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Here tonight are:

- Ms. Erway (letters A-F)
- Ms. Horab (letters G-M)
- Mrs. Kimpel (letters N-Z)
- Mr. Kidder (Office Assistant)

Goal tonight - make you aware what students will be learning during their Junior Meetings with their Counselors.

"This is an extraordinary time in your student's life ... and yours!"

Agenda

- what have the students done so far?
- College planning resources
- Things to consider
- College Applications
- Campus Visits
- Letters of Recommendation
- Financial Aid
- NCAA
- Timeline



Here is what will be discussed tonight ...

What have the students done so far?

PSAT- taken in October; scores found in student account on www.collegeboard.org

Students were shown how to use the online resources to help practice and improve SAT scores.
[Khan Academy | Free Online Courses, Lessons & Practice](#)

College Representative visits- were posted and announced for students to sign up to meet with colleges of interest.

Registered for the Upcoming National College Fair- All juniors will attend the College Fair on Wednesday March 20, 2024. Typically, over 200 hundred colleges attend from across the US and some International. <https://www.nacacattend.org/24Buffalo/4308945?page=1&per-page=50>

Junior Meetings-individual meetings are held between the student and their counselor to discuss post graduation plans, what steps should be taken next, and what resources are at their disposal

In Class Presentation on the Class of 2025 Folder on Google Drive- this is where all things College and Career are housed for students to have 24/7 access to resources and supports.

If you haven't seen your student's PSAT scores, have them log into their College Board account.

College visits:

- Students can come down to visit with the representative when the PA announcements are made
- Students are encouraged to apply locally and nationally
 - "Colleges know that St. Mary's has a challenging curriculum"

College Fair:

- Students will be attending for an hour
- Students have been asked to create a bar code so that they can easily get on colleges' mailing list
- Permission slips went out on Monday, March 4th; they are also available in Ms. Leah Tytka's room

Junior Meetings:

- Focused on the individual needs of the students based on where they are in the college application process

Junior Folder:

- Contains everything college-related for the students, including resources for the college search
- Counselors review the items with the students during their Junior Meetings
- A student who needs the link to the folder resent should contact Ms. Erway

What should Juniors be doing now?

Register for the SAT through Collegeboard www.collegeboard.org

→ Plan to take the SAT once if not twice (spring junior year, fall senior year)

Register for the ACT through www.act.org

Build your College list using google, specific college websites, or <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>

Attend **Spring Open Houses** and plan **Visits**. Colleges are focused on actively recruiting for the Freshman Class of Fall 2025. Go to any college admissions home page and click on visit or sign up for Open House to register. They have virtual options as well!

Students have also been introduced to [O*NET OnLine](http://O*NET.OnLine) an up to date US Labor website where students can explore careers, growth estimates, and take an interest inventory.

Remember - colleges do “super-score” (take the highest scores from multiple tests)
ACT are recommended for those who are better at science and history
Bigfuture uses “needs” and “wants” to help the individual student with their college search

Spring Open Houses are designed for present Juniors

O*Net is for career search, looking out ten years at the careers’ potential

“Remember – this is a marathon, not a sprint”

Test Optional:

- Some colleges would rather see SAT scores than not
- Make sure that scores align with the GPA
 - Low test scores with higher GPA should not be included
 - High test scores with lower GPA SHOULD be included
- Some colleges have announced that they will require them again in the near future
 - Florida colleges never stopped requiring them

Things to know when starting the college admissions process:

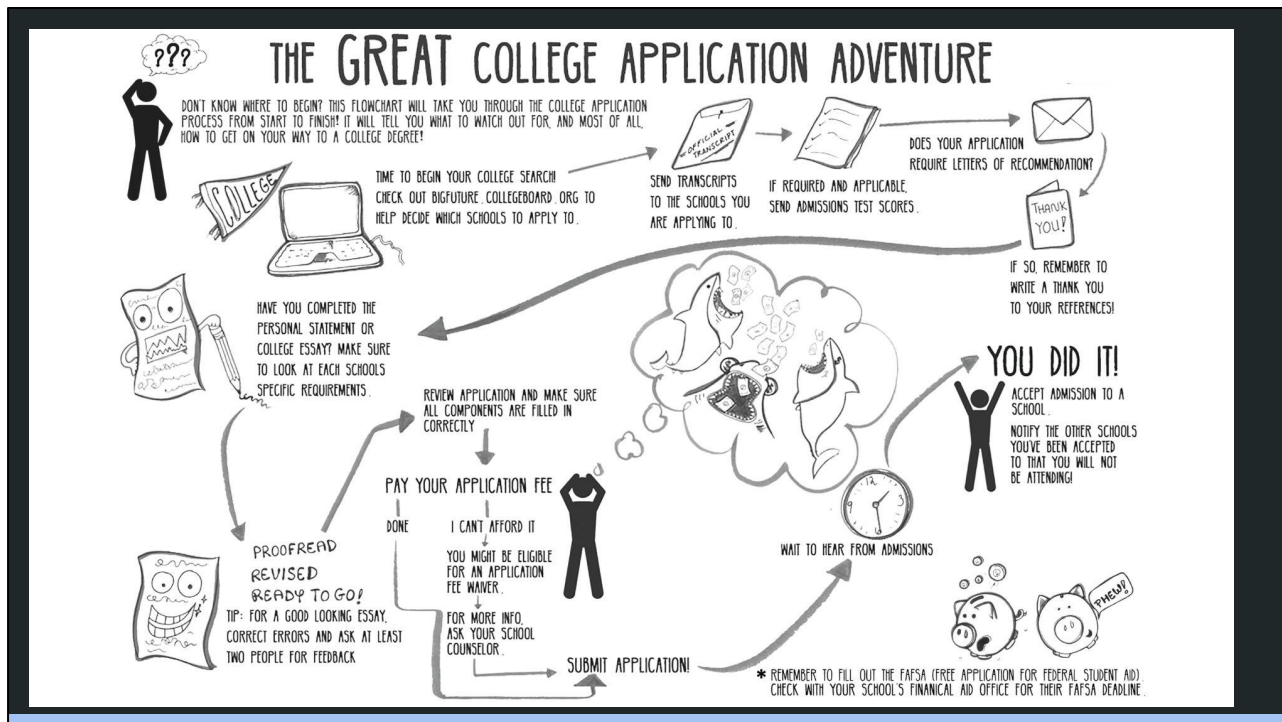
1. Organization is key- plan out visits and tours with schedules. Maybe try to fit 2 in 1 day.
2. Make time during the week- this is a consuming process in that a little bit goes a long way
3. Think about your needs/wants. What is a must for a campus to be considered vs. that would be nice if it had...
4. Lastly, remember there is help available. Counselors are available to answer questions and help keep the process moving forward.

Note all deadlines!

Recommend that you create a spreadsheet to track colleges, requirements, deadlines, tuition, etc.

Keep communication open between the parent and the student

“You have to make sure that you make the time to work on this!”



Neat graphic that shows all that goes into the College Application process!

Things to Consider; College Comparison and Research

- Geographic location and size
- Cost and financial aid
- Average GPA, SAT, and ACT Score
- Admission policy
- Majors and educational programs
- Personal factors
- Campus environment
- Campus activities
- Support services

Financial Aid Calculators are on all college websites

- Required by law
- To help estimate the student's costs for that college

Support Services are there to help students' transition from high school to college

College Applications

Most of you will use the Common Application

- <https://www.commonapp.org/apply>

SUNY Application

- <https://www.suny.edu/attend/apply-to-suny/>

If you are applying via a college specific website, please let your counselor know.

90% of students use the Common App

- Remember - you have to pay for each college student is applying to
- It's not hard, just time consuming (2-3 hours)

Demonstration given of Common App

- College essay will be completed in English class
- Some colleges require entering of transcript information by hand
- Application goes live on August 1st
 - Basic information can be entered now
 - Students will create their accounts in May
 - Essay, activities, and letters of recommendation do not transfer to the new year
- Individual colleges have their own questions
- Look for Green Check Mark indicating what parts have been completed
 - Application can't be submitted until all sections have been completed
- "FERPA" - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
 - Allows parents to have access to students' educational information
 - Teachers DO NOT have to let students/parents see their letters of recommendation
- Remember - deadlines shown are for student's applications
 - Teachers' letters are not due until later
 - That is, if the Letters of Recommendation are not in, Students should still submit their applications (Don't wait!)
 - Teachers and counselors have different deadlines for their letters

This May in English Class...

Set up a Common Application account and review how to complete it.

Discuss How to Ask for a letter of Recommendation and receive a “Brag Sheet”.

Discuss and start writing the College Essay together (to be completed in English class).

Review Big Future to continue building your college list.

Review the Junior Folder and the resources available it.

OVER THE SUMMER:

Continue to research and visit campuses.

Start making decisions on colleges you want to apply to, become familiar with any application deadlines and testing policies.

Make sure you are registered for a solid senior year of courses.

Students will create their Common App account and review the application process

Students will fill out Letter of Recommendation Forms

- Students should personally ask the teachers first if they will write the letters of recommendation
- Students should give form to teachers before they leave in June
 - Teachers often work on the letters over the summer
- Counselors recommend students ask for two letters at the most from teachers/coaches
 - Students can decide what college see which letters
 - Counselors also have to write a letter of recommendation, that goes to all colleges

College essay

- Draft to be written in Junior English class
- Final version to be completed in Senior English class (for a grade)
- This is to ensure that the essay is ready to be uploaded

Counselors make sure that students take a “challenging” schedule their Senior year, not dropping too many courses

NCAA Eligibility

- Division I and Division II Athletes (does not apply to Division III)
- Any student wishing to compete in collegiate sports at the DI or DII level, **MUST** create an athlete account to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- There is a \$70 fee.
- Students should register before the start of their Senior year.
- Register here: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

Suggest register for NCAA before Senior Year

- This will take off some of the pressure

Mrs. Kimpel uploads students' transcripts regularly

- If student receives an email saying transcripts are missing, don't worry – they will be uploaded soon!

Financial Aid

Application can be found out:

<https://studentaid.gov/>

- New FAFSA started this year 2024-2025.
- Use taxes from 2 years ago.
- Typically FAFSA opens on October 1st.

Hoping that FAFSA will come out on October 1st, as it has in the past

- This year's version was not available until January 31st

The new version only takes about 30 minutes to complete

Families can create their account now; just can't upload data until October 1st (if that's the day it opens)

Letters of Recommendation

What is it?

A letter of recommendation for college admission is a short document typically written by a teacher, counselor, or mentor/coach/employer highlighting your strengths and potential contributions to a school. You must carefully choose who will write your letters of recommendation and be thoughtful and responsible when asking for them.

We will provide students with a “brag sheet” to complete to hand out to the people they ask to write their letter. Typically 2- one should be from a teacher.

See above!

Campus Visits- There are many options!

- In Person Campus Visit
- Open House
- Virtual Tour
- Self Guided Tour
- Information Sessions

For example, www.canisius.edu

It's very easy to sign up for college visits:

- Go to school webpage → Admissions → Visit School
- Pick what dates work for your family

Recommend that you visit local colleges to get a feel of what student would like.

- For example:
 - Large state school - UB
 - Small private school - Hilbert
 - Urban school - Canisius
 - Rural school - Alfred

- Then student can expand to other areas, already knowing what type of school they like

Q&A

FAFSA links to parent's IRS account, so that information doesn't have to be entered by hand

- Once information is submitted, an SAR (Student Aid Report) will be received
- If financial situation changes, contact the college's Financial Aid Office to make an appeal

Communication will help the entire application process

- Remember that students can be "undecided" when entering college

AP Credits accepted are on the college's website, though they are often hidden

- Advice is to Google "AP credits at (name of college)"
- Credits accepted vary by college

Colleges may look at the ability of a family to pay when deciding to accept a student

- "Remember – colleges are business too"

Don't always look at the "sticker price" of a college

- For example, private colleges have more scholarships available than state schools

Remember - Financial Aid Packages are negotiable

- You can play one college against another
- However, there is NO flexibility if a student applies "Early Decision"
 - Student has to lock in to the school by Christmas
 - Student is supposed to withdraw applications from all other colleges
 - If student changes their mind, they have to start the application process all over again, including paying application fees
 - Change is only allowed if there is a change in financial situation
- There is more flexibility if a student applies "Early Action"

- Commitment not needed until May 1st

Excelsior Scholarship

- Still available, but have to make sure that money is included in State Budget
- Remember that there are lots of repercussions if a student does not complete four years in NY

Final Suggestions

- Have the STUDENTS call the Admissions Offices with questions
 - PARENTS can call the Financial Aid Offices
- Visit colleges!
- Check for scholarships
 - There are many posted on the St. Mary's Counseling Office page
 - There is a list of scholarship websites available in the Junior Folder

Students and parents are encouraged to call/email the counselors with questions

- "That's what we are here for!"

Thank you for attending!!!