

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

## August

- Obtain dates and locations of college fairs and "parent nights" in your area. Check out [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org) for our calendar of events.
- Keep your grades up. Colleges look at your overall GPA through all four years of high school.
- Review your college savings plan; start saving money if you haven't already done so.
- Talk to your parents and your school counselor about where you want to go to college.

## September

- Register for the PSAT/NMSQT,® a two-part exam similar to the SAT.® Scores are used to determine National Merit Scholars.
- Determine what factors are important to you in a college. Go to [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org) for information on choosing a college.
- Review college and career resources at your high school.
- Go to the Golden Circle College Fair on Sept. 28 from 12:30 to 3 p.m. at the Polk County Convention Complex (501 Grand Ave., Des Moines). It's the largest college fair in Iowa – approximately 150 colleges attend.

## October

- Take the PSAT/NMSQT.
- Attend a college fair and talk with college representatives to start researching potential colleges. Visit [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org) for a link to local college fairs.
- Search for colleges at [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org).
- Visit with your school counselor to discuss ways to increase your chances of being admitted to the college of your dreams.

## November

- Review brochures and catalogs from colleges that interest you. Make a list of 10 to 15 colleges that fit your requirements.
- Download the College Checklist on [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org) to keep on track.
- Attend a financial aid night at your school to become familiar with the financial aid process and types of assistance available.
- Start planning to take the SAT and/or ACT® exams, if required. Familiarize yourself with registration deadlines and test dates. Check the entrance requirements of the colleges to see which test(s) you need to take.

## December

- Research scholarships. Keep an ongoing file of scholarship and financial aid information (such as criteria, amounts, contact persons and deadlines). Check out [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org) for free scholarship searches. Avoid scholarship searches that charge fees.
- Narrow your college choices to fewer than five schools.
- Register now if you're planning to take the January SAT or February ACT. Pick up a study guide at a local bookstore or library.

## January

- Begin scheduling visits to colleges.
- Attend a financial aid night, if you haven't already done so.
- Organize scholarship information by deadline. Keep a calendar with application deadlines so you don't miss any.
- Register now if you're planning to take the March SAT. Pick up a study guide at a local bookstore or library.
- Keep saving money for college!

## February

- Research careers at [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org).
- Become familiar with the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
- Make sure you enroll in senior classes that fulfill the credits you'll need for college.
- Put together a resume listing your activities, volunteer experiences, academic achievements and employment.
- Register now for the April ACT, if applicable.

## March

- Attend college and financial aid fairs and schedule college visits. Go to [www.ICANSucceed.org](http://www.ICANSucceed.org) for a list of spring college fairs. Call ahead to arrange campus tours.
- During each college visit, meet with the admissions and financial aid offices.
- Talk to your school counselor about AP® courses and CLEP® tests. Consider taking honors or college-level classes.
- Register now for the May SAT, if required.

## April

- If you're currently enrolled in AP courses, consider taking AP exams.
- Compare your impressions of each college and rank them according to preference.
- Continue to search for scholarships.
- Find out about scholarships offered by your place of worship, civic and business groups in career fields that interest you.
- Register now for the June ACT or SAT, if applicable.

## May

- Finalize your college choices and highlight the important features offered at each.
- Take AP exams, if applicable.
- Consider taking a summer course at a local college.
- Obtain a summer job related to your career interest or do community service.
- Polish up your resume; if required, assemble writing samples, a portfolio or audition tape.

## June

- If you haven't visited all the colleges on your list, schedule visits.
- Be prepared to obtain private scholarship applications and begin completing them.
- Save your summer earnings to pay for college.
- Serve your community – grades aren't the only thing colleges evaluate.

## July

- Obtain and begin to complete college applications.
- Prepare for your senior year.
- Consider which teachers, employers or other adults you'll ask to write letters of recommendation.
- Beware of credit card offers! It's easy to get in over your head. Talk with your parents to consider your options.