



# COLLEGE PLANNING

## 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

**P**reparing for college is a significant step for both students and parents. At SPIRE Academy, we aim to provide clear and practical guidance to help you navigate this process effectively. These tips cover essential tasks such as attending college fairs, finalizing applications, exploring financial aid options and staying organized with deadlines. Utilize these resources to ensure a smooth and successful transition to college. Remember, your SPIRE College Counselor is available for support and assistance whenever needed.

# SENIOR YEAR – 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

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## TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- › Attend available college fairs, local college events and admission rep visits.
- › Create your Common App account.
- › Finalize your personal statement (required by most college applicants).
- › Follow up with recommenders writing your letters and see if they need anything from you.
- › Begin the college preparation process as soon as possible. This includes researching colleges, exploring financial aid options and understanding application requirements.
- › Understand the costs associated with college education and start financial planning early. Explore scholarship opportunities, grants and financial aid options to help alleviate the financial burden.
- › Your college counselor is your ally throughout this journey. Don't hesitate to reach out for assistance whenever you need it!
- › Finish and send out college applications. The deadlines for the majority of Early Decision and Early Action submissions fall on either 11/1 or 11/15, while most Early Decision 2 and regular applications have deadlines in early to mid-January, although these dates can vary significantly.
- › Keep track of application deadlines, required documents and important dates related to college admissions. Utilize organizational tools such as calendars or spreadsheets to stay on top of everything.
- › Continue to work hard in the classroom to maintain your academic standings.
- › Once you have selected a college, be sure to solidify your housing, meal plan and transportation to college.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

- › Have open and honest conversations with your child about their college aspirations, expectations and concerns. Encourage them to express their thoughts and preferences.
- › Focus on a well-balanced college list that fits your student's needs both academically and athletically.
- › While it's important to support your child, encourage them to take ownership of their college applications and decisions. This fosters independence and prepares them for the transition to college life.
- › Support your child through the college application process. This may involve helping them gather required documents, proofread essays and payment for application fees.
- › Take time to learn about financial aid options and scholarships.
- › The FAFSA (opens October 1<sup>st</sup>) is a free student aid application open to US students only. Complete and submit the FAFSA early for the best chance at getting the most available aid that schools can offer.