

College Prep Calendar for Juniors (and their parents, too!)

Welcome to 11th grade!! You're no longer a rookie in high school, but there are some big decisions and steps to be made this year! Don't stress, but do take action and plan ahead so that your last two years of high school are filled with confident and well-planned decisions that will serve you well for years to come.

General info:

- **Colleges are going to be most interested in your junior year grades** since it is the most current full academic year. Regardless of your gpa up to this point, perform at your highest level this year. Ask for help if you need it! Start strong and keep it up!
- **The way to make sure that the college you attend is the best fit for YOU is to be in charge of the college search and application process.** YOU should be taking the lead in the college search and application process. Your parents, teachers, counselor and other important role models can and should be a part of the process, but you should be able to take ownership of the results.
- **Get and/or stay involved in activities and service that interest you.** Instead of trying to create a long, meaningless list to try to please an admissions officer, find and leverage your interests into rich experiences that show colleges who you are and what you really care about. Try to take on at least one leadership role, if possible. Out-of-school groups (church, scouts, community organizations, even paid jobs) are equally as important as high school groups.
- **Keep exploring careers.** Use MyNextMove.org or ONetOnline.org as resources, but consider job shadowing or volunteering as a hands-on way to check out different careers. Focus on your strengths and interests. Find out what type of education is needed for careers of interest. It is okay to be uncertain about your future career, but you should be investigating and exploring! Many students go to college "undecided," but the more you can narrow down your list now, the fewer headaches you may have later (when you are paying college tuition). Your potential major can also affect which colleges you apply to and your odds of getting in.
- **If you are considering playing Division I or II sports, register with the NCAAEligibilityCenter.org.** Meet with Mrs. Fees to discuss the academic requirements needed to practice and play at the schools of your choice.
- **SAT recommendations:** for most students, Mrs. Fees recommends taking the SAT for the first time during the school day SAT in early March. Then take it a second time in May or June so you'll have 2 scores under your belt. If you'd like to take it a third time, there are test dates in August, October, and November. (Taking the SAT early in junior year rarely results in ideal scores; this results in frustration and pressure in subsequent testings.) Reflective use of PSAT and SAT score combined with thoughtful thorough test prep are more likely to result in better scores than simply testing early and often.
- Mrs. Fees will be sponsoring college and financial information nights for you and your family – these are important! See monthly events on next page.

Monthly items:

September:

- Sign up for an account on KhanAcademy.org. They have a FREE SAT prep program that is highly recommended SAT! Make it your “homework” to complete a section of the test prep each week.

October

- Take the **PSAT/NMSQT on October 16**. (Register through SAHS; costs \$17.)
- Bookmark the Delaware Scholarship Compendium (<http://delawaregoestocollege.org/scholarship-compedium>). Use their month-by-month calendar and apply for any scholarships for which you may qualify.
- **“Paying for College” workshop** at Sussex Academy on October 8 at 6:00 pm. Sponsored by Stand by Me Delaware.

November

- Attend the **Southern Delaware College Night college fair** held in mid-November.
 - Download the list of attending colleges ahead of time; decide which of the colleges you want to talk to and find out more about so that you can make the most of your time there.
- Identify the traits of colleges that you think appeal to you: big, medium, or small? urban or rural? football team or not? Interesting programs? distance from home? what else is important to you?

December

- If you haven’t already, start a preliminary list of colleges. Put as many colleges on the list as you like! Make sure to note your thoughts about the college and why you are considering it.
- PSAT scores arrive this month! Make sure to really evaluate your scores so that your SAT scores can be even better. Use the resources that will be available to you on My College QuickStart.
- Take a **free full-length practice SAT on Dec. 10**, sponsored by Revolution Prep. You’ll get instant scan-and-score results with lots of great feedback. Talk to a Rev Prep consultant or Mrs. Fees for help interpreting your scores, and use their SAT prep or other available SAT prep programs to get ready for the school-day SAT in March.
- If you are interested in the ACT, take a practice ACT test at <http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/>. This college admissions test is as widely accepted by colleges as the SAT. It is quite different than the SAT, and some students do better on the ACT than the SAT.

January

- On January 7, our alumni will be returning for a **College Student Panel**. This is an opportunity for students to talk to college student, ask questions, and get advice and tips.

February

- Schedule an appointment with Mrs. Fees to meet with you (parents invited too!) before the end of the school year. Together we can map out your college plans and make it happen!

March

- **Wednesday March 4: SAT given at Sussex Academy** during the school day (required). Registration for this SAT is done through SA and the State of Delaware. All other SAT's require students to do the registration at CollegeBoard.org.
- Attend the **Junior Parent College Workshop on March 31 or April 1 at 6:30**. (same workshop both nights; choose one). Designed to deliver all the info parents need to know to search, apply, and pay for college!

April

- Start looking for summer jobs and/or internships.
- Using 2018 tax returns, have your parents complete the FAFSA4caster.gov to get an idea of what your family may be expected to contribute to the cost of college. Complete Net Price Calculators for the colleges you are interested in. Keep in mind that very few students actually pay the "sticker price" of a college's listed tuition, and financial aid packages will vary greatly. Don't let the price of a college deter you from applying.
- Visit colleges over Spring Break, if possible. Saturday visits may also be available; make sure to sign up on the college's website for the official tour and presentation. Students may miss school to visit a college; bring back a note from the admissions office so that the absence will be marked as excused.

May

- Start your Common App (or other app platform needed).
- Start to craft your college essay.
- Ask two teachers and your counselor for recommendations BEFORE leaving for summer. Give them the Letter of Rec form.

June – August

- Polish your college essay.
- Visit as many colleges as possible. Make sure to make an appointment on the college's website to get a tour and information session. Record notes, take pictures, and evaluate the school.
- Narrow down your list of colleges by the time school starts. Most students find 6-8 college applications to be manageable. Evaluate Reach-Match-Likely admissions odds to ensure happy news in spring of senior year.
- If there is a school which you are 100% sure you want to attend AND that you could afford, research its Early Decision and/or Early Action application process. These applications are often due in early November.