

SENIORS – SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Julie Sitko, College and Career Counselor

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Welcome to a new school year and your child's senior year of high school! My name is Julie Sitko and I am the College and Career Counselor. This is the time to think about life after high school. My role is to advise and support students and families in the college search and to help identify "best fit" colleges and universities, and to assist students in realizing th

Here are some things to think about as we go through your child's senior year:

FALL - Post-Secondary Timeline for seniors

- Check with the colleges your child wants to apply to determine if they need SAT or ACT test scores. Many are not requiring board scores this year for admission or scholarships. Even if students do test, they don't have to apply with test scores – look at the scores normally accepted at a school and determine if students should apply with or without test scores. (easy to do – google: 50% SAT at X college/university)
- If your child does register for ACT/SAT tests, utilize the opportunity to send their scores to four schools for free. Requesting scores to be sent before testing will ensure the scores get to the schools faster. If scores are lower than previous tests, colleges will look at the highest test scores and should not penalize students for the lower test scores.
- Have your child talk to teachers about writing recommendation letters. Students should have a conversation with a teacher about a recommendation letter, then request it in Naviance.
- Encourage your child to apply to college. My recommendation is to submit applications by Thanksgiving, but no later than Christmas. Be cognizant of individual college deadlines.
- Your child will request transcripts to be sent via Naviance. I will be talking with the seniors next week about requesting transcripts and recommendation letters. Guides on how to request both will be in the Seniors 2024 Teams page.
- Complete the Moon Records Release form. This form will be available on Monday, September 11 through the Seniors 2024 Teams page. The form must be completed before any transcripts will be sent. Any questions, reach out to Mrs. Marciniak.
- Encourage your child to register to attend college visits at Moon. All visits are listed below.
- Participate in online programming hosted by colleges. Information is posted on the schools' individual websites.
- Encourage your child to register to vote! If they haven't already registered, the deadline to register to vote in Pennsylvania is October 23. To vote, your child needs to be 18 by Election Day (November 7). More information on registering to vote: <https://www.votespa.com/Register-to-Vote/Pages/How-to-Register-to-Vote.aspx>. Encourage your child to research the candidates and vote on candidates who they feel best represent what is important to them. Have them pay attention to the local elections – those are the elected positions that will most likely have the most influence on their day-to-day lives.

SRAR workshop: Students applying to Pitt, Penn State, Virginia Tech, Clemson, University of Delaware – among other schools do not require students to turn in a transcript when they apply to these schools. Instead, students will complete the Self Reported Academic Record (SRAR) as a required part of their application. I'm partnering with Penn State – Beaver to host a workshop where students will complete the SRAR with the Director of Enrollment. He'll walk the students through the SRAR.

Students must sign up for the workshop in the counseling center.

Prior to the workshop, there are several steps the students have to take (including create a SRAR account).

Wednesday, September 13 during Activity and 2nd period

COLLEGE FAIRS

During the first week of October, there are college fairs all over Allegheny County.

Monday, October 2

North Pittsburgh College Fair

LaRoche University

6-8 PM

Kerr Fitness Center

Tuesday, October 3, 2023
South Pittsburgh College Fair
Bethel Park High School

Thursday, October 5, 2023
West Pittsburgh College Fair
Robert Morris University
6-8 PM
UMPC Complex

College fairs are a great opportunity to explore options, gather information, ask questions, get a feel for campus culture, learn about scholarship opportunities, and compare options. They could also be an opportunity for overwhelmed or unsure students to start thinking about what type of post-secondary education is best for them. The schools will be arranged alphabetically and the best way to approach the college fair is just to wander around, gathering information and asking basic questions like:

How many students are at your school?
What are your most unique majors?
Why do students like your school?
What is the campus culture like?

FINANCIAL AID AWARENESS

The FAFSA is being revamped this year and will not be released until December (an exact date has not been given)

PHEAA Virtual Financial Aid Night

Wednesday, November 15

6:30 PM

Please join a representative from PHEAA (the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) for a virtual Financial Aid Night from the comfort of your home. This presentation will provide an early understanding of the financial decisions students need to make concerning higher education. Participants will have the opportunity to enter questions in the Q & A section at any time, as well as at the end of the presentation.

Registration information will be available closer to the event.

IN-PERSON FAFSA Completion workshop

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

6:30 PM

This is an opportunity for families to complete the FAFSA with the help of Amy Sawdey, our partner at PHEAA.

Registration information will be provided closer to the event.

Scholarships:

All scholarships that come through our office are listed in Naviance. To find the scholarships, log in to your Naviance account, go to Colleges>Scholarships and money>Scholarship list. The scholarships we get in the counseling center are listed on the 'Scholarship list' page. That site is updated regularly, so be sure to check back regularly as new scholarships are posted. Your child should be checking this site regularly. My favorite scholarship search sites are: www.fastweb.com, www.goingmerry.com, and www.pittsburghfoundation.org/scholarship_search#hs. The last site is local (Pittsburgh) scholarships. You do have to search through the scholarships, but there is a lot of money available to students.

ASVAB:

The ASVAB is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. It is also an excellent assessment for general career guidance. It is administered annually to more than one million military applicants, high school, and post-secondary students. The test will be administered on Wednesday, November 1. More information will be shared in October and November. The test will also be administered in March 2024.

College Representatives Visiting Moon Area High School:

Colleges come to Moon to talk to students about their schools. This is a good opportunity to get general information about schools, but also a great opportunity to meet the admission counselors. Often, the counselors who do these visits are also the same people who will read your child's college application and can be a first line resource for all questions about that school.

All visits are listed on the Naviance homepage, under "What's New." Students sign up for visits in Naviance. Registration will close one hour prior to the visit. All visits are also on the announcements. Most visits are in person, but a few are virtual. To register for a visit, your child will go to the main page of their Naviance account, go to the of visits, under "What's New," click on more info beside the name of the school and on the next page, "register me.' Once registered students will stop by the Counseling Center to get a pass to attend the visit.

This list will change and additional schools will be added. The most current list is in Naviance.

<u>College</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
<u>Carlow University</u>	Mon September 11, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>Carnegie Mellon University</u>	Tue September 12, 2023	8:27 AM
<u>Dickinson College</u>	Tue September 12, 2023	10:11 AM
<u>Indiana University of Pennsylvania-Main Campus</u>	Wed September 13, 2023	12:08 PM
<u>Westminster College</u>	Wed September 13, 2023	1:30 PM
<u>Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania</u>	Thu September 14, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>Saint Vincent College</u>	Thu September 14, 2023	11:03 AM
<u>Washington & Jefferson College</u>	Fri September 15, 2023	11:03 AM
<u>University of Oregon</u>	Fri September 15, 2023	11:55 AM
<u>Kent State University at Kent</u>	Mon September 18, 2023	8:27 AM
<u>Shenandoah University</u>	Mon September 18, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>Duquesne University</u>	Tue September 19, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>Point Park University</u>	Tue September 19, 2023	10:11 AM
<u>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</u>	Fri September 22, 2023	1:45 PM
<u>PennWest California</u>	Mon September 25, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg</u>	Mon September 25, 2023	11:55 AM
<u>Seton Hill University</u>	Tue September 26, 2023	8:27 AM
<u>University of Akron Main Campus</u>	Tue September 26, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus</u>	Wed September 27, 2023	10:32 AM
<u>Marietta College</u>	Wed September 27, 2023	1:30 PM
<u>Pennsylvania State University-Penn State Main Campus</u>	Thu September 28, 2023	10:11 AM
<u>University of Delaware</u>	Thu September 28, 2023	1:23 PM
<u>Allegheny College</u>	Fri September 29, 2023	8:27 AM
<u>Ohio Northern University</u>	Mon October 2, 2023	10:11 AM
<u>Worcester Polytechnic Institute</u>	Mon October 2, 2023	11:03 AM
<u>The College of Wooster</u>	Tue October 3, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>University of Mount Union</u>	Tue October 3, 2023	1:23 PM
<u>University of Dayton</u>	Wed October 4, 2023	8:56 AM
<u>Villanova University</u>	Wed October 4, 2023	1:30 PM
<u>Baldwin Wallace University</u>	Thu October 5, 2023	11:03 AM
<u>University of Kentucky</u>	Thu October 5, 2023	11:55 AM
<u>Temple University</u>	Fri October 6, 2023	9:19 AM
<u>University of New Hampshire-Main Campus</u>	Fri October 6, 2023	11:03 AM
<u>Michigan State University</u>	Tue October 10, 2023	11:03 AM
<u>Thiel College</u>	Tue October 10, 2023	1:23 PM
<u>Virginia Tech</u>	Wed October 11, 2023	8:56 AM
<u>St Bonaventure University</u>	Wed October 11, 2023	10:32 AM
<u>Case Western Reserve University</u>	Thu October 12, 2023	8:27 AM
<u>Boston University</u>	Thu October 12, 2023	1:23 PM
<u>Waynesburg University</u>	Mon October 16, 2023	8:27 AM

Wheeling University	Mon October 16, 2023	9:19 AM
Colby College	Tue October 17, 2023	9:19 AM
Rosedale Technical College	Tue October 17, 2023	10:11 AM
John Carroll University	Wed October 18, 2023	10:32 AM
Lycoming College	Thu October 19, 2023	10:11 AM
Lehigh University	Mon October 23, 2023	8:27 AM
Jacksonville University	Mon October 23, 2023	10:11 AM
Miami University, Oxford	Tue October 24, 2023	10:11 AM
University of Pittsburgh-Johnstown	Mon October 30, 2023	8:27 AM
Saint Francis University	Thu November 2, 2023	8:27 AM

Visiting schools:

If you have a chance to visit schools, here are things to think about when you're on campus:

- Talk to people in the department of anticipated study. If your child is totally undecided, talk to the schools about what they do to help pick a major. Colleges have robust career centers and advising programs which help students pick a major, find internships and eventually jobs and graduate schools.
- Ask what is the four-year graduation rate? Colleges report a six-year graduation rate, due to financial aid. Ask about the four year rate— schools should try to get students in and out in four years – make sure the school is going to help your child make the best use of their time and get the classes needed to get out in time.
- Ask what is the retention rate for returning sophomores? This number can tell you a lot about what schools are doing to make students happy and keep them enrolled. If a number is low, ask why students are leaving – what's going on? If the number is high, it's safe to assume students are generally happy and the college is doing a good job of educating students and keeping them happy.
- College is not just about getting a degree. It's about so much more. Is your child going to be challenged at each school? Are they going to have to put in more effort than they ever have? That's a good thing!
- Learn the middle 50% SAT/ACT scores and GPA of admitted students at the schools that interest you. This can serve as a guide to schools that will be a good academic fit for you. Also – remember if board scores are lower than the middle 50%, but the GPA fits in the middle 50%, in most cases, students do not need to submit test scores, if they could potentially hurt an application.

ACT and SAT testing:

If your child wants to test, go to the testing websites for information about testing and open test sites. (**SAT: www.collegeboard.org** and **ACT: www.act.org**). A schedule of tests dates is in the class of 2024 Teams (under Post-Secondary Planning, then files). The same list is also on the High School Counseling Center webpage. For the graduating class of 2024, many colleges in the United States are test optional for both admission and scholarships. Before deciding if your child wants to test, check with the schools they are interested in and determine if they need to test. When students apply without test scores, schools are often examining the transcript much closer. For example, if your child is interested in studying business, colleges will look closely at the math classes they took and the grades earned in those math classes.

- Students on free/reduced lunch are eligible for a fee waiver. Have your child see their school counselor or Ms. Sitko
- Every college accepts either the SAT or ACT. There is no preference.
- When registering for the ACT, I do not recommend taking the writing portion of the exam. I do not think it will be necessary for admission.
- Check out this site to see if schools your child is interested in have determined their testing policies <https://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>.

ACT/SAT Prep:

Students taking ACT and SAT tests should do some sort of preparation prior to taking the tests. There are many resources available for test prep. All students have FREE access to Khan Academy – an online program that partners with College Board (owners of the SAT) to provide test prep to students. <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>. ACT also has [online test prep here](#). [These are both fantastic resources](#).

-[Penn State Beaver](#) is offering in person SAT prep classes, starting September 23.

-[Eaton Prep](#) offers SAT prep classes at the Mt. Lebanon Recreation Center.

NCAA:

If your child is an athlete considering playing sports at a division I or II school, make sure to visit the NCAA Eligibility Center website www.eligibilitycenter.org. Student athletes need to submit an official high school transcript (requested through Naviance) and official test scores, if they are available. These scores must be sent directly from ACT or College Board. NCAA will not accept test scores from the high school transcript. If your child hasn't had an opportunity to test, they can still gain eligibility without test scores. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are taking the appropriate classes to qualify for NCAA Eligibility. A list of NCAA approved courses are on page 6 of the Program of Studies. More information can be found [here](#). *This registration does not apply to students attending division III or NAIA schools.*

Pittsburgh Teen FBI Academy:

The 2023 Pittsburgh FBI Teen Academy is open to high school juniors and seniors how have any interest in the FBI – not just criminal justice. Due to the vast workforce in the FBI, what they do and how a relationship with the FBI can help their school is encouraged to apply.

West Point and Naval Academy informational program:

Somerset High School

September 14

6-8:30 PM

For more information, please contact BG Hank Sembower at relas@comcast.net or Joe Olsavsky at jeolsavsky@comcast.net

Scholarship opportunity for female seniors:

P.E.O. Chapter BN of Sewickley is seeking outstanding young women who are seniors in high school to apply for the P.E.O. Star Scholarship. This scholarship provides a one-time \$2,500 award to high school senior women who wish to pursue post-secondary education. A woman is eligible to be recommended for the P.E.O. Star Scholarship provided she:

- Exhibits excellence in each of the following areas: leadership, academics, extracurricular activities, community service, and demonstrated potential for future success
- Has a minimum cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Is a citizen or legal permanent resident of the United States or Canada
- Plans to attend an accredited post-secondary educational institution in the United States or Canada, full-time or part-time, in the fall of the academic year following high school graduation

Candidates should email a resume to jkent1@comcast.net that gives their name, address, phone number, email address, unweighted GPA on a 4.0 scale, citizenship, lists of extracurricular activities, community/volunteer service and work experience with activity years, leadership positions and involvement. Resumes are being accepted immediately. The deadline to receive resumes is **Friday, September 8, 2023**. Additional information may be found at www.peointernational.org by clicking on "P.E.O. Projects/Philanthropies" then clicking on "Star Scholarship." Questions? Reach out to Jeanette Kent, P.E.O. Chapter BN Star Scholarship Chairwoman at 724-601-6384 or emailing her at jkent1@comcast.net