

# **Post-Secondary Planning: College & Career**

**Tamarac High School Counseling Center**

# What to do in 11th grade:

- Take a challenging course load, and keep your grades up
- Continue involvement with school and community extracurricular activities
- Meet with your School Counselor to discuss career interest & college options
- Explore college and career options using resources available in the High School Counseling Center: handbooks, college & career websites, etc.
- Read the Counseling Center Newsletter monthly
- Take advantage of opportunities to speak with college representatives: college fairs, visits to the Counseling Center, campus visits, etc.
- Attend the **College Caravan** at Tamarac High School: May 24th, 8:00am
- Register for the SAT and/or the ACT in the spring (May or June)

# What to do in 12th grade:

- Continue to take a challenging course load, & keep grades up-colleges and employers seek the best prepared students, and will see all of your grades
- Register to retake the SAT and/or ACT in early fall
- Attend the Financial Aid information session with your parents
- Meet with your School Counselor in the fall to discuss your plans
- Speak with college admissions representatives who visit the Counseling Center, attend college fairs, make appointments for college visits
- Consider college essay topics and begin drafts
- Prepare applications carefully!
- Continue reading the Counseling Center Newsletter monthly

# Recommended Testing Schedule

- 11th Grade:
  - May or June: SAT &/or ACT (\*select to take with writing if required by the colleges you are considering applying to)
- 12th Grade:
  - September or October: SAT &/or ACT (\*select to take with writing if required by the colleges you are considering applying to)
- Registration must be done online
  - SAT: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
  - ACT: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)
- Practice tests and study materials are available in the Counseling Center

# How to Research Colleges

- School Counselor
- Online: Counseling Center website, Career Connections website, etc.
- College catalogs and other print materials, college websites
- College fairs, open houses, college representative visits
- Campus visits

# Questions to Ask-Choosing a College

- What type of college would I like to attend?
  - Four year vs. two year
  - Public vs. private
- What college environment am I looking for?
  - Large university vs. small college
  - Big city vs. small town
  - Resident vs. commuter
- What is my tentative college major?
  - Liberal Arts vs. technical vs. specialized school
- What is the cost of the college I am researching?

# The Best College

The best college for *you* is one that fits....

- Academically
- Athletically
- Socially
- Financially
- Emotionally

# College Search Tips

- Only apply to schools that you would be happy to attend if you were accepted
- Apply to a range of schools:
  - Safety
  - Good match
  - Reach
- 4-5 schools is a fine number



# College Acceptance: What Colleges Look At

- High school grades
- Rigor of course load
- Standardized tests: SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, Regents Exams
- Extracurricular Activities
- College Essay
- Recommendations from School Counselor and teachers
- Demonstrated interest

# Applying to College-Types of Applications

- Instant Admit Days
- Institutional Online Applications
  - Sometimes online applications are free
  - Check college websites directly-Admissions section
  - “Fast Forward” applications
- SUNY Online-”Apply Now”
  - Preferred method of applying to State University of New York (SUNY) Schools
- Common Application
- Paper Applications

# Completing College Applications

- Complete all parts of the application: essay, personal statement or writing sample, supplement (if required) and fee
- Prepare a resume or activity sheet-may be required
- Request letters of recommendation from counselor and teachers
- Request official standardized test scores from CollegeBoard (SAT), ACT, etc.
- Complete and submit an “Application Information/Transcript Request Form” to the Counseling center:
  - One form per college
  - Allow at least 5 days for records to be processed and released from the Counseling Center-plan accordingly, be mindful of deadlines

# The College Essay

- Required by many four year colleges as part of the application
- An opportunity for you to give the college personal information and insight into who you are
- Take your time writing it, and be thoughtful
- Proofreading is important! Have someone read it over-parent, School Counselor, English teacher, etc.
- One well written, well edited essay could work for several different applications
- Start early!
- The Counseling Center has reference materials to help with the essay

# Letters of Recommendation

- Required by many colleges and employers as part of the application
- Who should write one: your School Counselor, at least two teachers
- You may also consider asking a coach or community member
- Ask in advance! A good letter takes time to create
- Provide a copy of your autobiographical sketch and/or resume
- Provide copies of any other recommendation forms, if required by the college or employer

# College Admission Policies

- **Traditional:** Typically applications are due before January 1st of 12th grade. Notification of acceptance is usually in March or April
- **Rolling Admissions:** Students apply any time before a specified date, and will receive a reply within a month to six weeks from the date of completed application
- **Early Decision:** Applications are submitted early (typically by November 1st of 12th grade), and admissions decisions are made in advance of the typical notification date and are binding. \*Student's top choice school
- **Early Action:** Applications due in early November, & admissions decisions are made in advance of the typical notification, but are typically NOT binding

# Financial Aid

- Financial Aid is money to help you pay for college
- Money is available for all types of colleges: two year college, four year college, vocational/trade schools
- You apply for financial aid during your Senior year as early as October 1st using “Prior Prior Year” data
- Your parents will be involved with the process-FAFSA, CSS Profile
- Attend the Financial Aid information session, hosted by the High School Counseling Center
- The Financial Aid offices at the colleges you’re applying to are also excellent sources of information

# Scholarships

- Start early-begin looking during Junior year and throughout Senior year
- Students are considered for merit based awards from colleges during the application process-based on GPA, SAT/ACT scores, extracurriculars, etc.
- Larger scholarships often awarded by the college at the time of acceptance-may be part of the Financial Aid package
- Apply for local scholarships! The Counseling Center Newsletter lists many awards each month that students are eligible to apply to
- Other resources: online, Scholarship Search on the Career Connections site, books available in the Counseling Center
- Be mindful of deadlines



# Playing Sports in College

- If you would like to play college sports at the Division I or Division II level, you must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center
- All of your high school coursework, grades and test scores must be approved
- Not all courses offered in high school meet NCAA eligibility requirements-be sure to review the Course Selection Guide carefully, speak with your School Counselor, and check the NCAA Eligibility Center website directly for requirements and approved courses
- [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)

# Resources

- Your School Counselors!
  - Mrs. Maloney: [pmaloney@brunswickcsd.org](mailto:pmaloney@brunswickcsd.org)
  - Mrs. Poupore: [ppoupore@brunswickcsd.org](mailto:ppoupore@brunswickcsd.org)
- **The Counseling Center website:** organized by category, with information and links to a variety of online resources
- **The Counseling Center Newsletter:** available each month-print copies and online
- **Senior Notes:** a periodic, timely email blast for Seniors and their parents
- **The High School Counseling Center:** a variety of print materials available for you to take or borrow