Xaverian High School

Sophomore Parent College Info Night

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Highlights

- Introduction
- Let's talk about stress...
- What colleges see...
- Types of colleges
- Naviance
- Admissions Tests – SATs, ACTs, Subject Tests
- Resumes
- College visits
- Summer Programs

Counselors:

Mrs Pacheco (Director Of School Counseling) Ext 126
Mrs Ana Loposky (College Coordinator) Ext 166
Ms Cristine DePalo Ext 123
Ms Tanya Vassallo Ext 176
Mr Torres Ext 147
Mr Vargas Ext 168
Mr Burns Ext 161
Mr Ji-Won Moon Ext 208
**Sophomore Year for Parents:**

- Help your sons/daughters strengthen academic areas that need improvement. Please check that they are seeking after-school help by either going to the review classes, tutoring sessions or meeting with the teacher.
- Encourage them to challenge themselves and plan on taking some honors courses during their junior and senior years.
- Make plans to visit colleges during the spring and summer months.
- Investigate financial aid resources.
- Help your sons/daughters interpret the results of the PSAT, and Practice SAT and ACT.
- Familiarize yourself with Naviance, Explore it and encourage your sons/daughters to do the same.
- Go on our website. Explore College Corner.

**Sophomore Year For Students:**

- Go on Naviance, familiarize yourself with the site and the different tabs and surveys. Take as many surveys as you can, they will help you narrow your career interests.
- Keep a record of all your extra-curricular activities (clubs, teams, volunteer work, etc)
- Sign up for some new ones if they interest you. Remember it is quality and not quantity that counts.
- Meet with our counselor at least once a year.
- Develop good relationships with your teachers. You will need them to write your letters of recommendation next year. Make yourself known to them...in a good way...
- Volunteer...for everything!!!!!
- Take a list of questions with you when you go visit colleges (stop by our counselor’s office if you need help with this.
- Register for the June SAT Subjects tests – many competitive colleges and universities will want to see at least two of these. You should take them in the subject areas that you have mastered and when you have taken the corresponding course in high school.
- Consider taking a summer course at a local college. These are usually available for sophomores and juniors in high school. The experience will you a glimpse of what to expect in college and will enhance your resume. You might even walk away with a really good letter of recommendation.
Examining the options:

1. **Private College**

   These colleges have benefits that cannot be found elsewhere. They are academically challenging and student focused. Most have a common thread [critical thinking, technological advancement] that is woven through their entire curriculum.

   They also tend to be smaller; this kind of school will pose an enormous challenge for wallflowers as there are fewer social networks to choose from. Because of their size and tuition, their class size tend to be smaller. For students who occasionally ditch out of class—this is not the type of college for you. Professors are intensely involved in the academic lives of their students and their help is easy to access. They expect you to attend all their classes and they will notice if you are absent. These colleges usually offer good scholarships which help offset the tuition price.

2. **Community College**

   There is nothing wrong with a community college. In fact, community colleges give you the opportunity to attend college, get class credit, and determine a major and find the college that is the right fit for you.

   A common myth about community schools is that they employ less than first-rate staff. Not true. Most of the professors are incredibly accomplished. Many of them choose to work at a community school because the employment is usually part-time and very flexible. The colleges are good for students who haven’t chosen a major or those who aren’t sure if college is for them.

3. **Public University**

   State schools are a good option for most students as their tuition is reasonable and the classes are challenging. Keep in mind that these are usually very large and this can be a difficult environment for some students to adapt to. It doesn’t take long before anonymity sets in. If you like that though, then go for it!
Naviance

Naviance is a web-based program used to assist students with college and career planning. Students and parents log-in with their email and password and can access features by clicking on the different tabs.

Features:
- View Standardized Test Scores & Current Cumulative GPA
- Career Exploration
- Research Colleges
- College Planning
- Search for Scholarships
- Learning, Career & Strength Assessments
- Create Goals, To-Dos, & Resumes
- Helpful Links

Home Tab: A snapshot of your account and displays messages, favorites, to-dos, and quick access links

Colleges Tab: College planning, research colleges and save schools of interest to lists
- Find Your Fit: find schools based on chosen criteria
- Research Colleges: access your list of colleges of interest (thinking about), compare colleges to your academic profile, acceptance data, and other college resources
- Apply to Colleges: access list of colleges you're applying to, test scores, and sign-up for college events
- Scholarship & Money: search for scholarships

Careers Tab: Find important career information, such as job descriptions, activities performed in careers, expected wages earned, and search for jobs by area (ex: Business & Financial Operations will list all related jobs). Students can add careers of interest to their “list” for quick access and take a variety of assessments.
- Under “Careers Home” you will find:
  - Careers & Clusters [I'm thinking about): careers added by student
  - Career Cluster Finder Assessment: matches you with career clusters based on activities that interest you, personal qualities, and school subjects that you enjoy
  - Do What You Are Assessment: matches you with careers based on your personality
  - Career Interest Profiler Assessment: matches you with careers based on work activities you'd enjoy and ranks your top three interest areas

About Me Tab: Keep track of your personal documents & results
- My Stuff: access to survey, resume, test scores, portfolio, documents, & journal
- My Assessments: access assessments listed above in addition to Learning Styles Inventory, taken during Freshmen year, and Strengths Explorer & MI Advantage, both usually taken starting in Sophomore year
- My Surveys: access to any surveys completed, in-progress, or pending
- Post-Secondary Plans: access to Game Plan, which is a series of questions designed to help your counselor work with you to develop a plan for achieving your goals after graduation.

My Planner Tab: Access your goals, to-dos, & tasks assigned by school
Time Management Tips For High School Students

It's 10 p.m.—Do You Know Where Your Homework Is?

Does it seem like there's never enough time in the day to get everything done? Feel like you're always running late? Here are some tips for taking control of your time and organizing your life.

1. Make a "To Do" List Every Day.
   Put things that are most important at the top and do them first. If it's easier, use a planner to track all of your tasks. And don't forget to reward yourself for your accomplishments.

2. Use Spare Minutes Wisely.
   Get some reading done on the bus ride home from school, for example, and you'll kill two birds with one stone.

3. It's Okay to Say "No."
   If your boss asks you to work on a Thursday night and you have a final exam the next morning, realize that it's okay to say no. Keep your short- and long-term priorities in mind.

4. Find the Right Time.
   You'll work more efficiently if you figure out when you do your best work. For example, if your brain handles math better in the afternoon, don't wait to do it until late at night.

5. Review Your Notes Every Day.
   You'll reinforce what you've learned, so you need less time to study. You'll also be ready if your teacher calls on you or gives a pop quiz.

6. Get a Good Night's Sleep.
   Running on empty makes the day seem longer and your tasks seem more difficult.

7. Communicate Your Schedule to Others.
   If phone calls are proving to be a distraction, tell your friends that you take social calls from 7-8 p.m. It may sound silly, but it helps.

8. Become a Taskmaster.
   Figure out how much free time you have each week. Give yourself a time budget and plan your activities accordingly.

   Have you ever wasted an entire evening by worrying about something that you're supposed to be doing? Was it worth it? Instead of agonizing and procrastinating, just do it.

    Setting goals that are unrealistic sets you up for failure. While it's good to set high goals for yourself, be sure not to overdo it. Set goals that are difficult yet reachable.

Consider these tips, but personalize your habits so that they suit you. If you set priorities that fit your lifestyle, you'll have a better chance of achieving your goals.
Extracurricular Activities
Life Outside the Classroom

Sure, life in school is pretty interesting. You’ve got algebraic equations, Bunsen burners, sentence diagrams... but chances are, you’ve got commitments outside of school, too. Maybe you have a part-time job, play in a band, are on a sports team, or do volunteer work.

Colleges Care
The good news is that colleges pay attention to your life both inside and outside the classroom. Yes, your academics probably come first, but your activities reveal a great deal about you, such as:

- How you’ve made a meaningful contribution to something
- What your non-academic interests are
- Whether you can maintain a long-term commitment
- Whether you can manage your time and priorities
- What diversity you’d bring to the student body

Maintaining a Balance
Keep in mind, colleges are not interested in seeing you “do it all.”

“We’re looking for a commitment to and a passion for an activity outside of the academic setting—we’re looking for depth rather than breadth,” explains Nanci Teaster, a college admissions director.

Colleges don’t have a checklist of requirements when it comes to extracurriculars—they want to see your individuality—and your consistent commitment.

Haven’t Gotten Involved Yet?
Lots of school, community, and religious organizations give you chances to explore your interests and talents. If you haven’t felt drawn into something yet, there’s no shortage of opportunities for you to explore.

School Activities
It’s pretty easy to find out about activities available at school. Once you start exploring, sometimes the challenge is figuring out how much to do. Here are some quick tips:

- Most importantly, when you find something you like to do, stick with it.
- If you’re interested and have extra time, try to excel in more than one area. For example, write for the paper and volunteer. But make sure you’re giving your all to each activity, and, most importantly, to your school work.
- Don’t worry about being president, or captain. The key is whether you’ve done something significant, center stage or behind the scenes.

Work Experience
Work experience—paid or volunteer, year-round or summer—can help you identify career interests and goals, gain work experience, and apply classroom learning to the real world. It’s also a great way to earn money for college, of course. Consider arranging for an internship or to shadow someone at his or her job.

Community Service
You can also gain skills and experience through volunteer work, such as by tutoring elementary school kids or spending time at a local hospital. Some schools even offer academic credit for volunteer work.
High school sophomores

Action plan

With your freshman year behind you, you are one step closer to finding a college that fits your needs. In addition to keeping your grades up, you can begin researching prospective schools. Continue meeting with your counselor and involving yourself in outside activities, such as athletics and community service. Your senior year will arrive before you know it, and you can be ready when it does.

Continue to meet with your counselor

Your guidance counselor can help you plan a schedule and choose sufficiently challenging classes. When reviewing your records, colleges take into consideration both your GPA and the amount of effort required to earn it. If you were not automatically placed in advanced classes, think about asking to be placed in them. Many high schools will allow you to move to an accelerated class if you are successful at the current one. Others will want you to pass a test if you would like to change your schedule. Whatever the requirements, it doesn’t hurt to try.

Continue dedicating time to outside activities

As we mentioned before, colleges love to hear about your life outside of the classroom. If you didn’t dedicate your time to an activity as a high school freshman, you can do so now. It is not necessary to join every club on campus, just pick one or two things that interest you. Admissions committees are impressed with awards or leadership positions, but don’t be fooled into thinking that you have to be a superstar. As long as you consistently dedicate your time to something you enjoy, you will make an impression. If you can convince schools your extracurricular activities have positively impacted someone’s life, including your own, your commitments will be even more notable.

Research colleges

During your sophomore year, you should begin researching colleges of interest. Speak with friends and family about their college experiences, and ask them about the positive and negative aspects of schools they attended. Take a look at student requirements, and find high school classes that will help you fulfill them. A common requirement is knowledge of a foreign language. Try to take four years of a second language during your time in high school. Even if you are not in an Advanced Placement class, many colleges will give you credit for testing out of language classes.

Begin financial planning

College may seem like a financial burden, but it doesn’t have to be. If you create a financial plan, you can avoid falling into debt. Check college websites to get an estimate of tuition costs. You should also take into account the costs associated with living on campus. By using our college search tool, you can compare the living expenses of schools that interest you. This includes estimates for book fees and the costs of room and board. Whatever these expenses may be, Scholarships.com will help you fund your education. Just create a profile on our website, and we’ll take care of the rest. Based on the information you provide, our scholarship search will filter our database of scholarships to find those directly applicable to you. Best of all, this service is completely free of charge!
**SEVEN QUESTIONS PARENTS SHOULD ASK**

1. **When should we start the college search process?**
   The actual college search process should start no later than the junior year in high school. But college planning must begin much earlier. College prep courses must be taken in high school and parents must start planning for the expense. Eighth grade is a suggested start for academic considerations. When the child is born is when to start saving!

2. **What can parents do to help their children?** First, understand that this process is the most stressful thing their children have faced. Then, support their child's decisions. Third, "take off as much pressure as possible, including financial worries.

3. **What are some specific ways to help?** Communicate with the guidance office early in high school. In the junior year use the counselor as a resource for selecting a list of colleges and any other strategies the counselor may offer. Then, try to save as much as possible to offer your child a true choice of college, without regard to money.

4. **What are colleges most interested in?** "Three things: transcript, transcript, and transcript." B's in difficult and demanding courses (e.g. AP courses) are preferable to A's in less challenging courses.

5. **How important is the interview?** Many colleges have eliminated interviews except to encourage enrollment and to get a little more information. Usually only a very good or very bad interview will have any effect.

6. **What do colleges look for in extracurricular activities?** Quality over quantity. Not a laundry list but a commitment and in depth interest in a few. The list should include some volunteer service either in the school or in the community.

7. **Why hurt my child's chances for admission if we apply for financial aid?** The standard answer is "no", that colleges endorse a "need-blind" admissions policy. But some colleges will fully fund those applicants they want and only partially fund those that are lower on the list. They may also give more grant aid (vs. loan aid) to students they most want to attract. Students who apply "early decision" may get less attractive offers because the college knows they are more committed. But many colleges still adhere to the need blind admissions policy.
Tips for Finding Your College Match

Characteristics You Should Consider

How can you find colleges that match your needs? First, identify your priorities. Next, carefully research the characteristics of a range of schools. Finally, match the two. Here are some college characteristics you should consider.

Size of the Student Body
Size will affect many of your opportunities and experiences, including:

- Range of academic majors offered
- Extracurricular possibilities
- Amount of personal attention you'll receive
- Number of books in the library

When considering size, be very sure to look beyond the raw number of students attending. For example, perhaps you're considering a small department within a large school. Investigate not just the number of faculty members, but also how accessible they are to students.

Location
Do you want to visit home frequently, or do you see this as a time to experience a new part of the country? Perhaps you like an urban environment with access to museums, ethnic food, or major league ball games. Or maybe you hope for easy access to the outdoors or the serenity of a small town. Learn more.

Academic Programs
If you know what you want to study, research reputations of academic departments by talking to people in the fields that interest you. If you're undecided, relax and pick an academically balanced institution that offers a range of majors and programs. Most colleges offer counseling to help you find a focus.

In considering academic programs, look for special opportunities and pick a school that offers many possibilities.

Campus Life
Consider what your college life will be like beyond the classroom. Aim for a balance between academics, activities, and social life. Before choosing a college, learn the answers to these questions:

- What extracurricular activities, athletics, and special interest groups are available?
- Does the community around the college offer interesting outlets for students?
- Are students welcomed by the community?
- Is there an ethnic or religious group in which to take part?
- How do fraternities and sororities influence campus life?
- Is housing guaranteed?
- How are dorms assigned?

Cost
Today's college price tag makes cost an important consideration for most students. At the same time, virtually all colleges work to ensure that academically qualified students from every economic circumstance can find financial aid that allows them to attend. In considering cost, look beyond the price tag.
Diversity
Explore what you might gain from a diverse student body. Think about the geographic, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of the students as a means of learning more about the world. Investigate what kinds of student organizations, or other groups with ethnic or religious foundations, are active and visible on campus.

Retention and Graduation Rates
One of the best ways to measure a school's quality and the satisfaction of its students is to learn the percent of students who return after the first year and the percent of entering students who remain to graduate. Comparatively good retention and graduation rates are indicators that responsible academic, social, and financial support systems exist for most students.

Find Colleges
Use College Search to research two-year and four-year schools and find the programs that meet your needs.

Browse colleges with our A to Z College Search listings or search for Colleges State-by-State.
College visits

What sort of questions should I ask?

Since the purpose of your college visits is to research your level of comfort at the schools, plan your questions accordingly. Some questions may be general and apply to every school you visit; others may be more specific. You will gain most insight into the school you visit if your questions go beyond the obvious – the ones answered in the factual publications or on college websites. Ask questions about those issues and topics that matter to you.

Here are a few general questions:

- Why do students select this college?
- What is the best thing about your college?
- What do students complain the most about?
- Describe the sort of students that goes here and the kinds of students that are most unhappy here.
- How active is the social life?
- What are the most popular majors?
- What are the most popular extra-curricular activities?
- How active is the college in helping with career planning?
- What happens here on weekends?
- How good is faculty in advising and being available to students?
- How are roommates chosen?

Questions to ask admissions officers or professors:

- What are typical course requirements?
- Who teaches introductory courses - professors or graduate students?
- What opportunities exist for independent study and study abroad?
- What consists of a typical schedule for a freshman?
- What types of tutoring are available?
- Are there internships available?
- How much freedom do I have in choosing freshman courses?
- Will any of my high school courses count for college credit (AP? College courses?)