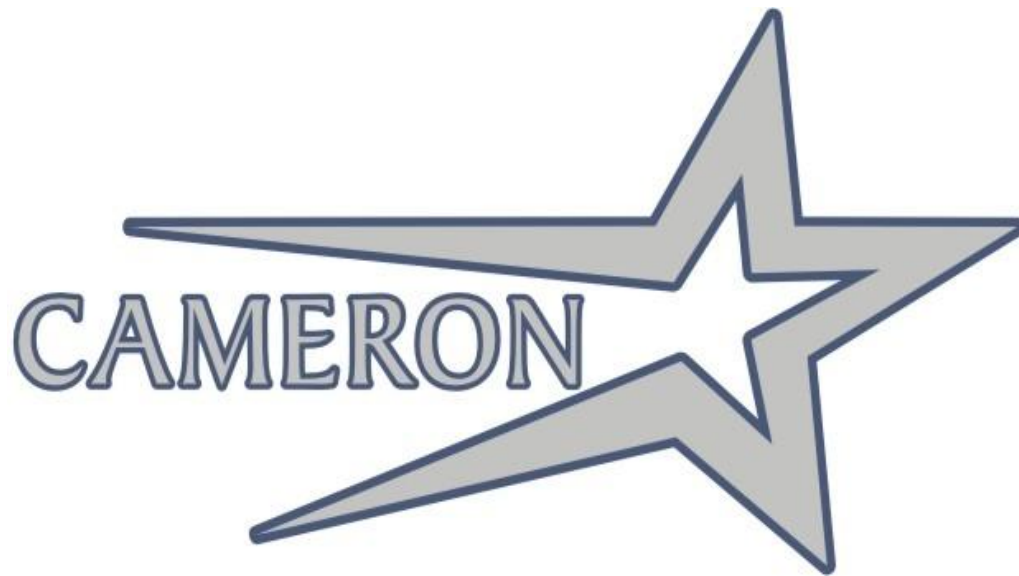


# **SENIOR PLANNING GUIDE**

Cameron High School



# Education/Career Planning Calendar for Seniors

## September

- **Schedule your Senior Planning Conference with the Student Services Office**
- Check out the Student Services webpage at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)
  - Click on the scholarship icon to see what is available
- Visit post-secondary campuses
- Finalize list of post-secondary options for which applications will be sent
- Write all post-secondary application deadlines on a calendar
- Begin or continue to complete applications for admission, housing, and/or financial aid
- Register for any necessary tests (ACT, SAT)
- Review transcript with Mrs. Sanborn to make sure you are on track to graduate

## October

- **Apply now if you know where you want to go!**
- Check out the Student Services webpage at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)
  - Click on the scholarship icon to see what is available
- Visit post-secondary campuses
- Take ACT, SAT I or II, if necessary
- Continue working on applications
- Start searching for possible scholarships, especially at your post-secondary school (local scholarships will be available after January 1<sup>st</sup>)

## November

- Check out the Student Services webpage at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)
  - Click on the scholarship icon to see what is available
- Visit post-secondary campuses
- Continue applying and searching for scholarships
- Sign up to take the ASVAB if you are military bound or would like to take advantage of the career assessment piece.

## December

- Check out the Student Services webpage at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)
  - Click on the scholarship icon to see what is available
- Applications to post secondary schools are usually due by December 1<sup>st</sup> for priority placement.
- Visit post-secondary campuses
- Complete post-secondary applications
- Continue applying for scholarships
- Take ACT, SAT I or II, if necessary

## January

- Check out the Student Services webpage at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)
  - Click on the scholarship icon to see what is available
- Attend **financial aid meeting** at Cameron High School (students will be notified of date and time)
- Complete financial aid forms. Note: Taxes should be completed prior to doing the FAFSA.
- Make final visits to post-secondary campuses
- Have all post-secondary applications completed
- Take ACT, SAT I or II, if necessary
- Check that all recommendations, transcripts, and test scores have been sent to post-secondary schools of choice
- Study for semester tests. GPA during your senior year is very important
- Send mid-year grades to post-secondary schools, if needed
- Begin completing local scholarships

## February - April

- Check out the Student Services webpage at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)
  - Click on the scholarship icon to see what is available
  - Complete local scholarships
- Complete FAFSA form if not already done and send to regional processing center. The turnaround time is much quicker if completed on-line ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov))
- Complete any late deadline application forms
- Schedule your placement tests
- Evaluate offers of admission
- Make sure housing, tuition and any other required deposits have been made to the college of your choice
- Consider visiting post-secondary campuses before making final decision (if you haven't done so already)
- Review your SAR (Student Aid Report) for accuracy

## May

- Make final decision, if not made earlier
- Notify Student Services as to where to send your final transcript
  - Many colleges will not let you register for your fall courses until this final transcript has been received
- Thank all those who have helped in the admissions process
- Enjoy your graduation celebration!!!!

## June

- You will receive a final transcript in the mail from the Student Services Office



# Now What?

## Post Secondary Options

Most careers require at least some education or training beyond high school. One career may require four years of college while another may require a six-month program at a technical school. In most cases, your career goal will determine which of the following options is the most appropriate:

- Four-Year Colleges
- Two-Year Colleges
- Career and Technical Colleges
- Military
- Apprenticeships
- Employment

**62% of today's jobs require a two or four year degree. It is estimated that this percentage will be 75% by the year 2020.**

## Four-Year Colleges/Universities

A four-year college education, or bachelor's degree, is necessary for approximately 20% of today's careers. A bachelor's degree can open doors, provide status, and prepare students for financially rewarding careers. All colleges and universities hope to attract bright, well-prepared students. Colleges and universities vary greatly in their majors offered, admission policies, and costs.

Four-year colleges and universities want students to have both a broad-based education, and education in a specific subject area or major. In order to insure that students receive a well-rounded education, most four-year colleges and universities require that students take 25 to 50% of their classes in general education courses like English, math, science, and history. Since many of the general education courses are taken during freshman year, —undecided” students can use their first year of college to fulfill general education requirements and to decide on a major.

Entrance requirements vary greatly. Colleges and universities that have an open admission policy will accept most high school graduates who apply. At the other end of the spectrum are colleges and universities that are highly selective. In order to be accepted at a highly selective college or university, a student must usually have high ACT/SAT scores and a high GPA. Regardless of the entrance requirements, all colleges and universities want applicants who have followed a college prep program in high school. This generally includes four years of English, three years of math (including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II), three years of science, three years of social studies, two years of the same world/foreign language, and one year of fine arts. If a student has not taken all of these courses, it does not mean that he/she cannot go to a four-year college or university. Consult with the college admissions counselor for more information.

**Check out the UW System website at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu>.**

The student who has not taken several of the recommended college preparatory courses may want to start at a two-year college, and then transfer to a four-year college after a year or two. Students may also start off at a four-year college or university's branch campus where the admission requirements are less competitive, classes are smaller, and where there is less academic pressure. Students can attend the branch campus for one or two years, then, if they have high enough grades, transfer to the colleges or universities main campus. Degrees from a four-year college include B.A.-Bachelors of Arts or B.S. - Bachelors of Science. After a bachelors degree, some advanced degrees include: M.A. -Masters of Arts, M.S. -Masters of Science, Ed.D.- Doctor of Education, Ph.D. - Doctor of Philosophy, J.D.-Juris Doctor (lawyer), and M.D.-Medical Doctor.

## Two-Year Colleges

Students may start their education at a two-year college, and then transfer to a four-year college to earn a bachelor's degree. Check out the transferability of credits from one school to the next before transferring. At UW campuses the "Guaranteed Transfer Program" allows a student to transfer to a U.W. four-year post secondary school. Schedule a campus visit to learn more about their programs and facilities.

**Check out the Transfer Information System (TIS) at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu> to see transferability of credits from one campus to another.**

*UW Barron County is a wonderful start to many college 4 year degrees, but work with the admissions people with the college to which you will be transferring so make sure all of your credits transfer into your future program.*

## Career and Technical Colleges

Technical colleges provide affordable, career-oriented programs, which enable students to begin their careers after only one or two (or less) years of college. Typically, class sizes are kept small and instructors have worked, or are working, in a related career field. Career and technical colleges offer students short-term training in a wide variety of career fields. Career and technical colleges may be publicly or privately owned, and the programs they offer vary greatly. Some career and technical college programs last only a few weeks, while others take up to two years to complete. These programs are designed to prepare students for specific careers. Students spend most of their class time in job-related settings where they receive hands-on training from experienced instructors. **Check out the website at [www.witechcolleges.org](http://www.witechcolleges.org)**

## Military

The military trains young men and women so that they can protect the interests of our country. In order to do this, the military offers qualified high school graduates a good salary and free job training. The military also provides discipline and structure, as well as opportunities for career advancement and travel. The United States military is the nation's single largest employer. It offers training and employment in over 2,000 job specialties, 75,000 of which have civilian counterparts.

There are four major branches of the military: the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Opportunities for students also exist in the Coast Guard, the National Guard and the Reserves. College students who take ROTC will enter the military as officers, while academically gifted students will find excellent educational opportunities at the four military academies.

## Apprenticeship

Students who prefer a hands-on approach to learning may want to consider an apprenticeship program. Apprentices learn a skilled trade through a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. Apprenticeship programs are considered by many to be the best way to receive training in the skilled trades.

Apprenticeships are agreements in which employers pay individuals while they are learning their trade or profession. These programs demand hard work and dedication.

## Employment

Employment is an appropriate option for some high school graduates. Turn a job into a career. High school graduates with no vocational training will probably find that they have limited career options. In many cases they will find that they are, in reality, not entering a career field as much as they are "getting a job". In most cases they will also find that they will not be making much more than minimum wage, and opportunities for advancement will be very limited.

On the other hand, business and industry are always anxious to find employees who are hard working, polite, punctual, well-groomed, willing to learn, and able to get along well with others. Of course, if a student has a particular talent or skill in sales, art, computer, etc., he/she can be very valuable to an employer.

# College Representative and Military Recruiter Visits

Representatives from colleges and the military visit the high school each year. Listen to the announcements; check the Student Service's bulletin board to determine the date and time. You need to pre-register to meet with recruiters and have a pass from the Student Service's office which excuses you from your class. A college comparison worksheet is included in this booklet to assist you in comparing the data.

*The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that today's learner will have  
10-14 jobs by the age of 38!*

## General Admission Standards for College

Colleges will use some, if not all, of the information listed below when determining whether or not to accept an applicant. Individual colleges, however, differ in how they evaluate this information. For example, one college may place a great deal of importance on test scores, while another college may not.

- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Class Rank
- Strength of subjects
- ACT and/or SAT scores
- Recommendations
- Activities/awards
- Personal essays
- Interviews
- Volunteer and/or community service

## Grade Point Average (GPA) and Class Rank

Even though individual colleges use their own criteria when evaluating prospective students, virtually all colleges consider a student's GPA. Since college applications are generally completed during the fall of the senior year, the GPA at the end of the junior year is very important. Final rank for top 10% and academic scholarships are determined after the seventh semester.

Admission standards to Wisconsin four-year universities include the following core curriculum:

- 4 units of English
- 3 units of mathematics, including Algebra II
- 3 units of laboratory science
- 3 units of social studies
- Foreign Language (it is a requirement for some) In Wisconsin it is a requirement for the following two public colleges: UW-Madison and UW-Eau Claire.

In addition to the core, post-secondary schools have made it clear that they may deny admission to applicants with low ACT scores and a low high school grade point average.

Check out our webpage on the Cameron Area School District Website  
by going to  
[www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us)

Go to Cameron High School page and look for Student Services

# College Entrance Exams

There are two major college exams, the ACT and SAT. Nationally, most schools will accept scores from either the ACT or SAT I. The University of Wisconsin System recommends the ACT.

ACT (American College Test) is a college entrance examination generally taken during the junior and/or senior year. Students receive scores in English, reading, math, and science reasoning, as well as a composite score. **Registration is completed online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)**. ACT has a 30-minute Writing test as an optional component to the ACT. If you have already decided on the college or university that you will be attending, be sure to check to see if they require the Writing Test for admissions. You can check at [www.actstudent.org/writing/](http://www.actstudent.org/writing/).

SAT I (Scholastic Assessment Test) is a college entrance examination, generally taken during the junior and/or senior year. The SAT I is a three-hour test, primarily multiple choice, that measures verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities. Students planning to attend a college that prefers the SAT I must also determine if any SAT II subject tests are required. SAT II consists of subject tests, which measure the student's ability to apply knowledge. Subject Tests are one-hour, primarily a multiple-choice test in specific subjects.

## ACT vs. SAT Comparison Chart

SAT	vs.	ACT
reasoning test	<b>Type of Test</b>	content-based test
Critical Reading: 2, 25-min sections and 1, 20-min section; Math: 2, 25-min sections and 1, 20-min section; Writing: 1, 25-min essay, 1, 25-min section, and 1, 10-min section	<b>Test Format</b>	English: 1, 45-min section; Math: 1, 60-min section; Reading: 1, 35-min section; Science: 1, 35-min section; Writing: 1, 30-min essay (optional)
reading, vocabulary, grammar & usage, writing, and math	<b>Content Covered</b>	grammar & usage, math, reading, science reasoning, and writing (optional)
tricky, questions can be phrased in ways that make them difficult to decipher	<b>Test Style</b>	straightforward, questions may be long but are usually less difficult to decipher
Math, Critical Reading, and Writing scores will each range between a 200-800; total SAT score ranges between 600-2400	<b>Scoring</b>	English, Math, Reading, and Science scores will each range between 1-36. Composite ACT score is the average of your scores on the four sections; ranges between 1-36
yes – you lose $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point for incorrect answers (except on the grid-in math questions)	<b>Penalty for Wrong Answers?</b>	no – you do not lose points for incorrect answers
yes – you can choose which set(s) of SAT scores to submit to colleges	<b>Score Choice?</b>	yes – you can choose which set(s) of ACT scores to submit to colleges
questions increase in difficulty level as you move through that question type in a section (except reading passage questions, which progress chronologically through the passage)	<b>Difficulty Levels</b>	difficulty level of the questions is random
arithmetic, data analysis, algebra I and II, functions, geometry; formulas are provided in the test booklet	<b>Math Levels</b>	arithmetic, algebra I and II, functions, geometry, trigonometry; no formulas are provided

with private schools and schools on the east and west coasts; however, every four-year college in the US accepts SAT scores	<b>Tends to be more popular?</b>	with public schools and schools in the Midwest and south; however, every four-year college in the US accepts ACT scores
seven times per year: January, March or April, May, June, October, November, December	<b>Offered when?</b>	six times per year: February, April, June, September, October, December (note that some states offer the ACT as part of their state testing requirements; these tests are not administered on the national test dates)
typically about four weeks before the test date	<b>Registration deadline?</b>	typically about five to six weeks before the test date
<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>	<b>More Information</b>	<a href="http://www.act.org">www.act.org</a>

## Reciprocity

Residents of Wisconsin may qualify for reduced rates at Minnesota Colleges or Universities by complying with procedures of the reciprocal agreement. Reciprocity application forms are available in April online at [www.heab.state.wi.us](http://www.heab.state.wi.us)

## College Athletics

If you are planning to participate in Division I or II college athletics the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse must certify you.

To learn more about NCAA eligibility and to get an application, visit their web site at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)

## Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is often an important step a student takes in defining a career goal. Once a student has read what he/she can about an occupation, job shadowing allows the student to see the occupation in action by pairing with a person who is in a career in which the student has shown interest. This experience gives the student actual on-the-job experience and an opportunity to ask employees job specific questions. This activity assists the student in deciding to either explore the career further or search for an alternative.

Students must set these experiences up on their own and take an excused absence from with Parental permission.

## Program/Class Shadow

Students may arrange to attend a program/class shadow at WITC or CVTC by contacting Mrs. Sanborn in the Student Services Office.



# Selecting a College

Here are some things for you to consider when selecting your college:

## Location

- Distance from home

## Size

- Enrollment
- Physical size of campus

## Environment

- Type of school (2yr., 4 yr.)
- School setting (urban, rural)
- Location & size of nearest city
- Co-ed, male, female
- Religious affiliation

## Admission Requirements

- Deadline
- Tests required
- Average test scores, GPA, rank
- Special requirements

## Academics

- Your major offered
- Special requirements
- Accreditation
- Student-faculty ratio
- Typical class size

## College Expenses

- Tuition, room & board
- Estimated total budget
- Application fee, deposits

## Financial Aid

- Deadline
- Required forms
- Percent receiving aid
- Scholarships

## Housing

- Residence Hall Requirement
- Availability
- Types and sizes
- Food plans

## Facilities

- Academic
- Recreational

## Activities

- Clubs
- Organizations
- Athletics, intramurals

# Campus Visit

Arrange to visit any colleges to which you plan to apply.

Consider these factors before and during your visit:

- Make arrangements with the admissions office for your visit
- Try to visit on a weekday and stay overnight if possible
- Meet with the college admissions officer
- Verify admission requirements (tests and high school preparation)
- Discuss your chances for success
- Obtain the college calendar and a catalog
- Determine college costs
- Ask about financial aid opportunities, as well as deadline, forms required, etc
- Ask questions about academic requirements/offerings, the average class size and academic fitting
- Attend a class to get an idea of typical size, teaching style, academic atmosphere
- Check the percentage of entering freshmen who graduate in four years
- Ask about the placement record of graduates in the field you are considering for major study
- Identify career planning services for undergraduates
- Tour the campus. Check out the dorms, dining hall, library, bookstore, computer labs and other areas key to your needs
- Talk to students about the general academic environment and the study commitment necessary for success
- Find out what student activities (clubs, organizations, etc.) are available
- Inquire about campus life and social activities; is the campus deserted on the weekends
- Investigate transportation options

# Writing an Essay

**DO** start early. Leave plenty of time to revise and rewrite. You can improve on your presentation.

**DO** read the directions carefully. You will want to answer the question as directly as possible, and you'll want to follow word limits exactly. Express yourself as briefly and as clearly as you can.

**DO** tell the truth about yourself. The admission committee is anonymous to you; you are completely unknown to it.

**DO** focus on an aspect of yourself that will show your best side. You might have overcome some adversity, worked through a difficult project, or profited from a specific incident. A narrow focus is more interesting than broad-based generalizations.

**DO** feel comfortable in expressing anxieties. Everybody has them, and it's good to know that an applicant can see them and face them.

**DO** tie yourself to the college and/or program. Be specific about what this particular school/program can do for you. Your essay can have different slants for different situations.

**DO** speak positively. Negatives tend to turn people off.

**DO** write about your greatest asset and achievements. You should be proud of them.

**DON'T** repeat information given elsewhere on your application. The committee has already seen it and it looks as though you have nothing better to say.

**DON'T** write on general, impersonal topics - - like the nuclear arms race or the importance of good management in business. They want to know about you.

**DON'T** use the personal statement to excuse your shortcomings. It gives them additional attention.

**DON'T** use clichés.

**DON'T** go to extremes: too ~~w~~itty", too ~~o~~pinionated", or too ~~i~~ntellectual".

# Financial Aid

## Get a Jump Start

Parents and students who would like to get a jump start on planning for the costs of college should log on to [www.finaid.org/calculators](http://www.finaid.org/calculators). This web site can help you estimate how much money college will cost through a financial aid calculator. The calculator will estimate how much money you, or your child, will receive in financial aid and loans. The web site has many other valuable resources such as information on designing a savings plan for post secondary education.

## Financial Aid Meeting

There will be a Financial Aid meeting on **Thursday, February 12 @6:30 p.m.** in the Cameron High School LMC. More information will be coming to you closer to the date of the event.



## Know the Financial Aid Deadlines at the College You Plan to Attend

Be aware of scholarship deadlines and deadlines to file the FAFSA at the college you plan to attend. Filling out the FAFSA is the most essential step in the financial aid process; however, some universities require additional paperwork and have early deadlines.

## Beware of College Financial Aid Scams

Have you seen or heard ads that promise to find college scholarships or your money back? **Buyer beware!** Some Wisconsin families with college bound students have been misled by questionable scholarship search firms. Complaints investigated by the Bureau of Consumer Protection state that for fees up to \$400, some search firms claim they will find you a scholarship or refund your money. Students often don't get scholarships or refunds. For example, a University of Wisconsin student sent \$199 for what was advertised in a shopping paper as a scholarship guaranteed to be worth at least \$1,700. All she received was useless information. "With two different student loans, I couldn't afford to lose that \$200", the student said. The University of Wisconsin-Madison financial aid office says it receives numerous complaints from students who have wasted money this way. The problem with scholarship search firms is perpetuated by companies making money by licensing new scholarship search firms. For free accurate scholarship information, check with high school guidance people and college financial aid offices.

For more information, contact the Division of Consumer Protection at 800-422-7128 or log on to: [www.datep.state.wi.us](http://www.datep.state.wi.us)

## FAFSA on the Web



**WHAT IS FAFSA ON THE WEB?** Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on the Web is an Internet based version of the paper FAFSA. The federal government uses this form to determine your eligibility for aid, which includes grants, scholarships, work-study and loans.

**HOW DO I FILL IT OUT?** Visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) and click "Before Beginning a FAFSA" to get started. If you want a paper copy to use as a guide, use the pre application worksheet, not a paper FAFSA. To download a copy, click "Print a Pre Application Worksheet". Also, print a completed FAFSA for your records! Click "Print" before you click the "Submit" button at the end of your FAFSA.

**CAN I SAVE MY FAFSA ON THE WEB?** \*Yes! To do so, you must remember the password that you entered at the beginning of your application. If you forget it, you cannot look it up. You will have to start your FAFSA over so record this password in a safe place. \*To save your FAFSA application online, click the "Save" button at the bottom of each step. Your info will be saved for 45 days.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FAFSA ON THE WEB?** By completing the FAFSA on the Web, you can: \* Allow the federal processor to do a "final check" of your information and alert you of any mistakes. \*Speed up the FAFSA process. Receive your SAR in 1-2 weeks (or 3-5 days if you include an e-mail address) vs. 4-6 weeks if you fill out the paper version. \*Cut down on postal service problems or delays.

**WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?** Whether you complete a paper or electronic FAFSA, you will be required to provide your signature (and parent's signature if you are a dependent student). There are three different ways to do this: (1) Use your 4-digit PIN (read more on the PIN below) issued by the U.S. Department of Education to electronically sign your FAFSA. (Your parents will also need

their own PINs to electronically sign your FAFSA.) (2) Print the signature page, get the required signatures and mail the form to the address listed on your signature page. (3) The third option is the slowest and is not recommended. Wait until you receive your Student Aid Report (SAR), get the required signature(s) and return it via the U.S. Postal Service using certified mail.

**WHAT IS A PIN?** The Personal Identification Number (PIN) is the code that the U.S. Department of Education uses to identify you online. A PIN allows you to:

- electronically sign your FAFSA to speed up the process
- check the status of your electronic FAFSA
- make corrections to your personal information online.

**Keep your PIN private**, as it allows you (or someone else) to electronically sign federal documents and access confidential information.

**HOW DO I GET A PIN?** Students and parents who are eligible to receive a PIN can visit [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov) and click on "Apply for PIN" at the bottom of the page. You can choose to receive your PIN via e-mail or regular mail. You will need to submit your name, date of birth and Social Security number. It takes about three business days to receive your PIN electronically.

### **Helpful FAFSA Links:**

FAFSA on the Web - Pre Application Worksheet: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) (click "Before Beginning a FAFSA")

**More about your PIN:** [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)

Federal School Code Search: [www.waicuweb.org](http://www.waicuweb.org) (click "Find my school codes")

Questions about FAFSA on the Web or your PIN call: 800-4-FED-AID

### **Ten Great Financial Aid Tips**

1. Prioritize your efforts, starting with the federal government. Then turn to the private sector for additional assistance.
2. Learn all you can about the college financial aid process. Be sure to meet with your aid administrator. Attend a Financial Aid meeting either at Cameron High School or a surrounding school.
3. Submit a FAFSA, even if you don't think you qualify for aid. Being rejected for federal aid is sometimes a prerequisite for private awards.
4. Apply for aid as soon as possible after January 1. The early bird gets the worm—and sometimes the scholarship!
5. Inform financial aid administrators about atypical expenses. Certain allowances may be made to assist you.
6. Take advantage of tuition prepayment discounts. Some colleges offer up to a 10% discount for early payment.
7. Money from grandparents should be paid in your name directly to the school. This avoids gift tax liability.
8. Investigate company-sponsored tuition plans. Many employers will invest in the education of their employees.
9. Apply! You cannot win awards or receive funds for which you do not apply, so pay attention to deadlines.
10. Use scholarship search engines like [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) to help you find the private sector assistance you need!

*The only way that you will know if you qualify for financial aid is if you apply. [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)*

## Scholarship Listings in School

Throughout the year notification of scholarship competitions are received and students are made aware of the scholarships. An active scholarship list and the necessary documents are available in the Student Services Office, posted on the Student Services bulletin board and posted on our website. Our webpage which can be found at [www.cameron.k12.wi.us](http://www.cameron.k12.wi.us) > high school page > student services page. Students are encouraged to involve parents in the search for financial aid. Religious groups, fraternal organizations, and employers may also be sources of scholarships. **Students are encouraged to inquire into the availability of institutional scholarships at the schools they are considering.**

## Scholarship search Via the Internet

The fastWEB search on the Internet contains a database of over 275,000 scholarships. You may set up a fastWEB mailbox to receive information on scholarships that match your personal criteria. ([www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)).

## Top Ten Tips for a Winning Scholarship Application

- Apply only if you are eligible.
- Complete the application in full.
- Follow directions.
- Neatness counts!
- Write an essay that makes a strong impression.
- Watch all deadlines.
- Make sure your application gets where it needs to go.
- Keep a back-up file in case anything goes wrong.
- Give it a final 'once-over'.
- Ask for help if you need it.

# How to Get Organized for Your Future

Important documents are frequently misplaced or forgotten because a student has not created an organized plan for keeping records.

## The Necessary Components for Getting Organized

- A safe and secure location in your home for all records to be kept
- A metal or wood file cabinet, a plastic file box, an expandable pocket portfolio, or at least a good solid cardboard box (make sure to label the outside so it doesn't get thrown out!)
- A yearly calendar or pocket organizer for recording important dates
- Folders to organize your files

## You Will Need to Create “Basic Files” for the Following

- Your Social Security number
- Your high school transcript
- Your personal resume
- ACT, SAT, PSAT, or any applicable test scores
- Letters of recommendation from teachers, counselors, employers, etc...
- Immunization records
- Income tax records
- Medical records
- Insurance records

## Create These Additional Files as the Year Progresses:

For each post-secondary institution or college to which you have applied or visited, create a file for:

- Your admission status
- Scholarship information
- Housing information
- Meal plans

- Registration information and dates
- Campus visits
- FAFSA application
- Each specific scholarship for which you have applied
- Summer employment or internship possibilities
- Student or parent loan documents

## **Helpful Hints for Good Organization**

- Make copies of everything you fill out
- Record all important dates and deadlines in your planner
- Request parent/guardian involvement

## **Websites**

This is only a small sample of the available resources that one can refer to for additional information.

### **Career interest/assessments/college Searches**

[www.wiscareers.wisc.edu](http://www.wiscareers.wisc.edu)

Our school district pays the annual fee for our student's to use this site.

Username: Power school username,

Password: lunch account number or Power school six digit password

### **Scholarship Searches**

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

[www.college-scholarships.com](http://www.college-scholarships.com)

[www.college-scholarships.com/wisconsin.htm](http://www.college-scholarships.com/wisconsin.htm)

### **Financial Aid**

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

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

[www.salliemae.com](http://www.salliemae.com)

[www.wiredscholar.com](http://www.wiredscholar.com)

### **College Information**

<https://apply.wisconsin.edu> (Wisconsin colleges application on line)

[www.uwhelp.wisconsin.edu](http://www.uwhelp.wisconsin.edu) (a helpline for Wisconsin public schools)

[www.witechcolleges.com](http://www.witechcolleges.com) (Wisconsin technical college programs)

[www.wisconsin.edu](http://www.wisconsin.edu) (two and four year Wisconsin public colleges)

[www.wisconsinmentor.org](http://www.wisconsinmentor.org) (four-year Wisconsin private colleges)

[www.mnscu.edu](http://www.mnscu.edu) (for Minnesota colleges)

### **NCAA ( students planning on playing Division I or II college sports must register)**

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

[www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net) (to register)

### **Testing Info**

[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) (for ACT test)

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) (for SAT test)

### **Job Searching**

[www.badger.state.wi.us](http://www.badger.state.wi.us)

[www.dwd.state.wi.us/jobnet](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/jobnet)

### **Reciprocity**

[www.heab.state.wi.us](http://www.heab.state.wi.us)

## *Suggestions for Letters of Recommendation -*

### **GIVE THIS TO THE PERSON WHO HAS AGREED TO WRITE A LETTER FOR YOU!**

When requesting a letter of recommendation be sure to:

- Think of an individual who knows you well.
- Make an appointment to ask the individual to write a letter of recommendation for you.
- Plan ahead to meet your timeline and allow **10-14 days** for the completion of the letter.
- At the time of the appointment give the letter writer specific dates and directions for the completed recommendation. **Provide the information as presented below** or provide a copy of your **resume** to assure an accurate and complete recommendation.
- Be sure the letter writer understands the requirements for the recommendation.
- If appropriate, provide stamped envelopes.
- DO NOT assume the letter will be completed if you leave the request in his/her mailbox or drop it off on a desk; make sure you make personal contact with the individual.
- Write a thank you note to the person who wrote your letter of recommendation.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Resume attached \_\_\_\_\_

Need the letter back by \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail letter by \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

My future goals:

Plans for college or other post-high school education or training:

Special interests, hobbies, talents and how you have pursued them:

School activities you've been involved in:

Activities outside of school (i.e. work, volunteering, church, clubs, etc.):

Describe yourself and provide relevant information that will be of benefit to the writer:

List any special awards or recognition(s) you've received: