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## October 2024

Welcome to the October edition of the Parent and Student Newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to help College Now's students and caregivers stay on track in planning for education after high school and learn about College Now programs and events, scholarship opportunities, financial aid, deadlines and more - all designed to pave the way for a successful future.

Each month, you'll find important updates and reminders tailored to each grade level, along with tips on how families can actively support their student's educational journey.

Questions? Contact your [College Now advisor](#)! Our services are completely free and we are here to help students find their best postsecondary fit.

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**FINANCIAL AID CORNER**



## Get a head start on the 2025-26 FAFSA

Attention Class of 2025! Have you created your Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID yet? The FSA ID is a username and password combination you use to log in to U.S. Department of Education's each online systems. You and all contributors (parents/guardians) will need an FSA ID to complete the 2025-26 [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#). Learn more about creating your FSA ID [here](#).

As a reminder, the 2025-26 FAFSA opens **December 1, 2024**. You need to complete the FAFSA to apply for student aid such as federal grants, work-study funds and loans. Completing and submitting the FAFSA form is completely free!

### Get a head start on the financial aid process by:

- Collecting 2023 income, tax and asset documentation for all contributors and students.
- Researching financial aid deadlines for all prospective institutions.

As always, College Now is here to guide you through the financial aid process. Find your College Now advisor [here](#)!

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## COLLEGE TEST PREP



## Upcoming Test Dates

Have you registered for the ACT or SAT yet? It is recommended that students take at least two entrance exams before submitting college applications.

### ACT

**Saturday, October 26**

- Late registration deadline:  
**Monday, October 7**

[Register for the ACT here](#)

### SAT

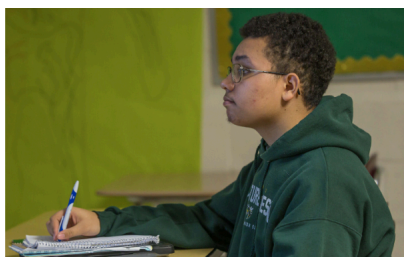
**Saturday, November 2**

- Registration deadline:  
**Friday, October 18**

[Register for the SAT here](#)

***What's the point of testing?*** Scoring well on entrance exams can increase a student's eligibility for merit-based aid and special scholarships. While many institutions across the nation no longer require entrance exams, we encourage students to take at least two exams before graduating. Plus, colleges/universities sometimes require a test score for specific academic majors and scholarships.

***How can I prepare?*** If you need help preparing for the upcoming ACT, you're in luck—College Now's experts are here to adequately prepare you to ace it. Check out the test prep sessions below:



### STOP IN AT AN ACT BOOTCAMP!

Join College Now at the ACT Bootcamp at **Lakewood Public Library on Saturday, October 12 or 19 from 12 - 4 p.m.** to gain invaluable insights into the ACT's format and content, arming yourself with the knowledge you need to succeed. Learn proven strategies from experienced instructors to tackle even the toughest questions with confidence.



### GET PAID TO STUDY WITH IMPACT!

College Now's impact! program provides students with ACT or PSAT test preparation and guides students through college and career research. And the best part? We'll pay you to successfully complete a session! While most of our Fall 2024 impact! sessions are already in session, it is not too late to sign up for our October 14 - December 6 session at Wellington High school! Note: Students from any school across Northeast Ohio are invited to register- you do not have to attend the school where the session is held.

[Register here](#)

[Register here](#)

## COLLEGE NOW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WEBINARS

### **Mastering FAFSA: Your Key to Financial Aid**

Tuesday, October 8  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Get a comprehensive overview of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Understand the steps to complete the application and the importance of meeting deadlines. Completing the FAFSA accurately and on time is crucial for securing the financial aid you need.

[Register here](#)

### **Cracking the Code: The Importance of Test Prep**

Tuesday, October 15  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Revisit the significance of test preparation with updated strategies and resources, including tools for the digital SAT. Effective test prep can greatly enhance your chances of getting into your dream school.

[Register here](#)

### **Scholarship Secrets: Finding and Winning Free Money**

Tuesday, October 22  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Learn how to find and apply for scholarships that can help reduce the cost of college. Get tips on writing winning scholarship essays and standing out to selection committees. Scholarships can significantly reduce your student debt and financial burden.

[Register here](#)

## SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

**Scholarships are an incredible source of financial assistance for college students. Unlike loans, scholarship funds are free money. That means you don't have to pay them back over time -- an assurance that can vastly reduce financial stress and help you focus more on your studies.**

Check out the opportunity below!



[Big Future Scholarships](#)

Did you know that CollegeBoard gives away multiple scholarships every month to students like you? Each month Big Future by College Board selects two students and awards them a \$40,000 scholarship for completing steps within their BigFuture profile. Students that complete tasks within their profile are also entered into a drawing for multiple \$500 awards each month. No essay, no minimum GPA or test score requirement. Students must be enrolled in the grades 10, 11 or 12.

[Apply here](#)

**Remember:** As you are searching for scholarships, it's important to also consider institutional scholarships that may be available to you upon admission. Many colleges and universities offer scholarships based on academic performance, leadership and extracurricular involvement. Be ready to submit essays, letters of recommendation or other documents that may be required. If you need any assistance applying for scholarships, reach out to your College Now [advisor!](#)

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## STUDENT CHECKLIST

**What should you do now to support your future?**

**Stay on track for the school year by checking off the items in your grade's checklist!**

### Freshmen

- Learn how to [calculate](#) your grade point average (GPA).
- Research volunteer opportunities in your community.
- Work on your resume and keep a record of your involvement, volunteer work and employment.

### Sophomores

- Take the [PSAT](#) or Pre-ACT (your results will not be used for college admission). Prepare for the PSAT by completing a College Now [impact!](#) session.
- Get involved with activities outside of class if you haven't already. Your level of involvement and accomplishments are more important than the number of activities.
- Continue working on your resume and keep a record of your involvement, volunteer work and employment.

### Juniors

- Watch out for when college representatives may be scheduled to visit your school.

- Consider getting a job, volunteering or joining a club and keep your resume updated with any new activities.
- Take the [PSAT](#) offered at your school. While scores will not be used for college admissions, you may qualify for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Prepare for the PSAT by completing a College Now impact! session.
- Meet with your College Now [advisor](#) to discuss your test prep strategies. Prepare for the ACT by completing a College Now [impact!](#) session.
- Keep notes and highlights from schools you visit.

## Seniors

- Continue to work on and complete college applications and essays.
- Continue to meet with college representatives and attend college fairs.
- Create your [FSA ID](#). Save your login information in a secure place.
- If you are applying to selective colleges that require the [CSS Profile](#), complete this as soon as possible.
- Register for the SAT and/or ACT if you haven't done so already. Institutions will consider exams taken during the fall for admissions. Prepare for the ACT by completing a College Now [impact!](#) session.
- Pay attention to early application deadlines (e.g. November 1). Finalize and send any early action or early decision applications this month.
- Attend any school-sponsored financial aid events or other college related programming.
- Start setting aside money for college deposits, usually due May 1. Saving a bit each month between now and May will make it easier to pay the \$200-800 that will be due.
- Continue to apply for scholarships.

## FAMILY CHECKLIST

**What should you be doing with your student to support your future?**

***It's never too early to have conversations with your student about their interests and future. Parent / teacher conferences, often held in October, are critical for parents and caregivers to learn about and support their students. Make sure you look at your student's report cards, GPA and any teacher comments. Be prepared to ask questions and ask for the support you and your teacher may need.***

## Middle School

- If you're looking for a private or parochial high school for your student, October is a great time to take visits to various schools in the area. Deadlines for visiting schools and enrollment vary.

## Freshmen

- If your student is an athlete, make sure to talk to the coach about college sports and balancing their athletic training with academics.

## Sophomores

- Taking the PSAT sophomore year is good practice for learning how to take tests. Help your student prepare for the test by making sure they're eating right, studying and getting enough rest. Inquire about the test score and understand areas where your student may need some support to improve.
- If your student is an athlete, make sure to talk to the coach about college sports and balancing their athletic training with academics.

## Juniors

- Attend special educational events offered online or in-person at your school. These may include Junior Nights, college nights and understanding financial aid for postsecondary education.

## Seniors

- Begin to prepare to file the [FAFSA](#) (application is set to open December 1). Create an FSA ID and collect information such as tax returns, as well as bank and investment balances.
- If your student has applied for Early Decision or Early Action, discuss the enrollment options with your student and ensure any decisions and paperwork are signed and submitted to the school. Many early decision deadlines are November 1, so make sure to learn all you can about your financial needs, enrollments and services at each college or program with early decisions.
- If you and your student are still exploring schools, taking time for virtual tours or attending autumn online events is a great way to get an understanding of the college or program.

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*See you next month! In the meantime, reach out to your  
College Now [advisor!](#)*



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