



High School Senior Scholarship Roadmap

A month-by-month guide to scholarships, financial aid, strong materials, and safer decisions.

FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS & FAMILIES

"For such a time as this." - Esther 4:14

Free to download, print, and use for personal scholarship planning. Never include Social Security numbers, passwords, tax returns, or full financial-account details in scholarship essays or emails.

1. Senior-year scholarship roadmap

August-October

- ☐ Build resume and activity list
- ☐ Create scholarship email and folders
- ☐ Request transcript and recommendation letters
- ☐ Complete FAFSA when available
- ☐ Apply to colleges and local scholarships

November-January

- ☐ Submit priority financial-aid materials
- ☐ Apply for school-specific scholarships
- ☐ Search civic groups, employers, unions, faith communities, and foundations
- ☐ Track confirmations and missing documents

February-May

- ☐ Compare aid offers
- ☐ Appeal changed financial circumstances
- ☐ Apply for smaller and local awards
- ☐ Thank recommenders
- ☐ Report outside scholarships to the college when required

Summer before college

- ☐ Complete verification and loan counseling if borrowing
- ☐ Confirm bill, payment deadline, housing, orientation, and transportation
- ☐ Ask about campus jobs, emergency aid, and basic-needs support

2. Where to search

- EFF Scholarship Directory - portal.estherfundsfoundation.org/scholarships
- Your high-school counseling office and local community foundation
- Colleges on your application list - admissions and financial-aid pages
- Employers of the student or family, unions, professional associations, and credit unions
- Community, service, cultural, disability, faith, military, and career organizations

SEARCH SMALLER POOLS

Local and school-specific scholarships may receive fewer applications than national quick-apply awards. Apply to both.

Five local organizations I will check

3. Build a strong application packet

- ☐ One-page student resume
- ☐ Unofficial transcript and school profile if available
- ☐ Activity, service, work, and caregiving list
- ☐ Story bank and essay drafts
- ☐ Two recommenders with contact information
- ☐ FAFSA Submission Summary and aid offers stored securely
- ☐ Professional headshot only when requested
- ☐ A professional file-naming system

Recommendation request script

Hello [Name], I am applying for [scholarship] by [deadline]. Would you feel comfortable writing a strong recommendation about [class, activity, work, or character]? I can send the prompt, my resume, and submission instructions. Please let me know if the timeline works for you. Thank you for considering it.

4. Before accepting an award

- ☐ Verify the sender and award provider.
- ☐ Read enrollment, GPA, major, attendance, and renewal conditions.
- ☐ Ask whether the payment goes to the student or school.
- ☐ Ask whether unused funds carry forward or must be returned.
- ☐ Tell the college about outside aid when required.
- ☐ Never pay a fee to receive scholarship funds.

My next five scholarship actions
