



# Prospect High School

## Senior Parent Newsletter

August 2017

## Class of 2018

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### College and Career Center (CCC) Hours

7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

10:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Please Note:

The CCC is closed during 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> periods.

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### Hello Parents!

Senior year can be filled with many emotions for both students and families. Students feel excitement over the chance to make those adult decisions that will affect their lives. They may also feel apprehension over the uncertainty of the future. While the multitude of required tasks may seem daunting, careful and thoughtful planning can simplify the process and lessen the stress.

During the next few months your son or daughter will be responsible for applying to colleges, seeking scholarships, visiting college campuses, and continuing to research careers/majors; all while successfully completing senior year! The key to a smooth process is to start early and stay organized. I will assist students and parents with the information you need throughout the year via Senior Guidance sessions, Senior Parent Night, emails, daily student announcements and individual student/parent appointments. Please keep this newsletter as a reference as questions arise in the coming months.

I look forward to an exciting year assisting your sons/daughters with their planning for life beyond high school. Please do not hesitate to call me with any questions that may arise during the school year.

Have a great year!

**Diane Bourn**  
College Counselor

### Upcoming Events . . .

Senior Counseling Core Curriculum  
All seniors will attend mandatory sessions on **August 22 and 23rd** during their P.E. or P.E. Waiver classes. The college application process and timeline of events will be discussed.

#### Senior Parent Night

The Senior Parent Night will take place on Thursday, **September 7** at 7:00 p.m. in the PHS theatre. The college selection process and admission procedures will be reviewed to give you useful information to help your senior. This is a follow-up session to the Junior Parent Night and contains new information.

#### College Admission Rep Visits

Admission reps from many colleges across the country will again be visiting the CCC at Prospect this fall. Times and dates will be posted on our website, in Naviance and announced on morning announcements. Please encourage your student to take advantage of these great opportunities.

#### Early Morning Sessions

The following sessions will be offered before school to provide additional assistance to seniors:

- College Application Assistance
- Scholarships and Financial Aid
- Understanding your Financial Aid Award

Please see the Calendar of Events in this newsletter for dates and times.

# Application Procedures

The college application process can be relatively painless if you and your child plan accordingly, stay organized, and set some goals. Encourage your senior to go to the websites of the colleges to which they plan to apply and view the online application to determine requirements. **Summer is a great time to begin writing those admission essays and personal statements.**

In order to have the best chance of being accepted at colleges and be considered for scholarships, apply early! MANY schools have an early action or priority deadline date. These dates are usually November 1st or 15<sup>th</sup> but can be as early as October 15. By completing the college application process early, students can begin searching for scholarships sooner. **THE GOAL SHOULD BE TO COMPLETE ALL APPLICATIONS PRIOR TO WINTER BREAK; PREFERABLY BY NOVEMBER 1.**

## 1. Deciding Where to Apply

This could very well be the hardest part of the application process. Remember there is no *one* perfect college or university for your child. Encourage your child to narrow his/her choices down to a few that would be considered good fits. It is much easier to narrow down choices in the fall than in March or April of senior year. Try to choose colleges from each of the four categories listed below. Remember, these must all be schools that the student would consider attending.

Reach schools - the student's test scores and GPA do not quite meet the scores of students admitted there in past years. Highly selective colleges are reach schools for even top students since they admit only 6-15% of all applicants.

Match school - the student has a reasonable chance of getting admitted.

Safety school - a "probable admit" school.

Financial Safety school - a "probable admit" school that is also financially feasible for the family.

## 2. Completing the Application

The majority of colleges today prefer that students apply online. Online applications can be accessed via the college's website and are generally available no later than September 1. The three main types of applications are: the college's own application, the Common Application and the Coalition Application.

## 3. Sending Transcripts

Many colleges require that official transcripts are sent from the high school. A few colleges ask students to self-report the classes they've taken and corresponding grades in lieu of requiring an initial transcript. **We will be implementing new procedures this fall for students to request transcripts, letters of rec and other application materials.** Students will be instructed on how to do so during the post-secondary planning meetings with counselors on August 22 and 23 during PE periods.

## 4. Counselor Form, Secondary School Report or Counselor Letter of Recommendation

Many applications require that the counselor provide additional information such as the rigor of course selection or counselor comments on the student's ability and/or character. Additionally, some require a counselor letter of recommendation. Prior to requesting a counselor letter, seniors must complete the **Counselor Rec Questionnaire** in Naviance.

## 5. Teacher Recommendations

Some college applications require a teacher recommendation. Prior to students asking a teacher for a letter, students should fill out a **Student Information for Teacher Recommendation Request Form**. This helps the teacher write a quality recommendation for the student. Colleges look most favorably on teacher's recommendations for which the student has waived the right to review the recommendation. Please comply with the requirements of the college and not send unwanted recommendations.

**Please keep track of all deadlines. Requests must be submitted 15 days prior to a deadline to guarantee everything will be sent from PHS in time.**

## 6. ACT and/or SAT scores

It is the student's responsibility to have ACT/SAT scores sent to the schools to which they apply. Students may request to have scores sent for a small fee via the websites of ACT ([www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)) or SAT ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)). Test scores may already have been sent to colleges since students had the option of specifying up to four schools to have their scores sent when applying to take the exams. Students should check with their colleges to determine whether the writing portion of the ACT/SAT or SAT Subject Tests are also required.

# Financing College



Financing soaring college costs is a challenge for most families. By grasping an understanding of the process, parents and students will be better able to make their college choice.

## FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the application that is used to determine students' eligibility for financial aid. Since this application is often used for any aid, not just need-based, it is recommended that all families complete the FAFSA. The FAFSA requires that the student and the parent(s) the student resides with submit income and asset information.

- The FAFSA will become available on October 1 and families will report their 2016 income on the 2018-2019 FAFSA. This will allow most families to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to import their 2016 IRS tax data directly into the FAFSA.
- It is in your best interest to submit the FAFSA **as soon after October 1 as possible**.
- The online version of the FAFSA can be accessed at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).
- An FSA ID is required to sign the online FAFSA application. Both a student and one parent need to get an FSA ID. You may apply online for your FSA ID now by visiting the FAFSA website and clicking on "FSA ID" on the top.

Early financial aid estimations can be received:

- By filling out a 2017-2018 FAFSA to determine your family's EFC (Expected Family Contribution)
- By using the Net Price Calculator available on the financial aid page of each college's website

Mark your calendar for these important events:

### Senior Financial Aid Night:

Tuesday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m.  
Rolling Meadows HS Theatre

### FAFSA Completion Night:

Tuesday, October 10 at 6:30 or 7:45  
Wheeling HS Library

Here are some additional tips for financing a college education:

1. Select Affordable Quality. Consider Illinois public universities since our students receive the discounted in-state tuition rate. Illinois students are now eligible to receive discounted tuition at many out-of-state schools in the Midwest. Consult the Midwest Exchange website for a list of participating colleges: <http://msep.mhec.org/> Some discounted tuitions are limited in number or only available to students with certain academic credentials or for particular majors.

Don't discount a more expensive private college until you have seen the financial aid package they provide.

2. Community Colleges. Consider attending our local community college, Harper College, before transferring to a university; or take a class or two at Harper during summer break.

3. Take A Full Load Each Term. Some schools charge a flat rate for full-time tuition (12 or more credits). Taking an additional class or two may be financially advantageous.

4. Graduate on Time. Extending your education by a year or even a semester will cost you not only additional tuition but lost earnings.

5. Consider Becoming a Resident Assistant. Each floor in the residence halls on campus employs a student who is the designated resident assistant (RA) for the floor. The benefits may be free room and board, a private room and a monthly stipend.

6. Part-Time Work. Studies show that students who work on campus for 8 to 12 hours per week actually are more successful than those working off campus or not at all.

## Scholarships



Scholarships are a great source of college funding to supplement college savings and federal financial aid. Some scholarships are available directly from the college and students are automatically awarded money based on *GPA* and *ACT/SAT* scores. Many scholarships, however, require applications and a significant amount of work on the part of the student. Each scholarship has its own set of requirements and due dates, but the majority of local, national, and school-specific scholarship applications usually are due the early part of second semester. Many local scholarships are listed in Naviance. Summer is a great time to use Naviance to find scholarships for which you plan to apply.

### Scholarship Seminar Scams

Please beware of companies that offer to find scholarships for your child. Sometimes families are promised career guidance, college advisement, assistance on financial aid forms and guaranteed scholarships, BUT attached to these services are fees that can be quite high. Remember, you can research and apply for scholarships and financial aid entirely on your own with no fees. The College Counselors of District 214 provide guidance and information sessions to help you through the process.

## Naviance Family Connection

*Naviance- Family Connection*, a web-based college and career planning tool, can help students with many college-related tasks. Use *Naviance* scattergrams to view the *GPA*s and test scores of PHS students admitted to colleges your senior is considering. You can access *Naviance* via the Quicklinks section of the PHS website. Ask your seniors to share their login.

## Prospective College Athlete



Any senior athlete with aspirations of participating in college athletics at the Division I or II level needs to register with the NCAA eligibility center online at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org). The site contains all relevant information regarding eligibility rules and regulations. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to make sure he/she meets the various requirements for eligibility. For additional or more specific information please refer your son or daughter to his/her counselor.

### Advising the Student Athlete Night:

Monday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m.

Forest View Educational Center

## ACT/SAT & SAT Subject Tests

Students may still be able to take additional ACT or SAT tests in order to attempt to improve their scores for admission or scholarship consideration. Please check the individual colleges where your student is applying to determine if additional test scores would be received prior to admission and/or scholarship deadlines. Many selective colleges require SAT Subject tests. A list of colleges requiring SAT Subject tests can be found in Naviance.

## College Resources Webpage

There is a wealth of information on the College Resources portion of the PHS Webpage. To access, go to the **Menu** and use the **Students** dropdown to select **College Resources**. From there you can get to additional pages on specific college-related topics. Check back regularly since pages are updated throughout the school year with new information about college reps visiting our school and other events.

# Senior College/Career Calendar 2017/2018

Dates are accurate as of the time of printing on 08/01/17. Please refer to the PHS website for the most up-to-date information.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TIME &amp; PLACE</u>	<u>TARGET AUDIENCE</u>
<b><u>August</u></b>			
Tuesday & Wednesday 22 & 23	Post-Secondary Planning: Overview of application procedures, college/career selection, scholarships, senior year timeline, etc.	During P.E. or P.E. Waiver Classes In KLC labs and theatre with counselors	12 Students
<b><u>September</u></b>			
Wednesday 6	Career Night: Arts & Communications/ Human Services	6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Prospect High School	9-12 Parents & Students
Thursday 7	Senior Parent Night	7:00 p.m. in PHS Theatre	12 Parents
Tuesday 19	Financial Aid Seminar for Senior Families Speaker: Mark Anderson, Lake Forest College	7:00 p.m. Rolling Meadows High School Theatre	12 Parents & Students
Thursday 21	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
Tuesday 26	Directions College and Career Fair (Planned by D214, D211 and D220 for students receiving special education or 504 services)	6:00 - 8:30 p.m. FVEC - Field House	10-12 Parents & Students
<b><u>October</u></b>			
1	Start filling out federal financial aid form (FAFSA)		
Tuesday 3	Performing & Visual Arts College Fair	6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. University of Illinois - Chicago	10-12 Parents & Students
Wednesday 4	Career Night: Health/Natural Resources	6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Buffalo Grove High School	9-12 Parents & Students
Tuesday 10	FAFSA Completion Night	6:30 p.m. or 7:45 p.m. Wheeling High School Library	12 Parents & Students
Wednesday 11	District 211 College Fair	6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Palatine High School	11-12 Parents & Students
Thursday 12	Early Morning Session: College Application Assistance	7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. PHS College & Career Center (CCC)	12 Students Only
Saturday 14	NACAC College Fair	11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. McCormick Place, Chicago	10-12 Parents & Students
Sunday 15	National Portfolio Day	Time TBA School of The Art Institute of Chicago	10-12 Parents & Students
Monday 16	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
Wednesday 18	Career Night: Engineering & Industrial Technology/Business & Computers	6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Rolling Meadows High School	9-12 Parents & Students

<b><u>November</u></b>			
1	Most priority, early action and early decision deadlines are on this date.		
15	Aim to submit your FAFSA by this date in order to be eligible for the most financial aid.		
Monday 20	Advising the Student Athlete (for students considering college athletics) Speaker: Maureen Harty, NCAA	7:00 p.m. Forest View Educational Center Theatre	9-12 Parents & Students
<b><u>December</u></b>			
Thursday 7	Early Morning Session: Scholarships & Financial Aid	7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. PHS College & Career Center (CCC)	12 Students Only
<b><u>January</u></b>			
Monday 15	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
Saturday 27	Gap Year Program	12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. New Trier High School, Winnetka Campus	11-12 Parents & Students
<b><u>February</u></b>			
Friday 16	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
Monday 19	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
<b><u>March</u></b>			
Thursday 22	Early Morning Session: Understand Your Financial Aid Award	7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. PHS College & Career Center (CCC)	12 Students Only
Monday- Friday 26-30	Spring Break. Great time to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
<b><u>April</u></b>			
Monday 2	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
Monday 23	No School. Great day to visit a college.	Consult the college's website at least two weeks before to register for the campus visit.	
<b><u>May</u></b>			
Monday 1	National Decision Day: Seniors must accept admission to one college by this date to guarantee admission.		
Wednesday 2	Senior Celebration Day	Lunch Periods College and Career Center	12 Students