

Zionsville Community High School  
**Preparing for the College Search:  
A Checklist**

**Prepare yourself academically:**



Review your four-year graduation plan and revise as necessary.

The four-year graduation plan allows students to outline academic courses to make sure they are prepared for earning the diploma of their choice. Please refer to the high school guidance website under "Academic Information" for specific information.



Meet with your guidance counselor to be certain that you are on track to complete the diploma of your choice.

*ZCHS guidance counselors do their best to meet with every student at least once/year to discuss course selection and academic planning. Students are encouraged to seek their counselors' help if needed, rather than waiting to be called to the counselor's office.*



Take rigorous coursework that will prepare you for college-level coursework.

*Did you know that ZCHS offers 20+ Advanced Placement (AP) courses and several college credit courses that allow students to experience college level work that could result in college credits earned before a student ever steps on campus? Did you also know that 79% of ZCHS students who took AP tests in 2012 scored a 3 or higher?*

**Prepare for and register for college entrance exams:**



Review your PSAT scores from your sophomore year and visit <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/quickstart.html> to learn more about how you can work to improve your PSAT scores when you take them again as a junior.

*Did you know that ZCHS students are provided three opportunities to take practice college entrance exams before they ever have to take the tests "for real"? Freshmen, sophomores and juniors take the PSAT.*



Plan to take the ACT and/or SAT at least once during the junior year. Students are encouraged to take the ACT and/or SAT at least twice because most students improve their score.

*Did you know that the ACT and SAT are offered at ZCHS four times (each) throughout the academic year? Did you also know that ZCHS's SAT scores rank among the best in Indiana public high schools?*

### **Begin/continue gathering information about colleges and universities:**



Start browsing college and university web sites for information about programs of study, admissions requirements, and financial aid.



Schedule campus visits during breaks or as part of your family vacation. Students are encouraged to visit as many campuses as possible to identify the best fit for them.

### **Continue your extracurricular involvement and/or identify new ways to get involved in your school or local community:**



Start to document your extracurricular involvement in a resume. Include involvement in clubs/organizations or athletics as well as community involvement, and note any leadership positions held.

*Did you know that ZCHS sponsors 75+ clubs and organizations, and students can start their own clubs if one doesn't exist in an area of interest?*



Identify ways in which you can gain work experience, either through part-time jobs or volunteer opportunities. It is never too early to start developing skills that will serve you well no matter your educational or career path.

*Did you know that colleges and universities are less interested in a laundry list of activities, and instead prefer to see activities that students can demonstrate have meaningful connections to their future plans?*

### **Begin identifying financial aid and scholarship resources:**



Start browsing the financial aid and scholarship web sites for the colleges and universities to get a sense about requirements, deadlines, etc.

*Did you know that the ZCHS Class of 2012 was awarded more than \$7.3 million in scholarships?*



Begin searching for local, state, and national scholarships for which you may qualify. A great place to start is the Boone County Community Foundation's web site: <http://www.communityfoundationbc.org> and the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana web site: [www.in.gov/ssaci/](http://www.in.gov/ssaci/).

Zionsville Community High School  
**Preparing for the College Search:  
Helpful Websites for Juniors**

**College Search Resources**

1. [www.knowhow2go.org/](http://www.knowhow2go.org/) --a site dedicated to outlining the steps needed to go to college.
2. [www.learnmoreindiana.org](http://www.learnmoreindiana.org) --a site developed for Indiana students that offers a wealth of information about college and careers.
3. <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/> - Recently revamped Department of Education website offers a searchable database of nearly 7,000 colleges and universities
4. [www.Collegeresults.org](http://www.Collegeresults.org) - Created by the Education Trust, this website enables viewers to find or compare overall graduation rates and how those rates have changed over time; and by gender, and race. Data is based only on first time full time freshmen
5. [www.Collegedata.com](http://www.Collegedata.com) - College match, calculates chances of admission, and financial aid and scholarship opportunities
6. [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com) --Peterson's offers a comprehensive college search tool.
7. <http://www.campustours.com> - Virtual campus tours of over 800 colleges
8. <http://www.indnext.com/index.html> - Indiana NEXT is a guide to life after high school.
9. [www.icindiana.org](http://www.icindiana.org) --official website for the independent colleges in Indiana
10. [www.ctcl.com](http://www.ctcl.com) --Colleges That Change Lives website showcases 40 small colleges known for providing excellent undergraduate education
11. [www.collegeproowler.com](http://www.collegeproowler.com) -- this site offers a college search tool for students.
12. [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) --If you plan to participate in college athletics, be sure to visit this site.\
13. <http://www.indianacollegecosts.org/explore-indiana-colleges> Compare college profiles, estimate college expenses and view a map of Indiana that lists colleges/universities.

**College Admissions Testing**

1. [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) --This site has information about the PSAT, SAT, and AP testing programs. It also offers a wealth of resources related to the college search process.
2. [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) --Princeton Review offers test preparation services.
3. [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) --The official site for the ACT test.
4. [www.benderandrocapeducationalservices.com](http://www.benderandrocapeducationalservices.com) --a locally owned test preparation company.

**Financial Aid and Scholarships**

**Note:** Check the financial aid website of the colleges/universities you are considering.

*The colleges/universities are often the best source for financial aid- especially merit based aid.*

1. [www.bccn.boone.in.us/cf/scholarships.html](http://www.bccn.boone.in.us/cf/scholarships.html) --This site provides information about local scholarships for Boone County students. Many scholarships will be posted after the 1<sup>st</sup> semester. Check back frequently for updates.
2. [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) - The Department of Education's Free Application for Federal Student Aid
3. <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/> The State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana provides information about state grant and scholarship programs.
4. [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) - Create a free log in, use to search for colleges, scholarships, careers. Sends emails to you when scholarships are posted that match student's profile
5. [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) -- Lots of information about college financing, accurate family contribution calculators, links to numerous informational sites
6. [www.profileonline.collegeboard.com](http://www.profileonline.collegeboard.com) -- Financial aid form required by some colleges
7. <http://www.scholarshipcoach.com> -- Free scholarship site
8. <http://www.lunchmoney.com> -- Free scholarship site
9. <http://www.collegecosts.com/> --National Center for College Costs/Murray & Associates works with families to understand the costs associated with college attendance and navigate the financial aid process.

## 2012-2013 SAT/ACT DATES

### SAT

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

October 6, 2012\*

November 3, 2012

December 1, 2012\*

January 26, 2013\*

March 9, 2013

May 4, 2013

June 1, 2013\*

\*asterisk indicates dates when the SAT will be offered at ZCHS

### ACT

[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

September 8, 2012\*

(Registration Deadline: August 17, 2012)

October 27, 2012

December 8, 2012\*

February 9, 2013\*

April 13, 2013

June 8, 2013\*

\*asterisk indicates dates when the SAT will be offered at ZCHS