🎓 Senior Newsletter| September 2025

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📬 Welcome to senior year!

Welcome to your child's senior year at Moon Area High School! I'm Julie Sitko, the College and Career Counselor, and I'm here to help guide your student through the college and career planning process. You'll receive this monthly newsletter with key updates, timelines, and opportunities to help keep your student on track for life after high school.

🗓️ Senior Year: Fall Post-Secondary Timeline

✅ Key To-Do's

- **Test Optional:** ~90% of colleges are *not* requiring SAT/ACT scores for admission or scholarships.
  ➤ *Tip:* Google "50% SAT at [School Name]" to determine if your child should submit scores.
- **Sending Test Scores:** Use free score reports when registering for the ACT/SAT.
- **Recommendation Letters:** Ask teachers early and request them in **Naviance**.
- **College Applications:** Aim to apply by **Thanksgiving**, but no later than **Winter Break**.
- **Transcripts:** Request through Naviance *after* completing the **Moon Records Release Form** (available September 12 in Teams).
- **College Visits at Moon:** Students should register to attend via Naviance.
- **Virtual College Events:** Check individual school websites for online info sessions.
- **Register to Vote:** Students 18 by **Election Day (Nov. 3)** must register by **Oct. 20**
  🗳️ Register to Vote in PA

📝 SRAR Workshop

Many schools (Pitt, Penn State, Virginia Tech, Clemson, Delaware) use the **Self-Reported Academic Record (SRAR)** instead of official transcripts.

🔹 SRAR Workshop Info

- 🗓️ **Wednesday, September 10| homeroom & 2nd**
- 💻 Hosted with **Penn State–Beaver**
- 🎯 Students must register and complete pre-work. Registration link at the top of the Class of 2026 Teams page.

🏫 College Fairs

Christian College Fair

📍 Eden Christian Academy | 🕛 Sept. 18 | ⏰ 6–8 PM
➡️ Register here: https://www.findyourchristiancollege.com/

Regional College Fairs (October)

🗓️ October 6 – North Pittsburgh @ LaRoche University, 6–8 PM)
🗓️ Tues, Oct. 7 – South Pittsburgh @ Bethel Park HS
🗓️ **Wed, Oct. 8 – West Pittsburgh @ Robert Morris University**
📍 UPMC Events Center | ⏰ 6–8 PM
📲 Register for a barcode: StriveFair (for all regional fairs)
🎯 Ask basic questions like:

- What majors are unique to your school?
- What's the student-to-faculty ratio?
- What's the campus culture like?

College "Appy-Hour"

Work on applications and essays with help!

📍 **Counseling Center fishbowl during Homeroom (Wednesdays in October)**

🎯 Bring questions, laptop, and your to-do list!

Financial Aid & FAFSA

🎓 **PHEAA Virtual Financial Aid Night**

🗓️ Thursday, Oct. 16 | ⏰ 7:00 PM

💻 Join from home – there will be an opportunity to ask questions

➡️ Register here

🏫 **FAFSA Completion Night**

🗓️ Monday, Nov. 3 | ⏰ 6:30 PM @ MAHS

🎯 Work with PHEAA to complete the FAFSA together

Registration available in October

Scholarships

Where to Find Scholarships:

- **Naviance:** Go to *Colleges* > *Scholarships & Money* > *Scholarship List*
- Great sites:
  - fastweb.com
  - goingmerry.com
  - Pittsburgh Foundation

⭐ **Featured Scholarships**

Coca-Cola Scholars Program

- 💵 $20,000 | 📝 Achievement-based
- 🗓️ Deadline: **Sept. 30**
- Apply Here https://www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org/apply/

The Gates Scholarship

- 💵 Last-dollar scholarship (selected students will receive full funding for cost of attendance not already covered by other financial aid)
- 🗓️ Deadline: **Sept. 15**
- Apply Here https://www.thegatesscholarship.org/

College Programs in Pittsburgh

United States Service Academies – Fall information seminar

📍 Robert Morris University| 🗓️ Oct. 30 | ⏰ Doors open at 5:30. Program runs 6-9

All military academies will be present

Notre Dame on the Road

📍 North Catholic HS | 🗓️ Sept. 30 | ⏰ 7 PM

Insight into Notre Dame academics, admissions, and financial aid

University of Chicago Visit

📍 Sewickley Academy | 🗓️ Oct. 16| ⏰ 7 PM

🪖 ASVAB

🗓️ Wednesday, Nov. 5

➡️ Registration available in October

Also offered again in **March 2026**

🎯 Good for military AND general career guidance

🎓 College Rep Visits to MAHS

Admission reps will visit Moon to speak with students.

🎯 These reps may read your child's application!

- Sign up in **Naviance** > "What's New" > "More Info" > "Register Me"
- Stop by the Counseling Center for a pass

🎒 Tips for Visiting Colleges In-Person

- 🎓 Ask about **graduation rate in 4 years** (not 6!)
- 🧭 What's the **sophomore retention rate**?
- 🤝 Meet faculty in the intended major
- 📊 Know the school's middle 50% **GPA/SAT/ACT scores**
- ❓ Ask: *Will this school challenge and support my student?*

📝 SAT & ACT testing

📍 Info & registration:

- SAT – collegeboard.org
- ACT – act.org

📁 Dates are posted in:

- Class of 2026 Teams > Post-Secondary Planning
- Counseling Center webpage

🔁 **Test Optional Tips:**

- If scores help your application – submit them.
- If not – apply test-optional!
  - 🔍 See if your college is test-optional: FairTest.org

🎯 **Testing Notes:**

- Free/reduced lunch = **fee waivers available** – see your counselor or Ms. Sitko
- **No preference** between SAT or ACT

📚 ACT/SAT Test Prep Options

- **Khan Academy** (FREE SAT prep): khanacademy.org
- **ACT Academy** (FREE ACT prep): academy.act.org
- **Penn State Beaver** – In-person SAT classes: https://beaver.psu.edu/ce/youth/sat
  Classes begin Sept. 27.
- **3RPrep** – Virtual & in-person options: https://www.3rprep.com/
- **Goldstein Test Prep** – SAT/ACT tutoring (in-person & virtual)
  - 📞 412-874-7645 | Website: goldsteintestprep.com
    - Offering an in-person SAT class at Sewickley Academy, starting 10/4. Register here.
- **Eaton Prep** – Classes at Mt. Lebanon Recreation Center and virtually www.eatonprep.com
- **Fox Chapel HS SAT Bootcamp:** Saturday, Sept. 28. If interested, reach out to Lisa Gibson--lisa_gibson@fcasd.edu

🏅 **NCAA Eligibility (Div I & II Athletes)**

✅ Register at: eligibilitycenter.org

📄 Official transcripts sent at the end of the academic year

📩 Send test scores directly from ACT/SAT websites

📚 Review NCAA-approved courses (Page 18 of Program of Studies)

⚠️ Not required for Division III or NAIA schools

🕵️ **FBI Teen Academy – Apply Now!**

High school juniors & seniors interested in **FBI careers (not just criminal justice!)** can apply for the **2024 Pittsburgh FBI Teen Academy.**

🧠 Learn about the FBI's workforce and build relationships. Register here.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. Let's make this a successful and exciting year for your student!