

SOLEBURY.EDU

COLLEGE COUNSELING NEWSLETTER



A SNEAK PEEK
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The Junior College Class

Winter 2026

Winter exams are in session, 18 juniors are heading out on the Boston Area College Tour, and a well-deserved spring break (and warmer weather) awaits!

We have just wrapped up our five-part series of college guidance classes. We had some great conversations about the college search, application and decision-making process, and these students appear to be very invested in the process. You will find the course syllabus on our college counseling [web page](#), along with our [handbook](#) that gives an in-depth look at the many facets of the college application process.

Some highlights of the course include:

The Essay | We talked about what the elements of successful essays are, and reviewed a few particularly strong essays from Solebury alumni. As part of their college questionnaire, students were required to write an essay (using prompts from the Common Application). We will review and discuss these in the meetings this spring. Anytime a student wishes us to review their essay and provide feedback, we will be happy to do so.

The College Search | While there are several search engines out there, we focused on [College Board](#). We also introduced the students to some of the features of [Scoir](#), our college counseling portal. We use this portal to send all documents to the colleges. We talked about the different types of colleges (everything from research universities to trade schools) and selecting a major.

Testing | We talked about how colleges use standardized testing, the differences and similarities between the ACT and SAT, and the registration process to sign up for these exams. We discussed the recent changes to both exams and what they mean to the students. While *we encourage students to take the SAT or the ACT at least once* to provide a baseline to help in your college searches, about 2000 (about 83%) of the 2400 4-year colleges in the United States have already committed to being test optional for the class of 2026. See the full list [here](#).

The Application | We've had seniors apply to as many as 56 schools and as few as 1! We hope that students remember our conversation in class and *choose a reasonable number (3-10) of colleges to which to apply*. We encouraged students to apply early, and walked through the Common Application (accepted by over 1,000 colleges).

Visits | While you can get a sense of size, location and majors on a website, *campus visits are really the best way to determine atmosphere and non-academic fit*. So it is best to visit when college classes are in session but our classes are not. This current spring break is a good time to visit colleges, so hopefully the students have a chance to do so! Curious as to which colleges track demonstrated interest? Take a look at this [table](#), updated November 2025.

Interviews | The interview is a chance for students to learn more about the college and for them to learn more about the student. It is very rarely an evaluative part of the process, but it can help show how interested students are, which in borderline cases can help tip the scales in a student's favor. We talked about the difference between an informative and evaluative interview, and encouraged students to sign up - even if it's optional.

Recommendations | Students will be expected to identify at least two teachers by mid-May and ask them for letters of recommendation. After talking to them, they should request these recommendations through Scoir.

Decisions | The most important factor in a college decision is strong grades in a challenging, balanced curriculum. Students should keep pushing themselves appropriately and getting better grades, and continuing to do so in senior year. We also talked about other factors such as activities, interest shown in the school, demographics, special interest cases, etc. Tim's classes looked at 7 mock student profiles. They were allowed to accept 3 and waitlist one, but had to deny the other 3. In a separate activity, Erin's students stood in for 9 qualified (but very different) students, and decided on 3 acceptances, 3 waitlists, and 3 denials. *Between the discussion and the results, our students can see that college admissions is a very human process and not an exact science.*

Test Prep Opportunities

ACT Practice Test

Saturday, March 28
Online - \$10, Register [Here](#)
Revolution Test Prep

Upcoming Test Dates

ACT | April 11

We will provide transportation for boarders to Council Rock North High School in Newtown, PA. Boarders must sign up for transportation in Scoir by April 3. Register [here](#).

SAT | March 14, May 2

We will provide transportation for boarders on May 2 to Central Bucks High School East in Doylestown, PA. Boarders must sign up for transportation through Scoir. Register [here](#).

*Solebury does not register students for these tests.



College Fairs

CTCL* College Fair

Monday, March 9, 7-9pm
Philadelphia Sheraton
Register [here](#)

(*Learn about the 45 Colleges That
Change Lives [here](#))

March NACAC Online Fair

Sunday, March 15, 1-6pm
Register [here](#)

SHRHS College Fair

South Hunterdon Regional High School
March 17, 1-2:30pm

April NACAC Online Fair

Sunday, April 19, 1-6pm
Register [here](#)

Main Line Regional College Fair

Villanova University
May 27th; 6:00 - 8:30 PM (ET)
Register [here](#)

Student Meetings

Spring 2026

In addition to the college classes, we require every junior to meet with us individually before the end of junior year. This way we can set forth a plan of action and talk about student-specific information that we could not do in a group setting. Parents are certainly welcome to meet with us either together with their children or separately. We have enjoyed the meetings that we've already had with you and your child.

These individual meetings will give the juniors a sense of what to expect when it comes time to do their own interviews. As counselors, we will also write a letter of recommendation to include with your application materials. This letter will be based on teacher comments, meetings, the questionnaire and our observations of them outside of the classroom.

Students whose last names begin with A-L will be working primarily with Tim, and students whose last names begin with M-Z will be working primarily with Erin. Students should e-mail us their free periods to set these meetings up once the spring trimester begins.

We will also have a required meeting in the fall of senior year, and students and parents can meet with us at any time.

Final Thoughts

What's Next?

Over the spring break, your counselors will be reviewing the junior questionnaires and preparing for spring meetings. If you haven't completed [the questionnaire](#), please do so as soon as possible! We will also be attending virtual and in-person sessions with colleges. A few things juniors can do:

- Visit colleges
- Attend an in-person or virtual college fair
- Start to plan your summer. Make it meaningful and productive.

We are wishing you all a restful and restorative spring break!

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Check out our [handbook!](#)

