

POST-SECONDARY PLANNING

SELF – ASSESSMENT

Evaluate and analyze your interests, strengths and abilities. An on-line career interest survey is available to all students at www.careercruising.com (the username is **Parkland, and the password is Trojans**). Also, the ASVAB, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, is an excellent career assessment tool available to juniors and seniors during the months of September and April.

COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS

Students should consider the following factors when creating a list of potential schools:

- Major course of study and future career paths
- Academic admission requirements
- Geographical location
- Size
- Financial obligations
- Extracurricular activities
- Accreditation

The next step is to create a list of possible schools – your college search can be completed on-line using www.careercruising.com, www.collegeboard.org or www.collegedata.com.

COLLEGE RESOURCES – DO THE RESEARCH

Resources available in the Counseling Office include:

Internet – computers and a listing of websites are available for searching schools, scholarships, financial aid, etc.

Profile/Reference Books - such as Barron's, Peterson's, etc.

College Representative Visits - are scheduled throughout the school year. Juniors and seniors are welcome to attend with teacher permission.

All of the above will help you to **narrow the list of possible schools and provide you with a clearer direction.**

TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Learn the requirements for each college/university. The SAT I should be taken in the spring of the junior year and/or in the summer/fall of the senior year. Parkland offers a prep course in the fall and the spring, which provides students with an opportunity to review test-taking strategies. Parkland High School is a test center for the SAT administrations scheduled for November 2019, March 2020, May 2020, and June 2020. The SAT exam is also offered locally in August, October, and December of the school year. Students can register for the SAT at www.sat.org/register.

When registering for the SAT I, be sure to include the 4 college codes allowed by the College Board as part of the total fee. Most schools require SAT scores to be

submitted directly from the College Board. If you do not do this when initially registering for the SAT, you must pay an additional fee later in order to forward your scores to any college or university. Also, be sure to include the Parkland High School code number, #393125 on your registration form. If this number is not provided, your scores will not be sent to Parkland High School and they will not appear on your high school transcript.

Score Choice is an SAT registration option offered by the College Board. Students are able to select one composite test score on a particular sitting date and only that score will be sent to colleges. All other scores will be held and not reported. Be sure to read the SAT registration options closely in order to determine which score reporting option is best for you.

SAT fee waivers are available to students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Please see your counselor to discuss your eligibility.

Some colleges require SAT II Subject tests. Check the school's website to find the latest information. If the tests are required, usually two subject tests must be completed.

The American College Test (ACT) is an alternative to the SAT I and is accepted at all colleges. The ACT will be offered in the Lehigh Valley in September 2019, October 2019, December 2019, February 2020, April 2020, June 2020 and July 2020. Students can register for the ACT at www.actstudent.org.

During the month of May, **Advanced Placement Tests** are available in all AP courses offered at Parkland High School. AP scores will be recorded on the high school transcript unless a written request to remove those scores is received from the student and parent.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

A Transcript Release Form must be signed and submitted to the Counseling Office the first time an application is completed. No college applications will be processed until this form is submitted. This is extremely important in order to complete your applications on time. Seniors have the option of removing their SAT or ACT Scores from their transcript. If the scores are removed it is the responsibility of the student to submit all test scores to colleges/universities through the College Board or the ACT organization.

Counselors begin processing college applications at the beginning of the senior year. Ten working days are required for processing all college and scholarship applications. An application may require an official transcript, high school profile, secondary school report and a counselor recommendation. **If a recommendation is requested, a recommendation profile form or resume must be submitted to the Counseling Office.**

Many transcripts and secondary school reports are now processed online through Parchment Exchange, Common Application, SendEdu and other online services.

Students are encouraged to open a Parchment Exchange account during the spring/summer between their junior and senior year. Parchment is an electronic transcript service used by Parkland High School. Students can request their high school transcript be sent to most colleges and universities through the Parchment system.

Over 800 colleges now accept the **Common Application**. **The Common Application can be accessed online at www.commonapp.org.** It is a very convenient and efficient way to process numerous college applications. The Counseling Office processes all secondary school reports for the common application online. **Students are required to enter the counselor's email address in order to activate the secondary school report link.** All information will be submitted online including recommendations and transcripts.

Requesting teacher letters of recommendation is the responsibility of the student. Teacher recommendations are processed separately from the application. Students should provide the teacher with an email link so the recommendation can be sent electronically. If a print copy of the recommendation is required, a stamped addressed envelope should be provided to the recommender. Students may want to provide a recommendation profile/resume to assist teachers with writing the best possible recommendation.

Some colleges require mid-year grade reports. Mid-year grade reports for all Common Applications are processed by the high school counselor. If a mid-year grade report is needed for a college application processed through Parchment please place a new transcript order request in Parchment at the completion of the second marking period.

All students should request **final transcripts through Parchment**. Colleges and universities require documentation of final grades and verification of graduation status at the end of the senior year.

FINANCIAL AID

The **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)** is a free federal form that must be completed to determine eligibility for Federal Aid Programs such as Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, Stafford Loans and work-study employment. The Class of 2020 will file the FAFSA with "Prior-Prior Year" (2018 income tax information) for the 2020-21 school year. FAFSA is available as of October 1, 2019. This process will enable students to file their FAFSA earlier, with more accurate information, aligning more directly with the admissions process.

A **Federal Student Aid ID** must be created to log into the U.S. Department of Education websites. Your FSA ID confirms your identity when accessing financial aid information and electronically signs Federal Student Aid documents. Students and parents will both need to create a FSA ID. For help, go to StudentAid.gov/fsaid.

The **CSS Profile form** is required by some private colleges and universities to access institutional aid. This form needs to be completed only if the college requires it as part of their financial aid application. There is a fee to register for the CSS Profile and a charge to send information to individual colleges and universities. CSS Profile forms are available online at <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com> October of the senior year.

Scholarship links and information resources are located on the Parkland High School website. Local scholarship opportunities should be researched at places of employment, unions, religious organizations, and other community groups. Free scholarship search services include: FastWeb, Scholarships.com, Cappex Review, Chegg and Scholarshippoints.com.

MILITARY OPTION

Recruiters from all branches of the military visit the high school throughout the school year. Students can initiate a meeting through their school counselor.