

**Danville Area
High School**



Post Graduate & College Planning Guide





Important Names & Numbers

Danville Area High School CEEB Code:
390 950

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→ A letter to our students

Dear Students,

This is an exciting and challenging time in your life. The Danville Area High School Guidance department has created this booklet to help students proceed efficiently toward post high school education. Each student (& parent/guardian) is encouraged to work closely with the guidance office, but this booklet helps to provide an overview for good planning and acts as a resource and checklist to help complete plans.

Parents/Guardians typically allow more independence for their children as they move toward their senior year, and then they feel a little embarrassed about “interfering” in the student’s planning for post high school education. Remember that a parent telephone call to a counselor can quickly and smoothly give the parent either general advice or specific details.

Enjoy this time and please reach out with any questions!

- The Guidance Office

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College Planning Calendar



Junior Year

September/October/November

- Register for fall SAT, check on the DHS School Day SAT option
- Athletes should complete NCAA Clearinghouse application at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net

December/January/February

- Continue to evaluate college opportunities
- Make sure your grades are aligning with your college list goals
- Think about early college or co-op opportunities for Senior year
- Register for Spring SAT
- Take ASVAB exam (graduation pathway & career exploration purposes)

March/April

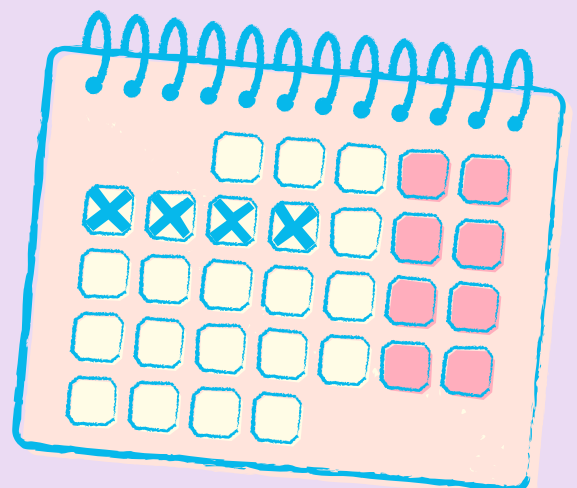
- Meet with counselor to review selection of 12th grade courses
- Consider purchasing dual enrollment credits through Lackawanna College & other colleges that partner with DHS.

May

- AP Students take AP Exams
- Think about teachers that you want to ask to write a recommendation
- Prepare a resume to submit to them with info about yourself.

June

- Continue to research & visit colleges
- Create a common application account & ask the guidance office for an updated transcript to begin the process of inputting grades.
- Begin draft of application essays.



Common Application opens August 1st!

College Planning Calendar



Senior Year



August/September

- Continue to visit colleges
- Know your deadlines!!
- Register for final SAT if taking it again
- Finalize essays & gather final teacher recommendations



October

- If applying Early Decision or Early Action, finalize applications deadlines 11/1-11/15
- Apply to NCAA Clearinghouse
- Make sure teacher recommendations are finalized and loaded to application



November/December/January

- Attend Financial Aid Night at DHS
- Submit all applications before January 1
- Submit for colleges with January 15 deadline
- Submit FASFA



March/April

- Purchase dual enrollment credits through Lackawanna & other college that partner with DHS
- Start the scholarship application, (Due end of March)



May/June

- Accept by May 1 & watch for housing deadlines
- Notify guidance of where you will attend and ask for a final transcript to be sent
- Provide info to the guidance office as to where to send any scholarships

College Application Process



How do I apply to college?

In most cases you will need to have written an essay and requested at least 1 letter of recommendation from a teacher and from your School Counselor. Teachers and Counselors should be given a minimum of 2 weeks but preferably a month to complete your recommendation. The earlier you ask the quicker the turnaround will be.

It is important to create your account on the Common Application website (www.commonapp.org) and make a list of the application deadlines for each school you are applying to.

The more organized you are the more seamless this process will be.

I applied, what's next?

You will need to formally ask your counselor to send out your transcript and letter of recommendations that the college requires. Please email your counselor, the guidance secretary or use the transcript request form on the DHS website to request your transcript. Provide an email or mailing address of where to send.

Make sure that your SAT/ACT scores are forwarded to the schools you applied to. These can be requested through Collegeboard.com and Actstudent.org.

HOW BEST TO UTILIZE YOUR COUNSELOR



✎ Do expect your counselor to:

- Encourage you to select courses that will challenge you & present a more well rounded profile to college admission counselors
- Advise you of your necessary graduation requirements
- Encourage you to focus on specific goals and criteria for college selection (i.e. size, location, course of study)
- Maintain up to date college, military & career resources
- Submit mid year grades to requested colleges
- Provide information and forms for state & local scholarships
- Work with you to review your applications before submitting
- Review your essay with you and review application
- Suggest colleges that would be a good target for you to apply to

✎ Do not expect your counselor to:

- Choose your schools for you
- Complete your applications for you
- Write your college essays for you or choose your prompt
- Keep track of your deadlines
- Submit official SAT/ACT scores to colleges on your behalf
- Ask a teacher to write a recommendation for you

What students should look for in a college

It's important to consider the following factors when deciding what college is the right fit for you:

1. **Academic Departments:** Majors in your area of interest, strength of department, independent study, internships, foreign study.
2. **Class Size:** Faculty-Student relationships; committees with student representatives, opportunities for discussion.
3. **Campus Life:** School spirit, fraternity or sorority, dining services, resident life, clubs, sports, diversity.
4. **Student Enrollment:** Number of undergraduate students, percent of freshman who graduate, male-female ratio.
5. **College Type:** 2 or 4 year, church/private/state, liberal arts/technical, degrees offered.
6. **Location and Size:** Geographic region/distance from home, travel cost, urban or rural, weather, nearest city, library, study rooms, student centers, resident halls.
7. **Cost & Financial Aid:** Tuition cost, room & board, fees, personal/family resources, % of students receiving financial aid & merit and need-based financial aid, process to apply for financial aid. Does this school fit my budget?
8. **Curriculum:** proportion of study between general education, concentration of major, required freshman courses & elective curriculum.
9. **Credits:** Will the credits I earned while in High School be accepted?
10. **Career Presentations:** Pre-professional programs, career advising, graduate school, job placement, internships.
11. **Other Programs:** Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), ROTC (military) programs.



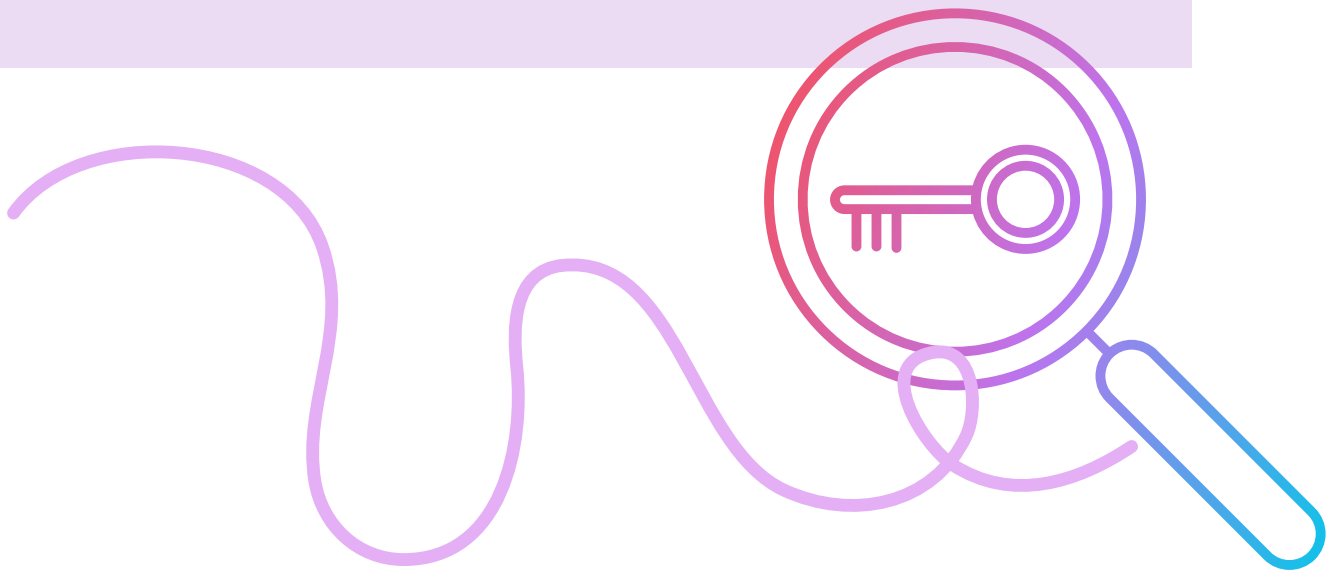
WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN STUDENTS

When searching for the right college there are at least two things to consider:

What you want in a college and what the college is looking for in its applicants

Qualities college often look for in their applicants:

- *Academic Preparation
- *Challenging Coursework
- *Good grades in a range of courses
- *Ranking among high school peers, including senior ranking
- *SAT or ACT scores
- *Extracurricular Activities (commitment rather than quantity is key)
- *Recommendations from teachers & others
- *Written Self Expression, often judged by your essay
- *Verbal Expression and presentation
- *Leadership Ability & Positions
- *Level of interest in & Enthusiasm for the college



What do I look for when visiting a college?



Below are some questions to help prepare for visits:

- 1) Find out about the learning facilities and resources: What is the average class size? What is the library like? Do students have access to computers/printers? What kind of help is available to students? Is Work-Study offered?
- 2) Ask about the faculty and student body: What is the background of the faculty? Who teaches the undergraduate classes? How accessible are faculty members? What is the graduation percentage?
- 3) Explore the living environment: What are the dorms like? How many years are students expected to live on campus? Can you choose a roommate? What are the meal plan options? What are campus activities like on the weekend? Do most students stay on campus?

Towards the end of Sophomore year and through Junior year is a good time to begin the college search. It is helpful to visit schools while students are in session to get a feel for the student body and campus life.

*****NOTE:** Students should fill out an educational travel form for a college visit!

To arrange a college visit, go to the College's website for open house dates or email the admissions office to schedule a visit.

UNDERSTANDING ADMISSION

➤ DECISION OPTIONS:

Rolling Admissions:

Most colleges using rolling admissions will review applications as the files are completed and return decisions within a few weeks. Most state universities use this process. **The earlier you submit your application the higher your chances of being granted admission**

Early Decision (ED):

A plan under which a student applies to their first choice college & agrees by contract to attend that school if granted admission. Decisions are usually rendered in December. Applications are often due by November 1. Students may be accepted, rejected, or deferred. Students may only apply to one school as early decision, however, they can and should send other applications out as back up options for regular admission to other schools.

Early Action (EA):

A plan where a student applies to college(s) early in the fall of senior year. The students are given a decision early, mid December, but the student is not obligated to attend. Students can apply to several schools as EA.

Waitlisted:

A student who meets the admission requirements but will only be offered admission if a spot becomes available. Final offers are made after May 1.

Deferred Admission:

Students who defer admission may choose to work, travel or pursue special programs. Deferred students CAN NOT attend another college during that time off. This means a student may be accepted for the 2nd semester instead of the first, or be asked to start earlier in the summer session.

January Admission:

Colleges may admit freshman to begin studying at the start of the second semester.

* It is important to review each colleges policies and details regarding their admissions policies.

Standardized TESTS

Most colleges will ask you to submit scores from a college admission test. These tests will measure your academic aptitude and are used to compare students from high schools across the country. Speak to your Guidance Counselor for more information on how to register for these tests.



PSAT/NMSQT: This test is given in October to all Sophomores and to select Juniors. This test serves as a practice test in preparation for the SAT test. PSAT scores are NOT used by colleges as admission criteria but one's score as an 11th grader can determine qualification for selection as a National Merit Scholar.

SAT: The SAT is generally taken in the fall and spring of junior year. Some students opt to take it first in the spring of sophomore year to get a baseline score. If needed students can take it again fall of senior year. The SAT exam is designed to test

ACT: The ACT is a standardized test of achievement composed of 4 sections, English, Math, Reading and Science reasoning. There is an optional writing section which measures skills on short essay writing.

Advanced Placement Tests (AP): AP tests are designed for students who have completed college level course in high school. They can provide college credit to students scoring a 3 or higher. Tests are taken in school.



The Common Application

What is the Common Application?

The Common Application is a not for profit organization that provides applications online and in print that allows students and school officials to submit applications to any of it's 400 members.

Why use the Common App?

Once completed, copies of the application for undergraduate admission can be sent to any number of participating colleges. The same is true of the school report, mid year report, final report and teacher evaluation forms.

Is the Common App treated fairly?

Yes! Colleges and university members have worked together over the past several years to develop the application. All members fully support its use and all give equal consideration to the common application. Many colleges and universities have transitioned to only accept the common application.

The Common Application can be found at
www.commonapp.org

NCAA Clearinghouse Certification

In order to participate in Division I or Division II sports in college students MUST register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. This form should be filed at the beginning of junior year.

- Log onto www.ncaaclearinghouse.net
- Select prospective student athlete
- Select domestic student release form (complete all questions), pay the fee unless you have a fee waiver.
- Once completed there will be two release copies that are to be turned into the guidance office. One paper will say preliminary transcript, the other will say final transcript.
- Have SAT or ACT scores sent to Clearinghouse

As a prospective student athlete you will need to review the list of approved core courses (form 48H) and the Division I and Division II freshman eligibility standards.

- Requirements from NAIA schools differ from those of NCAA institutions
- Division II schools do not have a sliding scale
- Summer school classes in senior year may be used as a core course requirement
- Classified students are given some special consideration
- Requirements from the Division II NCAA schools do not include registration with the clearinghouse.

FINANCIAL AID 101

The lack of adequate family financial assistance should not prevent any student from attending college. If the student has the necessary ability & motivation, financial assistance is available from a variety of sources.



↘ Applying for Financial Aid:

- Fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid) The forms are located on the FAFSA website: www.fafsa.ed.gov. When filling out the FAFSA a PIN will be given and be used to electronically sign the form.
- A pin can be applied for by logging into www.pin.ed.gov.
- The form opens on January 1 each year and must be completed soon after.
- Students filling out the FAFSA must have parental assistance.

↘ Filling out the FAFSA, what will I Need?

- Have PIN number ready
- Social Security number and Driver's License
- W-2 forms or other records of earned income from the previous tax year
- Federal Income tax return
- Parents federal income tax return
- Records of other untaxed income received, such as, welfare benefits, social security benefits, veteran's benefits or military allowances.
- Current bank statements or any other records of stocks, bonds and other investments.
- Alien registration (If not a US citizen)

WHAT IF I AM NOT READY FOR COLLEGE?

College is not for everyone. If you are a student who struggled just to make it to graduation or you are unsure what path to take there are many options available.

Employers are looking for more than academic skills. Some of the qualities that potential employers are looking for are interpersonal skills, initiative, attendance, and other qualities that may never appear on your transcript!

There are many things to consider when making your decision. Talk with family, friends, industry professionals and your guidance counselor to find out what the right path for you is.

IS THE MILITARY RIGHT FOR YOU?

Take the ASVAB Test: Developed by the Department of Defense, this test is usually taken by students in grades 10-12. Designed to discover skills & interest, it helps students explore careers available in both the civilian and military sector.

Do your Research: Visit service websites to read up on general prerequisites such as health, education and citizenship and to learn about benefits.

Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS): Includes a physical exam, meeting with a counselor to select job and take the oath of enlistment. Most recruits head to basic training shortly after MEPS.

Basic Training: Marks the transition from civilian life to military life. Lasts from 8.5-13 weeks.

Resources: www.goarmy.com, www.marines.com, www.navy.com, www.airforces.com, www.gocoastguard.com

College Comparison

WORKSHEET

Name of
School

Financial
Aid

Size
-Campus
-Student
Body

Housing

Admission
Requirements

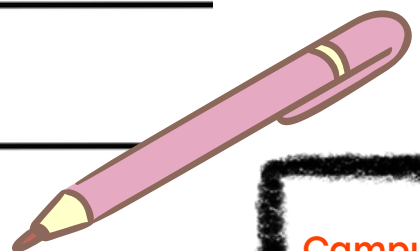
Student
Life

Academics
Majors
Offered

Location
-distance
from home

Cost to
Attend

Campus
Location



College Comparison

WORKSHEET

Name of
School

Financial
Aid

Size
-Campus
-Student
Body

Housing

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