

Fox Lane High School

Junior Group Guidance Packet

2023-2024

Agenda:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Session:</u>	<u>Topic(s):</u>
January 10	1	Introduction (process, timeline, websites, etc.) PSAT Review Standardized Testing
January 18	2	What Colleges Look for in Students What are YOU Looking for in a College
January 25	3	College Jargon Demonstrating Interest The College Visit
February 1	4	Course Selection for 2024-2025 Managing Stress in the College Process
February 8	5	Naviance Researching Colleges (possible course selections)
February 15	6	The Application Application Component Part 1: The Essay
February 29	7	Application Component Part 2: Activity Sheet Update
March 7	8	Application Component Part 3: Recommendations
March 14	9	Financial Aid & Scholarships
March 21	10	College Plan Check-in College Interview
March 28	11	Peppercorn University Final Steps & Checklist

- Class of 2025 Google Classroom code: foa56mt (same GG Google Classroom from last year)
- Small groups with your counselor run on **every E and 5 day** from **January 10th through March 28th**. You will most likely be assigned to durings your **PE/free period**.
- Please bring this packet every week.
- Handouts are also available on the Class of 2025 Group Guidance Google Classroom.
- Attendance is mandatory.

Helpful Websites

Category	Website	Web Address	Log in * (if applicable)	Password * (if applicable)
General	FLHS College Handouts	https://www.bcsdny.org/Page/1871		
	Naviance	https://student.naviance.com/flhsny		
	Niche (for college research)	www.niche.com		
	Common Application	www.commonapp.org		
Applications	Coalition Application	www.mycoalition.org		
	SUNY	www.suny.edu		
	CUNY	www.cuny.edu		
	SSAR (self-reported grades)	https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com/Login.aspx		
Standardized Testing	College Board (PSAT, SAT, APs)	www.collegeboard.org		
	ACT	www.act.org		
	Test Optional Schools	www.fairtest.org		
	Khan Academy (for FREE SAT test prep)	www.khanacademy.org		
Financial Aid & Scholarships	Kaplan (for FREE ACT test prep)	https://www.kaptest.com/act/free/act-free-practice-test		
	FAFSA (US Gov't Financial Aid Form)	www.fafsa.gov	FSA ID:	
	NYS Financial Aid: HESC & TAP	www.hesc.ny.gov		
	CSS/PROFILE (Financial Aid Application)	www.cssprofile.collegeboard.org		
	Fast Web and/or Going Merry (free scholarship search)	www.fastweb.com www.goingmerry.com		

* Only record usernames and passwords if you are comfortable keeping them on this form. Regardless, please keep all usernames and passwords in one place!

FLHS Junior Timeline - Class of 2025

- Students are encouraged to **visit colleges** (virtual or in person) throughout the year during the various school breaks (*most popular: February and Spring Break*)
- **Back to School Night** (September) and **Parent/Teacher Conferences** (October) for Parents
- **FLHS Club Fair** – Remember that it is important to be involved in extracurricular activities (either inside or outside of school)
- **PSATs** – Juniors take the *NEW DIGITAL* PSAT exam (October); visit Khan Academy to create a SAT prep account <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat> (Encouraged for college-bound students)
- **Standardized Testing** – Register for Winter/Spring SAT or ACT (please see page 2 for test dates and deadlines) – *Need help deciding which test to take? Check out the differences [here!](#)*
- **11th Grade Parent Night** (December) – Overview of the college application process
- **Late Fall is the beginning of the college research process!** Students can begin to research schools, register for standardized testing, visit colleges, and look through FLHS statistics for individual colleges via [Naviance](#). The more formal college planning process will kick into high gear when Group Guidance begins in Q3. Students can make **individual college planning meetings** with their counselor before and during the Group Guidance season as needed.

Fall

Winter

- **February Break** – take a few days and visit colleges
- **PSAT Results** provided by the College Board
- Take SAT or ACT (please see page 2 for test dates and deadlines)
- **Junior Group Guidance** (January) – Group Guidance sessions are extremely important to assist students in the college application process; all 11th graders will meet with their counselor weekly in small groups throughout the 3rd quarter on E/5 days
- **End of Quarter 2/First Semester** – End of Semester 1 classes; check portal for 2nd semester schedule
- We highly recommend that families interested in applying for **financial aid** for college join one of the many events offered by NYS Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) to assist families with the college financial aid process. <https://starttheregetthere.ny.gov/events>
- **Course Selection** (January-March) – Each student will have a “Course Information Day” followed by a “Course Recommendation Day” with their teachers; soon after, each student will meet with their counselor individually to select courses for the following year

Spring

- Families can schedule a **college planning meeting** with their counselor (*winter meetings are suggested for families planning to visit schools during Feb Break*)
- **Spring Break** – Take a few days and visit colleges
- Take SAT or ACT – Please see pg 2 for dates/deadlines
- **AP Exams** (May; if applicable)
- **Awards Ceremony** (by invitation)
- **FLHS College N’ Coffee** informal virtual event for parents (date TBD)
- **Local College Fairs** (information will be sent by Guidance in Spring)
- **Junior Day of Service** (May)
- **National Honor Society** Induction (May; by invitation)
- **Confirm courses** for next year when posted to portal
- Get **working papers** for summer employment – **Check out the *job opportunity board* outside of Guidance!**
- **Local Final Exams** – Students attend review sessions and/or local final exams on **all** days
- **Regents Exams** – Students only attend school on days they are scheduled for Regents exams

Summer

- **Report Cards** posted to portal – **HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!**
- Please consult the FLHS website for **summer reading list** and for **summer assignments** for some AP/Honors courses
- Take final SAT or ACT (if needed) – Please see pg 2 for dates/deadlines
- Follow steps on **Junior Summer Checklist** including: visit colleges, interview with admission counselors, revise college list, complete or update activity sheet, write or revise college essay, fill out most of the Common Application
- Engage in meaningful summer plans – **work** experience, **community service**, enrichment, etc.

2023-2024 Important Dates to Keep in Mind*

(*please refer to the BCSD calendar online for most accurate and up to date information)

September 12	Back to School Night for Parents (<i>encouraged</i>)
September 15	Add Deadline for full year and first semester courses
October 10	Drop Deadline for full year and first semester <u>elective</u> courses (<i>if applicable</i>)
October 11	PSAT (<i>recommended for 4-yr college-bound juniors</i>)
October 26-27	Parent/Teacher Conferences for Parents (<i>encouraged for parents of struggling students</i>)
November 13	Course Level Change Deadline (<i>if applicable</i>)
December 14	11th Grade Parent Night (<i>encouraged</i>) **NEW DATE**
January 10	Tentative Start Date for 11th Grade Group Guidance (<i>required for 11th graders</i>)
January 22	Start of Second Semester classes
February 1	Add Deadline for second semester courses
February 9	Drop Deadline for second semester elective courses (<i>if applicable</i>)
May 1	Southern Westchester College Fair (Westchester County Center - White Plains)
May 2	Northern Westchester College Fair (Northern Westchester BOCES - Yorktown Heights)
May 7-17	AP Exams (<i>if applicable</i>)
May 20 or 22	Junior Day of Service
May 21	Awards Ceremony (<i>by invitation only</i>)
May 28	National Honor Society Induction (<i>by invitation only</i>)
June 10	Last Day of Classes
June 11, 12, 13	Local Final Exams - Students attend review sessions and/or local final exams on all days
June 14-25	Regents Exams - Students only attend school on days they are scheduled for Regents exams
June 28	Report Cards posted to portal - HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

SAT Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
August 26, 2023 (<i>paper</i>)	July 28	August 15
October 7, 2023 (<i>paper</i>)	September 8	September 26
November 4, 2023 (<i>paper</i>)	October 6	October 24
December 2, 2023 (<i>paper</i>)	November 3	November 21
March 9, 2024 (<i>digital</i>)	February 23	TBD
May 4, 2024 (<i>digital</i>)	April 19	TBD
June 1, 2024 (<i>digital</i>)	May 17	TBD
August 24, 2024 (<i>anticipated</i>)	TBD	TBD

2023-2024

SAT

Test Dates

2023-2024

ACT

Test Dates

ACT Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
July 15, 2023 (<i>not offered in NY</i>)	June 16	June 23
September 9, 2023	August 4	August 18
October 28, 2023	September 22	October 6
December 9, 2023	November 3	November 17
February 10, 2024	January 5	January 19
April 13, 2024	March 8	March 22
June 8, 2024	May 3	May 17
July 13, 2024 (<i>not offered in NY</i>)	June 7	June 21

* Please consult College Board and ACT website for most up to date information

Guide to Your PSAT Scores

The PSAT is excellent practice for the SAT. It contains the same types of math, reading, and writing questions. The first thing to remember is the PSAT **isn't** used for college admissions, but high scores can earn you scholarship dollars, including a National Merit Scholarship. Additionally, your PSAT scores are a good predictor for how you may score on the SAT, which will be very important for college admissions and scholarships. **Bottomline... It's good practice!**

Accessing Scores Online

You can access your scores either through the Big Future Mobile app or through your [College Board](#) account. Eventually scores will also be posted on your [Naviance](#) account. The PSAT is scored on the same rubric, but a slightly different scale, as the real SAT. While the SAT is scored in a range of 400–1600, the PSAT range is 320–1520.

Understanding PSAT Scoring

Score	What is it?	Why it's important
TOTAL SCORE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sum of your 2 section scoresScore range: 320–1520 (Score range for the SAT is 400–1600)48–228 for the NMSC Selection Index score	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Your total score can help you predict how you may score on the SAT.While 1000 is the average score for the SAT, a 920 is the average score for the PSAT.Use the percentile to see how you rank against other test-takers.High scores and percentiles <i>may</i> earn National Merit recognition.
READING & WRITING SCORE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 of 2 section scoresScore range: 160–760	<ul style="list-style-type: none">See which section you're acing and where you might need more prep.Use the percentile to see how you rank against other test-takers.
MATH SCORE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 of 2 section scoresScore range: 160–760	

Using Your PSAT Score Report

Use your PSAT score report to identify your strengths and weaknesses, so you know what to work on as you prep for the real thing. Are there algebra concepts you need to review? Did you miss picking up points because you ran out of time?

- Your Score Range:** This range shows how much your scores would likely vary if you took a different administration of the test under identical conditions.
 - Total: ± 40 points, or Each Section: ± 30 points
- The All Tester Percentile:** The percentile compares you to everyone else who took the PSAT on the test date. A 70th percentile score means you scored equal or higher than 70% of the students who took the PSAT during that particular administration.

Knowledge and Skills

In the Knowledge and Skills section, you'll see a graphic that shows your performance on each of the **eight content areas** measured on the PSAT (4 in Reading and Writing, and 4 in Math). For each content area, you'll see:

- The approximate number of questions in the content area.
- The % of the section covered by that area (e.g. 12–14 Q's would be ~26% of the Reading/Writing section).
- A visual indication of how you performed in each content area.

You can use this section to identify content areas you may want to focus on to practice and improve.

Career Snapshot

You'll see a section that provides a snapshot of growing careers in your state which includes:

- The median yearly income of each career.
- The expected growth rate for new job openings in your state over the next five years.
- The most common education level for people in that career.

This list might include a career you're curious about—or maybe none of the options feel like a great fit. *It's okay either way!* This snapshot does not currently reflect your performance on the PSAT. You can explore personalized options that match your interests and skills through Naviance or at bigfuture.org/career-search.

NMSC Selection Index Score

National Merit (NMSC) uses the Selection Index scores to screen students. Your score is calculated by doubling your Reading and Writing Score, adding it to your Math score, then dividing that sum by 10. After reviewing your Selection Index score you can read more information about your eligibility for the National Merit® Scholarship and how scholarship recipients are determined by NMSC.

What Could You Score on the SAT?

Naviance will provide you with a predictive score for the SAT based on your PSAT score. In order to see your predictive score, add colleges to "Colleges I'm Thinking About" and then select "Compare Me." The "PSAT to SAT 1600" will show your predictive score.

What's Next?

After you get your PSAT scores, **create a Khan Academy account at www.khanacademy.org**. Students can also use College Board's Bluebook app (already downloaded on their Chromebook) for a free practice test which will integrate with the free SAT prep materials on Khan Academy.

Standardized Testing (SAT VS. ACT)

Fox Lane's CEEB code is 333245

Note: Each college has different standardized testing requirements. Please check with each school's website to determine what is required. For a list of colleges that have test optional/flexible policies please visit www.fairtest.org.

General Information		SAT (as of March 2024)	ACT
	Total Time	2 hours 14 minutes	2 hours 55 minutes (plus 40 minutes for optional essay)
	# of Sections	2	4 (plus 1 optional essay section)
	Sections	Reading & Writing, and Math	English, Math, Reading, Science, & Optional Writing
	Scoring	Two section scores: 200-800 scale combined for a total score of 400-1600	Four section scores: 1-36 averaged for a composite from 1-36
	Adaptive Questions	Difficulty of Module 2 depends on performance on Module 1	Increasing question difficulty for Math and Science sections only
	Pacing	More time per question	Less time per question, must move quickly
	Score Reporting	Most schools will Superscore the SAT. Students send scores officially from www.collegeboard.org or self-report scores to colleges depending on college guidelines.	Many schools will superscore the ACT. Students send scores officially from www.act.org or self-report scores to colleges depending on college guidelines.
	Registration	Create an account using a personal email address at www.collegeboard.org .	Create an account using a personal email address at www.act.org .
	Practice Test	PSAT - offered at FLHS in October of junior year	Call a local test prep company or take a community sponsored free practice ACT
	Test Dates	August, October, November, December, March, May, June	July (no NY), September, October, December, February, April, June
	Test Center	FLHS is a test center for the SAT but does not play a role in the administration of the SAT.	FLHS is NOT a test center for the ACT.
	Testing Accommodations	If you qualify for testing accommodations at FLHS, speak to your counselor prior to registering for a SAT to apply for accommodations. Once approved, you are approved for ALL future College Board exams (PSATs, SATs and APs).	If you qualify for testing accommodations at FLHS, you must first register for an ACT exam on www.act.org . Then notify your counselor after you register for the exam and they will apply for accommodations for you.
ACT Reading	Time	N/A	35 minutes
	Format	N/A	4 passages with 40 multiple choice questions
	Key Skills	N/A	Reading comp, inferring, locating details. Reading passages include content from Prose Fiction, Humanities, Social Science, & Natural Science
SAT Reading & Writing / ACT English	Time	2 separate 32 minute modules	45 minutes
	Format	54 short passages with 1 multiple choice question per passage	5 passages with 75 multiple choice questions
	Key Skills	Craft & Structure, Information & Ideas, Standard English Conventions, and Expression of Ideas	Grammar rules, connecting sentences logically, recognizing overall structure & argument
Math	Time	2 separate 35 minute modules	60 minutes
	Format	Each module has 22 questions, some multiple choice questions and some (8-12) student produced response	1 section with 60 multiple choice questions
	Key Skills	Algebra (35%), Word Problems, and Data Analysis (15%), Geometry & Trig (15%), & Adv. Math (35%)	Preparing for Higher Math (57-60%): Number & Quantity (7-10%), Algebra (12-15%), Functions (12-15%), Geometry (12-15%), Stats & Prob (8-12%); Integrating Essential Skills 40-43%: Rates & Percentages, Area/Surface Area, Average & Median
Science	Time	N/A	35 minutes
	Format	No specific section; imbedded in reading and math sections	Multiple passages with 40 multiple choice questions
	Key Skills	Understanding scientific ideas, reading charts and graphs	Doing calculations, reading charts and graphs, analyzing experimental design
Optional ACT Writing	Time	NO LONGER OFFERED	40 minutes for 1 essay
	Format		Presented with 3 viewpoints on a topic and asked to analyze and argue own perspective

WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN STUDENTS

While generalizations are dangerous on any topic, it is reasonably safe to say there are common criteria which colleges use to judge the acceptability of an applicant. The most selective colleges will review each component of the application more carefully and will be more discriminating than less selective schools. The factors below are important to most colleges:

TRANSCRIPT

Your high school record is the first factor considered for admission. When evaluating your transcript colleges look at two aspects: the strength of your program **and** the grades you received in those courses. It is important that you continue your coursework in each of the five major academic areas – English, Social Studies, Math, Science and World Language. The more selective a college is for admission, the more demanding the high school program should be.

****BE SURE TO TAKE A FULL, DEMANDING SCHEDULE SENIOR YEAR!****

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

Test scores are generally considered in relation to your overall record, either validating your existing record or demonstrating greater potential for achievement. Standardized tests will NOT override a student's academic performance throughout their high school career. There are an increasing number of schools who have become test optional for those students who feel that standardized testing does not accurately reflect their academic potential. If a student chooses not to submit standardized test scores, their grades will be weighed more heavily.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Counselor: The counselor's recommendation is a comprehensive report based on insights into your personal and academic qualities, interests and activities and teacher reports on your classroom performance. This recommendation highlights your most positive traits.

Teacher: A teacher recommendation describes your strengths as a student, reflecting projects undertaken, quality of written work and class participation. Your teacher may focus on your potential for academic growth and development and include observations on your personal qualities. Not all schools require letters of recommendation.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

College admissions officers are interested in how applicants spend their time outside the school day. Your participation and achievement outside of the classroom can significantly enhance your application. GREATER INVOLVEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN A FEW SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES IS MORE IMPRESSIVE THAN SUPERFICIAL INVOLVEMENT IN MANY.

ESSAYS

This is the part of the application where the student comes to life. At selective schools where students tend to have similar GPAs and test scores, the essay allows you to individualize your application and to demonstrate your writing skills. Not all schools require an essay, while some schools might require several.

INTERVIEW (when applicable)

An interview is a personal exchange of information between the student and the college. Interviews may be required, recommended or optional in the admissions process. Not all schools offer an interview.

What YOU Look for in a College

What factors are important to you?...

Circle or write in factors that might influence your decision of where to apply. Some factors might be very important to you while others might not apply to you at all.

Academics:

Possible Major(s):			
Research Opportunities	Co-op Opportunities	Special Programs	Class Size
Faculty: Student Ratio	Honors/Special Programs	Retention Rate	College vs. University

Selectivity:

Non-Competitive 90-100% Acceptance Rate	Competitive	Highly Competitive	Most Competitive Under 30% Acceptance Rate
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School Type:

2 Year	4 Year	Public	Private
SUNY	CUNY	Religious Affiliation	International
All Women's	Test Optional	Military or ROTC	HBCU

Location & Setting:

Urban (with defined campus)	Urban (without a defined campus)	Suburban	Rural
Commute	Dorm	Long Flight	Short Flight
Northeast	Southeast	Mid-West	West

Size:

Small (under 5K)	Medium (5-10K)	Big (10-15K)	Huge (more than 20K)
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Other Factors:

High Financial Consideration	Athletics (recruited)	Athletics (spectator)	Art
Music	Theater	Conservative	Liberal
Learning Disability Supports	Campus Facilities	Dietary Restrictions	Diversity
Study Abroad	Religious Organizations	LGBTQ+	Gender Ratio

Glossary of College Jargon

Admissions Terms:

Rolling Admissions – when a college or university accepts students on an ongoing basis without a formal application deadline. Schools that have rolling admissions benefit students who submit their applications early in the process.

Early Decision – is a program that some schools have where they accept applications early in the application process (1-2 months before the regular deadline) for those students who have chosen a school as their first choice school. Students who are accepted under an early decision program are bound to that acceptance and agree to attend that institution. The student must also agree to withdraw applications to all other institutions.

Early Action – is a program much like early decision, however in an early action agreement, a student is not bound to attend that institution and they may continue to apply to other schools. Although some schools have both an early decision and an early action program, most schools only have one or the other.

Target – a school whose profile *matches* that of a student. A student should fall between a school's mid 50th percentile of SAT scores and GPA to be a target school.

Reach – a school whose profile *exceeds* that of a student. A student who's SAT scores and GPA falls below the mid 50th percentile for a school should consider that school a reach. Even if your scores fall within the range for a school that institution may still be a reach school due to large applicant pools.

Safety – a school whose profile is *below* that of a student. A student

should be above a school's mid 50th percentile of SAT scores and GPA to be considered a safety school.

Class Rank – an admissions term that refers to whether or not a high school numbers their students based on their cumulative GPA.

GPA – stands for Grade Point Average. A GPA can be on different scales whereas the 3 most common ones are (from highest grade to lowest): A-F, 4.0-1.0, and 100-50 (where 65 is failing).

Weighted GPA – the term given to a grade point average where a student will receive extra points for classes with a honors or AP designation. Therefore, it is possible for said student to have a GPA above the maximum 100 in a class.

Unweighted GPA – an unweighted GPA assumes no extra points for the course level.

Waitlisted – a school may choose to waitlist a student if they have accepted enough students to fill their freshman class. If less than the projected amount of students deposit to a school, a school may choose to accept students off of their waitlist. Students who are waitlisted need to deposit to another school. Some years schools do not go to their waitlist. In other years a considerable amount of applicants may be taken off of the waitlist.

Deferred – a student who applies early decision or early action will either be accepted, rejected or deferred. If a student is deferred they will be reconsidered for admissions with the regular decision applicant pool.

SSAR – a form required at some colleges where a student must self-report their academic record instead of sending in a transcript.

Special Talent – a student who is considered to have a special talent is typically an athlete, an artist, a performer or a musician. A special talent can be beneficial in the admissions process if a student intends to continue using that talent in college.

NCAA – refers to the division of athletics that a school participates in. Within the NCAA, a school could either be division I, division II, or division III. Within the 3 divisions there are smaller conferences that schools participate in. A student who intends to compete on either the NCAA division I or II level needs to be cleared by the NCAA. This process should be started in a student's junior year of high school.

Associates Degree – the degree for completing a 2-year college program at a community/junior college.

Bachelors Degree – the degree given for completing a 4-year college program.

Test Optional – a student is able to decide whether or not to submit standardized testing as part of their application. Students should consider whether or not they are within a school's mid-50% OR whether or not a score accurately reflects their ability when deciding whether or not to apply to a school without test scores.

Test Free/Score Free – unlike test optional, when a school is test/score free they will NOT look at standardized test scores for any student.

Campus Life Terms:

Lecture-style class – a course that is typically large in size. A lecture is when a professor or graduate student disseminates course information to a class. Although questions may be asked, the focus of the course is typically not based on discussions.

Seminar-style class – a course where classroom discussion is an integral part of the curriculum. These classes can often be smaller in size since they are dependent on a dialog between the professor and students.

Greek System – refers to whether or not fraternities and sororities are present on a college's social scene. Fraternities are for men and sororities are for women.

Suitcase school – refers to a school where most of the student body leaves campus during the weekend.

Commuter school – refers to a school where the majority, if not all, of its students do not reside on campus. Most commuter schools do not offer housing or offer limited housing options.

Residential school – refers to a school where there is a heavy presence of student life on campus. The majority of students live on or close to campus.

Conservatory – is an institution where the focus is on a visual or performing art. A student who attends a conservatory typically will not have many courses outside of their field. Conservatories train students to become professional artists.

Cooperative Education Program (Co-Op) – a college program of alternating periods of full-time study and paid employment in related

work. Graduates have the advantage of 1-2 years of practical experience. Most Co-Op programs take 5 years to complete.

"Dry" campus – does not tolerate alcohol on campus for both of-age and under-age students.

Urban – refers to a campus situated in a city.

Suburban – is situated outside of a city. Westchester is considered to be a suburban environment.

Rural – considered to be country-like. A rural school is typically not in close proximity to a major city.

Financial Aid Terms:

Need-blind – a school is need-blind with regard to financial aid if they do not look at a student's financial need when making an admissions decision with regard to that student.

Need-aware – a school is need-aware if they do look at a student's financial need when making an admissions decision.

HEOP/EOP – stands for Higher Education Opportunities Program, or Educational Opportunities Program. The funding for both programs is the same, however HEOP refers to private schools in NY State, while EOP refers to public schools in NY State. To be considered for this program students must prove both economic and educational disadvantage. If accepted a student will receive special services and special funding to that institution. A summer "bridge" program is often included to help transition the HEOP/EOP students to life at college. If a school has a HEOP/EOP program a student who meets the economic and educational requirements may apply to schools that might normally be considered reach schools.

FAFSA – stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This is the document that must be filled out by the student and his/her family to be considered for Federal Financial Aid. There is no processing fee for this application.

CSS Profile – an application filled out by the family of an applicant for financial aid. Some colleges use this information in addition to the FAFSA to estimate how much money a family can contribute towards college expenses. Not all schools require this form. If there are questions, students must check with college financial aid offices to determine appropriate financial aid forms.

iDoc – a part of the CSS profile, iDoc is a service that collects a family's financial documents and distributes them to institutions on behalf of the student.

TAP – an application required for students applying for need-based aid for colleges based in the state of NY.

FAFSA Submission Summary (formerly SAR: Student Aid Report) – a summary of information provided on FAFSA used in determining student eligibility for Federal Student Aid.

Student Aid Index (formerly EFC: Expected Family Contribution) – the estimated amount of money a college assumes a family can contribute towards post-secondary education. The total tuition of a school minus the SAI determines the financial need for a student.

Net Price Calculator – is a tool you can use to help determine what need-based financial aid your family might qualify for. Each college website contains a calculator under their financial aid section.

Ways to Demonstrate Interest and Connect to a College

While an in person visit is still the best way to gauge fit, colleges are working overtime to ensure you have ample opportunities to learn about their school if you are unable to get to campus. It's increasingly important that you take advantage of these opportunities:

- **What is Demonstrated Interest?** Some colleges will keep track of various ways that you interact with them as a measure of how likely it is that you would attend their school, and therefore is taken into consideration during the application review process
- Even if you are able to visit a campus in person, taking a virtual tour or taking part in a virtual info session will be **another (somewhat new) way of expressing interest** to your prospective colleges
- Remember to always use your **personal email address** so colleges can get a hold of you

Different Resources for College Experiences/Demonstrating Interest:

→ Individual College Websites

- ◆ This should be your first stop on your virtual tour experience! Pay attention to your emails and/or go to the *Visit* section of your prospective schools' websites. For most schools you will find:
 - Virtual Tours
 - Virtual Information Sessions
 - Live Chat with an Admissions Counselors
 - Virtual Interviews (*please see our handout on Virtual Interviews for tips*)
 - Contact information to email admissions representatives

→ In Person Opportunities

- ◆ When feasible, on campus opportunities are the best way to get a sense of fit. In person opportunities can include:
 - On Campus Tours and Information Sessions
 - In person interviews
 - Regional Information sessions
 - FLHS-based visits/information sessions (in fall)
 - On Campus Open Houses and other events
 - College fairs

→ Interactive Virtual Tours

- ◆ There are several third party companies that have wonderful resources with virtual tours, and many with virtual reality (VR) options. ALWAYS make sure to enter your contact information so you get "credit" for the tours.
 - www.vouvisit.com/collegesearch
 - www.campustours.com

→ Strive Virtual College Exploration

- ◆ Strive Virtual College Exploration program offers virtual college information sessions. These 45-minute presentations will allow colleges to speak specifically about their institutions, connect with students, and answer questions live.
 - <https://www.strivescan.com/virtual/>

→ SUNY

- ◆ SUNY's [SUNY Virtual Events](#) schedule for students and parents
- ◆ SUNY also offers virtual [Financial Aid Information Sessions](#)
- ◆ Specific campus events can be found on SUNY's [Visit a Campus](#) page
- ◆ **WCC: Virtual Open House**
 - WCC periodically offers a [Virtual Open House event](#)

CAMPUS VISITS

The best way to learn about a college is by visiting the campus.
When visiting be sure to talk to students, jot down impressions of the campus and school and consider the following:

Will I fit in here????

LOOK AT THE STUDENTS:

Where are they from:

Local communities?

Other states and countries?

Public schools? Private schools?

What are they like:

Studious? Social? Athletic? Intellectual?

Diverse?

Do they seem:

Comfortable? Overworked? Bored? Intense?

What do they do on and off campus:

Sports? Student government? Greek life?

Concerts/lectures/plays? Clubs? Community service?

Do they tend to go home on the weekends?

When is your visit taking place: During exams?

Early morning? Nice weather? Inclement weather? During a break?

LOOK AT THE CLASSES:

How large are they:

Average class size vs. largest class size

How are they taught:

Lectures? Seminars?

By whom are they taught:

Professors? Graduate Assistants?

Am I intellectually challenged by what is happening in the class?

LOOK AT THE CAMPUS:

Athletics:

Who plays?

Are intramurals/clubs extensive?

How are facilities:

Good? Crowded? Available?

Meals:

How is the food? Are there different meal plans?

Are there special diet options:

Vegetarian? Kosher? Vegan?

Dorms:

Well maintained? Spacious? Noisy? Do students tend to live on campus? Is housing guaranteed?

Student services:

Academic counseling? Personal counseling? Job placement/career planning? Religious services/ organizations? Research and Internship opportunities?

Facilities:

Libraries? Laboratories/classrooms? Student Center?

Ask the Right questions!!!

ASK STUDENTS:

- How many hours a week do you study? Is that typical of students here?
- How easy is it to get the classes you want?
- Are campus jobs readily available?
- Are faculty members interested in and accessible to students outside of class?
- Do many students go home on weekends?
- Is it possible to study in your dorm room?
- What is the library like as a place to study? ... to do research?
- What do you like best about this college? ...least?
- If you had it to do again, would you still choose this college?

ASK YOURSELF:

- Is the setting appealing to me?
- What is the surrounding town like? Would I feel comfortable here?
- How is the food?
- Do the students all look the same?
- Are they different?
- Do they look like my friends?
- Are the buildings well-maintained?
- Are the grounds clean and manicured?
- Would I thrive in this academic environment?

ASK THE ADMISSIONS REP:

- What is the average GPA and SAT/ACT scores for your accepted students?
- What percentage of your students receive financial aid?
- What is your most popular major? What is your school most known for?
- What factors do you consider during the application process?
- How important is my GPA?
- How important are the types of classes that I take (honors, AP, Regents)?
- How important are my standardized test scores? Are you test optional?
- If test optional, what % of students submitted testing? And what was the mid 50% score of accepted students?
- What percentage of your students are: _____? (fill in with any community/group you identify with)
- What percentage of your freshmen live on campus?

My questions for my college visit:

Tour Guide Question:

1.) _____

Admissions Representative Question:

2.) _____

Campus Scorecard

School Name: _____

Rate these areas from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Jot down your impressions— things you like or don't like, things you want to remember.

Campus	①	②	③	④	⑤
Dorms	①	②	③	④	⑤
Classes/Academics	①	②	③	④	⑤
Library	①	②	③	④	⑤
Food	①	②	③	④	⑤
Fitness Center	①	②	③	④	⑤
Social Life	①	②	③	④	⑤
Overall Feel	①	②	③	④	⑤

Other Notes: *Can you picture yourself here?*

Campus Scorecard

School Name: _____

Rate these areas from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Jot down your impressions— things you like or don't like, things you want to remember.

Campus	①	②	③	④	⑤
Dorms	①	②	③	④	⑤
Classes/Academics	①	②	③	④	⑤
Library	①	②	③	④	⑤
Food	①	②	③	④	⑤
Fitness Center	①	②	③	④	⑤
Social Life	①	②	③	④	⑤
Overall Feel	①	②	③	④	⑤

Other Notes: *Can you picture yourself here?*

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Library	①	②	③	④	⑤
Food	①	②	③	④	⑤
Fitness Center	①	②	③	④	⑤
Social Life	①	②	③	④	⑤
Overall Feel	①	②	③	④	⑤

Other Notes: *Can you picture yourself here?*

Campus Scorecard

School Name: _____

Rate these areas from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Jot down your impressions— things you like or don't like, things you want to remember.

Campus	①	②	③	④	⑤
Dorms	①	②	③	④	⑤
Classes/Academics	①	②	③	④	⑤
Library	①	②	③	④	⑤
Food	①	②	③	④	⑤
Fitness Center	①	②	③	④	⑤
Social Life	①	②	③	④	⑤
Overall Feel	①	②	③	④	⑤

Other Notes: *Can you picture yourself here?*

Naviance is your HUB for everything career/college for the next few years! As a sophomore, you were able to research careers and interests. Junior year you will be able to research colleges and create an initial college list, and narrow down your list of schools to apply to. In senior year you will request transcripts and teachers recommendations through Naviance. Therefore it is very important that you understand the features and know how it works!

Logging On:

- **Step 1** - The preferred web browser for Naviance is Google Chrome. Using the BCSD Launchpad click on the Naviance Icon (alternatively: go to www.naviance.com; under Account Log-in, click on "FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS"; enter zip code 10506; click "Fox Lane High School").
- **Step 2** - Click on "Student" then enter your BCSD email and password. Do not attempt to log in more than twice - notify your counselor if you need to reset your password. Please store your password in a safe place as you will use Naviance often in the future.
- **Step 3** - *You can now log into Naviance from any computer to explore and research college and careers!*

Now you can explore colleges in Naviance...

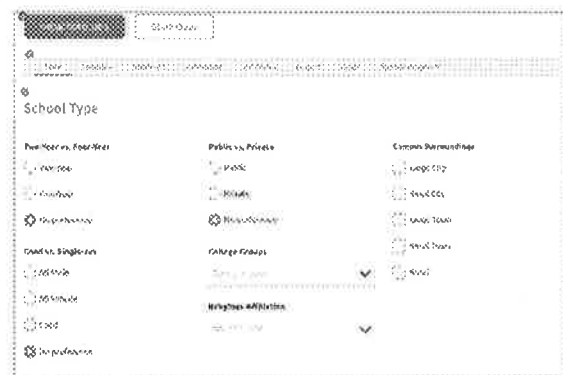
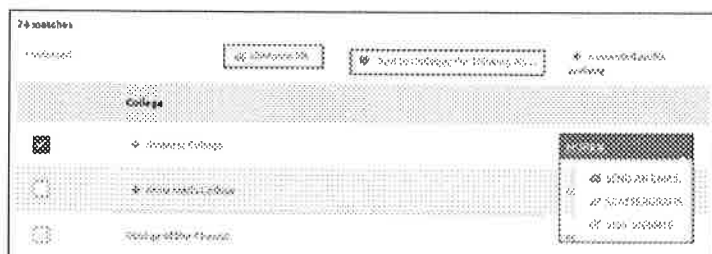
Using Naviance Student's *Find your Fit* search tools, you can locate the schools that most fit with your interests, passions, and criteria. Once you've narrowed down a group of colleges, multiple tools are available to understand more about that school in general and as a prospect.

- **Colleges I'm Thinking About:** This is a list of schools that you have *favorited* and identified as prospective schools of interest.
- **Colleges I'm Applying To:** This is a list of schools to which you are actually applying and will be updated in your senior year.

Advanced College Search

Using multiple categories, answer questions to identify colleges that match your interests.

1. Click on a *category* (i.e., Location or Majors).
2. Answer some of the *category-related questions* and *identify your preferences* for a school.
3. Click *View Matches*. A list of schools that match your criteria displays. You might need to go back to categories if you were too specific OR too vague.
4. Click the *checkbox(es)* next to the school(s) depending on what action you want to take next.

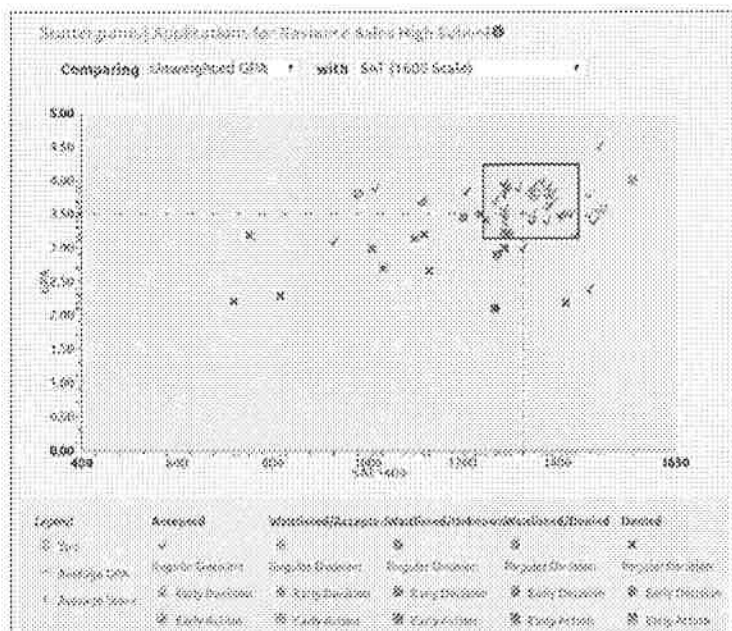



5. From results list, click *Save Search* to save this search.
6. From here, you can choose to use *Compare Me*, Add to *Colleges I'm Thinking About* (Favorite), Send an Email to the school, view a Scattergram for the school, or visit the school's website.
7. Once you Add to *Colleges I'm Thinking About* you now have a list of potential colleges. Go to *Colleges I'm Thinking About* to continue to research those schools through Naviance.

Scattergrams

A scattergram is a graph used to help you analyze how you fit in with other students from your high school who have been accepted, waitlisted, or denied admittance to a school based on (your **unweighted**) GPA and test scores.

1. Select a college from the dropdown list. The number in parentheses shows how many other students from your high school, historically, have applied to this school.
2. Click *View Scattergram*. The scattergram for this school displays.
3. Change the Comparing and with dropdown menus to make sure you are comparing the right information.
4. Use the legend to view those accepted, waitlisted, and denied. **Your** data shows as a light blue circle provided you have taken at least 1 SAT or ACT. Hover over a data point to see connected SAT and GPA information.



College Lookup

You can add colleges individually to your *Colleges I'm Thinking About* list as well. Lookup school(s) by multiple filters including name, country, state, or college group. Favorite a school by using the heart symbol next to the college in order to add that school to your *Colleges I'm Thinking About* list.

The College Lookup interface includes filters for Name, Location, and Country. A search bar is present. Below the filters, a list of colleges is shown with columns for College, Location, and a heart icon for favoriting. The list includes Washington, DC, Atlanta, GA, and others.

College Compare

College Compare

College compare averages are for students from your high school that have been accepted to that college's admissions from 2012-2016. Averages have a green checkmark when your number is higher and red "X" when your number is lower. PSAT score, if available, has been converted to the equivalent SAT score and compared to the average single SAT score of an accepted student. The column labeled "Acceptance" shows the number of students accepted out of the number of students that applied.

College	GPA	Single SAT 1600	Single SAT 2400	Combined SAT 1600	Combined SAT 2400	PSAT to SAT 1600	ACT	IB	Acceptance
University of Washington	3.5	1400	0	1400	0	1100	6	0	28/125
University of California	3.8	1300	1879	1142	1000	1267	28	20	28/125

Under your *Colleges I'm Thinking About* list you can select "Compare Me" to see the average test scores and **unweighted** GPA of FLHS students who have been previously accepted to that college. Numbers with a green check mean that you are above those averages, and numbers with a red X mean that you are below those averages. If you have not taken an SAT or ACT yet, the "PSAT to SAT 1600" will provide you with a predictive score. This is great for a quick glance! However for a more detailed understanding of where you fall, you should look at a school's *Scattergram*.

Explore, have fun, there is lots more to experience through Naviance!

College Research Table

[illegible]

Application Basics

3 main application types

- The Common Application (www.commonapp.org)
- The Coalition Application (www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org)
- Institutional Applications (found on individual school's websites)

Do's and Don'ts

- ✓ **Don't** use your BCSD email for college applications
- ✓ **Do** check spelling, grammar, capitalizations, etc
- ✓ **Do** check with your parent/guardian for questions you don't know the answer to
- ✓ **Do** consult the FLHS Guidance Cheat Sheet for FLHS specific questions
- ✓ **Do** match your name exactly as it appears on Synergy
- ✓ **Do** write down your username and password somewhere

Typical Components for Most Applications

- Demographics
- Family Information
- School Information
- Grading Information
- Senior Course Information
- Standardized Testing
- Honors/Activities
- College Essay
- Supplemental Essays (if needed)
- Major Selection



College Essay Guidelines

The college essay is often the most difficult part of an application for admission to a college. It is one of the few things that you've got complete control over in the application process, especially by the time you're in your senior year. You've already earned most of your grades; you've already made most of your impressions on teachers; and chances are, you've already found a set of activities you're interested in continuing. So when you write the essay, view it as something more than just a page to fill up with writing. View it as an opportunity to tell the admissions committee about who you are as a person.

To help you get off to a good start, we've put together the following "tips" and "hints."

Top 10 Essay Tips

1. **Be yourself.** If you are funny, write a funny essay; if you are serious, write a serious essay. Don't be afraid to reveal yourself in your writing. We want to know who you are and how you think.
2. Tell us **something different** from what we'll read on your list of extracurricular activities or transcript. They do **not** want to read **a summary of your resume.**
3. **Don't try to take on too much.** Focus on one "most influential person," one event, or one activity. Tackling too much tends to make your essay too watered down or disjointed.
4. **Write thoughtfully** and from your heart. Don't tell them what you think they want to hear.
5. Use a **strong opener.** Catch their attention from the start. Essays should have a thesis that is clear to you and to the reader. Your thesis should indicate where you're going and what you're trying to communicate from the outset.
6. **Don't do a history report.** Some background knowledge is okay, but do not rehash what other authors have already said or written.
7. **Proofread,** proofread, proofread. Nothing says "last-minute essay" like an "are" instead of "our" or a "their" instead of "they're."
8. Keep it **short** and to the point.
9. **Be specific** – avoid clichéd and generic writing. Use vivid and precise details. Show rather than tell, using anecdotes, examples, and descriptions.
10. **Limit the number of people** from whom you request feedback on your essay. Too much input creates an essay that sounds as though it has been written by a committee or results in writing that is absent of your own voice.

Three Steps to a Great College Essay

You, in 650 Words or Less

The college application essay is a chance to explain yourself, to open your personality, charm, talents, vision, and spirit to the admission committee. It's a chance to show you can think about things and that you can write clearly about your thoughts. Don't let the chance disappear - believe in yourself!

The Essay Writing Process

To write a college essay, use the exact same three-step process you'd use to write an essay for class: first prewrite, then draft, and finally, edit.

1.) Prewriting:

To begin, you must first collect and organize potential ideas for your essay's focus. Since all essay questions are attempts to learn about you, begin with YOU.

- **Brainstorm:** Set a timer for 15 minutes and make a list of your strengths and outstanding characteristics. Focus on strengths of personality, not things you've done. For example, you are responsible (not an "Eagle Scout") or committed (not "played basketball"). If you keep drifting toward events rather than characteristics, make a second list of the things you've done, places you've been, accomplishments you're proud of; use them for the activities section of your application.
- **Discover Your Strengths:** Do a little research about yourself: ask parents, friends, and teachers what your strengths are.
- **Create a "Self-Outline":** Now, next to each trait, list 5 or 6 pieces of evidence from your life - things you've been or done -- that prove your point.
- **Find Patterns and Connections:** Look for patterns in the material you've brainstormed. Group similar ideas and events together. For example, does your passion for numbers show up in your performance in the state math competition and your summer job at the computer store? Was basketball about sports or about friendships? When else have you stuck with the hard work to be with people who matter to you?

2.) Drafting:

Now it's time to get down to the actual writing. Write your essay in three basic parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction gives your reader an idea of your essay's content. It can shrink when you need to be concise. One vivid sentence might do: "My favorite science project was a complete failure." The body presents the evidence that supports your main idea. Use narration and incident to show rather than tell. The conclusion can be brief as well, a few sentences to nail down the meaning of the events and incidents you've described. An application essay doesn't need to read like an essay about *The Bluest Eye* or the Congress of Vienna, but thinking in terms of these three traditional parts is a good way to organize your main points.

There are three basic essay styles you should consider:

- **Standard Essay:** Take 2 or 3 points from your self-outline, give a paragraph to each, & make sure you provide plenty of evidence. Choose things not apparent from the rest of your application or "light up" some of the activities & experiences listed there.
- **Less-Is-More Essay:** In this format, you focus on a single interesting point about yourself. It works well for brief essays of a paragraph or so.
- **Narrative Essay:** A narrative essay tells a short and vivid story. Omit the introduction, write one or two narrative paragraphs that grab and engage the reader's attention, then explain what this little tale reveals about you.

3.) Editing:

When you have a good final draft, it's time to make final improvements to your draft, find and correct any errors, and get someone else to give you feedback. Remember, you are your best editor. No one can speak for you; your own words and ideas are your best bet.

- **Let It Cool:** Take a break from your work and come back to it in a few days. Does your main idea come across clearly? Do you prove your points with specific details? Is your essay easy to read aloud?
- **Feedback Time:** Have someone you like and trust (but someone who will tell you the truth) read your essay. Ask them to tell you what they think you're trying to convey. Did they get it right?
- **Edit Down:** Your language should be simple, direct, and clear. This is a personal essay, not a term paper. Make every word count (e.g., if you wrote "in society today," consider changing that to "now").
- **Proofread Two More Times:** Careless spelling, errors in grammar, awkward language, or fuzzy logic will make your essay memorable - in a bad way.

College Activity Sheet / Resume



Start with a Google Doc!

What to include:

- Clubs/Extracurricular Activities
- Outside of School Activities
- Athletics
- Community Service/Volunteer Work
- Work Experience
- Internships
- Research Experience
- Honors/Awards
- Hobbies/Interests
- Visual and Performing Arts Activities
- Category of your choice...

You decide the categories and the order - make choices based on what works best for you!

Do's and Don'ts:

- ✓ **Do** try to make it **one** page
- ✓ **Do** explain items that are unclear (bullets work well here)
- ✓ **Don't** explain *everything*
- ✓ **Do** keep the format consistent
- ✓ **Do** make it visually appealing
- ✓ **Do** think back to 9th grade
- ✓ **Do** think of both formal and informal activities
- ✓ **Do** highlight your strengths
- ✓ **Don't** include things that have happened before high school and are really old
- ✓ **Don't** include things that aren't true
- ✓ **Do** update periodically
- ✓ **Do** make sure someone edits your resume



Letters of Recommendation

Why do colleges require letters of recommendation?

- They want to learn more about you as a student and as a citizen in your community.

What are the different types of recommendations?

- Counselor - provides an overall picture of the student in and out of the classroom. The counselors write for each student, so no extra steps needed to secure this.
- Teacher - provides details about who you are as a learner in their classroom.
- Supplemental - optional if an additional person (coach, employer, clergy, etc.) knows you in a **very** different way than your teacher(s) and counselor.

How many teacher letters will I need?

- Most colleges require 1 or 2 teacher letters
- Some require 0
- Don't ask more than 2!

Who should I ask?

- Some colleges specify from which subjects (certain majors may require recommendations from specific subject areas) but most are open to any classroom teacher you have had.
- Junior year core subject area teachers are best because they have worked with you the most recently. If you would prefer a sophomore teacher, that's okay, but make sure you have stayed in touch with them since sophomore year (as a coach, club advisor, etc.).
- You must have been in that teacher's class as a student.

Some Dos and Don'ts

- Try to stick with junior year core classes.
- You can pick an elective class if that is an area you plan to pursue in college (ex. art, music, theater)*.
- You can pick a sophomore year teacher if you have stayed in touch with that person (through a club, sport, etc.)*.
- You can choose any core subject unless your intended college/major has a requirement*.
- Pay attention to individual college requirements.
- You don't need to ask your counselor for a recommendation - we are already planning to write for you!
- You don't need a supplemental letter of recommendation.

** as long as the school doesn't specify otherwise*

When should I ask?

- You can start reaching out to your teachers in person (preferred) or via email now, but be sure to review our guidelines below first:
 - Open with a respectful and formal greeting/closing.
 - Mention the major/program that you are applying to (if you know).
 - Clearly state that you are requesting a college letter of recommendation.
 - Share the reason you are asking this teacher in particular.
 - Offer any pertinent details about yourself or the class.
 - Be sure to note that the letter won't need to be completed until the fall.
 - Some teachers may respond, asking to speak with you to gather more information or ask you to complete a form for them. Be sure to offer the information they need to write a good letter for you.

What's next?

- In the fall you will confirm with the teacher(s) who have agreed to write on your behalf. You should confirm with your teachers at least three weeks prior to your earliest deadline.
- After you get verbal confirmation, your counselor will show you how to input the request into Naviance.

Do I get to read my letters of rec?

- The short answer is no.
- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. You will be asked in the fall whether or not you will waive your FERPA rights.
 - **Why should a student waive their FERPA rights?** Waiving your right allows colleges to know that you do not intend to read your recommendations, which helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful. Some recommenders may refuse to write a letter for you unless you waive your rights. Students are strongly encouraged to waive their FERPA rights.

Don't forget to say Thank You!

What if I want a supplemental letter of recommendation?

- A recommendation from someone who has not taught you would be considered an optional *supplemental* letter.
- Most students do **NOT** ask for a supplemental letter.
- If you believe that person would add a different perspective from your other letters of recommendation then you may ask that person to also write on your behalf.
- Even if a coach/club advisor is also a teacher at FLHS they do not count as a teacher recommendation if you have never been a student in their class.
- The process for a supplemental letter is different and does not involve Naviance. Those requests are most typically done through your Common Application account in the fall. Please speak to your counselor for more details.

How do I get my counselor to write a letter of recommendation for me?

- Counselors will write on behalf of every senior.
- No formal request needs to be made.
- Parents will be sent a "Brag Sheet" and students will be sent a "Student Questionnaire" via email. These items are instrumental in a counselor writing a comprehensive letter of recommendation.

Financial Aid

The Basics: Need-Based Aid vs. Merit-Based Aid

What is Need-based Aid? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Financial aid that comes in the form of grants and loans to cover the cost of college based on your family's income and ability to afford college.	What is Merit-based Aid? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Scholarships that are given to a student (most often regardless of income) based on a student's strength as an applicant or based on their accomplishments. Can be based on grades, athletics, special talents, leadership, etc.
How do I know if my family qualifies for Need-based Aid? <p><i>Complete a Net Price Calculator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete the Net Price Calculator on each school's websiteOr you can complete a general one at: https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/Or at: https://myintuition.org/A Net Price Calculator will help your family determine if you will qualify for Need-based Aid? - AND - it will show you what a typical financial aid package will look like for you at a particular school?	How do I qualify for Merit-based Aid? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Each scholarship program will have different requirements and criteria.Scholarships can be due at any time - but most applications will be completed during senior year after college applications are complete
Where does Need-based Aid come from? <ul style="list-style-type: none">The US Government (i.e. Pell Grants, and Government loans)NY State (i.e. TAP grants and others)Individual colleges	Where does Merit-based Aid come from? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Most merit aid comes directly from individual collegesState/National ScholarshipsLocal ScholarshipsCompany Scholarships
How do I apply? <ul style="list-style-type: none">FAFSA Application is required by ALL colleges to be considered for need-based aidThe CSS PROFILE application is additionally required by some schools for need-based aidNY State TAP application is required for students who plan to attend a college located in the state of NY	How do I apply? <ul style="list-style-type: none">Look at websites regarding merit-based scholarship programs - some require a separate application and some will automatically consider studentsScholarship Search Engines:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fast Web https://www.fastweb.com/college-scholarshipsBig Future through College Board https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-searchGoing Merry https://www.goingmerry.com/Local Scholarship packet come out January of senior yearCompany Scholarships: check with your parents to see if their workplaces offer one

Basic Financial Aid Terms:

Need-blind – a school is need-blind with regard to financial aid if they do not look at a student's financial need when making an admissions decision with regard to that student.

Need-aware – a school is need-aware if they do look at a student's financial need when making an admissions decision.

HEOP/EOP – stands for Higher Education Opportunities Program, or Educational Opportunities Program. The funding for both programs is the same, however HEOP refers to private schools in NY State, while EOP refers to public schools in NY State. To be considered for this program students must prove both economic and educational disadvantage. If accepted a student will receive special services and special funding to that institution. A summer "bridge" program is often included to help transition the HEOP/EOP students to life at college. If a school has a HEOP/EOP program a student who meets the economic and educational requirements may apply to schools that might normally be considered reach schools.

iDoc – a part of the CSS Profile, iDoc is a service that collects a family's financial documents and distributes them to institutions on behalf of the student.

FAFSA Submission Summary (formerly SAR: Student Aid Report) – a summary of information provided on FAFSA used in determining student eligibility for Federal Student Aid.

Student Aid Index (formerly EFC: Expected Family Contribution) – the estimated amount of money a college assumes a family can contribute towards post-secondary education. The total tuition of a school minus the SAI determines the financial need for a student.

New York State Scholarship Opportunities:

(1) Excelsior Program (Public NY Colleges)

- **Eligibility:** An applicant must be a resident of NYS; have a combined federal adjusted gross income of \$125,000 or less; be pursuing an undergraduate degree at a NYS public (SUNY or CUNY) college.
- **Award Amount:** A recipient may receive up to the resident tuition rate charged by SUNY or CUNY. Scholarship is for tuition only and does not apply to Room and Board.

(2) NY STEM Incentive Program (Public NY Colleges)

- **Eligibility:** An applicant must be a NYS resident; be enrolled full time at a public college located in NYS; be ranked in the top 10 percent of their graduating class; be matriculated in an approved undergraduate program leading to a degree in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics. There is no income restriction on the STEM Incentive Program.
- **Award Amount:** An annual award up to the annual SUNY tuition charged to NYS residents.

(3) Enhanced Tuition Award (Private NY Colleges - the private equivalent to Excelsior)

- **Eligibility:** An applicant must be a resident of NYS; have a combined federal adjusted gross income of \$125,000 or less; be pursuing an undergraduate degree at a participating private colleges located in NYS.
- **Award Amount:** Recipients of Enhanced Tuition Awards will generally receive \$6,000 through a combination of their TAP award, ETA award and a match from their private college.

(4) DREAM Act

- **Eligibility:** The Senator José Peralta New York State DREAM Act gives undocumented students access to NYS administered grants and scholarships that support their higher education cost.
- **Award Amount:** Varies

If Financial Aid is a main consideration for college make sure your prospective list includes SUNY/CUNY options and a number of safety/scholarship schools!

College Interviews

A college interview provides a college with an opportunity to give you more information about the school and answer any questions. In addition, the interview gives the college a chance to learn more about you, your interests, and how you'll be able to contribute to the school.

Are they required? Very few colleges require interviews, although a fair number offer optional or recommended ones. These are typically highly selective or small private colleges. Most large public universities don't even offer interviews because there are simply too many applicants.

How do I know? Check a college's website or contact its admissions office to determine whether interviews are offered and how to schedule one. Interviews can be on-campus, usually with an admissions representative, or off-campus near where you live, usually with an alumnus of the college.

What if an interview is optional? If you have the option of getting interviewed, do it. It's to your benefit to take advantage of an opportunity to interview because it shows the school that you're genuinely interested in attending. And demonstrating interest can greatly help your chances of admission. Finally, the interview gives the school another chance to get to know you outside of what's in your application.

Interview Tips

1. Bring specific questions

Your interviewer will expect you to ask some questions about the school and talk about why you want to go there. Put some energy into coming up with questions with answers that cannot be easily found on their website.

2. Practice, practice practice...

Being interviewed is a skill, and it requires practice. Sit down with one of your parents, a teacher, your guidance counselor, or a friend and have him or her ask you their best college interview questions. Answer them honestly and seriously. Then ask your "interviewer" how you came across. You'll also get better after each college interview, so try to arrange your schedule so that your last interviews are with the schools you care about most.

3. Common college interview questions

Interviewers tend to ask about the same topics. Common interview topics include: .

1. Why do you want to attend this college/university? (Hint: Specific examples are always key!)
2. What's your favorite subject in high school?
3. What do you want to study in college?
4. What do you enjoy doing when you're not in class?
5. What are three interesting things about you that I wouldn't know from your application?
6. What's an example of an obstacle, a failure, or a mistake that you learned from?

4. Be yourself...

Remember, the key to getting admitted (and being happy at college) is finding your best fit school. You want to be yourself so that the person interviewing you can discern what you would add to the campus community. Before your interview, think about why the school appeals to you, what you want to study, and what you might do after graduation.

5. ...but be your best self.

You have many sides, so

showcase the side of yourself that is professional, mature and poised. Don't show up looking like you just peeled yourself off the couch—wear what makes you feel comfortable and confident. Smile, and remember your interviewer wants the interview to go well too!

6. Stop worrying about the clock.

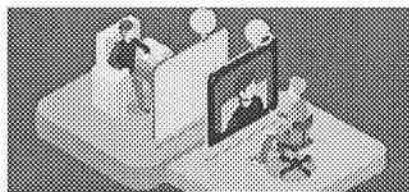
Most interviews run approximately 30 minutes to an hour. Students are sometimes told that the sign of a good interview is a long one. But on-campus interviews are usually scheduled back-to-back, and off-campus interviews are usually performed by alumni who are working professionals—so your interviewer is likely on a tight schedule. If you notice them checking the time, it's not (necessarily) because they think you're boring.

7. Be thankful.

Send a thank-you note. If there's something about the interview that was helpful to you, let your interviewer know. If you connected with your interviewer over a book, common experience, or a band you're both into, then mention it! Otherwise, simply express your continued interest and thank your interviewer for taking the time to meet with you.

** Excerpts from Princeton Review and Prep Scholar*

Virtual College Interviews



More and more colleges are opting for virtual interview experiences. As with any requirement, we strongly suggest that you check with each college's website to ensure that you are aware of their policies regarding the college interview. As before, some are required, some are optional, and some schools will not offer an interview opportunity. Some must be requested by you, and others might be offered by admissions after you apply. Bottom line, check the requirements of each school!

Please read the handout provided on the Google Classroom or in your Group Guidance packet for tips on the college interview. When doing a **virtual interview** consider these additional recommendations:

1. Carefully Select your Setting:

- When considering the location/room you will conduct your interview from, make sure you have an appropriate backdrop. Make sure your area is free of background noise. Prior to your interview day, check the lighting in the room.
- Please make sure everyone in your house is aware of your interview and request to have them remain quiet and away from your interview location.
- Random things are going to happen; your dog may have to let you know that a squirrel is in the yard, or the doorbell may ring. Do not get flustered, just roll with it.

2. Know the Device you're Using:

- Understand how to adjust the volume, camera, and screen.
- Be sure the device is charged and that you have the necessary cables if you need to connect to an outlet.
- When Wi-Fi isn't reliable, check to see if your phone can be used as a hotspot.

3. Prepare:

- Keep a list of possible questions for your interviewer that are specific to that college.
- Practice with a friend on a virtual platform so you both can practice using your skills in this format.
- As always, be yourself. The individuals on the other side of the camera are trying to get to know you as much as they want you to get to know them and understand their campus and needs.

4. Just Before the Interview:

- Keep the questions you plan to ask in view.
- Turn off your home and/or cell phone ringer(s) so you will not be disturbed.
- Double-check the time, and be aware of time zone differences.
- Test out the virtual platform ahead of time to make sure you know how it works.
- Dress as you would in an interview: a polo or nice shirt with pants or skirt is always a good look.
- Have water available; you will be talking quite a bit (but you should not be chewing gum, or eating during the interview!).
- Be ready early, just as you should always be for any interview.
- Close all other applications on the computer.

5. During the Interview:

- Look at the device's camera rather than your screen. (Think of the camera as being your interviewer; make eye contact.)
- Remember to nod and smile.
- Show your knowledge and etiquette by not interrupting and using appropriate language.
- If you can't hear clearly, as sometimes happens, apologize to the interviewer, and ask them to repeat the question.
- Should you get disconnected, wait a few minutes for the interviewer to call back. If that does not happen, initiate a new connection yourself.

6. After the Interview:

- Be sure to send a thank-you email to your interviewer within 24 hours of your interview.

Junior Spring Checklist

☐ Explore Colleges & Demonstrate

Interest

- Attend In-person or Virtual Campus Tours and Information Sessions; be sure to register when available Demonstrating Interest
- Open and read emails sent from colleges that you are exploring (as they may track this)
- Other ways to demonstrate interest/research: *email admissions counselors, explore admissions section of college websites, optional interviews, sign up for mailing lists, etc.*

☐ Narrow Down College List

- Keep your list accurate in Naviance
- Make sure you have a range of targets, reaches, & safeties (remember that safeties are our “scholarship schools”)
- What Colleges Look for in Students Handout
- Make sure you have at least 1 (non-reach) SUNY if financial aid is a consideration

☐ Update Activity Sheet/Resume Draft

- Activity Sheet/Resume Handout
- Refer to the samples for ideas on formatting and content

☐ Brainstorm Common App Essay Ideas

- Use Common App prompts
- College Essay Guidelines

☐ Take your Spring Exams

- SAT www.collegeboard.org (free prep at [Khan Academy](https://www.khanacademy.org))
- ACT www.act.org (free prep at [Kaplan](https://www.kaplan.com))

☐ Ask Two Teachers for a Letter of Rec

- Complete any information requested by teachers
- Follow up with teachers this fall
- Juniors Letters of Recommendation Handout

☐ Complete Student Questionnaire by 5/1

(through Google Doc found in Classroom)

- Required for counselor letter of recommendation
- You can also remind your parents to complete the brag sheet for you!

☐ Attend a Financial Aid event (parents)

- Highly recommended for families interested in financial aid
- Online SUNY Financial Aid events and HESC Financial Aid events

Remember: All college handouts are in our *Group Guidance Classroom*

Peppercorn University Worksheet

- Have you read the guidelines on the first page closely?
- Make sure to pay attention to what factors should be considered when making decisions on candidates. You are employees of Peppercorn University and therefore should make decisions based on the criteria they have set forth for you.
- Have you looked closely at each candidate? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- You do not have to base decisions solely on grades and SATs, and want to look at the candidates holistically.
- When we come together as a committee we will have to make decisions by the majority, so make sure to get your arguments ready for the candidates you want to see accepted.
- You have visited their high school and have met all the candidates, and want to make sure that your voice is heard during committee.
- Remember you have to **Accept (A)** two candidates, **Defer (D)** one candidate, and **Reject (R)** three candidates.

In the space below you may take notes on the six candidates. You may want to write down pros and cons for each candidate as well as total SAT scores, course levels, rigor of senior year, and GPAs. Also note academic trends, and anecdotal information.

Raul: **A D R** (Circle one)

Rosie: **A D R**

Justin: **A D R**

Stella: **A D R**

Roger: **A D R**

Marsha: **A D R**