11th Grade College Planning Night & College Panel Discussion

Presented by the STEM Counseling Department
January 15, 2019
Topics for Tonight

• College Timeline and Testing (6:30-6:45pm) - KMW
  ▫ Establishing a timeline
  ▫ Standardized testing
• Exploring Colleges (6:45-7:00pm) - MW
  ▫ Evaluating colleges—evaluating size, selectivity, setting, and “fit”
• Understanding the Basics of College Admissions/Naviance (7:00-7:15pm) - LG
  ▫ Application procedures
  ▫ Naviance
• College Panel Discussion (7:30-8:15)
ESTABLISHING A TIMELINE
Education
Educate yourself about different types of colleges, majors, school culture, etc.

Remember to REGISTER for the SAT or ACT, if required.

Exploration
Visit colleges, request information, learn about admissions requirements, etc.

Remember to TAKE the SAT or ACT, if required.

Preparation
Start writing your college essays, organize letters of recommendation, determine how to apply to your prospective schools.

Applications!!!
Finalize your list of colleges and APPLY!

You can take the SAT or ACT for a 2nd or 3rd time now too!
IMPORTANT TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

- Are you required to take Subject Tests?
  - Make sure to build in time for SAT Subject tests, if required.
- Will you be applying to any specialized programs that have earlier deadlines?
  - For example, accelerated medical programs, scholarships, etc.
- Are you applying Early Decision?
  - We’ll talk more about this later!
- Are you an athlete?
  - You must register for the NCAA Clearinghouse as a DI or DII athlete.
STANDARDIZED TESTING
PSAT

- Only offered once a year in October.
- Enables students and families to get access to college/career planning tools provided through the College Board.
- Allows students to enter the National Merit Scholarship Competition during their junior year.
**National Merit Scholarship Program**

- **Junior PSAT/NMSQT (1.5 Million)**
  - Approximately 1.5 million juniors take the PSAT/NMSQT. 50,000 receive National Merit recognition.
  - Oct

- **Commended Student (34,000)**
  - 34,000 students are recognized as Commended Students. The estimated Selection Index required is 207. Final numbers will be released Sep 2016.
  - Sept

- **Semifinalist (16,000)**
  - 16,000 students are recognized as Semifinalists. Selection Index cut-offs are determined by state and are estimated to range from 207 to 221 in 2016. (CA est. 220)
  - Sept

- **Finalist (15,000)**
  - Almost 95% of Semifinalists eventually are named Finalists. A Semifinalist must meet certain academic requirements, attain a minimum SAT score, and meet other criteria.
  - Feb

- **Scholar (8,000)**
  - About half of Finalists will be awarded scholarships from NMSC or sponsoring colleges or corporations. Special Scholarships are awarded to students meeting eligibility criteria established by corporate sponsors. These recipients need not be Finalists.
  - Mar-Jun

More information can be found at nationalmerit.org
Depending on your strengths and weaknesses, you may prefer one test over the other.

The SAT and ACT are significantly different tests.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The ACT</th>
<th>The SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Style</td>
<td>Achievement (curriculum based)</td>
<td>Aptitude (reasoning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Time</td>
<td>2 Hrs &amp; 55 Min (Plus 50 min Optional Essay)</td>
<td>3 Hrs Plus 40 Min Essay (Plus 50 Min Optional Essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sections</td>
<td>4 (Plus Optional Essay)</td>
<td>4 (Plus Optional Essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Passage based reading comprehension in Prose Fiction, Social Science, Humanities, and Natural Science</td>
<td>Data interpretation and passage based reading comprehension. Includes complex text on historical/political issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Algebra, Geometry, and pre-Calculus (trigonometry, matrices, etc). Less critical thinking and tricky questions that SAT.</td>
<td>Similar to current SAT plus trigonometry, higher algebra, and more word problems. Less critical thinking and more math skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing/English Section</td>
<td>Testing grammar and rhetoric in passages.</td>
<td>Testing grammar and rhetoric in passages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Requires data interpretation and critical thinking skills as well knowledge of the scientific method.</td>
<td>Not directly tested. Data interpretation skills are tested throughout exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>Evaluation of three different opinions on a philosophical or political issue.</td>
<td>Analysis of the mechanical and rhetorical structure of a sample text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoring</td>
<td>Four sections scaled from 1-36 with a composite score of 1-36</td>
<td>2 Sections Math and Evidence Based Reading &amp; Writing, each scored on a scale of 200-800, with a composite score of 400-1600.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Answer Penalty</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You can do both!

But you may want to consider the ACT if you are...

- Strong critical reader
- Prefer straightforward questions
- Prefer to use a calculator for all math sections
- Solid knowledge of Geometry
- A decisive/fast test taker
- Have strong understanding of punctuation
- Enjoy writing your own point of view
- Have strong understanding of how to conduct a scientific experiment
You may want to consider the SAT if you are...

- Prefer to analyze written arguments
- Have a strong vocabulary
- Prefer to limit the amount of scientific method
- Comfortable answering questions without answer choice
- OK with not always using a calculator
- More comfortable with Algebra than Geometry
- Able to answer multi-step/applied knowledge questions
- A slow test taker
Not All Schools Require Testing!

- Fairtest.org
- Not all of us are great test takers
- High scores don’t necessarily correlate with success in college
- *Score optional schools* that are popular with STEM students are:
  - Bryn Mawr, Dickinson, Franklin & Marshall, Gettysburg, Muhlenberg, Susquehanna, Albright, Wake Forest, George Washington, American, Duquesne, WPI, Temple, University of Arizona, Hofstra, George Mason, Ithaca, St. Joseph’s University, Elizabethtown, and University of Scranton
SAT Subject Tests

• Taken *in addition to* SAT Reasoning or ACT exams
• Be sure to **consult college admissions sites directly**, these are generally required or recommended by the most competitive colleges and/or specialized programs (e.g. UDel College of Engineering)
• One hour timed tests
• 20 different subjects to choose from
• Up to three **Subject Tests** may be taken on any given date
SAT Subject Tests

- Literature
- US History
- World History
- Math Level 1
- Math Level 2 – junior year
- Biology – junior year
- Chemistry – fall senior year
- Physics – fall senior year
- French
- French with Listening
- German
- German with Listening
- Spanish
- Spanish with Listening
- Modern Hebrew
- Italian
- Latin
- Chinese with Listening
- Korean with Listening
SENDING STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

• Students send test scores directly to colleges via their Collegeboard (SAT) or ACT accounts.
• It can take several weeks for colleges to receive your scores – be mindful of deadlines!
• Students have option to send four free score reports to colleges the time of registration, or up to 9 days after the test date.
  ▫ Take advantage of these free score reports!
  ▫ No need to withhold earlier/lower test scores! Colleges do not rule out students if they happen to see lower scores.
• Knowing if your prospective colleges allow for score choice, super scoring, and test optional opportunities may help you determine how to proceed.
**SENDING STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES**

- **Score Choice:** gives you the option to choose which scores (by test date for the SAT and by individual test for SAT Subject Tests) you send to colleges. Similar process for ACT.
  - Please note some schools require that you submit every score report.
- **Super Scoring:** you submit scores from test dates of your choosing, and the schools cherry pick your best score from each section, creating a “superscore.”

SAT Super Score policy: [http://sat.collegeboard.org/scores/send-sat-scores](http://sat.collegeboard.org/scores/send-sat-scores)
ACT Super Score policy: [http://www.actstudent.org/scores/send/](http://www.actstudent.org/scores/send/)
EXPLORING COLLEGES

Evaluating size, selectivity, setting, and “fit”
HOW COLLEGES DETERMINE “FIT”

- transcript
- GPA
- application
- demonstrated interest
- essay
- letters of recommendation
- extracurricular activities
- test scores

“fit”
ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT

- Every course taken (9th-11th) and courses in progress (12th)
- Final grades
- Yearly GPA
- Cumulative GPA
- Credit values
- Name and address
PROVIDING CONTEXT

• You are evaluated within in the context of your school and your class
  ▫ What classes does your school offer? What did you take? How did you do?
• We do not rank
• We provide your individual cumulative GPA and the highest GPA in the class
  ▫ Helps provide context to where you stand in the class
GRADES AND GPA

11th Grade is a very important year for earning good grades in challenging courses.

- Colleges look for improvement from 9th grade.
- Some colleges will require senior year grades (1st marking period or midyear) to make decisions.
- Colleges are looking for continual improvement.

- Transcript will show GPA individually by year, as well as your cumulative GPA.
- Grades and GPA can be indicators for setting realistic expectations for admissions at some colleges.
BEYOND GPA AND TEST SCORES

• **THE COLLEGE ESSAY**
  - Make sure it is edited and free of errors.
  - Build your essay around:
    - Something in your personal life that has shaped you
    - How you fit in with the philosophy of the university
  - The Essay is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

• **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**
  - Check to see if your colleges require recommendation letters
  - Ask two teachers who know you well
  - Add teachers on Naviance and provide them a Recommendation Request form
  - FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

After considering GPA, rigor of schedule, and test scores, many schools look to the college essay and letters of recommendation.
WHAT COLLEGES ARE A GOOD “FIT” FOR YOU?

Important considerations:

• Size and diversity of student body
• Location
• Academic Programs
• Campus life: athletics, activities, housing
• Student Services: Accommodations
• Financial Aid and Scholarship opportunities
• Freshman Year Retention Rate
• If at all possible visit each campus, take a tour, sit in on a class, talk to students and faculty.
"THE U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT GUIDE TO AMERICA'S TOP 500 COLLEGES...CHAPTER ONE..."
THINKING STRATEGICALLY AND REALISTICALLY

REACH

TARGET

LIKELY

REMEMBER! Finances can be just as important as academic achievement in the selection of reach, target, and likely schools.
A **reach school** is a college that you have a *chance* of getting into, but your test scores, class rank and / or high school grades are a bit on the low side when you look at the school's profile.

A **target school** is a college that you are pretty likely to get into because your test scores, class rank and / or high school grades fall right into the middle range when you look at the school's profile.

A **likely school** is a college that you will almost certainly get into because your test scores, class rank and / or high school grades are well above average when you look at the school's profile.

The top U.S. colleges and top universities should *always* be considered reach schools, for the admissions standards are so high that not even perfect SAT scores guarantee acceptance.
HIGHLY SELECTIVE ADMISSIONS

• Schools that **accept fewer than 20%** of applicants.
• We encourage our student to apply to these institutions, **but also stress the importance of having a “safety net” in target and likely options.**
• REMEMBER: Target and likely schools should be institutions that you would **actually** attend!
• Unfortunately, a rigorous program, high GPA, and outstanding standardized test scores do not guarantee admissions at these schools. **So, what do they look for?**
HIGHLY SELECTIVE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

• There is a lot of anxiety and stress around highly selective college admissions.
  ▫ Thousands of qualified applicants vying for so few spots.
• The competition doesn't end after admission at these schools.
• The first colleges that many students learn about are famous, highly selective schools, but there are 4,000+ colleges in the U.S. – the perfect school for you may be one that you are not familiar with yet!
QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

• The ease of online applications leads to students applying to...
  ▫ more schools than necessary
  ▫ schools they don’t know anything about
  ▫ schools that have no intention of admitting the student (marketing!)
    • Some colleges target students they will not accept in order to increase applications, and increase their selectivity ratings!
Understanding the Basics of the College Admissions Process
ADMISSIONS POLICIES

• Early Decision (I & II): Binding – *typically November*
  ▫ Cannot apply early to other colleges, can apply regular decision

• Early Action: Non-Binding – *typically November*
  ▫ Can apply early to other colleges, can apply regular decision

• Single Choice/Restricted Early Action: Non-Binding
  ▫ Cannot apply early to other colleges, can apply regular decision

• Rolling Admission – *opens early fall*
  ▫ Open admission, no specific deadline

• Regular Decision – *typically January*
  ▫ Deadline date established by the institution
  ▫ Priority Deadline
BEWARE!

• Do not rush to get all of your applications in for Early Action deadlines.
• Remember these are *non-binding* – EA just means the colleges makes a commitment to give you a decision by a certain date
• Regular decision is just fine!
• Causes undue stress for all involved
• Instant gratification is nice, but at what cost?
EARLY DECISION

• A binding admissions policy in which the student agrees to attend the college if they are accepted
• You can only apply to one school as an Early Decision applicant
• You must sign an Early Decision agreement (parents and counselor too!) when applying ED
• This plan should only be used if you know the college is the one and you know it is affordable
IN OTHER WORDS...

• If you are accepted ED, and the financial aid package is sufficient, you are committed to going to that school!

• You cannot delay your decision in order to compare other financial aid packages.

• The college determines what is “sufficient” based on financial aid paperwork (EFC) you are required to submit – *talk to financial aid to get an idea BEFORE applying ED.*
## Important Considerations

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<th>Pros of ED</th>
<th>Cons of ED</th>
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<td>• Reduce stress by cutting the time spent waiting for a decision.</td>
<td>• Pressure to decide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Save the time and expense of submitting multiple applications.</td>
<td>• Less time to work on the application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gain more time, once accepted, to look for housing and otherwise prepare for college.</td>
<td>• Reduced financial aid opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reassess options and apply elsewhere if not accepted.</td>
<td>• Time crunch for other applications</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More competitive applicants</td>
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COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ED

• “I have to decide which school to apply to ED...”
  ▫ Nope! You are not required to go ED. ED is something you should decide to do after *thoroughly researching a school*.

• “I can break my early decision agreement if I’m not happy with my financial aid package.”
  ▫ Remember, there is a difference between what you want to pay and what the college thinks you can afford.
  ▫ Do your homework BEFORE applying ED – speak with financial aid, use net price calculators, etc.
  ▫ **We won’t send docs to other schools once we’ve signed an ED agreement**

• “Applying ED will help me get into a selective college.”
  ▫ Yes and no. Statistically some schools have a higher acceptance rate for ED applicants, but these applicants also tend to be the strongest. Beware that some schools promote ED as a strategy to assure their own numbers.
Leanne Glowik
Downingtown STEM Academy
335 Manor Ave
Downingtown, PA 19335-2542

Dear Ms. Glowik,

We are sending this letter as a formal notification that has been admitted to Lehigh University under our Early Decision I Plan and has agreed to withdraw any and all applications to other institutions. We ask your assistance in ensuring this is completed.

Students have been notified of their admission under the binding Early Decision I commitment and have also been asked not to initiate any new applications to additional schools. Students and parents or guardians have signed and submitted the Early Decision Confirmation Form with their enrollment deposit acknowledging their commitment to Lehigh University. We look forward to welcoming them to campus in the fall of 2016.

Should you have questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact our office at

Best Regards,

[Signature]

J. Leon Washington
Vice Provost of Admissions & Financial Aid
QUICK FINANCIAL AID OVERVIEW

- Types of Student Financial Aid
  - Grants: Federal/State/College
  - Loans: Federal/State/Private
  - Work Study Opportunities

- Application for Federal and/or Institutional Aid
  - FAFSA
    - Application Submission: starting Oct. 1st (senior year!)
    - www.fafsa.gov
  - CSS Profile:
    - Available in October (senior year!)
    - Used by many private and/or Early Action/Early Decision Institutions
    - Comprehensive list of Schools: http://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile
  - University Specific Forms
NAVIANCE
Naviance is an online college and career readiness software.

While using it, you can:

- Link personality type and interests with careers
- Indicate preferences/ criteria to determine college matches
- Compare your academic statistics to the average statistics of your prospective colleges
- Predict the outcome of your application for a specific college using the Scattergrams
- Track application materials, including teacher recommendation letters
JUNIOR MEETINGS

• Counselors will hold individual junior meetings during the school day starting in March.
• 45 minutes in length.
• Identify a time that works best for your schedule.
• Fill out survey to help guide the meeting.
• Register for your students appointment online.
• Counselors will visit 11th grade lit. classes to give lessons on using Naviance and college apps
COLLEGE PANEL

- Jeremy Branch – Penn State University
  - Assistant Director of Enrollment Management
- Catherine Campbell-Perna – Drexel University
  - Associate Director, Freshman Admission
- Carolyn Defant – Villanova University
  - Associate Director of Admission
- Philip Morabito – Franklin & Marshall College
  - Assistant Dean of Admission
- Amber Moore – Delaware County Community College
  - Assistant Director, Admissions & Enrollment Services
- Ryan Mignone – Widener University
  - Assistant Director of Admissions
- Joseph Luna – Shippensburg University
  - Assistant Director of Admissions