

EducationQuest Foundation

College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

December 2017

New College Timeline will keep you on track to college

EducationQuest has launched a new [College Timeline](#) for students in grades 9-12 that spells out steps you should take during fall, winter, spring, and summer to plan for college.

The Timeline also allows you to add your own tasks, get reminders when it's time to complete tasks, and check off tasks when they're complete. You can access these features by creating and/or logging into your [MyEducationQuest](#) account at EducationQuest.org.

Check it out and give it a try. It will make the college planning process more manageable!

What to expect after you submit your FAFSA

The [FAFSA](#) opened October 1 so many of you have already completed and submitted your form. Here's what happens next:

Expect a Student Aid Report (SAR). You'll receive it via an email link if you provided an email address on your FAFSA. The SAR acknowledges that your FAFSA was received, and if you need to take further action to process your FAFSA.

Make sure you applied for admission to colleges you listed on your FAFSA.

Colleges who receive your FAFSA results typically won't send you a financial aid package until you've applied and have been accepted to the school.

Watch for verification requests. The college(s) you listed on your FAFSA might request verification of your FAFSA information. If so, send the required documents to the colleges' financial aid office.

Watch for financial aid award notifications. The colleges you applied to – and listed on your FAFSA – will send you a financial aid award notification detailing the types and amounts of aid they're offering based on your financial need.

This [EducationQuest Blog article](#) has more details about what happens after you submit your FAFSA.

Haven't completed your FAFSA yet?

No problem! You and a parent can complete the form at [FAFSA.gov](#). Before you start, create an FSA ID for you and one for a parent at [fsaid.ed.gov](#). You'll need them to access and sign the FAFSA.

For free help with the FAFSA, watch this [FAFSA Demo](#), use our free [FAFSA Tools](#), or call EducationQuest to make an appointment:

Omaha – 888.357.6300

Lincoln – 800.303.3745

Kearney – 800.666.3721

Scottsbluff – 800.303.3745, ext. 6654

Winning the scholarship game

Follow these tips to increase your chances of earning scholarships:

Don't ever pay for scholarship searches! Use *free* resources such as [ScholarshipQuest](#) at EducationQuest.org with over 2,000 Nebraska-based scholarships. Free national sites include [Peterson's](#), [FindTuition](#), [Cappex](#), and [Chegg](#).

Visit your school counselor often for information about local scholarships.

Focus on local and college-specific scholarships because you're more likely to earn them.

Update your activities, honors, community service or paid jobs using the [Activities Resume](#) at EducationQuest.org.

Earn the best possible ACT/SAT scores by taking the exam in the spring of your junior year and again in the fall of your senior year.

Use quality references such as a teacher, coach or counselor. Encourage them to write specific examples of your leadership skills. Give them advance notice and a specific deadline.

Tailor your essay to the scholarship. Ask an English teacher to read your essay and offer advice on making a big impact. Your essay will need to stand out from other applications.

Want some inspiration? [Read](#) how one Nebraska student earned over \$65,000 in scholarships!

December "To Do" List

Complete these tasks during December to stay on the right college planning track.

Seniors:

- ___ If you haven't already, submit [college applications](#) and the [FAFSA](#).
- ___ Continue to apply for scholarships.
- ___ Use our [College Timeline](#) to stay on track to college.

Juniors

- ___ Use our [College Timeline](#) to stay on track to college.
 - ___ Take an ACT prep course.
 - ___ Set up a [ScholarshipQuest](#) profile and start searching for Nebraska-based scholarships.
 - ___ [Register](#) by January 12 for the February 10 ACT.
 - ___ [Register](#) by February 9 for the March 10 SAT.
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For free help with college planning, contact EducationQuest Foundation:

Omaha	Lincoln	Kearney	Scottsbluff
402-391-4033	402-475-5222	308-234-6310	800-303-3745 ext. 6654
888-357-6300	800-303-3745	800-666-3721	

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