# RON LIEBER'S

## COLLEGE ADMISSION PREP CHECKLIST FOR FAMILIES WITH HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

UNDERSTANDING MERIT AID

## AUGUST - SEPTEMBER

☐ If you haven't already, have the money talk with your kid – what are you able to pay and borrow, and what are you actually willing to pay and borrow? If there's a gap between the two, talk about it.

☐ Run the "net price calculator" for the schools you're interested in to see what sort of prices they estimate for you. (Googling it is the easiest way to find it.) Take a screen shot of the results so you have them – you might need this later if your kid gets in but they quote you a much higher price than what the calculator estimated.

☐ Talk about need-based financial aid vs. merit scholarships. Understand the difference – and whether you qualify for both or just merit scholarships (merit scholarships are not need-based for the most part).

☐ Build a list of potential colleges (include reach, match and safety schools).

- ☐ Include schools where your student is above average, since the merit aid odds are better there. A school's common data set has data that can help with this.
- ☐ Scour the schools' websites for any specific information or clues about how their merit aid process work.
- ☐ Use tools like the College Scorecard and https://meritaidcourse.com to set up cost comparisons.

☐ Learn how big data and application timing influences results.

☐ Build a résumé of extracurriculars, awards and achievements. Merit scholarships aren't only about grades.

☐ Know merit scholarship application deadlines, for schools that have them – they can be very early.

☐ Register for the SAT/ACT as needed, keeping in mind that many schools use those scores to calculate your merit aid.

☐ Make some college visits if you have the time and money – and ask about merit aid and overall pricing.

## OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

☐ Submit the FAFSA and the CSS profile (if applicable).

☐ Know early decision deadlines (here's more on merit aid and early decision).

☐ Apply for early decision (if applicable).

- ☐ Know your options and rights when offered early decision with or without a merit scholarship package.
- ☐ Understand that early decision may not come with maximum merit aid.
- ☐ Watch Ron's free module on early decision: https://meritaidcourse.com/#the-course.

☐ Tailor your essays to highlight unique skills and achievements. Let's repeat it for emphasis: Merit scholarships aren't only about grades.

☐ Create a merit-aid tracker, with links to colleges' merit aid information pages, to stay organized.

## DECEMBER - JANUARY

☐ Review early decision/action results.
☐ Know regular decision application deadlines.
☐ Follow up on any missing documents that schools have asked for.
☐ Apply to regular admission schools.

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## FEBRUARY - MARCH

☐ Learn how to appeal your offer with https://meritaidcourse.com/.

## APRIL - MAY

☐ Make your final college decision.
☐ Submit your deposit and housing application.
☐ Celebrate! And if Ron's course helped, please tell others with younger kids about it.


CONSIDER TAKING

# RON LIEBER'S MERIT AID COURSE

TO LEARN HOW TO NAVIGATE THE MERIT SCHOLARSHIP SYSTEM, ADVOCATE FOR YOUR FAMILY AND SECURE THE BEST POSSIBLE FINANCIAL OUTCOME FOR YOUR COLLEGE-BOUND HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

**Families routinely save thousands — often well into five figures.**
And if you don't feel what you learn is valuable, we offer a 30-day money-back guarantee.

www.meritaidcourse.com