PROVIDENCE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
1800 W. Lincoln Highway • New Lenox, Illinois 60451 • (815) 485-2136 • www.providencecatholic.org
COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Dear Parents of Juniors and Seniors: August/September 2017

How quickly they're growing up! It seems like only yesterday that you were registering your sons and daughters here at Providence Catholic. Now it's time to make decisions concerning college. So, thank you for taking the time to read through this letter which will help to answer many of your questions. We know this can be an exciting as well as a worrisome time. We hope to make things as easy as possible for you. To that end, enclosed you will find the Providence Catholic High School College Preparation Information Booklet, which is updated annually.

We are very excited to have all in one place the information you will need as you go through the college selection process. (Ninety-nine percent of the Class of 2017 are now continuing their education.) Please pay particular attention to the timelines on pages four through six that will serve as guidelines in your planning of what to do when.

As you and your sons and daughters read through this booklet, please note that we begin to foster awareness of further education beginning in the freshman year. This is reinforced each year through various presentations and coursework. By senior year, the groundwork is in place. Representatives from various colleges visit to meet with students and seniors are allowed one college day to visit a prospective college.

VISITS BY COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES

Juniors and seniors may visit college representatives in both the fall and spring. When visits for college representatives are scheduled, they are posted on the calendar in the glass case outside of the Counseling Offices, outside of Theology classrooms and listed in the daily all-school announcements. They are also posted under the "Colleges" tab on Naviance Family Connection and on the Plus Portal calendar. Having this information will make the time spent with the college representative more productive.

Juniors and seniors are to check any of these places frequently and request a pass from one of the College Counselors or the Counseling Department administrative assistant at least two days before the representative's visit. The student will take the pass to the teacher of the class that will be missed at least one day prior to missing class. The teacher has the option of signing the pass to excuse the student from class. College representatives will meet with students in the College and Career Center located in our Blanchette Learning Commons.

We have already set up dates with several colleges to come and talk with our students, so they will have ample opportunity to speak with a wide variety of schools. From this list below, you may learn more about a visiting school by clicking on its name in Naviance which will lead you to that school's website. As of today, the visits scheduled for September and October are:

September 12	Marquette University at 12:10 pm (period 5)
	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at 1:50 pm (period 7)
September 13	St. Ambrose University at 9:35 am (period 2)
	Eastern Illinois University at 1:10 pm (period 3)
September 14	Monmouth College at 9:27 am (period 5)
	University of Kansas at 1:10 pm (period 7)
September 15	Merrimack College at 8:30 am (period 2)
September 18	University of Missouri, Columbia at 9:40 am (period 3)
September 19	Benedictine University at 12:10 pm (period 5)
	Creighton University at 1:50 pm (period 7)

COLLEGE VISITS CONTINUED

September 20	Lake Forest College at 9:27 am (period 5)
	Carroll University at 1:10 pm (period 7)
September 21	University of South Alabama at 7:55 am (period 1)
	St. Mary's University, Minnesota at 1:10 pm (period 3)
September 26	Purdue University at 9:40 am (period 3)
	DePaul University at 12:10 pm (period
September 27	Joliet Junior College at 1:10 pm (period3)
September 28	Illinois Institute of Technology at 1:10 pm (period 7)
October 3	University of Notre Dame at 9:40 am (period 3)
	Saint Louis University at 1:00 pm (period 6)
October 4	Illinois Wesleyan University at 7:55 am (period 1)
	St. Norbert College at 9:35 am (period 2)
October 5	Knox College at 9:27 am (period 5)
	Elmhurst College at 1:10 pm (period 7)
October 10	Northwestern University at 8:45 am (period 2)
	Villanova University at 9:40 am (period 3)
	Arizona State University at 1:50 (period 7)
October 13	Vanderbilt University at 9:40 am (period 3)
October 17	Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame at 8:45 am (period 2)
	Miami University, Ohio at 12:10 pm (period 5)
	Xavier University at 1:00 pm (period 6)
October 18	Butler University at 1:10 pm (period 3)
October 19	Indiana University at 1:10 pm (period 7)
October 25	University of Chicago at 9:27 am (period 5)
October 26	University of Dayton at 1:10 pm (period 3)
October 27	Northern Michigan University at 12:10 pm (period 5)

SENIOR COLLEGE DAY

Each senior is allowed to take one college day to visit a prospective college. This is an excused absence. The student is to get the appropriate form from the College Counselor to take with him/her. The form must be validated by an admissions counselor at the college that is visited and submitted to the Dean's Office upon return to school. Arrangements must be made in writing with the College Counselor for the visit at least one week prior to the visit. Students are to take their college day before May 1st. Pages eight through ten of the enclosed booklet will help you plan your visit.

COLLEGE NIGHT FOR SENIORS AND THEIR PARENTS

The Counseling Department will be hosting a College Night for Seniors and Their Parents on Tuesday, September 12 at 7pm in the Providence Catholic small gym. Our college counselors, Mr. Kyle Murphy and Mr. Frank Palmasani, will provide important information on application procedures as well as the Common Application. They will also go through the application process and answer questions. Naviance Family Connection will also be explained. This will be a great follow-up to the junior college planning sessions that you attended with your junior last February and March.

CONQUERING COLLEGE COSTS

We would like to invite you to this informative program in our small gym on Tuesday, October 3rd at 7:00 pm. Last year, Providence graduates amassed nearly 40 million dollars of scholarship and grant offers from colleges. Come to this program to learn how. Frank Palmasani, one of our college counselors and author of "Right College, Right Price," will also explain how the new timeline could greatly increase scholarship and grant potential. This program is appropriate for parents of all four grade levels. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

COLLEGE NIGHT FOR PARENTS OF FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES

Mr. Murphy and Mr. Palmasani will be giving a presentation for parents of freshmen and sophomores on Thursday, November 2 at 7:00 pm in the Providence Catholic small gym. Information on the college selection process and Providence Catholic's part in that will be discussed. A comprehensive overview of the Naviance college and career planning program will be given.

Descriptions and dates for all upcoming parent events may be found on the Counseling Department page under "Parent Events." http://www.providencecatholic.org/student-services/counseling/parent-events/.

HOTLINE FOR FINANCIAL AID

The U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Information Center offers a toll-free student aid hot line. Parents and students can get answers to questions about student eligibility requirements, how to complete a financial aid application, the award and payment process, verification procedures and whether a particular school participates in the federal student aid programs. The toll-free number is 1-800-4 FED AID (1-800-433-3243).

COLLEGE FAIRS

The annual College Fair in which Providence Catholic and other local high schools participate will be held at Joliet Junior College again this year. Over 125 colleges and universities will be represented at this College Fair on Wednesday, October 18, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Moraine Valley is also hosting a College Career Night on Wednesday, October 11 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. These are great opportunities to meet with various college representatives with your sons and daughters and gather information.

RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

This form gives Providence Catholic permission to release your student's transcripts with college applications. Parents of the Class of 2018 were asked to sign this form at your student's college planning meeting last February or March. Parent/s who were unable to attend this meeting received an email with a link to the form. Please print, sign and return the release form to the Counseling Office as soon as possible. (Your student may sign this form if he/she is 18 years old.) Applications cannot be sent until this signed form is on file.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Our college counselors met with all the seniors on Tuesday, August 15 in Theology classes. During their presentation, Mr. Murphy and Mr. Palmasani explained the procedures on how to submit college applications online through Naviance Family Connection. These application procedures may be found in the Naviance Family Connection document library or on the "Seniors" page located in the Counseling Department menu on the PCHS website. These procedures should be followed completely. After submitting an online application via Naviance Family Connection, students must then complete an application tracking slip for each transcript requested regardless of the method of application. The tracking slips can be obtained in our Counseling Office, in the document library on Naviance Family Connection or from the "Seniors" page on our website. **All college applications must go through our Counseling office.** Transcripts will be sent electronically through Naviance Family Connection whenever possible. This process will be explained in detail at the September 12th College Night for Seniors and Their Parents.

Last spring, a College Planning Packet to list personal information for counselor letters of recommendation was explained to the Class of 2018. This packet also included a Parent Brag Sheet. Please be sure your sons and daughters have returned the completed packet to the Counseling Office if a letter of recommendation is needed. All of this information and this packet can also be found in the Naviance Family Connection document library or from the "Seniors" page on our website. This packet was also emailed to all Class of 2018 parents over the summer.

SENIORS PAGE

The following information and forms may be accessed from the "Seniors" page on our website: Application Procedures, Application Tracking Slip, College Planning Packet, Info Sheet for Teacher Letter of Rec, Parent

Brag Sheet, College Day Verification Form, Transcript Release Form and Final Transcript Release Form. Monthly senior newsletters may also be found on this page.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF JUNIORS

In February and March, every junior and his or her parent(s) will be invited to attend a college planning meeting during the school day with our college counselors. Families will be provided a comprehensive explanation of the college search and selection process. These personalized, interactive meetings will use the Naviance Family Connection and financial fit programs. Parents of juniors will receive an email from us in January with the particulars.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Information and/or applications for the following college scholarships may be found in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or by clicking on the links below. Paper applications for scholarships that are not "apply online only" may also be obtained from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Office or printed from Naviance.

Wendy's High School Heisman Award Program – Open to male and female students who have a minimum of a "B" average and participate in at least one school sponsored sport. Based on academic achievements, athletic accomplishments, community leadership and involvement in extracurricular activities. Apply online only at www.wendysheisman.com. Student must meet with Mr. Murphy or Mr. Palmasani for review and approval of their application **prior** to submitting the application online. **Deadline October 2.**

COLLEGE WEB SITES

Please look at the websites listed on page twenty-six of the enclosed booklet. Here you'll find places to start when looking for college information. Also enclosed with this newsletter are bulletins from FastWeb. FastWeb is a free online service that offers custom college and scholarship searches. The enclosed bulletins include information on college majors and an admission and financial aid timeline.

As a Counseling Department, we will email information to the parents of seniors monthly regarding college representatives' visits, application and scholarship information, and any other information we feel will be helpful in choosing a college. The college selection process will be made easier for you if you take the time to read through these monthly communications.

I, Mrs. Ryan, am the Director of Counseling as well as the counselor for the freshmen and sophomore students whose last names begin with T-Z. Mr. Kyle Murphy is our junior and senior/college counselor for students whose last names begin with A-K and Mr. Frank Palmasani is our junior and senior/college counselor for students whose last names begin with L-Z. Together we will be writing the monthly letters that will be emailed to you as parents of seniors. Mr. Senffner is our counselor for freshmen and sophomore students whose last names begin with the letters A-K. Mr. Mahaffey is our counselor for freshmen and sophomores with last names beginning with L-S. Mrs. Brassil is our administrative assistant and will be the "voice on the phone" when you call and ask for the Counseling Department. Again, thank you for taking the time to read through this letter. If we can be of help at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. Ryan

Pamela J. Ryan
Director of Counseling

PJR:lb
Enclosures

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Student Bulletin

Think About Your Future: College and Beyond

What Will I Do For the Rest of My Life?!

One day, you'll have to select a college major and/or a career. Whether you're thinking about your academic major at college or prepping for a career, there are things you can do now to help you make a decision.

Target Your Interests

- What subjects or classes have you enjoyed in school?
- Write down extracurricular activities or job tasks that you have enjoyed.
- Brainstorm academic majors or jobs that seem interesting to you.
- Take a personality test to find out what academic major or occupation might suit you.
- Take a look at a prospective college's course catalog. What course topics catch your interest?
- Talk to your high school counselor, friends and family!

Discover Your Values

- Do you want to study a broad topic that will apply to many jobs or an academic major that will prepare you for a specific career?
- Consider what you want to accomplish in the long term.
    - Is it related to money? Status? Power?
    - Giving back to the community at large?
    - Helping people?
    - A job that will allow you work/life balance?
    - Advance the development of your field?

Expand Your Knowledge

- Talk to people who work in your fields of interest. Ask about their day-to-day experiences in those fields. How did they choose their careers or majors (if they went to college)?
- Ask your teachers, parents and parents' friends about their careers. What should you expect if you major or get a job in one of their fields?
- Ask if you can "job-shadow" a parent or family friend at his or her workplace.
- Check out Monster's Career Start to learn about qualifications, skills and duties regarding specific jobs.

Discover an Academic Major

Confused about choosing a major? Just curious to know what's out there? Consider using a decision matrix like the one shown below. You can also use colleges' departmental websites to discover information about possible majors.

How do I find this information?

1. Go to the college's' website.
2. Look for links such as "Current Students," "Academics," "Degrees," different colleges may use different wording.
3. After clicking the link from Step 2, select the academic major you want to learn about or study.
4. Try to find the course selection list in the course catalog. You may find it in either the "Prospective Student" or the "Current Student" section.

What do I do once I find this information?

- Many college websites will list their classes, course materials and videotaped lectures online. Do those courses sound interesting to you?
- Does the academic page in your field of interest have an "Events" or "Calendar" link? You can check out many extra activities a college offers for students in that academic major.
- Does the site have access to newsletters or other announcements and events within the department? Look for a sense of the academic atmosphere in that major. Is it interesting to you?
- You might be able to find information on what the college/department is currently researching. Do those programs and projects excite and motivate you?

Decision Matrix: Rank each major based on the factors important to you using a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (highest). The major with the highest total will be the best fit based on the factors important to you.

Major	Interesting	Money	Happiness	Status	Power	Community (Help Others)	Hours (Work/Life Balance)	TOTALS
Possible Major 1								
Possible Major 2								
Possible Major 3								

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Student Bulletin

Admissions and Financial Aid Guide Timeline

Junior Year

- Start to think about your college choices. Meet with your guidance or college counselor to discuss your academic goals.
- Take the ACT and/or SAT in the spring. High scores improve your chance of winning scholarships. You may want to take the tests again in the fall to try for a higher score.
- Talk to your parents about college costs. Visit: www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov and www.finaid.org/calculators.
- Request applications and brochures from your top college choices and visit their web sites.
- Visit prospective colleges over the summer. Ask college friends about their college experiences.
- Include a "financial aid safety school" which is a safety school (a college that will definitely admit you) where you could afford to attend even if you did not receive financial aid.
- Visit www.fastweb.com to find scholarships and to learn more about financial aid and paying for college.
- Consider the out-of-pocket cost (cost of attendance minus any scholarships or grants) as opposed to net cost (cost of attendance minus the financial aid package) when evaluating college costs. Net cost includes loans, which need to be repaid, usually with interest, while out-of-pocket cost tells you how much the college is really going to cost you and your family. All colleges must now provide a net price calculator on their web sites. These calculators estimate the out-of-pocket cost. Some calculators may highlight a net cost figure in addition to a net price figure; don't confuse the two. There may be differences in accuracy from college to college. Net price calculators can be used to evaluate whether a college is inside or outside the ballpark of affordability, but the results for different colleges may not be comparable.

Senior Year - Fall

- Organize applications; create files for each school you are interested in attending. List requirements and deadlines.
- If required, complete the CSS / Financial Aid PROFILE form available at profileonline.collegeboard.com.
- Retake the ACT and/or SAT to improve your score.
- Request letters of recommendation as soon as possible from teachers, counselors and community leaders (no later than one month before the application due date). Provide recommenders with list of your accomplishments, academic achievements and your career goals.
- To save money on application fees, consider applying early action or early decision to a college where you have a good chance of being accepted early to avoid the need for a safety school
  Note: Early decision requires you to enroll at the college if admitted, while early action does not.
- Create a FSA ID, eligible students should visit https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas complete and sign the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online. Be prepared to enter your name, Social Security number, date of birth and a challenge question.
- **As of 2016, you can now apply for the FAFSA as early as October 1st.** File the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov as soon as possible after October 1st. Some states and colleges have very early deadlines. Do not wait until you've filed your federal income tax returns or have been admitted.

Senior Year - Winter

- Work on your college applications. Many applications are due in late December and before early January.
- Check with your prospective schools about additional financial aid application forms, deadlines and requirements.

Senior Year - Spring

- Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) for any mistakes and report them to your prospective school(s). You can also update your SAR online. You should receive your SAR in 1-3 days if you filed electronically (paper filing: 2-3 weeks).
- Check email and postal mail regularly for admissions decisions (generally late March/early April); a thin envelope does not necessarily mean you are rejected.
- Compare your admissions offers. Ask your guidance counselor and parents to help you weigh your options.
- Compare your financial aid award letters based on net price at: www.finaid.org/calculators/awardletter.phtml where you will find the Award Letter Comparison Tool. Find out more with the Financial Aid Award letter quick reference guide found at: http://www.fastweb.com/nfs/fastweb/static/PDFs/bulletins/Evaluating%20Financial%20Aid%20Award%20Letters.pdf.
- Time for a decision! Most schools ask that you choose your school by May 1st, unless early decision.
- Check college's deadlines for housing, financial aid, etc.