College Counseling Welcome Night: 11th Grade Family Presentation

As we wait for families to arrive, please be sure to sign-in.
Agenda for this Evening:

1. College Counseling Philosophy & Why Fit Matters
2. College Counseling Resources at PHA
3. Role of the College Counselor and College Prep Class
4. Six Dimensions of the College Application
5. 11th Grade College Application Timeline
6. College Lists & Terms
7. Recap & Questions
PHA College Counseling Philosophy

Prospect Hill Academy’s College Counseling Department seeks to place students at colleges and universities that are the best “fit” for the whole student. Students should matriculate where they will thrive both academically and socially, but also have the most opportunities in life with the least amount of financial burden.
Students need to be at a college that fits their goals, needs, and personality.

If students do not end up at a school that fits them well, they put themselves at risk of dropping out.

Students who think first about who they are and what they want are more likely to choose a college that fits them.
Helping Students Find their Fit: College Counseling Resources at PHA

- 3 College Counselors to ensure a personalized approach:
  - Erin McElligott (Director of College Counseling, Alumni Support)
  - Leo Costa (College Counselor, College Prep 11)
  - Allie Michels (College Counselor, College Prep 12)
- Weekly College Prep class in 11th and 12th grade
- Parent programming events: 9/10 Family Night (December), FAB meeting (May), Kick Off to College, and FAFSA Fill-in Night (next October)
- Comprehensive College Counseling website, including college admissions handbook
  - https://www.phacs.org/apps/pages/CI-college-counseling
Role of the College Counselor

- Work 1-on-1 with 12th grade students to get to know them, their needs, and their college/career goals
- Act as the student’s advocate in the college process
- Help plan and create a list of colleges for students starting at the end of 11th grade
- Advise students and families about potential admissions decisions
- Write counselor’s recommendations for students
- Help students with applications, essays, and preparing for interviews
- Communicate key information on the college process to parents, including financial aid
College Prep Class

**College Prep 11**
- Professional communication skills
- Self Reflection
- College Admissions Terminology
- Researching Colleges
- SAT Prep
- College Application Essay
- College Visits (4 mandatory!)

**College Prep 12**
- Applying to College
- Completing Common App
- Revising Application Essays
- Applying for Financial Aid
- Interview Prep
- Transitions to College
  - Financial
  - Social
  - Academic
6 Dimensions of a College Application

- Transcript #1
- SATs #2
- Extra-Curricular #4
- Other #6?
- Interview #5
- Essays #3
- Recommendations #3
GRADES ARE MOST IMPORTANT
6 Dimensions of a College Application: Standardized Testing

- PSAT (today)
  - Practice for the SAT; colleges will NOT see these scores
- SAT (March 9th, May 4th, June 1st)
  - All juniors are REQUIRED to take the March 9th SAT
- SAT II (May 4th & June 1st)
- ACT
- Test Optional Schools (www.fairtest.org)
6 Dimensions of a College Application: Recommendations

- These letters summarize the students’ experience in the classroom and in the community. They are meant to provide context for students’ transcript and testing.

- At the end of 11th grade, students will ask 2-3 teachers for recommendation letters
  - 11th grade teachers
  - Core academic subjects (ex. science, math, English, history, Spanish)
  - Important to build positive relationships with teachers all year long and to show good work ethic even when struggling

- College Counselor will also write a letter
6 Dimensions of a College Application: 
Personal Essay

- 650-word essay about 1 or more important experiences that have shaped the student’s life
- Topics can include...
  - Obstacles
  - Accomplishments
  - Family
  - Special experiences
  - Passions/hobbies
  - Anything!
- Heavy-duty revision process starting in 11th grade and lasting until Fall or inter of 12th grade
- Students must receive 100% on this essay before they can apply to college
6 Dimensions of a College Application: Extracurricular Activities

- Athletics, arts, drama, clubs etc.
- Leadership positions
- Part-time work
- Family responsibilities
- Summer after Junior Year = IMPORTANT opportunity for extracurricular experience
  - Internship
  - Academic program
  - Community service
  - Job
- Quality over quantity
GRADES ARE MOST IMPORTANT
11th Grade College Timeline

November-December, 2018:
✔ Create college folder (GoogleDocs) and store test information, application info, passwords, and other college docs
✔ Review scores from the PSAT and begin preparing for SAT
✔ Attend 1 or more college tour

January, 2019:
✔ Continue preparing for SAT; take mock SAT at PHA
✔ Start scholarship and summer extracurricular search

February, 2019:
✔ Continue preparing for SAT; register for March SAT exam
✔ Attend 1 or more college tours during February break

July-August, 2019:
✔ Complete summer extracurricular activity
✔ Apply to fly-in college visit programs, refer to College Greenlight’s list
✔ Write 2nd draft of college essay
✔ Visit colleges on initial list to figure out top choice schools

September, 2019:
✔ Begin college applications
✔ Family compiles tax information/financial documents for financial aid forms
✔ Visit colleges on list to finalize top choice schools

October, 2019:
✔ Family attends FAFSA Completion Night @PHA and begins CSS PROFILE financial aid form, if needed
✔ Write final draft of college essay
✔ Take SATs one last time, if needed

November-December, 2019:
✔ Submit college applications
✔ Submit all financial aid forms
11th Grade College Timeline

March, 2019:
✔ Take the SAT on March 9th
✔ Apply for a summer extracurricular opportunity (ex. Mayor’s Program, academic program, job)

April, 2019:
✔ Prepare for AP exams, if applicable
✔ Prepare for SATs and/or SAT II’s
✔ Attend 1 or more college tours during April break
✔ Begin 1st draft of college essay

May and June, 2019:
✔ Take the SAT, SAT II’s, and/or AP exams
✔ Ask college counselor and 1-2 teachers to write college recommendation
✔ Meet 1-on-1 with college counselor and brainstorm an initial college list

July-August, 2019:
✔ Complete summer extracurricular activity
✔ Apply to fly-in college visit programs, refer to College Greenlight’s list
✔ Write 2nd draft of college essay
✔ Visit colleges on initial list to figure out top choice schools

September, 2019:
✔ Begin college applications
✔ Family compiles tax information/financial documents for financial aid forms
✔ Visit colleges on list to finalize top choice schools

October, 2019:
✔ Family attends FAFSA Completion Night @PHA and begins CSS PROFILE financial aid form, if needed
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November-December, 2019:
✔ Submit college applications
✔ Submit all financial aid forms
Developing a College List

- Self-reflection
- Honest assessment of grades and test scores
- Research and plan visit to college campuses
- All students should apply to a range of schools:
  - “ Likely” School = 80%+ chance of being admitted
  - “Possible” School = 50% chance of being admitted
  - “Reach” School = 20% or less chance of being admitted
Important College Terms

❖ Types of Colleges:
  ❖ Public
  ❖ Private

❖ College Living Options:
  ❖ Commuter
  ❖ Residential

❖ Types of Colleges:
  ❖ Liberal Arts = room to explore different areas of study
  ❖ Pre-Professional = set major/career track from the start

❖ Types of College Degrees:
  ❖ Two Year (Associates)
  ❖ Four Year (Bachelor’s)
  ❖ Graduate
11th Grade Presentation Recap

- Grades are extremely important
- College Prep 11th: self-exploration, start the college search, prepare for SAT’s
- 11th graders should visit at least 4 colleges this year and take official tours at each
  - Think about college fit – academically, socially, personally, & financially
- 11th graders are required to take the SATs on March 9th and then again in May, June, August, or October
- 1-on-1 Counselor Meetings start in May and will devise initial college list
11th Grade Presentation Recap

- Students will ask for letters of recommendation in the spring; they should form positive relationships with all 11th grade teachers.
- 11th graders should get involved in extracurriculars and use the summer to do an academic program, internship, or job.
- PHA College Counseling is here to support students and families; keep coming to events and ask questions.
- Use our website as a resource:
  - https://www.phacs.org/apps/pages/CI-college-counseling
Questions?

❖ If a question comes to mind after this evening, feel free to send them in an email or call us:
  ❖ lcosta@phacs.org
  ❖ emcelligott@phacs.org
  ❖ amichels@phacs.org
  ❖ 617-284-7922

❖ Use our website as a resource:
  ❖ https://www.phacs.org/apps/pages/CI-College-Counseling