



THE SENIOR SPECTRUM (October 2016)

Greetings, Seniors & Parents (Guardians):

It is hard to believe that the final year of high school is now here and graduation is right around the corner! Right now is the prime time for college applications to be going out. Please remember, as a general guideline, we suggest to have college application completed by Thanksgiving break.

Graduation

Your graduation date is May 27, 2017. It will be here very soon! It is very important to make sure that you are on track to graduate. If you need an appointment, or a copy of your transcript to check your credits, contact the high school. This is your responsibility to make sure that you graduate. We don't want any surprises when we get to the end of the year and no one goes through the graduation ceremony without meeting all of the graduation requirements, so please pay particular attention to your credits and all deadlines (FAFSA, college applications, etc).

College Applications

As previously stated, this is prime time for sending out college applications. The general guideline is to have your college applications submitted by Thanksgiving break. After this date you are at a greater risk of not being accepted and/or missing out on important scholarship opportunities.

College applications are all available online to submit electronically. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need help with accessing applications. You need to complete your part of the admissions application and bring any additional forms into the SAC office to your counselor. Your counselor will then send your transcript and any other high school information that is needed. Please inform your school counselor if there is a teacher recommendation that needs to accompany your application. If you apply online to a college you need to supply us with an addressed envelope with postage so that we can mail your transcript. Or, you may also notify us if we need to send your transcript electronically.

Parchment

The counseling department is offering a new way to send your transcripts electronically. In September, all seniors were notified specific log-in information for access to Parchment. If you did not receive an email, please see your counselor to receive your access code/log-in information. Once you have logged in, you can search specific colleges that you have applied to and request to submit your transcript electronically. Perks of using Parchment? It is FREAKY FAST, students can see when their transcripts have been sent in real time, and students can even request to have an unofficial copy of their transcripts sent directly to them. See your counselor if you have any additional questions/concerns.

Recommendations

If you need a recommendation for college or for a scholarship, choose a teacher whom you know well and have worked well with in past classes. Be polite in asking and give your teacher two weeks notice. Provide a profile/resume so that the teacher can write a stronger and more specific recommendation. You should also provide a stamped addressed envelope for this teacher if it will not be sent electronically.

College Visits

You are permitted a total of four college days in grades total between your junior and senior year. To take a college visit you need to schedule an appointment one week in advance with the college you wish to visit. See your school counselor to get a college visitation card to take with you on your visit. You take the college visitation card with you to the college and get a signature from the admissions office. You need to show it to your teachers and the attendance office. You are responsible for all missed work.

College Representatives Coming to Findlay High School

Visits to Findlay High School from college admission representatives are a great way for you, as the prospective student, to gain information about area colleges. ***Colleges visiting FHS are listed in the main office hallway, listing dates and times. See your counselor for a hall pass.***

During these visits, reps meet with interested students in small groups to discuss topics such as the academic programs, campus life, financial aid, and admission procedures for their college. They also answer students' questions; [20 Questions to Ask College Representatives](#) can provide a good starting point.

Benefits of these College Visits:

1. Students have a chance — in their own town — to meet face-to-face with a rep and ask specific questions.
2. Students can let the college know they are seriously interested.
3. In many cases, the reps are admission officers from the college, so students have a unique opportunity to make contact with a person who may be evaluating their application in the future.
4. The meeting provides students with a specific contact at the college to whom they can send questions.
5. Sometimes reps, particularly ones from state universities, will give an early read on students' transcripts, test scores and course selections during their visits. This helps students assess their fit at that institution and figure out what they can do to improve their chances of getting in.

Bulletin Boards

There are bulletin boards located outside and inside the SAC office where we post college information. As we receive information about events taking place at colleges we will post the information on the bulletin boards. Some of the events that you may be interested in will be open houses, scholarships competitions, and meeting with college representatives.

Military Careers

If your intention is to apply to one of the five military academies (service academies), you need to get the nomination of one of your congressmen. Some of the factors taken into consideration for this are: character, scholarship, leadership, physical aptitude, medical fitness, goals, and motivation. The ideal time to pursue this is in the spring of your junior year or early in the fall of your senior year. ROTC scholarships are available from

each branch of the military. An ROTC scholarship allows you to attend college first then enlist in a branch of the military after college. There are opportunities with all the branches of the military to pay for your college education. You can talk to your recruiter or contact your guidance counselor at the high school.

Financial Aid

The FAFSA is already opened for the 2017-2018 academic year and opened on October 1st. To complete the FAFSA, you will need your parent's 2015 tax information and to sign up for a digital signature. Because the FAFSA process is earlier, this means that colleges/universities financial aid deadlines—please ***pay close attention to college deadlines!*** If you need assistance with the FAFSA or have specific questions, we recommend that you ask the college/universities financial aid offices you intend on attending.

Scholarships

Scholarships will be listed in the catalogs located in the SAC office of the high school and online. To access the scholarship list available at the high school, go to:

<http://FHS.FINDLAYCITYSCHOOLS.ORG>, Click on the scholarships quick link on the left.

Other good web sites are:

WWW.FASTWEB.COM
[WWW.SCHOLAR AID.COM](http://WWW.SCHOLAR Aid.COM)
WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.ORG
WWW.eStudentLoan.com
WWW.ED.GOV
WWW.Finaid.Org
WWW.ED.GOV/PROG
WWW.PETERSONS.COM/RESOURCE/FINANCE/HTML
HTTP://YAHOO/SCHOLARSHIPSEARCH
WWW.Wiredscholar.com
WWW.FREESCHOLARSHIPS.COM
www.anycollege.net
www.gocollege.com
www.scholarships.com
www.scholarshipamerica.com
www.collegeclub.com
www.supercollege.com
www.weeklyscholarshipalert.org
www.collegebasics.com

NCAA

Prospective student-athletes for scholarship programs (Divisions I & II) must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse will verify your eligibility based upon a formula of GPA in college prep classes and ACT/SAT scores. You can register at www.eligibilitycenter.org

Standardized Tests

The ACT and SAT tests are the tests that the colleges use to determine if a student is qualified to be admitted to college. When students register to take one or both of these test they have the results sent to Findlay High School by entering the high school code. If a student does not have the score sent to Findlay High School, they will not be on the high school transcript. In order for the score to be on the high school transcript, the scores must come from the college board or the ACT organization.

ACT and SAT registration packets are available in the SAC office. You can also register for them at www.actstudent.org or at www.collegeboard.org

Test deadlines and related information for the ACT and SAT are available online.

Test Prep

There are many test prep materials on the market. Here are some companies that have test prep sessions.

Owens Community College 567-661-7357

Sylvan Learning Centers – 419-427-0975

Carol Hall - 419-332-4630

Ohio Graduation Test (OGT)

The Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) must be passed before you graduate. The test will be given the week of October 24-28. If a student does not graduate because he or she did not pass the OGT, they will still be permitted to take the test until they do pass. Once they pass they will be granted their high school diploma.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are coming up on December 8, 2015 3:30 – 7:30 pm, February 23, 2015 3:30 – 7:30 pm, and May 4, 2015 3:30 – 7:30 pm. This is a great opportunity to speak with your child's teacher. If you would like to speak with them call the high school at 419-427-5412 to make an appointment.

Contact Information

In case you need to get in touch with your guidance counselor here is our contact information:

A-G: Ray Elbin, 419-427-5414, relbin@findlaycityschools.org

H-Q: Mary Burget, 419-425-8313, mburget@findlaycityschools.org

R-Z: Jenny Coulter, 419-425-8356, jcoulter@findlaycityschools.org

Student Bulletin

Visit www.fastweb.com for more tips about college admission!

Admissions: Key Terms Defined

Award Letter: A letter telling you what financial aid (if any) your college is offering to you (includes types and amounts of aid offered, specific program information, etc.). You may choose to accept some or all of what is offered.

Credit (or Credit Hour): A unit of measurement institutions give for fulfilling course requirements. Most colleges require that you complete a certain number in order to graduate.

Cost of Attendance: Includes any cost associated with attending college: tuition and associated fees, room and board, books and supplies, etc.

Early Action: If you apply early action and are accepted, you may compare admissions and financial aid offers and wait to commit to the college until later in the year.

Early Decision: If you apply early decision, you must attend the college or university if you are accepted and must withdraw any applications sent to other schools. You won't be able to compare financial aid offers.

Enrollment Status: Indication of whether you attend full or part time. In general, you must attend at least half time (or in some cases full time) to qualify for financial aid.

Application Checklist

- ✓ Remember to ask about deadlines.
- ✓ **The General Application:** Is all information accurate and legible? Don't leave questions blank unless the application allows it.
- ✓ **Academic Transcripts:** Make sure they are sealed.
- ✓ **Letters of Recommendation:** Do you have the number of recommendations required? Also, check with the admissions office if they need to be sealed.
- ✓ **Work Samples/Portfolios:** Include your name, contact information and the project title on every item. Send copies, not originals.

Expected Family Contribution: Amount students and their family are expected to contribute toward cost of attendance.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students must fill out the FAFSA to find out how much federal aid they are eligible to receive. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov for more info.

Open Admissions: Students are admitted regardless of academic qualifications.

Out-of-State Student: Generally applies to students attending a public university outside of their home state.

Out-of-state students must pay a higher tuition rate unless they establish legal residency for that state.

Rolling Admissions: There is no set admissions deadline date; qualified students are accepted until classes are filled.

Undergraduate Student: A student who has not completed a baccalaureate or first professional degree

- ✓ **Application Essays:** Make sure your name, social security number, date of birth, contact information and essay title are on each page.
- ✓ **Reply Cards:** Include these for your prospective college to mail back to you as receipt of delivery. They should be stamped and self-addressed.
- ✓ **SAT/ACT Scores:** If you need to send test scores to additional schools, contact the testing company immediately. Scores are mailed about three weeks after your request.

Common Application Errors

Signatures: Before mailing, verify that all necessary forms have been signed.

“I’ll start the application next week.” Don’t run out of time to complete the application. Give yourself at least two weeks to find mistakes.

“I already ran a spell-check on my computer.” Words can be spelled correctly but used incorrectly. Ask a counselor, teacher or family member to proofread the application to catch any errors or poor phrasing.

“One copy is enough.” Print out any online forms and keep copies of all paperwork.

“I assume this is right.” If you’re confused by a question or any part of the application, ask someone. A quick call to the admissions office can save you from making an embarrassing error.

“I can send my application as soon as I’m finished.” Before you seal the envelope or click “Send” on your computer, double- and triple-check that you have included all necessary materials.

College Application Guide: 10 College Essay Tips to Get you Noticed

1. Don’t “recycle” essays. An essay that sounds like it has been used before will blend with everyone else’s.

2. Captivate your audience. Make your essay engaging and memorable. Include a quick, enticing intro; give a reason to finish reading it.

3. Be yourself. Choose a topic that is meaningful to you. Use your own voice. Show off a side of yourself that your application does not; don’t simply write what you think an admissions office wants to hear.

4. Accentuate the positive. When writing about a personal experience, emphasize how the experience changed you for the better.

5. Write in the active voice. Doing so will make for a clearer, more concise essay.

6. Don’t overextend. Your essay isn’t a term paper. Stay focused on your topic.

7. Ask people for input. Whether it’s a teacher, counselor, friend or parent, ask someone you respect for some candid feedback. Is it confusing? Boring?

8. Leave time for rewriting. Look for weak or dull spots and spelling and grammatical errors. Never let your first draft be your final draft.

9. Revise, reword. Improve on your first draft through various rewrites. Read the essay aloud to find awkward sentences or problems.

10. Pursue perfection. Have someone else look it over. Quadruple-check the spelling. Type your essay carefully.

What are Colleges Looking for?

A college admissions office wants to see more than just high test scores and grades. How can you separate yourself from the crowd? Grades and standardized test scores: It’s obvious, but these marks are one of the first things colleges look at.

On Your Application?

- ✓ **Extracurricular activities:** Quantity doesn’t mean quality. Have you taken a leadership role in your chosen activities? What have you accomplished?
- ✓ **Rigorous course schedule:** Schools want to see challenging courses that will help you grow academically. Don’t take classes just to pad your GPA.
- ✓ **Follow the rules:** If an application asks you to choose one essay, don’t answer them all. Read the application directions completely before answering any questions.

- ✓ **Include everything:** Verify all forms have been signed and that you’ve included all essays and recommendations. Doublecheck that you haven’t left out anything important.
- ✓ **On-time arrival:** Note when the application deadline is and send it in with plenty of time to spare. You may want to send your application via certified mail for added assurance that it arrived on time.

On Your Application Essay?

- ✓ ***Show, don't tell:*** Don't just list your attributes; get specific. For example, saying that you're helpful is not as dynamic as relating your experiences with helping younger students learn how to read.
- ✓ ***Creativity counts:*** Avoid clichés or standard essay topics. Try to come up with something an admissions office hasn't seen a million times before.
- ✓ ***No spelling errors:*** First, spellcheck your essay. Then, read it again for usage mistakes. Have a parent or teacher look it over for spelling and grammar errors.
- ✓ ***Personality:*** The application essay is your opportunity to show your prospective college what makes you *you*. Ask yourself whether what you've written is memorable, engaging and in your own voice.

In Your Interview?

- ✓ ***Arrive early and dress the part:*** Know where the interview will be held ahead of time so you won't arrive late. Dress on the conservative and understated side. If you have questions about the dress code, call the college and ask.
- ✓ ***Identity:*** Admissions offices want to know you as a person. If you're discussing your accomplishments, highlight why they were meaningful for you, or what you got out of them.
- ✓ ***Spontaneity, positivity, confidence:*** Sounding like you're reading off of a cue card won't leave them with a fond memory. It's a good idea to rehearse, but remember that the interview should be a conversation. Be natural, sure of yourself and optimistic about your future college career.
- ✓ ***Interest in the college:*** Come prepared with questions or impressions you have about the college to demonstrate your interest level. Place less emphasis on your plans after graduation and more on what you want to learn and accomplish while a college student. Follow up with a thank-you note.