

Senior Newsletter | October 2025

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A Message from Ms. Sitko

Hello families!

I'm Julie Sitko, the College & Career Counselor here at Moon Area High School. As your child navigates senior year, I'm here to help guide post-secondary planning—whether it's college, technical school, military, or the workforce. Each month, you'll receive this newsletter packed with resources, reminders, and opportunities. Please reach out with questions any time.

Fall Post Secondary Planning Timeline

- **Test-Optional Colleges:** Over 90% of schools are not requiring SAT/ACT scores. Even if your child takes the test, they don't need to submit scores unless they strengthen the application. (Search "50% SAT at [School Name]" to compare.)
 - **Free Score Reports:** Students sending SAT/ACT scores can choose four colleges for free.
 - **Recommendation Letters:** Many schools don't require them—check before asking. If needed, students should request via Naviance after asking the teacher directly.
 - **Apply Early:** Aim to submit college applications by Thanksgiving. Do not wait past winter break.
 - **Transcripts:** Must be requested via Naviance—guides are posted in the Class of 2026 Teams page
 - **Records Release Form:** Must be submitted before transcripts are sent. Found in the Teams chat pinned at the top of the page
 - **Virtual College Events:** Many colleges host virtual programs—check their websites.
 - **Register to Vote:** Students 18 by Election Day (Nov. 3) must register by Oct. 20
 [Register to Vote in PA](#)
 - **Selective Service:** Male students must register at age 18. [Register here.](#)
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College Appy-Hour

Wednesdays in October during Homeroom – Counseling Center

Students can work independently on applications with my support. Sign in at Homeroom first, then get a pass to go to the counseling center.

College Fairs

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?

HBCU College Fair

-  August Wilson African American Cultural Center
 -  Thursday, Oct. 9 (During school day)
 Permission slips due by **Oct. 6**
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College Events in Pittsburgh

University of Chicago Information Session

 Sewickley Academy |  Oct. 16 |  7 PM

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

ASVAB Testing

 **Wednesday, November 5**

✓ Great for military-bound students or general career exploration

 [Register here](#)

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

 [Register here](#)

Scholarships

 Naviance > Colleges > Scholarships and Money > Scholarship List

 Additional Sites:

- [Fastweb](#)
 - [Going Merry](#)
 - [Pittsburgh Foundation](#)
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College Reps Visiting Moon

Meet the admission reps (often those reviewing applications!).

 View and register in Naviance > “What’s New”

 Get a pass from the Counseling Center.

Campus Visits – Questions to ask

- What is the 4-year graduation rate?
- What is the retention rate for sophomores?
- What support is available for undecided majors?
- How does the school help with internships or job placement?
- What is campus culture like?
- What are your most unique majors?

Transcripts and Letters of Recommendation

-  Request at least **2 weeks in advance**
-  Letters from school counselors cannot be requested in Naviance. Students must speak with us directly.
-  Counselors need time to write quality letters—plan ahead!

ACT & SAT Testing

- **SAT:** collegeboard.org
- **ACT:** act.org

Test dates are posted in the Class of 2026 Teams page and on the Counseling Center website.

 *Fee waivers are available for students on free/reduced lunch—see your school counselor or Ms. Sitko.*

 **Test Optional Reminder:** Many colleges are test optional for Class of 2026, including for scholarships. Be strategic—if test scores don't help your application, you may not need to submit them.

 Check policies: [FairTest – Test Optional Colleges](#)

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 Oct. 18.
- **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

Engineering Opportunities

- [Carnegie Mellon University](#) offers programs for all ages

If you have any questions or need help at any point in this journey, please don't hesitate to reach out. Let's make senior year successful!