

Orchard Park Central School District

2240 Southwestern Blvd. West Seneca, NY 14224

David Lilleck
Superintendent



www.opschools.org
(716)209-6200

College & Career Selection / Spring 2024 (Class of 2025)

The college selection process can be overwhelming. Listed below are suggestions and procedures that will help guide you. Please make an appointment to see your counselor as often as necessary to answer all your questions.

1. The School Counseling Department recently delivered a lesson through English classes to all juniors. The lesson consisted of a review of graduation requirements and an introduction to the college process. As a follow-up, we will be meeting individually with each student to go over course selections for their senior year and to discuss their specific post-high school plans in more detail. We will discuss the OP application process, as well as Brag Sheets.
2. No recommendation letters will be written without completed brag sheets (teachers and counselors). If a recommendation is needed from a faculty member, be considerate. Do not ask the teacher a day before the deadline – allow several weeks for them to write for you. Give your teacher the Teacher Brag Sheet and include a stamped, addressed envelope with your request if needed. If you are using the CommonApp please be sure to invite your teacher directly to your application.
3. If a counselor recommendation is required, please advise your counselor. Do not assume that one will be written automatically. Please give at least two weeks' notice. You must have the required **Student Brag Sheet and the Parent Brag Sheet** filled out and turned in before requesting a letter of recommendation as indicated on the Transcript Request Form (TRF).
4. Applications for most schools may be obtained online through the college's website or by using the **Common Application**. Students applying to only SUNY colleges and universities may wish to use the **SUNY Application**.
5. Anytime you are asked to enter an email address (college application, ACT/SAT/AP registration. Scholarship application, financial aid forms, etc.) be sure to use a personal email address that you regularly monitor. If you use your OPHS email address, the spam filters may prevent you from receiving important information.
6. When requesting information from schools, make sure to ask about the financial aid process. You must fill out a **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA produces a Student Aid Report which indicates your eligibility for grants, loans, work-study, and private loans. It may also be used to determine your eligibility for institutional scholarships. Some schools also reference the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Be sure to submit this financial aid form by going to <http://css.collegeboard.org> if it is required for any of the schools you are applying to. Please be aware that a thorough introduction to the financial aid process will be given at our Financial Aid Night on May 9th at 7:00 PM.

Brandon Pafk
High School Principal

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7. Regardless of whether you apply online or on paper, you must complete a Transcript Request Form (TRF) available at <https://www.opschools.org/Domain/139> or in the House Offices. No transcript leaves the office without having a TRF on file. An electronic request or email does not replace the TRF. The TRF must be completed for all transcripts including

NCAA and scholarships. Please allow at least two (2) weeks before any deadline for processing. When all information requested is complete, the transcript will be mailed or submitted electronically. **Please note the following application deadlines and when the TRF needs to be turned in to your school counselor:**

- **11/1/24 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 10/18**
- **11/15/24 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 11/1**
- **12/1/24 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 11/15**
- **1/1/25 college deadline: Turned in to Counselor by 12/11**
- **1/15/25 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 1/2**

8. Keep track of dates and deadlines for tests, college interviews, and applications. Please note transcripts do not include SAT/ACT/AP scores. This means they must be sent directly from SAT or ACT.

9. If you would like to be considered for Orchard Park Pride, an honor given to 10% of a graduating class, **you must apply for OP Pride by filling out an application at <https://www.opschools.org/Domain/141> by 3 PM on November 1st if you wish to be considered for an OP Pride Award.**

10. If you plan to apply to college, be realistic about your choices. Do not underestimate or overestimate your abilities. Don't be afraid to consider competitive schools, but also have a 'safe' school among your choices. If you are not considering college, trade school, and military service offers educational as well as career opportunities. You should take the ASVAB (Military Entrance Exam) and meet with a recruiter. Students not interested in college should explore employment opportunities. Check the job board in the cafeteria for further information.

11. Copies of scholarship notifications should be given to Mr. Behm or Mrs. Stahl in House 1 for inclusion in the graduation program by June 1st – **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Only outside scholarships and specific colleges will be listed. No amounts or specific awards from schools will be announced.

12. Check scholarship listings at <https://www.opschools.org/Domain/145>

13. Encourage your parents to share in the college search process and your final decision about where to attend. Speak with friends, family, and the faculty about schools. You have a natural resource in these contacts. What are your special

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talents (music, athletics, and theater)? Look for schools with strong programs in these areas as well as the major you are looking for.

14. DEMONSTRATED INTEREST is the degree to which you show a college you are sincerely interested in attending their institution and may be taken into consideration when admissions decisions are made. One way to demonstrate your interest is to complete a campus visit or meet with college representatives when they visit OPHS. All visits are virtual. For more information on how to sign up and for dates, please visit <https://www.opschools.org/Page/10220>.

15. Check with colleges for special campus visitation programs and interviews and remember to send a thank you note after an interview. It helps the person to make a connection between the name, face, and application.

16. Whenever possible, spend time on the campus of schools to which you are applying - individual or group tour, open house, campus sporting event, etc. (Would you ever consider buying a car without test-driving it first?)

17. After you have been accepted and made your choice, be sure to let the other colleges know that you will not be attending. Many schools have waiting lists. Be considerate of others.

18. Keep us informed about decisions you receive from colleges and also any changes in your plans as the year progresses. We are interested and want this to be a productive year for you.

19. If you are a male, you must register with the Selective Service within 30 days of your 18th birthday. It is the law. If you don't register, you will not qualify for Federal College loans and grants, student aid in most states, employment training or federal and many state jobs. Register online at www.sss.gov.

20. If you want to play college sports, be sure to register with the NCAA. You can get information at <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>. Please be aware that Drama, American Cultural & Media Studies, Sports Literature, and Fundamentals of Algebra do not meet NCAA compliance requirements. Check the school's 48H for further information. This is your responsibility for eligibility.

21. Check the School Counseling page of the school website at:
<https://www.opschools.org/site/Default.aspx?PageType=1&SiteID=77&ChannelID=124&DirectoryType=6> on a regular basis. All documents referenced above (OP Pride Form, Brag Sheets, etc.) can be found there.

Good luck and remember to enjoy the experience - we're here to help!

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