

## Starting the Journey

### A Timeline

#### *Beginning the search for programs/schools*

##### *Prior to junior year*

- Plan volunteer, job, sport, music, extracurricular and summer activities that will enhance the student's résumé and increase his or her life experiences.
- Begin to consider and research what type of school, vocational programs, post-graduate ("pg") program, two-year college, or four-year college is most appropriate.
- What type of learning challenges support program is most appropriate? (Structured Programs, Coordinated Services, Services). Obtain learning challenges support program descriptions and application guidelines. (The learning challenges program within a college might require a separate application with different deadlines—a dual application.)
- Ensure that testing/documentation which validates the student's disability has been administered within the last two or three years and will be valid throughout the application process.
- Decide if SAT/ACT will be taken.
- Submit documentation and apply for appropriate accommodations for SAT/ACT or any college placement tests, for example, Advanced Placement tests.

##### *Prior to Senior year*

- Prepare academic résumé to be updated as needed.
- Select a mix of "stretch," "likely" and "safety" programs to visit.
- Participate in role playing interviews.
- Set up traveling dates to visit potential learning challenges programs and college admissions offices. This often requires two interviews per school.
- Compose and send a thank-you letter after each interview.

- Confirm that SAT/ACT scores are on file to send out to colleges.
- Acquire application(s) from programs and colleges.

*Senior year*

- Obtain reference letters.
- Write the essay required for school acceptance, or submit a fine arts portfolio if applicable.
- Make sure you know the application deadlines for both the college and LD support program if needed.
- Mail application at least five days before the deadline and make sure that it includes a request for ACT/SAT scores to be sent to that program.
- Wait.
- Acceptance(s) confirmed
- As a team, you and your family choose which program/school will be the best match for you.
- Make a final decision and notify program/school of your selection.
- Send money to secure placement in program/school.
- Write a Self-advocacy Letter to have available when your courses are selected.
- Pre-enroll in first-semester courses over the summer. Many schools allow this for students with learning challenges.
- Make arrangements for audio texts if needed.
- Prepare for change and transition and time to say goodbye
- Move on—Leaving high school!
- Celebrate!!!!