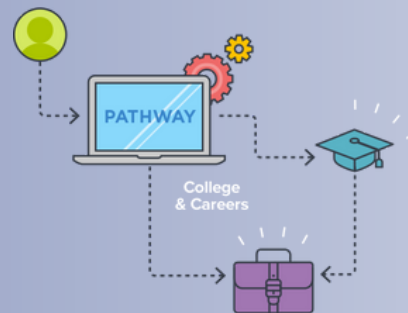


College Application Timeline



Grade Level:



11

Domain:



College & Career Exploration

TIME:



45 Minutes

This lesson is designed to help high school students create an action plan for college applications.

Objectives

Students will:

1. Learn about the different steps of applying to college.
2. Hear other students' experiences applying to college.
3. Determine the next steps to plan for their college and career.
4. Develop an action plan for their senior year.

MEFA Pathway Activities

- My Colleges
- My Careers
- My Goals
- My Digital Portfolio
- My Journal

Materials Needed

- Internet connection
- *College Timeline Checklist* (attached)
- MEFA's podcast episode, [*Deciding on a College: A Discussion with High School Students*](#)

Vocabulary

- Decision Plan
- Early Action
- Early Decision

Future Ready Skills

- Organization
- Evaluation
- Time Management
- Research

PART 1

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

1. Students should review the *College Timeline Checklist (attached)* to learn about the different steps of applying to college. Students should take notes and identify things they need to decide on or learn more about, such as their college list and corresponding deadlines, essay topic ideas, and letters of recommendation writers.
2. Have students watch MEFA's podcast episode, [*Deciding on a College: A Discussion with High School Students*](#) to learn about two students' college application experiences.
3. Have college-bound students identify steps applicable to their college application process using the *College Timeline Checklist*. Have career-bound students review their **My Careers** list under the *Discover Careers* tab and identify their favorite careers. Then have students click into each favorite career and review the career details page and identify the skills needed to be successful in that career. Have all students review and update their *Future Path* on their **My Digital Portfolio**, found under the *About Me* tab to make sure it is accurate.

PART 2

APPLYING INFORMATION

Students should navigate to their **My Colleges** list under the *Explore Colleges* tab. Instruct students to review their college list and favorite their top colleges by clicking the heart icon next to the school name. Students should also click on the plus sign to indicate the schools they plan on applying to.

PART 3

EVALUATING INFORMATION

1. Students should establish an organizational system, such as a calendar, that shows important college application due dates to make sure they are managing deadlines.
2. Have students mark their calendar with the time they will use for college prep.
3. Students should click on *My Goals* under the *Self-Discovery* tab and then create short and long-term goals related to completing their college applications.

PART 4

CRITICAL THINKING/CREATIVE APPLICATION

After students have viewed the podcast episode, [*Deciding on a College: A Discussion with High School Students*](#), encourage them to access their **My Journal** under the *About Me* tab and write a reflection about what they have learned about the college application process.

Class Discussion

Ask students what they have learned about the college application process that they did not know prior to this lesson. How do they feel about what they have learned? Confident? Scared?

College Timeline Checklist

September – October

- Make a list of (and visit if possible) all the colleges to which you want to apply.
- Create a Common App account at [CommonApp.org](https://commonapp.org).
- If needed, register for the SAT® or ACT® for a test date this fall.
- Create an FSA ID (for the FAFSA) online at studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account.
- Begin to fill out your college applications.
- If you haven't yet, request recommendation letters from teachers. Provide your recommenders with enough time (at least 6–8 weeks) to write your recommendation.
- Begin to work on your essay. Do not procrastinate! Let your personality stand out and individuality shine. Ask your English teacher to help you edit and proofread it. Essays should be around 500 words. (The Common app does not allow more than 650 words).
- If you are applying to college through Early Decision or Early Action, complete and submit your application(s) now.
- Submit the FAFSA as soon after October 1st as you can at fafsa.gov.
- If any of your colleges require the CSS Profile, submit that application as soon after October 1st as you can.

November – December

- If you registered for one, take your standardized test and have your test scores sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Complete and submit your college applications before Thanksgiving for schools with a December or later deadline.
- Start researching scholarships and grants. Check with your school counselor for local scholarship opportunities.

January – February

- Keep doing your best in your classes! Grades will continue to count throughout senior year.
- Have your mid-year grades sent to the colleges that have requested them.
- Complete as many scholarship applications as possible and submit them.

College Timeline Checklist

March – April

- Once colleges inform you of your acceptance, inform your school counselor of your acceptances and scholarships.
- Do not take Rolling Admissions for granted. Colleges with no application deadline may reach their maximum class size quickly. Apply as early as possible.
- Carefully review your college acceptances and financial aid offers.

May

- Select a college by May 1st! You will need to return the acceptance form (with any required deposit) to secure your spot. Notify your school counselor of your choice.
- Take AP tests and arrange for your scores to be sent to the college you will attend.

June

- Request from your school counselor that your final transcript be sent to the college you will attend.
- Look for information from your chosen college about housing, roommate(s), orientation, course selection, health records, and placement tests.
- Enjoy your last day of school. CONGRATULATIONS! You have made it through high school. Enjoy your graduation and look forward to college.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR JOURNAL ENTRIES

CATEGORY	EXCELLENT	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	4	3	2	1
Description	Offers a vivid, detailed, and insightful description of the experience, setting the stage for deeper reflection.	Provides a clear and detailed account of the experience, including relevant details.	Clearly describes the experience, event, or learning.	Offers a limited description of the experience.
Analysis	Engages in critical thinking, questioning assumptions, and demonstrating a thorough understanding of the learning.	Connects the experience to personal learning and raises some insightful questions.	Attempts to analyze the experience but may lack depth or clarity.	Superficial analysis, lacking deeper thought.
Future Application	Formulates clear, actionable plans for utilizing new insights and knowledge in future learning and experiences	Identifies specific ways to apply the learning to future situations or goals.	Suggests some possible connections to future learning or practice.	Makes no clear connection to future learning/action.