

Senior Year Step-by-Step



**Please turn on
your speakers**

Lee Binz, The HomeScholar



Homeschool parents have
four primary roles
throughout their
child's life:
caretaker, teacher,
mentor, and friend.





Consider Your Goals

Your goal: launching your child into the world

- Admission into college
- Meaningful employment
- Career to support a future family
- Be prepared for any thing the future brings



Summer Before Senior Year



Evaluate Readiness for Graduation

Is your student prepared to graduate high school?

- Necessary classes needed to graduate?
- Necessary tests needed for future plans?
- Should you repeat the SAT or ACT test?
- Do you have a plan for after high school?



Evaluate Readiness for College Application

1. Have you chosen 4-8 colleges?
2. Did you include a mix of colleges?
3. Have you visited each college?
4. Do you know the admission person?
5. Have you compared statistics of each?
6. Do you know how to write the essay?
7. Do you have SAT or ACT scores?
8. Can you complete applications early?
9. Do you know all the “college coupons” for scholarships?



Update Records

Be ready with high school records

- Transcripts
- Reading list
- Course descriptions
- Activity list or resume



National Merit Scholarship

- Records needed immediately when notified
- September: students are notified
- October: parents submit detailed application as “the school”
- November: SAT scores must be sent before December
- March: finalists notified
- Scholarship awards late in spring



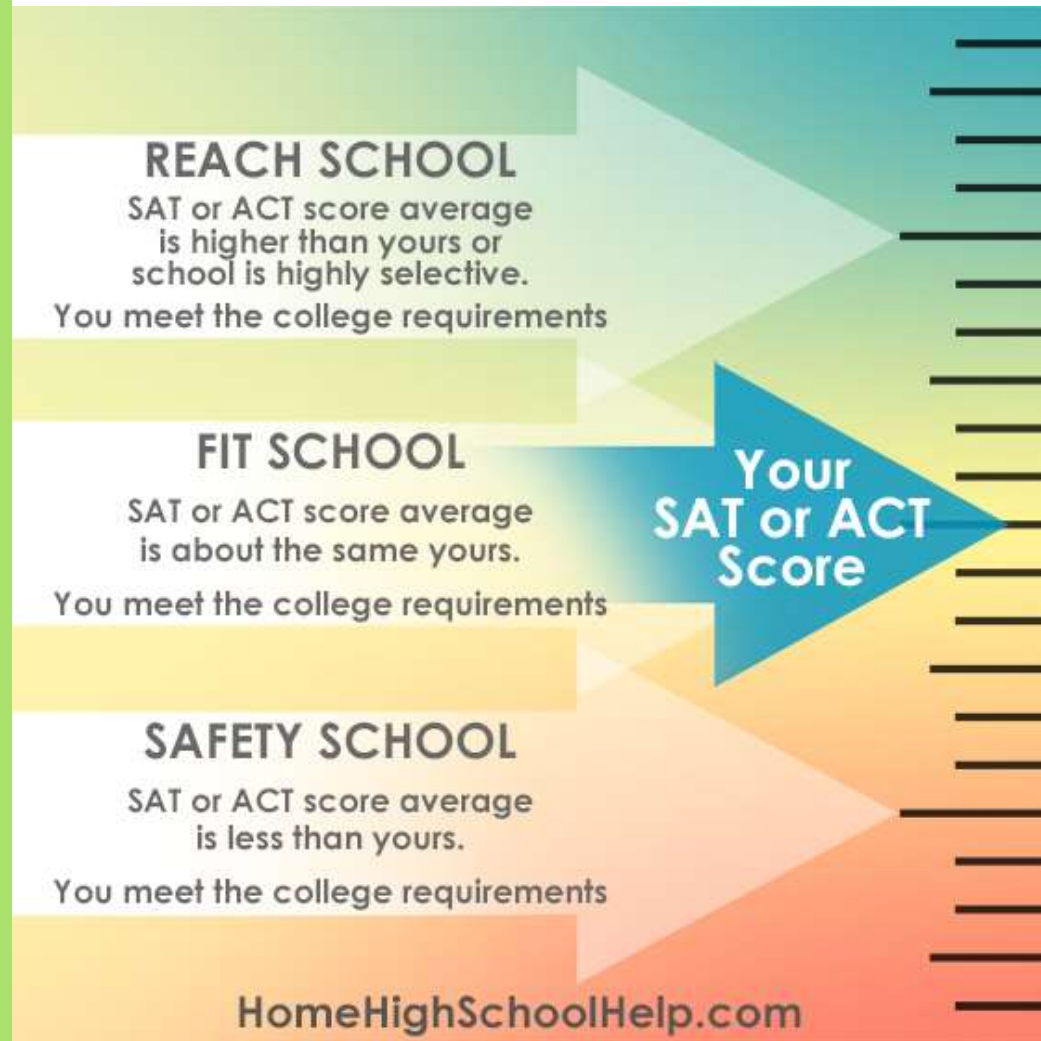
Collect Information for Admission

- Apply earlier than the deadline –
“Deadlines mean you are dead if you miss that date.”
- Each college is unique
- Read the details of each application
- Due dates may be earlier than expected



Collect Information

- Choose colleges to apply to
 - Reach
 - Fit
 - Safety
- Request applications
- Put deadlines on the calendar



Summer Activities for Teens



- Employment
- Volunteer work
- Meaningful activities
- Leadership experiences
- Socialization, and character
- Demonstrate self-motivation
- Consider CLEP tests
- Read great books

Summer Activities for Teens

- Prepare applications in summer?
 - ✓ If fall schedule is extraordinarily busy
 - ✓ If plans includes dual enrollment



Selective Service System

- Register for the draft at age 18yo
- Registration is the law
- Tied to FAFSA aid
- sss.gov



Fall of Senior Year



Fall of Senior Year

Start the application first day of senior year
Try to complete applications before Thanksgiving



Forms and Deadlines

Fall is filled with forms

- Application forms
 1. Common App
 2. Coalition App
 3. College App
- Application essays
- Letter of recommendation
- Test scores sent



Finalize Records

- Transcript
- Reading List
- Activity List
- Course Descriptions
- Supplemental information
 - School Profile
 - Cover Letter



Students Write Application Essays

- Self-reflective essay
- Technically perfect writing
- Entertaining and compelling
- Often 500-1000 words or longer
- Multiple essays per college application

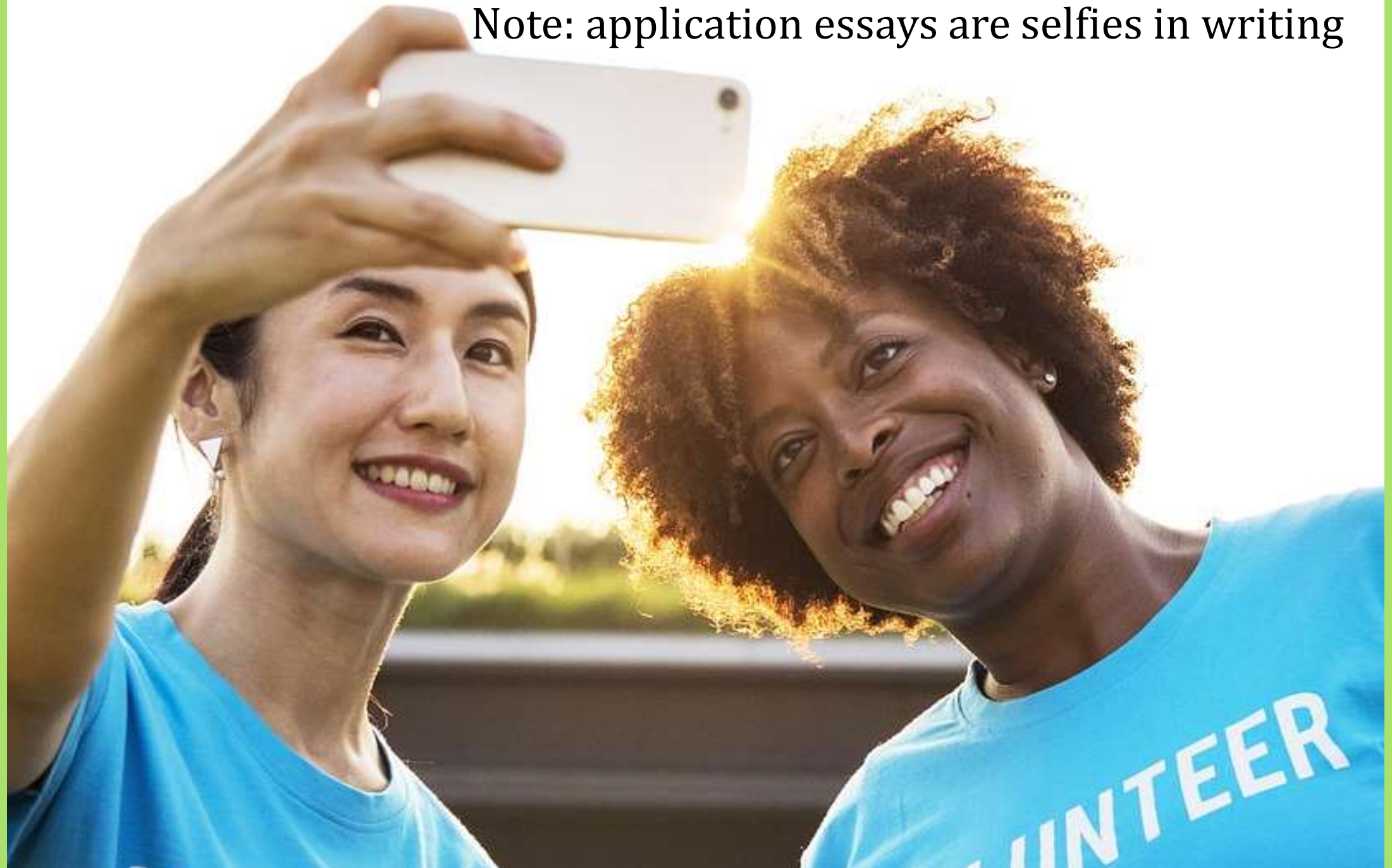


Application Essays

- Each essay is a self-portrait by the student
- Never repeat anything between essays
- Modify essays for specific colleges
- Be real and show personality
- Edit to perfection



Note: application essays are selfies in writing



Send Homeschool Records

- Application submitted separately
- Sending transcripts with senior year classes
 - Class title, credit value included
 - Class grade not included
 - Use “IP” for In Progress
 - Use “TBD” for To Be Determined
 - Define terms on the transcript
 - GPA without classes senior year
- Put dual enrollment on the transcript



Complete the FAFSA October 1st

- FAFSA determines need-based financial aid
- Complete forms October 1 senior year
- Repeat yearly until youngest exits college
- Aid is first-come, first-served
- Be first in line for money

Federal
Student
Aid



Complete the FAFSA October 1st

- Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
- The federal government decides “how much you can afford”
- FSA ID: special username and password used as your digital signature

Federal
Student
Aid

“Only create an FSA ID using your own personal information and for your own exclusive use. You are not authorized to create an FSA ID on behalf of someone else, including a family member.”



Complete the FAFSA October 1st

- FAFSA is aid from the government
- Must be registered for the draft
- More money comes from colleges
- Two for one deal when 2 in college

Federal
Student
Aid



Winter of Senior Year



Waves of Scholarships

- Scholarships come in waves through the year
 1. Based on GPA, SAT, ACT
 2. Based on FAFSA and need
 3. Based on merit, skill, or interview



College Interview

- Demonstrate socialization
- Additional college visits
- Scholarship competitions
- Top tips for interviews
 1. Plan for the visit
 2. Be assertive and confident
 3. Be rested for the interview



College Interview

Interview skills

1. Firm handshake
2. Direct eye contact
3. Speak clearly
4. Dress conservatively
5. Act professionally
6. Turn electronics off
7. Practice interview questions
8. Elaborate on answers



Mid-Year Report

- Send mid-year report with semester grades
- Send semester grades from dual enrollment or public school classes



Spring of Senior Year



Plan Celebration

- Senior party
- Senior portraits
- Graduation ceremony
- Graduation announcements
- Cap and gown
- Order diploma
- HomeschoolDiploma.com



Plan Ahead for Scholarships

Scholarships require careful planning junior year

1. Document a quality education
2. Great GPA
3. SAT or ACT Test scores
4. Subject-specific exams
AP, CLEP, or SAT Subject Tests
5. Thorough course descriptions
6. Scholarships from colleges



Seek Scholarships Senior Year

- Ask about separate scholarship applications
- Parents can contact colleges to ask
- Student can contact the college to ask
- Contact other colleges for a better deal
- Retake the SAT or ACT Test
- Beware of consigning loans
- Carefully evaluate Debt
- Ask college again



Save Money on College

- Search for private scholarships
- Shorten time at university
 1. AP Exams
 2. CLEP Exams
 3. Community college
- Warning: avoid community college during summer after high school, or lose “freshman” scholarships



Choose a College to Attend

- Compare financial offers
 - Out-of-pocket costs
 - College graduation rate
 - College employment rate
- Evaluate debt
- National candidate reply date
- Pay fees to attend in the fall



Asking for More Money

- Evaluate debt load
 - Minimum wage, full time, live at home
 - Pay off debt in one year
- Ask for more money if necessary
 - After national candidate reply date (May 1)
 - After college registration (September)

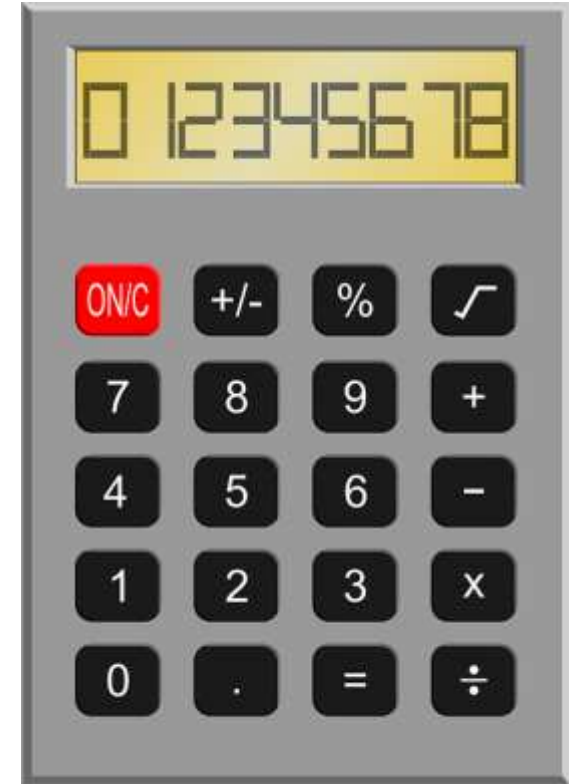


Summer After Senior Year



Finalize Records

- Finalize homeschool records
- Update the transcript
 - Graduation date
 - Final grades
 - Final GPA
 - Send to colleges as needed



Save Records

- Save the transcripts and records forever
 - Save on the computer
 - Save a physical copy
 - Save digital copy not on your computer
 - Email a copy to self
 - Email a copy to child or family member
 - Use an online back up system



Finalize Life Skills

- Focus on life skills
- Laundry
- Shopping
- Cooking
- Cleaning
- Banking



Shopping for College Life

- College packing list
- Check college policies on electronics
- Contact roommates to coordinate
 - Coordinate colors or room sections
 - Or agree on a single solid color, and then focus on function



Summer Shopping List

- Bedding and alarm clock
- Technology
- School supplies
- Cooking and eating
- Clothing and toiletries
- Cleaning and laundry supplies
- Documents, licenses, records
- Bank account information
- Food and snacks



Two sunflowers are positioned in the top corners of the slide, partially cut off by the edges. The one on the left is in the top-left corner, and the one on the right is in the top-right corner. Both have bright yellow petals and dark brown centers.

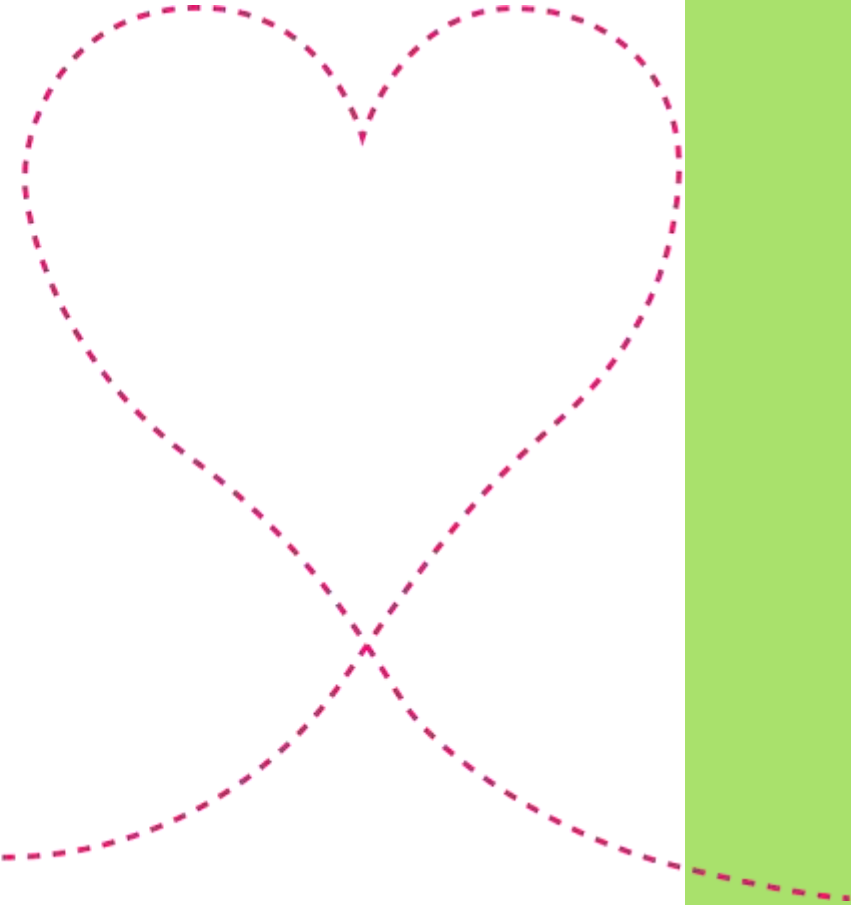
Fall After Senior Year





Face the Empty Nest

- Intense feelings
 - Loss
 - Tears
 - Pride
 - Relief
 - Hopelessness
 - Raging hormones
- Pain heals with time
- Find a “new normal”



Stay in Touch

- Shower with love in moderation
- Pray in faith, believing
- Social media
- Send gifts
- Plan visits



Children Becoming Adults

- Expect dramatic and rapid changes
- Focus on your 5 year plan
 - Healthy, happy, close, extended family
- Know when to step in
 - Life-threateningly stupid
 - Life-alteringly stupid
- Learn life skills and face natural consequence
- Consider a gap year to allow for maturity



Enjoy Success

- Face the empty nest eagerly
- Care for yourself and your home
- Volunteer work
- Travel
- Dinners dates
- Make a bucket list now



Panic Plan

“I’m a little bit behind...”



Freaked Out and Panicked

Keys to a successful emergency plan

- Student focuses on application
- Parent focuses on record keeping



Freaked Out and Panicked

Three tips for best success

1. Apply early in senior year (ASAP)
2. Apply to 4-8 schools
3. Apply to reach, fit and safety schools



Last-Minute Emergency Panic Plan

1. Drop all school and activities and apply
2. Quickly review scholarship tips
3. Visit 4 closest colleges or top choices
4. Register for first available SAT or ACT
5. Determine if student is missing classes
6. Replace unneeded class with needed ones



Last-Minute Emergency Panic Plan

7. Take the SAT or ACT if needed
8. Apply to 2 public and 2 private colleges
9. Write application essays
10. Complete transcript and records
11. Turn in application as soon as possible
12. Return to regular homeschooling and plan graduation party



Create a Back-up Plan

Avoid trauma and disappointment

- Apply to 4-8 colleges, reach, fit, and safety
- Complete applications as soon as possible
- Consider a transfer to another university



Create a Back-up Plan

Alternatives to college

- Research community college
- Find full time employment
- Remove “couch potato option”



Plan Ahead

- Plan ahead to avoid freaking out
- Write scholarship essays for high school credit
- Practice application forms junior year
- Ask for application forms during visits
- Apply during summer before senior year



5 Year Plan

“Super-Senior”





5 Year Plan

Delayed Graduation

5 Year High School

Extra Senior Year

13th Grade



Reasons NOT to Take a Super Senior Year

Perceived weaknesses that really are not important

- Unreasonable expectations
- Emotional consequences



Reasons NOT to Take a Super Senior Year

Student is not compliant with a 5th year

- Student is eager for independence
- Resistance to academics
- Student is over age 18
- Lack of motivation
- School refusal
- Frustration
- Maturity



Good Reasons to Consider a Super Senior Year

Maturity issues AND the student is compliant

- Early graduation can be avoided
- Emotional maturity is needed
- Physical maturity is needed
- Maturity will help with goals
 - Athletes
 - Dancers
 - Artists



Good Reasons to Consider a Super Senior Year

Transition to college AND the student is compliant

- Dual enrollment
- College classes
- Associates degree

Carefully watch the details

- Be honest in every interaction
- Be careful about dual enrollment
- Be careful about scholarship rules



Good Reasons to Consider a Super Senior Year

Solve requirement issues AND the student is compliant

- Admission requirements not met
- Graduation requirements not met
- Reach school has extra requirements
- Military academy dreams need nomination
- Earn more credits and more advanced classes



How to Handle a Super Senior Year

- Core classes and credits
- Exceed requirements
- Transcript by subject
- Add completion dates
- Write a cover letter



Alternatives to a Super Senior Year

- Graduate after 4 years and take a “Gap Year”
- Graduate on time and go to college
 - Carefully find an academically perfect fit college
- Graduate on time and look to what is next
 - Employment
 - Travel
 - Expand the resume
 - Earn money for college



Senior Year Step-by-Step



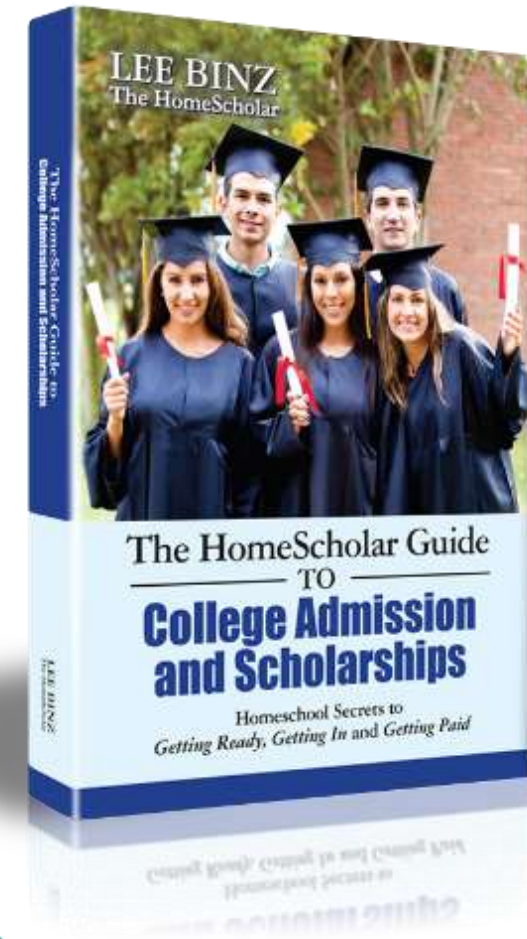
**Question and
Answer**

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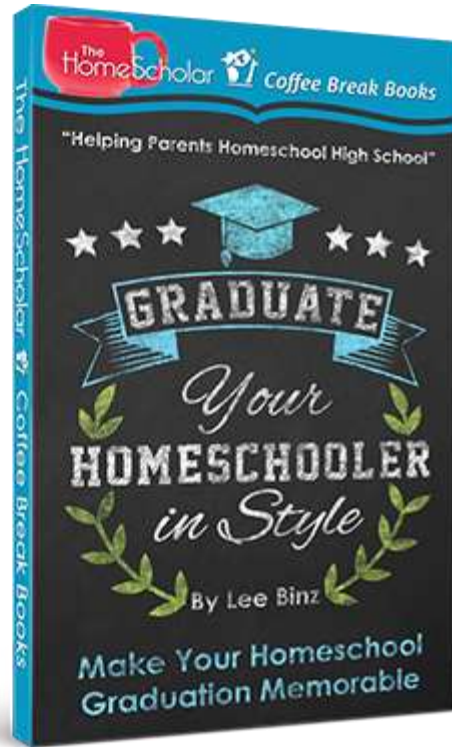
Suggested Resource

College Admission and Scholarships

- Homeschool Secrets to Getting Ready, Getting In and Getting Paid
- Detailed, reference book
- Plan ahead with this book



Suggested Resource



Graduate Your Homeschooler in Style

- How to make your homeschool graduation memorable
- Available on Amazon
- Perfect for parents with 12th graders or younger



Suggested Resource

The College Launch Solution

- Learn how to position your high school student for success
- Receive the best admission and scholarship results possible
- Prepare your teen for independent living and college success

Best for parents with 10th-11th graders





*The last season of
homeschooling is the
sweetest — the season
of friendship!*



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**Question and
Answer**

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