

## **PREPARING FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION – A TIME-LINE**

### **GRADE 9**

- Be sure to choose a challenging yet realistic course-load.
- Remember everything “counts” – you begin to develop your high school transcript which is a record of your final grades and you begin to develop your GPA which is an average (grades 9-11) of your final grades.
- Become involved in activities. (Make a difference in a few rather than simply “joining” many.)
- READ
- Continue to develop good study habits, good organizational skills, and good time-management skills.
- Work hard to get good grades.
- Plan to do something constructive over the summer months.
- Always be mindful of information coming your way regarding specific colleges. When on family trips, simply drive through a campus you are near. This will begin to give you a general sense of types of colleges (large/small, urban/suburban, etc.).

### **GRADE 10**

- Continue participation in meaningful extracurricular activities and consider taking a leadership position.
- Continue all of the preparation listed above which you began in grade 9.
- Begin to think seriously about your future goals. In grade 9 you were introduced to the COIN program and began to identify your abilities, interests, and aptitudes. Continue to fine-tune these self-explorations by using the COIN program at home and by visiting the Career Center where you can obtain additional career information.
- In October take the PLAN (pre-ACT) in order to begin to assess your strengths and your weaknesses when taking standardized tests to be used for college admission. This is simply a “trial run” and does not become part of your record. It also contains a career inventory which yields important information regarding your strengths and how they relate to specific careers.
- Most importantly continue with a high level of academic performance and with involvement in positive activities.
- Speak to your counselor about the advisability of taking an SAT II test in a specific subject area.
- Get to know your school counselor. This person will be writing a college recommendation for you and will guide you through the college choice and application process.

### **GRADE 11**

- In October take the PSAT. Again this is a “trial run”. This test also will enable you to apply for certain scholarships many of which are employment based. Before taking the PSAT as a junior ask your parents to inquire if their employer gives any scholarships based upon the PSAT. Juniors scoring very high on the test may also be considered for National Merit Scholarships.

- When you have taken the PSAT, you will begin to receive information from many colleges. Start to make general decisions concerning such things as size and location. When a college piques your interest, visit the college website. Most have virtual tours.
- Use information from the website and from college guides to determine the entrance requirements. Realistically consider your own strengths and weaknesses to begin making preliminary decisions.
- You will receive the results of the PSAT in December. USE THESE RESULTS to prepare for the spring SAT's and/or ACT's.
- Take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring.
- Be sure to attend the small group session you are invited to in the Career Center. This will help you to begin your college search and to prepare for the upcoming conference with your parent and your school counselor.
- Be sure to actively participate in the conference with your school counselor in the spring. This will aid you in making specific college choices.
- As you begin to narrow your college choices, visit those college campuses and participate in Open House events.
- Participate in Career Day at PHS (May 19).
- Continue to maintain good grades and to participate in activities.
- Select a senior year schedule which will be challenging and which will show college admission officers the importance you place on academic pursuits.
- You and your parents meet with the school counselor to discuss post-secondary options.
- Collect information and research colleges. Communicate with your parents and your school counselor. Utilize the services of the Career Center.
- Attend the PHS College Fair (April 28).
- Consider which teachers you will ask to write recommendations for you.
- As assigned in English class, write a letter to your school counselor to be used to enhance the counselor's college recommendation letter.

### **Summer Between Grades 11 and 12**

- Begin to fine-tune your possible college choices as discussed with your school counselor and your parents.
- Visit specific college websites.
- Visit college campuses as possible.
- Begin to look at college applications themselves to determine types of questions asked.
- Based upon a review of college applications begin preparations for writing the college essay.
- Write a draft of your resume to be included with college applications.

### **GRADE 12**

If you have prepared well, you will enter senior year organized and ready to apply to college which realistically can help you to fulfill your goals. You will have a transcript (record of your academic achievement) and a resume (record of your activities) of which you are proud. If you have done your college research, visited campuses, and kept in touch with your school counselor, you are now ready to begin the college application process! Your hard work and planning are about to pay off!!!

- Speak to individual teachers to request recommendations.

- Make an appointment to speak with your school counselor to finalize your college application plans.
- Update your college application information in Naviance. (As a junior you were introduced to this program.)
- Obtain college applications (usually online).
- Review your resume with your school counselor.
- Review your essay with an English teacher.
- Complete college applications.
- Make an appointment to meet with your school counselor to submit college applications.
- Continue to achieve well in the classroom – colleges will see your senior year grades!

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