools of your intent by May 1. If you’re not sure which offer to accept, make one more campus visit to the schools you’re considering. Make sure to send your deposit to your chosen school and ask your school Records Office to send your final transcript to the college in June.

Complete enrollment paperwork for the college you will attend
Once you accept an offer, you should receive information from the college about course scheduling, orientation sessions, housing arrangements, and other necessary forms. Be sure to complete all required paperwork by the appropriate deadlines.

Congratulations!
You’ve finished high school and are about to embark on an exciting new phase of life. Good luck.