Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

It’s tempting. You’ve been accepted to college, with one foot out the door. But the other is still firmly planted in high school. Why bother with those end-of-the year projects, assignments, and finals? Your friends are partying, hanging out at the beach, or sleeping in. Joining them sounds like a great idea.

When senioritis is spreading faster than the latest flu strain, it’s time to point out why checking out of high school a few weeks too soon could cost you—big.  The most severe casualty could be your admission to college. Kevin MacLennan, director of admissions at the University of Colorado in Boulder, says each year about 50 students have their acceptance rescinded. He tells [9news.com](http://www.9news.com/news/article.aspx?storyid=115805&catid=188) in Colorado, "We want to make sure that the student understands that we're serious here at the university about the student coming in, academically ready to be successful. The grades on which the student used for admission, those grades should be similar at the time they graduate from high school.”

[Tamar Lewin](http://thechoice.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/05/18/a-warning-colleges-can-change-their-minds/?hp) of the New York Times wrote this week that colleges are noticing a trend of increasing senioritis and its effect on final semester grades. Middlebury and Connecticut Colleges said the number of offers rescinded was on the rise. A number of other schools reported that they send warning letters of varying degrees of seriousness, depending, as one admissions officer noted, if the problem is a “big oops” or a “little oops.”

But even if your offer isn’t rescinded, and you don’t received what the Dean of Admissions at Reed College calls a “Come-to-Jesus” warning letter, your senioritis could still come back to haunt you. Here’s the reason: more than half of American college students graduate from a school other than the one they started at, and that number is growing. If you want, or need, to transfer, your entire academic record will be considered. And a serious dip senior year won’t help your cause.

There are only a few weeks left. It probably won’t hurt to ease up a little, but you could damage four years of hard work slacking off now. Stay focused on your future and keep senioritis at bay.

**Surviving “Senioritis”**

Whether your senior has been accepted by a college, is still waiting for an offer, or plans to work after high school graduation, spring term of senior year is not the time to succumb to “senioritis.” Sure, your son or daughter has worked hard during the last four years. But rather than throwing in the towel, it’s a good time for a reminder to finish strong.

Future employers and colleges are watching. Some universities may withdraw offers of

admission to students who drop college prep classes or begin earning lower grades. It’s the full four years that count, not just the first 7 semesters. If your senior starts slacking, a college might send a warning letter or add certain stipulations to its admissions offer, such as requiring a specific grade point average during the first year of college.

Taking it easy may feel like the right thing to do. But staying focused and mentally sharp will make the transition from high school senior to college freshman much easier. So let your teen enjoy senior year, but remember that academics — no matter what the future holds — should come first.

Words of Warning:

The following passages are excerpts of letters sent to admitted students who have displayed signs of senioritis during their final semester of high school:

**Providence College:**

"In order for the Committee on Admission to be fully aware of any extenuating circumstances, I ask that you submit a detailed personal statement to explain your disappointing academic performance. ... Failure to submit this statement will result in the cancellation of your admission."

**University of Pennsylvania:**

"Since the final transcript represents a departure from your previous level of achievement, it is imperative that we receive an explanation of your poor grade(s) immediately and in writing. Please be specific in your remarks as they will be used to help us determine appropriate actions."

**Smith College:**

"In preparing for your arrival on campus and the rigors of a Smith education, please consider taking steps to regain your academic momentum ... by creating a reading list within your particular academic area this summer; by availing yourself of summer classes or tutoring opportunities; or by investigating the academic support services at Smith when you arrive."

**Illinois State University:**

"Due to the fact that you did not meet the course-specific requirements, it is our strong recommendation that you work closely with your academic adviser to assist you with your transition to Illinois State. ... You will be required to meet with your adviser several times during your freshman year, and you should be prepared to discuss your performance inside the classroom."

**St. Lawrence College:**

"The St. Lawrence community values hard work and discipline and strives to admit students who illustrate that commitment to their academics. We are extremely disappointed in your recent effort but expect a renewed dedication to your studies this fall."