



**College Handbook
Class of 2020**

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Login Information	3
What is SCOIR	4
Testing	5
Applying for College	6
Essay and Activity Sheet	7
Letters of Recommendation	16
Student Brag Sheet	17
Financial Aid	19
NCAA and NAIA (Athletes)	21
Timeline	22

Introduction

The following handbook was designed by the Incarnate Word Academy Guidance Department to assist our students and families with the college search process. This process should be an exciting time in your daughter's life. However, with so many colleges and universities to choose from it can become overwhelming for some.

This handbook is designed to take you through the search process step-by-step from researching schools, to testing, all the way to the submission of applications, and finding ways to pay for college. We hope you find this guide helpful as you embark on this very important process. In addition to this handbook, please refer to IWA College Corner for more information throughout the year at: <http://iwacollegecorner.weebly.com/>

An electronic version of this handbook is available on IWA College Corner.

The IWA Guidance Department

Login Information

Use this page as record of your username and passwords for key websites throughout the college application process. Remember you will have to make individual logins for each college that does not use the Common Application.

SCOIR

Username: _____

Password: _____

Act.org

Username: _____

Password: _____

College: _____

Username: _____

Password: _____

Common Application

Username: _____

Password: _____

FSA ID and LOGIN info:

What is SCOIR?

SCOIR is IWA's college database and planning system. It is also the system we use to submit transcripts. All juniors have a SCOIR account to search for and start building a list of colleges that interest them. Students will be required to use SCOIR as part of the transcript release process and to request letters of recommendation from faculty and staff.

Login at <https://app.scoir.com/signin>

Parents can have access to SCOIR by linking to their daughter's account. In order for a parent to be linked to their child's account, the Student must invite the parent. To do this, the Student must navigate to their Profile and click on the Invite Parent link. This opens a dialog box to enter the parent information and invite the parent. The parent will receive a registration email to join SCOIR!

Testing

Standardized testing is a necessary portion of the admissions process at most colleges and universities. Schools use these tests as a way to gauge college readiness. Some schools do allow for a standardized “test optional” admissions process. This means that you do not need to submit standardized test scores to be considered for admission. A list of standardized test optional schools can be found at <http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>. Despite a growing number of these schools you will most likely still need to take the SAT or ACT to gain college admission since not every school participates in testing optional admissions.

It is recommended to take the ACT 3-4 times before December of Senior year. With that being said, all juniors are required to take the ACT here at IWA on Tuesday, April 2nd (cost included in tuition). For more information on **National** testing dates, deadlines and to register, visit www.act.org.

Because many schools use the ACT for admission decisions, students should have their test scores sent to the colleges they are interested in applying. You can list 4 schools (at no additional cost) when registering for the ACT. At this time, you can also list NCAA or NAIA as recipients. Waiting to send scores AFTER results are received will cost \$13.00/score/school.

IWA High School Code: 262-435 - you may need this when registering

ACT or SAT: The ACT tends to be the more favored test of our students and the St. Louis area as it is predominantly a “midwest test”. Students can, however, take the SAT as well or in place of the ACT. Either test is accepted for college admission purposes at MOST colleges. Specific details are available on the college website. More information on the SAT can be found at: www.collegeboard.org.

Applying for College

Between August 1st and November 15th of Senior year, we recommend that you apply to 3-7 colleges. IWA recommends at least one college in the St. Louis area. By completing applications by 11/15, students will have met the December 1st priority deadline at most schools. PLEASE BE AWARE that some selective schools will have an earlier deadline.

HOW DO YOU APPLY FOR COLLEGE: **ONLINE**

Go to the website of the college you are interested in applying to and click the big **APPLY NOW** button. This can be the easiest and quickest option for many state schools.

Another option is using the Common Application at www.commonapp.org. The Common Application is one application that can be sent to several schools. Not all schools will use the common application. Look on their site for a list of colleges as this may be an easier option when applying to selective schools. Some schools may require a supplemental application in addition to the Common Application. These will still be done in the Common Application and you will be prompted to complete them.

PROCESS:

1. Complete the Application
2. Submit the Application and required materials
3. After submitting the application; add this school to the “APPLIED” column in SCOIR under the “My Colleges” tab (*Once you do this, you will be prompted to answer a few questions...do not worry about application ID...leave blank*)
4. Send your ACT/SAT scores from ACT/College Board IF you did not already do so when registering for the test
5. Come into the Counseling Office and complete a **TRANSCRIPT REQUEST** form (they are on pink paper) and give to Mrs. Pisciotta or Mrs. Sumpter

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE COUNSELING OFFICE NEEDS 10 DAYS TO PROCESS TRANSCRIPTS.

Essay and Activity Sheet

ESSAY QUESTION – NOT all schools require an essay. Most public schools will NOT require one. Typically, essays are required for private or smaller schools. How will you know? The application will tell you. If you do not see an essay question on the application...then you do NOT need to send one. If there is an essay question, details will be provided.

ACTIVITY SHEET – most schools will have you complete a section on the application about your involvement in school and community activities. Some schools will ask that you provide them with a resume. If they say nothing about a resume/activity sheet...then you do NOT need to send one.

WHAT IS AN ACTIVITY SHEET?

It is a written document that describes your education, work experience, accomplishments, skills, honors, and career goals. It attempts to communicate to an employer, a college, or a scholarship committee what you have to offer based on what you have already accomplished.

The sample below is designed to assist you in formatting a College Resume. Please make it your own. Colleges do not want to see the same resume from every IWA student.

- Remember to include information that highlight YOUR STRENGTHS. If certain headings do not pertain to you, DO NOT USE THEM. This is simply a sample...tailor it to make you look good.
- Ex: If you do not have any Honors or Awards, get rid of that section/heading. If you have several hours of volunteer service, highlight that...create a heading called Volunteer Service. If you have major/career aspirations, add a heading that says what you want to major in.
- Be sure to explain any clubs or activities. Colleges do not know IWA as well as we know IWA. Colleges do not know about a Red Knight Award...what is it? They also don't know ALL the activities that take place during Mission Week or ALL the activities Student Council organizes. What does Spanish Club do?
- A 1-2 sentence explanation is sufficient
- Use words such as SELECTED, ELECTED, CHOSEN anytime you can. Also note any leadership activities or positions such as Student Council, President, Editor in Chief, Captain, Lead Cashier, Camp Instructor, Camp Leader, etc.

Most importantly...make sure your resume represents YOU!

Name
Address
Incarnate Word Academy
School Email

Honors and Awards

- National Merit Semi-Finalist (11) (this is a self-explanatory; known nationwide, no need to explain)
- Sportsmanship Award – IWA Soccer (11)
 - This Award is given to one student each year that is an example of sportsmanship on the team. I was selected by my coaches and peers to receive this award.
- Red Knight Award (11)
 - Schools do not know about IWA...what does this award mean? Short sentence explanation is necessary; were you selected, elected? By peers? By Faculty?
- Missouri All State Choir, (10,11)
 - Again, short explanation should accompany this; were you selected, elected, chosen?

High School Activities

- IWA Yearbook Staff (10, 11, 12)
 - Editor in Chief (12) – Selected by Yearbook Moderator to be Editor in Chief
- IWA Swim Team (10, 11, 12)
 - Varsity Team Captain (12); Won Districts 10, 11 and 12
- Spanish Club (9, 10, 11, 12)
 - Meet twice a month to discuss Spanish Culture; partake in activities such as watching movies, cooking authentic cuisine, going to Spanish restaurants, playing trivia games

Community Activities

- Meals on Wheels Volunteer (Summers, 2015-Present)
 - Deliver 3-5 meals to senior citizens every Saturday throughout the year.
- Church Youth Group (9, 10, 11, 12)
 - Meet once a month; participate in various community service activities throughout the year; coordinated over 100 youth members for a 2-week mission trip.

Work Experience

- YMCA Summer Gymnastics Camp Instructor (2017-Present)
 - 25 hours per week in the summer; Lead a group of 5-7 year olds, teach them proper technique, play games and assist with stunts
- Panera Bread (2017-Present)
 - Approximately 10 hours per week during the school year as a cashier

Interests

- Diving – Greenbriar Pool Dive Team (6 years)
- Dancing – Ballet, tap, jazz (10 years)

OTHER POSSIBLE HEADING:

Athletic Leadership Roles

Musical or Theater Experience

Artistic Abilities or Awards

Communication Skills

Community Service

Summer Employment

Foreign Travel

Summer Enrichment

Writing Experience

Major or Career Aspirations

FOUR KEYS TO WRITING GREAT COLLEGE ESSAYS

Tip #1: Don't try to impress the admissions officers; just be honest. Read the following 2 essays, they are great examples of this:

"I am a good loser. It is an art that I have perfected. When I was six, I lost a button up my nose. I put it up there and it never came back. My mother took me to the doctor and he couldn't find anything. To this day I have no idea where the button went. For all I know it could still be up there.

When I was a sophomore, I ran for sophomore class president. I stood up in front of my classmates, read a speech filled with big words and fancy phrases, and lost. The same thing happened when I ran for ASB president my junior year. One week after that bitter defeat, I reused my campaign posters and ran for junior class president. I rattled off another inspired speech, and lost. I was starting to perfect my art.

I knew I was good, but I never knew just quite how good I had become. I honed my expertise at my first National Honors Society meeting. We had to elect a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. I lost all four elections in a matter of twenty-five minutes. Who can boast that kind of speed and precision? I had finally mastered my art.

But I don't feel like I've lost.

Ironically, my losses have opened doors of involvement in other areas that might not have been available to me. I have committed my time away from what would have been ASB meetings to being a lector at my church. Once a month, I stand up in front of a crowded church filled with my peers, elders, and the priest and attempt to proclaim the Word of God. Every week, I am complimented on my public speaking ability. I have never lost my composure.

I was able to spend my entire summer working at Special Camp for Special Kids, a camp for children with physical and mental disabilities. It was there I met Alyssa, a twelve-year old girl with Spina Bifida. In a large, open gym, Alyssa and I turned on Brittany Spears music as loud as we could and danced – me doing my best modern dance interpretation, and Alyssa in her wheelchair laughing at me because I was an embarrassment to the human race. On the last day of camp, she wrote me a thank-you note. Scribbled in pencil on a little Hallmark card, Alyssa had written, "Megan – Thank you for making my week so much fun!" I will never lose that note.

If I had been elected ASB President, I could not have been elected as a "gladiator" of our spirit rallies...twice. Dressed in my school's colors, I put on skiing goggles while running over, and flying under, tables in an effort to win "spirit points" for the class of 2009. The entire school cheered me on, staring in awe as I flew under the last table and hit my head hard enough to make

a sound resembling a small sonic boom. I didn't lose anybody's attention, and I certainly didn't lose any spirit points.

I am a good loser. I'll give myself that. But each time I've lost, I've continued to try. I've never lost my spirit. I've never lost my drive. I've never lost an opportunity just because I was afraid to fail. I have tried so many other things and found success in those other areas that my losses have actually allowed me to win. So much of my life exists before me – so many obstacles, so many challenges, so much fun. I want to try all of it.

What do I have to lose?

******Megan is an “A” student. Her essay is a great example of a student who will not quit. While she is a good writer, her essay portrays a student that the college or university would WANT on their campus. ******

Gone Fishin'

My dad and I go fishing together once a month. It's a tradition that we started when I was four years old. We load up the car with our poles and tackle, get dressed up in all our fishing gear, and my mom packs us some sandwiches to take with us in a cooler. We leave before the sun comes up and make the three hour drive to the lake. Then we find our favorite spot on the shore, cast our lines, and spend a relaxing day fishing together. Over the years, my dad has taught me everything he knows about fishing. He grew up in Oregon and used to go fishing with his dad when he was a kid. Now he's passing that knowledge on to me. I always looked forward to our weekends fishing together when I was little, and I still do today.

When I was about 13, I turned into a typical teenager. Every time that weekend came around to go fishing with my dad, there were always a bunch of other things I would rather have been doing. I would worry about missing out on fun with my friends. Being out on a lake with my dad never seemed as exciting as it was when I was a little kid. But I always went. And to tell you the truth, I've always been glad when I did. Once I get out there with my dad, I'm always happy I made the trip.

When my dad and I are fishing on the lake, it's the only time that we're not father and son. He doesn't lecture me about why I should be doing better in school, and I'm not disagreeing with every single thing he says. We're just two friends fishing. The funny thing is that we never catch any fish. I think we've caught two fish in all our years of doing this. My dad seems to know what he's doing, so I think that maybe there just aren't that many fish in the lake we go to. But it doesn't matter. What's most important is that we get to spend time together.

One thing that's great about fishing is hearing my dad tell stories. I never knew this, but he and my mom actually met in college when she was his tutor. I guess my dad wasn't a very good

student and my mom had to help him pass all his classes in his business major. He told me while we were fishing that he never would have done well in college without my mom's help. Today, my dad is the chief operating officer of a large computer software firm. It made me feel better to know that my dad struggled in school like me. I probably never would have heard that if we didn't take our fishing trips together.

There are still some weekends when I really want to stay home and hang out with my friends instead of going fishing, but I always make the trip with my dad. None of my friends get to do this with their dads. I feel lucky that we have this tradition together. I know that next year when I go to college, my dad and I will have to stop doing our monthly fishing trip. But I also know that when I come home for Thanksgiving, Christmas, spring break and for the next summer, my dad and I are going to pack up the car, find our favorite spot on the lake, and spend six hours not catching any fish just like we've always done.

*****This student is a “C” student. While he will not be an IVY league candidate, this is still a very good essay and makes him a great candidate for many schools.*****

Tip #2: Own Your Story – if you put YOUR detail into the essay, it makes it different from others.

Example #1:

Without detail:

“I was extremely nervous before the orchestra started playing. However, I knew that this was an important performance and that I needed to play well. I took a deep breath, relaxed, and did my best to concentrate.”

With detail:

“I was sitting there on the stage with my violin resting on my shoulder, and I was sure I'd never been that nervous. I looked out into the crowd of 200 people and somehow, I found my dad. He was holding his video camera, the same camera that's been in our family since I was ten. My dad loves recording everything I do with that video camera. It's the same camera he used to record my first home run in little league and my entrance onstage in my first school play. Now, as I was about to play as the first chair violinist in my community orchestra, there was my dad once again, with our family video camera ready to go. Something about seeing him there just made me feel more relaxed and comfortable. I knew I was going to be okay. My dad gave me a quick

thumbs-up and mouthed the words, “Good Luck.” As the conductor raised his wand, I smiled at my dad, nodded back at him, and started to play.”

Example #2

Without detail:

“Our soccer team’s bond is not limited to the field. We are together at school almost every day and share a sense of sisterhood. This is what makes soccer so rewarding.”

With detail:

“On game days, you’ll notice our sea of blue jackets weaving in and out of the other students in the hallway. You can hear the “flop...flop” of our Adidas soccer sandals that are just now getting comfy after three years of wear. You can always spot Gina, our goalkeeper, who’s covered in bandages and gauze and looks like she requires immediate medical attention. Sometimes when I’m in that sea of blue jackets, I think about all those mornings during the summer when we met early at my house to go for six-mile runs in the canyon. I think about the soccer camps in Fresno when it was 100 degrees, the car wash fundraisers we did to get our new uniforms, and all the late-night talks we’ve had about how badly we want to bring a championship banner to our school. I’m proud to wear one of those blue jackets. But more importantly, I’m proud to play with these girls. I love soccer, but my team is what makes it so worth it for me.”

Always ask yourself the question: Could somebody else tell this story? If yes, put more detail in it. If you can’t find details, choose a different story or topic.

Tip #3: Don’t repeat information from the rest of your application or resume. Pick something not on your application or resume...something new. If you can’t think of a new topic, pick something from your application or resume but expand on it...use more detail, share new information and give new insight.

Example #1: When I was nine, I tried out for my first club soccer team. Unfortunately, tryouts were on the same day as my piano competition. Right after the recital, I ran out of the building and into my dad’s car. I was already late for tryouts, so I had to change in the car. On the way to the soccer field, I pulled on my shorts, shin guards, socks and shoes. I was about to pull off my formal pink dress when I realized that my mom had packed two pairs of shorts, but no shirt. There was no time to turn back home. My dad sent me onto the field with a, “Go get ‘em,” and I headed across the field in that fluffy pink horror, complemented by shin guards and soccer cleats. Somehow, I knew that the only thing worse than a nine-year old girl trying out for the soccer

team in a dress is a *crying* nine-year old trying out for the soccer team in a dress, so I collected myself, walked up to the coach and said, “Sorry I’m late, I am here to try out.” Everyone laughed – including the coach – but it didn’t matter what they thought...I made the team. Eight years later, I still remember learning not to care what other people think.

Example #2: My second year working at the Special Olympics, I was assigned to be a buddy to a man named Robert. At first I was a little disappointed that I wasn’t matched with a little girl like I had been in the previous year, but Robert’s enthusiasm was contagious. An eight-year veteran of the Special Olympics, Robert knew exactly what he wanted to do, and hand in hand, we headed over to the Frisbee Throw. Robert amazed me with his Frisbee skills and every time he scored, I was right there for a big high-five and an even bigger hug. Next was the obstacle course, and we had such a blast running through tires together that we ran the course over and over. After we got our faces painted, we remembered that his event was coming up, the one he had been training for all year.

Robert told me how nervous he was. In the eight years he had been a participant, he had never won a gold medal, and he desperately wanted to win it this time. When the announcer called, “Men’s 40 and up, 50 yard dash,” I sent Robert to his lane assignment and reminded him again how ready he was. Robert had made it clear to me that unlike many of the other buddies; I was not to run alongside him, but to let him do it on his own. Standing at the finish line, cheering as loudly as I could, I watched Robert cross it first. He hugged me so hard that I nearly fell over. I grabbed his arm and said, “C’mon let’s go get your gold medal,” but I was leading him only for a moment before he was dragging me.

Just as I thought the day couldn’t get any better, Robert and I heard over the loudspeaker that there was a band playing on the main field. Together, we ran over to the stage, which was surrounded by buddies and athletes sitting on the grass. Robert and I ran right through the people and up to the front where we danced, just the two of us. As my mom and grandma stood on the far side taking pictures, we did the twist, the hand jive, the swim; even swing dancing, not caring that we were the only ones up there.

Eventually, other people joined in. But even if they hadn’t, it wouldn’t have mattered. What people thought didn’t bother me. I didn’t care that some kids from my school were staring and snickering. This dance wasn’t about them; it was about Robert. It was his day, and I wanted him to celebrate and have fun. That day on the soccer field had been a challenge to play in a pink dress, but dancing with Robert in front of all those staring eyes was nothing but a pleasure.

This student is a “B” student. She wrote a good essay on a topic that was in her resume. However, she expanded on her volunteer work at the Special Olympics...she added more detail and brought something new to the table.

Tip #4: Your essays should sound like YOU!

Let's say you were going to write an essay about how you struggled but prevailed in chemistry. Here are two different versions of a first paragraph:

1. "Throughout our lives, we are often forced to confront challenges. Oftentimes, we are able to learn the most valuable lessons from challenges that we successfully overcome. I found this to be the case when I chose to enroll in AP chemistry my junior year. In spite of my best efforts, I consistently struggled with chemistry (my natural strengths are in English and History). But I persevered, and I'm very thankful that I did, as I successfully completed the course and proved to myself that I can finish what I start."
2. "In the middle of my junior year, chemistry and I were having irreconcilable differences. The divorce was going to get ugly. Really ugly. I don't know why, but no matter how many days I spent after school while my teacher, Mr. Chapman, patiently tried to help me, I just couldn't get it. In fact, after finishing the class, pretty much the only thing I'm sure about when it comes to chemistry is that I could never be a chemist. Believe me, that's good news for the scientific community."

Which of those essays would you keep reading? Version #2 is a good example of a natural tone. A good example of something you would say to your friend.

THE MOST OVERUSED COLLEGE ESSAY STORIES and HOW THE ABOVE TIPS CAN HELP:

1. "Sports taught me the importance of teamwork and committing to my goals" – Don't just write about sports in general, pick a moment or a season from your sports career....remember to own it and use detail.
2. "My trip to another country broadened my horizons." – Don't do a travel journal of your trip, rather talk about one certain night or experience on the trip. Use detail.
3. "Community service taught me the importance of helping people." – Students typically use community service as an essay topic, be sure to use detail and your own voice.
4. "My leadership position proves that I can work well with others." – Be specific: what leadership position. Tell a story. They know this from your resume - add to it.

Letters of Recommendation

DO I NEED A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION – possibly...not all schools will require a letter of recommendation. If the application/school requests a letter, then you need to ask a teacher, moderator, employer, etc to write you a letter. You can request a letter of recommendation via SCOIR (look for teacher recommendation button) or by talking directly to the teacher. JUST REMEMBER...not all schools require a letter of recommendation.

IF YOU REQUEST A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION - Please complete a student brag sheet and give to your teacher. This will assist them in writing a letter. In addition, please know that all schools will ask that your waive your right to see the letter.

List of possible recommenders:

NAME:

STUDENT BRAG SHEET

1. What school(s) are you applying to?
2. What careers/majors are you considering at this point in time? (Undecided is okay also!)
3. Use three adjectives to describe yourself and give an example of each.
4. Describe a difficult or disappointing situation and how you handled it.
5. How have you demonstrated leadership?
6. Describe how you exhibit maturity and responsibility.
7. What are your hobbies and interests?

8. What are your proudest accomplishments?

a. Academic:

b. Personal:

9. Is there anything you would like the college admissions office to know about your grades or admissions test scores?

10. Are there any circumstances in your life that have negatively influenced your academic performance?

11. Which courses have you enjoyed the most? Why?

12. Which courses have been most challenging for you? Why?

13. Describe and tell how a situation or event has made the biggest impact on your life.

14. Is there anything else you feel is important to include in your letter of recommendation?

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Financial Aid is monetary assistance to help students and families with the cost of college, vocational, and trade school education by meeting both the direct costs (tuition, fees and books) and living expenses (housing, food, transportation and personal expenses).

A large number of families eliminate colleges based on cost alone. This is not a wise idea. If a family is unable to afford the full cost at a particular college or university, it is possible that the student may qualify for enough federal and outside assistance, such as merit based scholarships that can make the college of his/her choice affordable.

There are three types of aid:

- **Grants or Scholarships** - These funds are called gift aid and do not require repayment. Grants are usually based on need. Scholarships are based on need and other criteria such as academic achievement (high overall GPA and ACT score) or special talent.
- **Loans** - These are funds that must be repaid after graduation or after leaving school. Student loans (i.e., the Stafford Loan and Parent Plus Loans) have lower interest rates than commercial loans.
- **Work-Study** - Money earned working on campus is usually arranged for students by the college or university they are attending. For further details, a student should contact the college or university's Financial Aid Office and make sure that they have completed a recent FAFSA application. They can then visit the college or university's website for a list of available campus positions that meet the Federal/State Work Study requirements.

Loans and work-study are commonly referred to as self-help. Financial Aid administrators generally put together an aid package that combines gift aid and self-help. Student's eligibility for financial aid depends on the family's EFC score which is established after the student and parents fill out a FAFSA. Every student who applies for aid receives a need analysis outcome from the college or university describing in detail what grants, loans or work-study programs the student and his parents will qualify for.

To apply for financial aid, students may be asked to complete several forms. **The Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** is required for all federal student aid programs. Both the student and his or her parents are required to provide financial and other information on these forms. Please be advised that some colleges or universities may also require completion of their own institutional forms.

Please note: FAFSA becomes available on October 1st (of senior year). Families are allowed to use their prior year income taxes to complete the FAFSA. The sooner the better in filling out the FAFSA forms. This will be beneficial for the families in finding out what type of aid they are eligible for. Parents and students with questions regarding financial assistance and possible scholarship opportunities should speak to the school counselor and the Financial Aid officers of the schools in which the student applied.

Families may find resources online to assist with this process. Always be cautious of services requiring deposits for scholarship searches. This is a cost that can be avoided. Listed below is the website that families should use in the process.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

- Completing and submitting the FAFSA is free and easier than ever, and it gives you access to the largest source of financial aid to pay for college or career school. In addition, many states and colleges use your FAFSA information to determine your eligibility for state and school aid, and some private financial aid providers may use your FAFSA information to determine whether you qualify for their aid.
- The FSA ID allows students and parents to identify themselves electronically to access FSA Web sites. While you are not required to have an FSA ID to complete and submit a *FAFSA on the Web* application, it is the fastest way to sign your application and have it processed. It is also the only way to access or correct your information online, or to pre-fill a *FAFSA on the Web* application with information from your previous year's FAFSA. BOTH Students and Parents will need an FSA ID. Register at
<https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>

SCHOLARSHIPS

Most schools have automatic scholarships. This means that if you complete the application for admission by the priority deadline, you will be considered for their scholarships. In addition to automatic scholarships, schools will have ones that require an additional application. Visit the college website to find out how to apply for these.

Scholarships are also available to students from outside organizations. Here are some great websites/resources to accessing these applications:

www.myscholarshipcentral.com - STL Scholarship database
www.scholarships.com - National Scholarship database
www.fastweb.com - National Scholarship database

Parents - be sure to check with your employer, bank, credit union, etc to see if they offer scholarships to employees/members.

NCAA and NAIA Eligibility Information

The National Collegiate Athletic Association Eligibility Center is a department within the NCAA, whose purpose is to ensure that all athletes that participate in Division I and II athletics are academically eligible. There are academic requirements that each student must achieve in order to receive a scholarship to a Division I or II University. The academic requirements, in their simplest form, are a combination of aggregate ACT score and CORE GPA (Math, English, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language). The higher your ACT score, the lower your CORE GPA can be, and vice versa. The ACT score is calculated by adding the top score from each subject test. Top subject scores from separate tests can be combined, also known as super scoring.

The following link will include more detailed information about the guidelines for students interested in the Division I requirements: <http://www.ncaa.org/static/2point3/>

This link will take you to a site with more detailed information for Division II:
<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/play-division-ii-sports>

There are no academic requirements for Division III athletics as they do not award athletic scholarships.

Each student is responsible for registering with the NCAA Eligibility Center. This step is suggested to be completed by the end of JUNIOR year. Once the student is registered, counselors can then send in transcripts to be reviewed by NCAA. The following link is where you can register: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

NAIA Eligibility Center - students interested in NAIA schools will follow a similar process. For more information and to register visit: <https://www.playnaia.org/eligibility-center>

Junior Year College Timeline

January:

- Attend College Kickoff Night
- Junior Guidance 2nd Semester begins
- Explore colleges using SCOIR or other websites such as www.bigfuture.collegeboard.com or www.fastweb.com
- Consider a college visit over Spring break or Easter break - schedule early

February/March:

- Go on College Visits (Juniors are allowed 2 excused days for visits; be sure to inform the main office)
- Begin to look at college websites to see if there are any upcoming visit days or “Preview Days” at the school, especially over Spring break. Whether you schedule your own visit or attend a “Preview Day”...both are great opportunities to learn more about the school
- Grade check...how are grades going?!?!
- Students interested in playing sports in college, visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> - NCAA Info/Registration; <https://www.playnaia.org/> - NAIA Info/Registration

April/May:

- All juniors will take the ACT at IWA on April 2nd. (More details to come)
- There is another opportunity to take the ACT in April - For dates, deadlines and to register, visit www.act.org (Remember it is recommended to take the ACT 3-4 times)
- **Don't forget to have test scores sent to the colleges you are interested in applying AND NCAA or NAIA if you are interested in playing a sport in college. Be sure to put in our IWA High School Code: 262-435**
- GRADES!! Study for exams and focus on finishing the semester strong.
- **ATTEND A REGIONAL COLLEGE FAIR** - Maryville University is hosting a Regional College Fair on Sunday, April 28, 2019 from 1-3pm. Register for this fair at www.strivefair.com

Summer:

- Explore and visit colleges
- Take the June and/or July ACT - For dates, deadlines and to register, visit www.act.org (Remember it is recommended to take the ACT 3-4 times)
- **Don't forget to have test scores sent to the colleges you are interested in applying AND NCAA or NAIA if you are interested in playing a sport in college. Be sure to put in our IWA High School Code: 262-435**
- Be ready to come back in August with a list of colleges to which you want to apply
- Seniors will meet with College Counselor beginning September 1st
- THOSE interested in **direct admit programs, particularly nursing**...apply in early August (or end of July if the college lets you apply that early)

Senior College Timeline

August:

- Use SCOIR, our college database and planning system, to begin to finalize your list. All seniors have a user ID and Password. Log on at: <https://app.scoir.com/signin>
- Use the college search tool on SCOIR to find colleges based on certain criteria such as location, size, major, sports and more
- Athletes interested in playing NAIA or NCAA Division I or II sports that have not completed the Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse form must do so by going to <http://www.playnaia.org/> or <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> respectively. What does this mean? Basically, you need to register with NAIA or NCAA in order to play Division I, II, III or NAIA sports...it's like an application.
- Register for the September ACT at www.act.org

September:

- Visit with college reps in the counseling office mods 7/8 (a list of reps and dates available on SCOIR)
- Go on college visits (Seniors are allowed 2 excused days for visits; be sure to inform the main office)
- Attend College Fairs
- By the middle of September, seniors should start to review the online application process of the colleges that are of interest. It is recommended to apply to 3-7 colleges, with one of the colleges being in the St. Louis area.
- Begin applying.
- Sign FERPA waiver in SCOIR or have a hard copy on file. Check with the counseling office to see if you have done this. This allows for IWA to release transcripts.
- Refine your activity sheet, work on essays for applications **IF** they require one (not all colleges require essays), collect writing samples, and assemble portfolios if necessary. (Art and Photography portfolios are typically required if you intend to major in them)
- Check all application deadlines...so you don't MISS them.
- Take September ACT and/or Register for October ACT - For dates, deadlines and to register, visit www.act.org (Remember it is recommended to take the ACT 3-4 times)
- **Don't forget to have test scores sent to the colleges you are interested in applying AND NCAA or NAIA if you are interested in playing a sport in college. Be sure to put in our IWA High School Code: 262-435**
- Begin thinking about getting letters of recommendation **IF THE APPLICATION REQUIRES ONE**; not all applications will require a letter of recommendation.
- Please send a thank you note to the individual providing you with the letter of recommendation.
- Begin to gather information needed for financial aid. Apply for a FSA Id at <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>. This gives you access to the online Federal Student Aid system and serves as your legal signature.
- October 1st is the first day to file. You can complete a FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- We encourage all families to file a FAFSA even if you think you make too much money. The FAFSA is not only used for loans, but also to qualify for work study programs, scholarships and more. It is in your best interest to complete one.

October

- Attend the National College Fair if you are still uncertain about your college choice - St. Louis University hosts a national college fair every October at their Simon Recreation Center (3639 Laclede Ave, St. Louis, MO 63108) Date: TBD
- Begin or continue to send out applications through the guidance office.
- If applying for early action or early decision, check deadlines!! (this is NOT common).

November

- **Incarnate would like College Applications submitted by NOVEMBER 15th to ensure all deadlines are met. This is IWA's deadline. Please be AWARE of 11/1 deadlines at some selective schools.**
- Keep working hard in school.
- Look for scholarship opportunities.
- Complete FAFSA if you have not done so already (Priority deadline is 2/1).

December-April

- Continue to look for scholarship opportunities.
- **Keep all college acceptances/scholarship information in a file. The counseling office wants a copy of all acceptances and scholarships for graduation.**
- Make a decision. We recommend NOT CHOOSING A COLLEGE BEFORE MAKING A COLLEGE VISIT. Once the choice is made, complete the necessary forms. The deadline to make a decision is May 1st. Should you need an extension, contact your college.
- Once a decision is made, please contact the other schools and let them know you will not be attending.

Remember...finding the right college is about FIT.

FIT academically, socially and financially.