

# FCAHS Counseling Department News

Fall 2024

We are excited for the new school year, and can't wait to work with our students! Just like the transition from summer to fall, school counselors help students with *transitions*, whether it be from middle school to high school or to opportunities after high school. It is our goal to help every student find success in the journey through high school & in preparing for the world beyond our doors. Every student participates in our school counseling program on a regular basis, but do not hesitate to reach out to your child's school counselor via email or phone should you have questions or concerns.

All students are provided with a comprehensive program that meets their academic, career, and personal/social needs. Below are just a few of the ways we work with our students and you:

- Providing individual & small group counseling
- Connecting students with resources to support their personal/social needs
- Teaching classroom school counseling units focusing on exploring careers & postsecondary opportunities
- Helping students develop four year plans
- Assisting students with course selection
- Guiding students through the college application process from initial research to submission of applications
- Providing information & interpretation of testing (SAT, ACT, ASVAB, Keystone)

## ***September is National Suicide Prevention Month***

We can all help prevent suicide. Our weekly Extra Rolls (located in the restrooms) provide contact info and resources for students that are struggling. The school's Wellness Council works to reduce the stigma associated with mental health & substance use disorders through school-wide programming. The "988" Crisis & Suicide Lifeline offers 24/7 highly trained & compassionate individuals for anyone that may be struggling at any time.



## College in High School Offerings

Students now have the opportunity to earn college credit while receiving a grade on a college/university transcript upon successful completion of applicable courses. Students enrolling in the CHS courses will be required to pay a fee to the college/university for each course. Additionally, students may elect to take these courses without earning college credit. Fox Chapel Area High School currently has concurrent enrollment agreements with the University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University and Seton Hill University. College in High School credits are available in the following courses: Argument, Accounting II, AP Government and Political Science; Business Calculus; AP Statistics; AP Calculus AB; Precalculus; Precalculus Accelerated; Calculus; Linear Algebra; French III, IV, and V; and German III and IV.

***The course instructors will provide the students with registration information.***

### CONNECT WITH US AND ACCESS OUR RESOURCES:



#### School Counseling Website:

<https://fcahs.fcasd.edu/student-support/school-counseling>

**Schoology:** Access code  
RQ2TV-R5ZDH

**Twitter:** @FCAHScounselors

Our counselors are assigned by student last name. For last names starting in:

- A-C: Mr. Tim McLister  
Extension 2439
- D-G: Mr. John Baxter  
Extension 2441
- H-K: Mrs. Dana Papalia  
Extension 2444
- L-O: Mrs. Rachel Machen  
Extension 2445
- P-S: Mr. Ben O'Connor  
Extension 2442
- T-Z: Ms. Tara DeComo  
Extension 2440

## Get involved!



High school is a great time for students to explore their interests & abilities.

Colleges look for students that demonstrate long-term involvement & commitment to a few activities. Colleges don't care 'what' students choose; rather, they are more interested in students that are passionate and demonstrate commitment to an activity.

Getting involved is also a great way to meet new friends and to try something new!

**CLUB WEEK takes place during ALL Lunches in the Commons from September 16th-20th**

**Get involved in the Fox Leadership Council (our student governing body) in many ways:**

- \*Become a homeroom FLC rep**
- \*Join a class council or committee (Community Outreach, Diversity, Wellness, and Social)**

## 12TH GRADE POST-SECONDARY PLANNING



The School Counselors will meet with all seniors September 6-7 to instruct and meet with students for post-secondary planning. Whether a student is planning for a 4 or 2 year college/university, technical school, the military, or employment, we focus on planning and preparing for life after high school for each student.

A portion of our unit with the seniors is focused on using Naviance Student to process college applications. Students learn how to link their Common Application account to Naviance; how to request counselor and teacher recommendations; and how to submit the transcript release form.

Students are encouraged to schedule follow-up meetings with their counselor as needed for assistance with the application process.

## CAREER SPEAKER SERIES

The career speaker series is back for another year! Any student interested in hearing the speakers and learning more about their careers is welcome to attend.

For the high school graduation project, all students must explore careers and be prepared for life after high school by completing 8 activities. **Every 9th grade student must attend one career speaker and complete a reflection towards the career project requirements.**

### Coming Friday 9/20 during a Career QRT:

*Gene Natali, Certified Financial Planner & FC grad!*: Mr Natali is an award winning author that's presented in over 500 high school and college classroom settings. He is a CFA that attended Allegheny College and Carnegie Mellon University. He's also a board member for the CFA Society Pittsburgh and is a part-time lecturer at the University of Pittsburgh.

*Tiffany Schachner, Certified Prosthetist Orthotist*: Orthotists work with patients that need medical devices, like braces and splints, to provide support to a body part. Prosthetists work with patients who need artificial limbs or other body parts; they customize the fit of their patients' medical devices to support individual needs.

## FCAHS OPEN HOUSE FINANCIAL AID PRESESSION

The Fox Chapel Area High School Counseling Office once again partnered with PHEAA to host a Financial Aid PreSession on **Thursday, September 5th at 6:00pm in the LGI**. The presentation focused on higher education costs, aid availability, the FAFSA application, the value of scholarships, and major changes with the FAFSA. Information from the presentation as well as resources will be emailed to all seniors and their families after the presentation. The information is also available on Schoology.



## SENIOR SAT TESTING DAY: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9th

The SAT will be offered on Wednesday, October 9th to **SENIOR students who register before Tuesday, September 3, 2024. Registration forms are available on Schoology and in the School Counseling office. The SAT cost is \$60. Submit your registration and payment to the School Counseling Office.**

Reminder: Seniors who registered to take the in school senior SAT should report to their testing room with two number 2 pencils, an approved calculator, and a drink/snack for breaks. More information will be sent directly to seniors taking the test prior to the test day.

## PSAT/NMSQT - OCTOBER 9, 2024



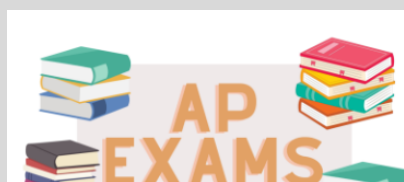
All 9th-11th graders will take the PSAT during the half day. No registration is required.

**The PSAT/NMSQT is digital!** The test is easier to take, shorter, has more time per question, and comes with a built-in calculator! All students will use school issued laptops for the test.

Checkout the video from Collegeboard to prepare for the digital PSAT/NMSQT:

<https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt#>

The PSAT won't count towards college admissions, but it is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship for juniors. The PSAT is a great primer for the SAT and even the ACT. The test is 2 hours in length (not counting breaks) and is divided into math and evidence-based reading & writing modules. All 11th graders are automatically entered into the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the PSAT and meeting other entry requirements (outlined in Student Guides). All students will receive a PSAT/NMSQT Guide via email and it will be posted on Schoology. The guide provides practice tests and detailed instruction about test day. More information regarding testing rooms and what materials will be required will be shared with students closer to the testing date. In the meantime, check out this College Board resource to help prepare: <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt/preparing>



### **AP EXAM INFORMATION:**

If you are currently enrolled in an Advanced Placement (AP) course during the first semester and/or a year long AP course and wish to take the AP exam in May of 2025, **you must register and pay by November 1, 2024**. Please download the AP Order Form in Schoology (See Ms. DeComo's post), see your AP teacher or get a form at the School Counseling office. You will submit your order form and payment to the School Counseling Office.



### **SCHOLARSHIPS:**

Our office posts scholarship information through **Schoology** and students can search for local and national scholarships through **Naviance**! Once students are logged in to Naviance, they will simply click on the 'College' tab. Then scroll down and click on the 'Scholarship List' and then select "Local and Regional

Scholarships" for local and private scholarships. Select 'National Scholarship List' for a national scholarship search through Sallie Mae.

### **COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY VISITS:**

The FCAHS Counseling Dept. hosts a plethora of college and university representatives visits for interested 10th -12th graders. These visits are a great opportunity to learn more about schools of interest— everything from unique programs to application requirements and how one's application will be reviewed. Check out and register to attend visits by logging into Naviance, clicking on the "Colleges" tab, and selecting "College Visits."

You **MUST** register in Naviance for the college/university visit in order to attend.

#### **To Register for a visit:**

Click on the college/university visit you wish to attend.  
Click on the "Register" button in the upper right corner.





## **SAVE THE DATE: NORTH PITTSBURGH COLLEGE FAIR AT LA ROCHE UNIVERSITY**

Thinking about college? Meet with representatives from more than 100 colleges and universities on **Monday, October 7th from 6-8 P.M** at the LaRoche University Campus Kerr Fitness & Sports Center 9000 Babcock Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA 15237

care/solace

We're on a mission to make accessing mental health care easier than ever before.

Care Solace connects students, staff, and families to care. At no cost to you, Care Solace will quickly and confidentially find available mental health and substance use providers matched to your needs. Get connected by reaching out to your school counselor or calling 1-888-515-0595 or visiting [caresolace.com/foxchapel](https://caresolace.com/foxchapel)

### **COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:**



Fox Families Care helps to bridge the gap between the needs and resources of children and families in our community. The counselors work closely and confidentially with Fox Families Care in a number of ways:

- Helping provide basic resources (clothing, shoes, school supplies, food)
- Emergency assistance for families facing acute hardship
- Extracurricular scholarships
- Career Exploration—conferences, tools, uniforms etc for AW Beattie
- Restocking the Foxes Burrow

Please reach out to your school counselor at any time should your family need assistance.

### **FOXES BURROW**

The Foxes Burrow is open every Friday morning from 6:45AM-7:55AM.

#### **1. What is it?**

The Foxes Burrow is a private space located in the high school that is open to all students. Backpack for Hunger provides food bags that may help those in need. Extra toiletries, school supplies, and some clothing items are also available.

#### **2. Where is it?**

The Foxes Burrow is located on the lower level by the TV studio, right off the auditorium entrance and bus drop off.



If you have questions or would like to ensure that your child receive a weekend Backpack 4 Hunger bag, please reach out to Rachel Machen, School Counselor & Community Outreach Chair at [Rachel\\_Machen@fcasd.edu](mailto:Rachel_Machen@fcasd.edu)



# IN THE NEWS



**Check out these articles and resources that provide advice and tips for families.**

[School Counselors Discuss The Importance of Youth Mental Health, Provide Tips for Parents.](#)

[FAFSA Roll Out Delayed Again](#)

[What the Supreme Court's Affirmative Action Ban Means for College Admissions](#)

[Forbes Releases New List of Ivies](#)

[Parent Guide to Supporting a Child With Anxiety](#)

[Teen Mental Health: How to Know When Your Child Needs Help](#)

[Kids, Teens and Vaping: Should Parents Be Worried?](#)

[How Many AP Classes Should I Take?](#)

[My Teen Struggles With Executive Function](#)

[Healthy Self Care For Teens: 4 Ways Families Can Help](#)