

College and Career Handbook



Oak Park and River Forest High School Class of 2018

Name _____ ID# _____

(Handbook also available at www.oprfhs.org)

HOW TO LOG IN TO NAVIANCE:

Student Instructions to Access Naviance

- 1) Go to the OPRFHS Home Page (www.oprfhs.org).
- 2) Click on "Students."
- 3) Click on "Naviance" under *Student Services*.
- 4) Enter your OPRFHS student e-mail address in the *E-Mail* box.
- 5) Enter your six digit Student ID + your 6 digit birthdate (MMDDYY) in the *Password* box.
- 6) Click "Log In."

On the *Family Connection* page, you will find several topics related to college/career planning.

Parent Instructions to Access Naviance

- 1) Go to the OPRFHS Home Page (www.oprfhs.org).
- 2) Click "Parents."
- 3) Click "Naviance College Planning."
- 4) For parents who have not previously registered, click "I need to register."
- 5) Guardian 1 (as listed in Skyward) - in the New User registration code box, enter "A" and your student's six digit ID number; click "Register."
Guardian 2 (as listed in Skyward) - in the New User registration code box, enter "B" and your student's six digit ID number; click "Register."
- 6) On the *Complete Your Registration* page, enter your e-mail address and create a password.
- 7) Click "I Accept" then click "Complete Registration."

You will use your identified e-mail address as your user name and newly created password each time you log into Naviance. Parents have "read-only" access to their child's Naviance information with the exception of the *Parent Questionnaire for Recommendation Letters*.

If you do not see your student, or are only seeing a former student, email familyaccess@oprfhs.org to have all your students' profiles merged into one account.

JUNIOR YEAR: THE SEARCH PROCESS

FALL

- ◇ Start off the year with the strongest course curriculum appropriate and earn the strongest grades to date.
- ◇ Begin to establish personal interests and determine “wants” and “needs.”
- ◇ Conduct campus visits and meet with College Callers who visit OPRFHS. See page 27 for instructions on how to receive College Caller reminders.

WINTER

- ◇ Meet individually with your counselor to select senior year classes and discuss thoughts about future plans.
- ◇ Use Naviance as a college research tool and visit college websites to gather information about entrance requirements and college costs.
- ◇ List your colleges of interest in *Colleges I’m Thinking About*. Use the *Scattergrams* feature to compare personal stats to previous students who were accepted and denied admission.
- ◇ Research which standardized tests are required (ACT, SAT, Subject Tests) for colleges of interest. Prepare for standardized tests by enrolling in a class, utilizing an online program or reading a test prep book.
- ◇ Conduct campus visits, take formal tours, and meet with admissions representatives.
- ◇ Organize mailings from colleges and file important emails regarding scholarships, summer programs, and admissions information.
- ◇ Remain focused on earning the best grades possible.

SPRING

- ◇ Register for ACT and/or SAT and SAT Subject Tests. Visit www.actstudent.org for ACT deadlines; www.collegeboard.org for SAT and SAT Subject Test deadlines.
- ◇ Conduct campus visits, take formal tours, and meet with admission representatives.
- ◇ Attend local college fairs:
Lyons Township HS — April 5, 2017 6:00-8:00pm
Hinsdale Central HS— April 20, 2017 7:00-9:00pm
- ◇ Continue developing a tentative list of schools. Compare and contrast different school types; divide schools into categories of reach, match, and safety.
- ◇ Pursue summer enrichment programs, summer employment, or other challenging activities.
- ◇ Register with NCAA Eligibility Center if you are a candidate for Division I or Division II collegiate athletics.

SUMMER

- ◇ Complete the following sections on Naviance: *Questionnaire for Recommendation Letters*, *Resume*, *Game Plan*, and *Colleges I’m Thinking About*.
- ◇ Download copies of essay questions from your colleges of interest; begin writing drafts!
- ◇ Plan your senior year college visitation schedule; consider school holidays and long weekends.
- ◇ Prepare for re-taking the ACT and/or SAT in the fall, if needed. Send test scores to the colleges of interest: www.actstudent.org for ACT; www.collegeboard.org for SAT and Subject Tests.

Self-Assessment

College selection is a process that begins with the individual student. In order to make informed decisions about college, you first must be able to think critically about your own abilities and aspirations. Matching talents and interests with desired colleges and careers is the heart of the college/career search process. Self-assessment is the starting point. The process offers you the opportunity to honestly assess your strengths, weaknesses, needs, desires and dreams relative to the colleges and careers you wish to explore. Only after you complete a thorough self-assessment should specific post-secondary plans be considered. Rather than trying to fit yourself to a college profile, you should match a program to your own specifications.

One of the best ways to begin is to reflect upon your own experience as a student at Oak Park River Forest High School. The following questions, published by the College Board in Looking Ahead to Your Future, are modified to serve as a starting point in your self assessment.

1. Are you satisfied with your accomplishments to date? What do you want to accomplish in the years ahead?
2. What are your academic interests? What courses have you enjoyed the most? What courses have been the most difficult for you?
3. How do you learn best? What methods or styles of teaching have you enjoyed the most?
4. How much do you genuinely like to read, discuss issues, and exchange ideas? What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience in recent years?
5. Are there outside circumstances that may impact your academic performance in the future?
6. What activities do you enjoy the most?
7. What do your parents expect of you? What do you expect of yourself?
8. What degree of academic challenge is best for you? What balance of study, activities, athletics, and social life suits you the best? How well do you respond to pressure and academic competition from others?
9. How much structure do you need? How self-disciplined are you?
10. Do you and your parents agree on your plans about college? How important to you are the opinions of your parents and friends? How important is prestige?

American College Test (ACT)

American College Test (ACT)

www.actstudent.org

The ACT is composed of four multiple choice tests - English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning - and an optional writing test. Students will receive a score for each multiple choice test as well as a composite score. The multiple choice test scores range from a low of 1 to a high of 36. The writing test score is reported individually and also combined to form a new English subscore.

Preparing for the ACT

The ACT website offers a variety of preparation materials for the ACT exam, including practice exams and study guides.

Who Should Take the ACT

College bound juniors and seniors should consider taking the ACT as an option for college admission purposes. Triton and other community colleges recommend that students take the ACT for placement purposes. *Please note that the ACT is no longer a graduation requirement in Illinois.*

How to Register

Students may register online (www.actstudent.org). Please use the following codes:

OPRF Test Center Code 174510

OPRF High School Code 143-245

2016-2017 ACT Test Dates

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
September 10, 2016	August 7, 2016
October 22, 2016	September 16, 2016
December 10, 2016	November 4, 2016
February 11, 2017	January 13, 2017
April 8, 2017	March 3, 2017
June 10, 2017	May 5, 2017

2017-2018 ACT Test Dates (Registration deadlines TBD)

September 9, 2017
October 28, 2017
December 9, 2017
February 10, 2018
April 14, 2018
June 9, 2018



Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT Reasoning Test)

www.collegeboard.org

The SAT Reasoning Test measures how well you have developed the verbal, writing, and math skills necessary for success in many colleges. The SAT has two scores: Writing with Critical Reading and Math, scored on a scale. Visit deliveringopportunity.org for more information on the redesigned SAT test.

Preparing for the SAT

OPRF hosts SAT test preparation classes in January for juniors. Information on that is mailed home in November of junior year. Free SAT test preparation is also available online at www.khanacademy.org/sat. and <http://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/SAT/practice>.

Who Should Take the SAT?

All high school juniors should take the SAT, as it is now required to graduate high school in Illinois. Students often take both the ACT and the SAT. Many colleges permit you to submit either your ACT or SAT score. Students should check specific admission requirements for colleges of interest.

How to Register

Students may register online (www.collegeboard.org). Please use the following codes:

OPRF High School Code 143-245
OPRF Test Center Code 14460

Attention Class of 2018: There will be an SAT test offered to all juniors at no cost on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. This test is fully suitable for college admission purposes and is also required for graduation. Registration details will be mailed to your home.

2016-2017 SAT Test Dates

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
October 1, 2016	September 1, 2016
November 5, 2016	October 7, 2016
December 3, 2016	November 3, 2016
January 21, 2017	December 21, 2016
March 11, 2017 (SAT only, no Subject Tests)	February 10, 2017
May 6, 2017	April 7, 2017
June 3, 2017	May 9, 2017

2017-2018 SAT Test Dates (Anticipated)

August 26, 2017
October 7, 2017
November 4, 2017
December 2, 2017
March 10, 2018
May 5, 2018
June 2, 2018



SAT Subject Tests

The SAT Subject Tests are one hour, primarily multiple-choice tests in specific subjects. You may take up to three SAT Subject Tests on a single test date. You cannot take the SAT Subject Tests and the SAT on the same test date.

Each of the SAT Subject Tests measures your knowledge or skills in a particular subject and your ability to apply that knowledge. The tests fall into five general subject areas:

- English
 - Literature
- Languages
 - Chinese with Listening, French, French with Listening, German, German with Listening, Spanish, Spanish with Listening, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Japanese with Listening, Korean with Listening
- History and Social Studies
 - U.S. History
 - World History
- Mathematics
 - Mathematics Level 1
 - Mathematics Level 2
- Science
 - Biology E/M, Chemistry, Physics

Preparing for the SAT Subject Tests

Free test prep is available at <http://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat-subject-tests/subjects>, including test-taking tips and sample questions for all 20 SAT Subject Tests. Find more practice information at www.SATSubjectTests.org. Khan Academy also provides free SAT test prep at www.khanacademy.org.

Who Should Take the SAT Subject Tests?

Some colleges require one or more of these tests for admission or placement purposes. Some require various combinations of tests; others permit students to choose. Check the requirements of the colleges you are considering before deciding which tests to take. **Many colleges will not require you to take the SAT Subject Tests at all. Other colleges require them to be taken by a certain date.**

Visit www.compassprep.com/subject-test-requirements-and-recommendations/ for a list of schools' SAT subject test policy.

When to take the SAT Subject Tests

Colleges that use the SAT Subject Test results as part of their admissions process often require that you take the tests no later than December or January of your senior year. If a college uses the SAT Subject Test results only to help with placement decisions, you might be able to take the tests as late as May or June of your senior year. You will probably do best on the SAT Subject Tests if you take them soon after completing the courses in the subjects being tested, while the material is still fresh in your mind.

Advanced Placement (AP) Test Dates: May 1-5 & May 8-12, 2017

Visit apstudent.collegeboard.org for exact test dates and times

The College and Career Center provides a variety of resources for students to use in the post secondary planning process.

College Caller Visits

Each year more than 200 college representatives visit OPRFHS to meet with prospective students. Juniors and seniors may take advantage of this opportunity to talk to an admissions counselor. Students need to have a College Interview pass signed by both their counselor and classroom teacher. College Interview passes can be obtained from your counselor or counselor's secretary.

The following questions help provide a basis for becoming a wise consumer in your discussions with college admissions personnel, instructors, and students on campus:

1. How many students are there at your institution? How many are graduate students? What is the male/female ratio?
2. What is the campus like (i.e. size, location to nearest city or downtown area)
3. What is the makeup of the student body (i.e. from what states, commuter versus residential, religious backgrounds, cultural diversity, most popular majors)?
4. What is the housing situation? Where can freshmen live? What are the residence halls like? What percent of the students live on campus? What about meal service?
5. What percent of students return for their sophomore year? Remain to graduate? In how many years?
6. What are the strong majors at your college? Do you have the major(s) I am considering? What percentage of the students are in that major? How difficult is it to change majors?
7. What are the sizes of the classes at each level? Are they taught by professors or graduate students? Are faculty accessible outside of class?
8. What opportunities are there for research, independent study, and study abroad? Are there internships or co-ops available? What percentage of students take advantage of these?
9. What kinds of clubs and activities are there? Are there fraternities/sororities on campus?
10. Do you have an honors program or academic programs such as a Residential College?
11. How extensive are the services in the job placement office? What is the placement rate in medical or law school? Do you have career and counseling services?

If you want to receive text notifications of the colleges/universities scheduled to visit OPRF, sign up for our REMIND list by texting @7bc68h to 81010. (standard texting rates may apply)

Campus Visits

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a visit to an actual campus is worth an entire book. Although college viewbooks and websites are crucial during the initial stages of exploration, the college visit lets you know what life at the school is really like. For students unsure about size and campus location, there are a number of schools within a half day's drive that are representative of almost every type of college or university available.

- University of Illinois-Urbana is a large public university two hours south of Oak Park.
- Students interested in an urban campus can visit UIC or Roosevelt University in Chicago.
- Another stop in the Chicago area is the University of Chicago in Hyde Park, a mid-sized, highly selective university in an urban setting.
- Right in our own backyard are Concordia and Dominican Universities, both small liberal arts schools in a suburban setting.
- In the Bloomington / Normal / Peoria area, a student can visit Illinois State University, a large public university; Illinois Wesleyan University, a small liberal arts college; and Bradley University, a mid-sized private university.
- To see rural campuses, head west. Approximately 180 miles from Chicago is Knox College, a small liberal arts college located in Galesburg, and Western Illinois University, a small public university in Macomb.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT

Spring of your junior year is the best time for initial visits. Spring vacation is an especially good time because most colleges have their break much earlier than ours. A visit can also be made in the middle of the selection process, typically in the fall or winter of senior year, to confirm that schools you have identified really fulfill the criteria necessary for you to be happy. Since some criteria you use for selection may only be evaluated by observation, a visit is a good idea. Finally, a campus visit can also be made at the end of the process to determine which school you will actually attend. **The more acceptances one has, the more difficult it may be to make the final choice in such a short period; therefore, narrowing down schools early actually results in less stress in the end.**

Regardless of when you visit, make the most of your time on the campus. Read the school newspaper and have a cup of coffee in the student union coffeehouse. Talk to undergraduates and ask them their opinions of the professors, housing, social life, and support services. Students are usually candid and eager to help.

CALL ATTENDANCE

Call the Attendance Office at 708-434-3104 ahead of time if you are missing a school day as students can be excused for college visits. If you plan to miss a school day, your parent must call the Attendance Office **prior to your college visit!**

Interviews

The admission interview has changed significantly in importance over the past several years. Many colleges still grant interviews but few require them. Of the schools that still do “interview”, many do not consider them in their decision-making. This is an issue of equity, because not all applicants have access to interviews. If an interview is required or recommended, a Chicago-area interview with a local alumnus will count just as much as an on-campus interview; however, if you find yourself on campus, be sure to schedule an interview with an admissions representative.

If interviews are not required, you may still want to pursue one if:

- your application does not convey your real strengths;
- you need to explain a special circumstance that has affected your academic record;
- you simply want to personalize your application.

How should I prepare?

Promptness and preparation will set the stage for an enjoyable and informative interview. Do not show carelessness by asking questions that you could easily answer yourself with a little research effort. Know what it is you need to know about the school above and beyond those specific items you have been able to locate. Ask questions that are important to you and convey the sense that you are genuinely interested. Just as students are expected to carefully prepare their applications and their essays, they also need to prepare for the interview.

What should I say and do in the interview?

Be prepared to discuss your classes, test scores and class rank. Some interviews may be a bit less formal, so do not be surprised if you are asked about books you have read or what your summer plans are. Ask thoughtful questions that you feel are important. Remember that although the interviewer wants to learn more about you as a person, you also want to learn as much as possible about the school. Watch for signs that the interview is ending. Thank the interviewer for his or her time, and ask for a business card. This will help you when writing your thank you letter. It is also a good idea to include something specific about your interview in the thank you letter. Jot down a few impressions after the interview. This will help when you reflect upon your visit.

Questions you may be asked in an interview:

1. What makes you think this is the right school for you?
2. What academic areas are you interested in exploring?
3. What do you expect to be doing ten years from now?
4. What have you liked and disliked about high school?
5. What is the last book you read?
6. What part of yourself would you most like to improve over the next four years?
7. What are your most important extra-curricular activities?
8. Describe your strengths; discuss your weaknesses?
9. How would your best friend describe you?
10. What do you hope to get out of your college experience?

Types of College Admission Plans

Regular Deadline Admissions - Many colleges have a specific application deadline for the receipt of applications. In this type of admission plan, the college informs applicants about admissions any time before April 15, and the student is asked to respond to an acceptance notification by May 1. A sizable non-refundable deposit is usually expected.

Rolling Admissions - Candidate's credentials are reviewed in the order in which they are submitted, and candidates are notified of an admissions decision in a short time. In general, the more academically successful students are, the earlier they are notified of their acceptance. As colleges with rolling admissions may send out their quota of acceptances early in the academic year, it is to the student's advantage to apply early. Although a college with this policy accepts its applicants early, the students do not have to notify the college of their decision until May 1.

Early Decision - Some colleges have an early decision plan, involving a commitment between the student and the college. The admissions committee will review the student's application earlier than those students applying regular decision, and the committee will inform the student of its decision around December 15. In turn, the student, if accepted, is ethically committed to attending the college and to cancelling (or not submitting) applications to any other colleges. Obviously, a student can submit an Early Decision application to only one college. This is a good policy to consider if you are absolutely sure the college is your first choice, and if you are in a position to submit all of your credentials (results of standardized tests, etc.) by November 1, the usual deadline for Early Decision, and financial aid is not a consideration. Colleges act on an Early Decision application in one of three ways: accept, defer, or reject. Defer means that the student's credentials will be reviewed again in the spring with the pool of applicants applying under regular decision. If a student is deferred, he/she is no longer committed to attending the college.

Early Action -This plan is similar to Early Decision, but it is different in one important way: there is no commitment on the part of the student to attend if accepted.

Single Choice/Early Action -This plan is a combination of Early Action and Early Decision. Students have no commitment to attend if accepted, but may not apply to other college "Early" programs.

Wait List - A term used by institutions to describe a process in which they may initially delay offering or denying you admission. Rather, the institution extends to you the possibility of admission in the future. Colleges offer admission to wait list candidates if insufficient numbers of regularly admitted candidates accept their offers of admission. August 1 is the date by which all wait list offers should be made.

Deferred Admission - Many colleges will allow a student to begin a semester a year or longer after the date for which he/she has been admitted. It is usually best and easiest to apply during the senior year and notify the college of plan for deferral after acceptance.

Create a Final List

Seniors should return to school in the fall with their final list of colleges. Most students find it in their best interest to apply to 6-9 colleges, covering a range of competitiveness which is realistic for their academic profile. As you narrow your college list, you may wish to select some institutions that present an admission challenge. Counselors often refer to these as “reach” schools, because the admission criteria is very competitive and a small percentage of applicants are admitted. Make sure that your final list includes several mid-range “match” colleges, for which your qualifications closely match those of the typically admitted student. It is also wise to have a “safety” school or two, where your statistics exceed the profile of most admissions. Give at least as much thought to your “match” and “safety” schools as you do to your “reach” schools. Apply only to schools at which you believe you would be happy for four or more years. Make sure all of the schools to which you are applying are listed in the *Colleges I Am Thinking About* page under the College tab in Naviance.

Final List

Reach:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Match:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Safety:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Colleges look at the following criteria when selecting students for admission:

1. The transcript - what courses were taken - any honors or AP classes?
2. Grade point average/rank in class.
3. Test scores - ACT/SAT (a few colleges require the SAT Subject Tests for admission).
4. Competitiveness of student’s high school as compared to others.
5. Letters of recommendation.
6. Area of interest (college major).
7. Special talents/activities.
8. Work /volunteer experiences.
9. Personal interview (sometimes required).
10. Ethnic and cultural diversity.
11. First generation students (parents did not attend college).
12. Legacy (did your parents or another family member attend this college?).

SENIOR YEAR: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

August

- ◇ Register for the September ACT.

September

- ◇ Meet with counselor in group planning session to discuss college application process.
- ◇ Attend “College Night for Parents of Seniors.”
- ◇ Finalize your short list—the schools to which you will apply.
- ◇ Visit selected college campuses, if possible.
- ◇ Attend College Caller meetings.
- ◇ Register for October ACT and/or SAT/SAT Subject Tests.
- ◇ Draft initial college essay.
- ◇ Ask for teacher recommendations.
- ◇ Submit CSS profile for financial aid, if required.

October

- ◇ *Complete transcript release forms three weeks in advance of schools with a November deadline.*
- ◇ Complete FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov (submit soon after October 1, 2017 for maximum financial consideration).
- ◇ Attend “Financial Aid Night” with parents.
- ◇ Register for November SAT/SAT Subject Tests.
- ◇ Attend to early action, early decision and priority deadlines.
- ◇ Arrange on and off campus interviews when offered.
- ◇ Review Scholarships on Naviance and college websites.
- ◇ See your counselor if considering alternatives to college.

November

- ◇ *Complete transcript release forms three weeks in advance of schools with a December deadline.*
- ◇ Register for December ACT and/or SAT/SAT Subject Tests.

December

- ◇ *Complete transcript release forms three weeks in advance of schools with a January deadline.*

January-February

- ◇ *Complete transcript request form for all remaining college application deadlines.*
- ◇ Request mid-year grade reports be sent to the colleges that require them.
- ◇ Investigate local and community scholarship opportunities.



Oak Park and River Forest High School

Transcript Release Form

Name: _____ ID Number: _____

Email: _____ Cell Number: _____ Cell Carrier: _____

Counselor: _____ OK to text? YES NO

Please release my transcript to the following college(s):

*EA, ED, PRI,
REG, Rolling*

*Deadline
Date*

*Applying
Common
App?*

- | | | | |
|----|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Please initial the following items upon completion:

- _____ I have listed the above schools in Naviance under "Colleges I Am Thinking About" and have also indicated above whether or not I am applying via the Common Application.
- _____ I have marked the Decision Type (Early Decision, Early Action, Priority, Regular Decision, or Rolling) for each college, along with the correct corresponding deadline date.
- _____ I have completed my counselor's recommendation letter questionnaire (if a letter is needed).
- _____ I have completed the EARLY DECISION (ED) agreement in Common App.

If applying via the Common Application:

- _____ I have completed the Education Section of the Common Application.
- _____ I have matched my Common Application with Naviance by entering my email address into the "Colleges I Am Applying To" section.
- _____ I have completed my Common Application FERPA Waiver.

My signature below indicates that I understand that my counselor requires a minimum three-week turn-around time for letters of recommendation and other application materials.

For Office Use Only:

_____ *Student Signature* _____ *Date*

Procedures for Requesting Transcripts

REMEMBER

You must include every school you are applying to on the Transcript Release Form, even those schools you self-report to. This information is required to track all of our students' applications. There is a separate form to request official transcripts for scholarship applications, the NCAA, or enrichment programs.

SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORTS (COMMON APPLICATION and NON-COMMON APPLICATION)

Common Application Schools: The Secondary School Report (SSR), the Counselor's recommendation letter, and your transcript will be sent electronically via Naviance. If your Common Application school has a supplemental form for your Counselor to complete, please provide it with your Transcript Request Authorization Form. (Common Application schools are indicated in Naviance by a blue computer screen icon with "CA" in the "Delivery Type" column of your Prospective Colleges.)

Non-Common Application Schools: Naviance will indicate whether a Non-Common Application school accepts electronic submissions. A blue computer screen icon in the "Delivery Type" column of your Prospective Colleges indicates that the college/university will accept transcripts and other materials electronically. If a red postage stamp icon appears, your transcripts, recommendation letters, and other required forms must be mailed to the college/university. For those schools, you will need to submit a large (9x12) envelope addressed to the College/University with the appropriate postage attached (minimum three stamps).

MID-YEAR REPORT

Some colleges request seventh semester transcripts and Mid-Year Reports. Mid-Year Reports and your seventh semester transcript will be sent automatically through Naviance if you applied via the Common Application. For all non-Common Application schools, please advise your Counselor's Assistant if a Mid-Year Report and seventh semester transcript are required. You may need to provide a stamped envelope for each Mid-Year Report along with the college's Mid-Year Report form. However, you will not need to provide an additional Transcript Request Authorization Form.

REPORTING TEST SCORES TO COLLEGES

NO TEST SCORES will appear on your transcript. If you did not choose to send your test scores to a college/university when you registered for the ACT or SAT, **you must request that your scores be sent from the testing agency directly to the college/university.** To request scores, log onto www.actstudent.org for ACT or www.collegeboard.org for SAT, SAT Subject Tests and/or AP scores.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY APPLICATION ID AND COMMON APPLICATION FERPA/WAIVING RIGHTS

To allow us to submit your transcript, counselor/teacher evaluation forms, and recommendation letters online to the Common Application, you must complete your FERPA agreement on your Common Application. To do this, complete the *Education* section of your Common Application, add at least one college to *My Colleges*, and sign the FERPA Release Authorization located in the *Assign Recommenders* section of the *My Colleges* tab. Next, to link your Naviance account to your Common Application account, go to the *Colleges I'm Applying To* section in Naviance under the *Colleges* tab and enter the email address you used for your Common Application account.

NOTE: Your first and last name and your birthdate must be the same in Naviance as our Common App account. **We cannot send your transcript and supporting materials to a Common Application school until all of these steps have been completed.**

APPLICATION DEADLINES

Know your deadlines and submit your materials in time for us to meet them. Make all requests for official transcripts, recommendation letters, and any additional forms at least **15 school days before your application deadline**. Requests and materials submitted within a shorter timeline cannot be guaranteed.

TURNING IN APPLICATIONS

It is the students' responsibility to be aware of application deadlines. After submitting an application on-line, **you must complete the *Colleges I Am Thinking About* section of Naviance before turning in your application materials, without which we cannot track your applications. You must also submit a transcript release form. Your transcript will not be sent to any institution unless they are listed on your Transcript Release Form.** Your Counselor will complete the school's portion of the application, attach an official transcript, and submit the school's portion of the applications. **On-line applications still require a signed transcript release form.**

Note: Application designation will be changed from "Colleges I'm thinking about" to "Colleges I'm applying to" internally once all documents have been submitted to your counselor.

COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATIONS AND SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORTS

Most schools will require the high school to verify grade, class rank and test score information. You may also need a Counselor recommendation, sometimes called the Secondary School Report. We consider a letter of recommendation written on your behalf by school staff to be a "confidential communication" with the college admission office. In order for your Counselor to write your recommendation letter, you must complete the *Questionnaire for Recommendation Letters, Colleges I Am Thinking About, Resume, and Game Plan* sections of Naviance. Requests for letters of recommendation from your Counselor must be made **at least 15 school days in advance** of your specific college's deadline.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

You should select a teacher who knows you well. Ask the teacher if he/she can honestly give you a positive recommendation. Be forthright. If they hesitate, it's perfectly acceptable to make the request of someone else. If the teacher agrees, it's helpful to provide information that can be included in the recommendation (not your Naviance questionnaire; that is for your counselor's use only).

When asking teachers to write a letter of recommendation, it's important that you give them **at least 15 school days notice**. Remember that you are not the only student they are writing for, and a hurried recommendation will probably not be as thorough. It's a good idea to check with the teachers a week before the letter of recommendation is due to politely remind them of the impending deadline. A thank you note to the teachers when the application process is over is always appreciated.

Some colleges (especially those with highly selective status) will ask you to write personal essays which will be read for content, organization, grammar, spelling, and your ability to answer the question. Since the college wants the application to reflect you, your interests and values, how you write, and how you think, completing your essay will require a great deal of time and energy. You will want to “put your best foot forward” without boasting. Suggestion: Ask your English teacher to review and critique your college essay.

The College essay is an important piece of the application. It is a personal statement, an opportunity for you to bring your application to life. You can use the essay to make yourself known to the reader in ways that do not already appear in the application. The admissions officer will be judging your ability to use the English language and your ability to follow directions. What you write becomes a reflection of your attitudes, values, interests, etc. The work you submit becomes the “real” you.

The essay should be the best piece of writing you are capable of producing. Avoid writing about what you think admission officers want to hear. You should write about what is important to you. Applicants often try to sound overly intellectual and use big SAT words when simpler, more age-appropriate word choices will do. Avoid writing about anything that is already mentioned in your application. The purpose is for the college admissions officer to learn something he or she did not already know about you.

If the essay is required by the college, you must understand what the college is looking for. If the essay is a response to a specific question, all students are writing on the same topic, and the answers may be compared as to quality of response. These questions usually seek to learn about your depth of knowledge, your ability to think and problem solve, and your ability to write and organize a response. If the essay is general, then breadth or clarification is more likely what is expected. Your purpose in choosing what to write about may be as important as what you write.

It takes a long time to write a good essay. You should start the first draft as soon as possible so that there is ample time for editing. Once the first draft is written, you should show the essay to your parents, friends, or English teacher. They will gladly read a draft. Remember that editing is not re-writing. Editors correct grammar, give responses, and make suggestions. Admissions counselors read thousands of essays and know what student writing is like. They also know when the quality of an essay is discordant with a student’s grades, test scores, and teacher recommendations.

College is costly and many students need financial aid. Cost should not be the determining factor in whether or not you apply to a college. It is important to be sure your educational needs are being met, and that as a family, you are not selecting a college based solely on tuition costs rather than what is obtained for that cost. Many colleges will meet the demonstrated need of the students they accept by offering financial aid packages. These packages typically consist of three types of need based assistance: grants (federal, state, and institutional), loans, and work study. (Merit scholarships are awards given based on academic success or special talents and are usually not determined by the financial need of the family.)

FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)

A family demonstrates its need for financial aid by filling out a financial aid application. The FAFSA is the application required by every college and university in the U.S. This form provides critical information to the colleges allowing them to determine how much they should expect your family to pay. The difference between what a family can pay and the total college cost should become the total amount of the financial aid package. When completing the FAFSA, a family will be asked to use the previous year's tax information. For example, a senior filing the FAFSA on October 1, 2017 will use tax forms from 2016. The FAFSA cannot be submitted before October 1 of the applicant's senior year; however, it is recommended the student file the FAFSA as soon after October 1 as possible in order to insure that the colleges receive the forms by their preferred deadlines. **File your FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.**

STUDENT AID REPORT (SAR)

After a student has successfully submitted the FAFSA, the Student Aid Report (SAR) will summarize the information and be sent to the student. The SAR will display the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The colleges and universities will use this figure when developing a student's financial aid package. Students who file a FAFSA on the Web will receive a paper SAR. Part Two of the SAR serves as the corrections document, if corrections are necessary.

Where Do I Get the FAFSA?

- Complete and submit online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Timeline - Steps in the FAFSA Process

September

- Gather tax records and other financial info

October

- Submit FAFSA immediately online (for quickest response) as soon as you can on October 1 because aid can be on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Submit additional college forms if required.

Need Help with the FAFSA?

- Call 1-800-433-3243 (Dept. of Ed.)
- studentaid.ed.gov
- Illinois Student Assistance Commission (www.isac.org)
 - * Our OPRF Rep: Vonna Hayes, Quavonna.Hayes@ISAC.illinois.gov
- Your high school counselor
- College financial aid officers
- Triton FAFSA completion workshops (see www.triton.edu for dates and times)

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE (CSS) PROFILE

To become eligible for non-federal student aid funds, students applying to private colleges and universities may be required to also file the CSS Financial Aid Profile in addition to the FAFSA. When applying for financial aid, the best way to make sure you know which forms you need to complete is to check each institution individually.

The CSS Profile requires a student to register first in order to receive the form specific to each college and university. The Profile registration form may be filed as early as October 1. Students and parents can use estimated information when completing the form. Although there is no fee for the FAFSA, the CSS Profile includes a non-refundable application fee of \$25.00 which includes an initial school report, and a \$16.00 charge for each additional school report. The Profile Registration Form may also be completed on-line at www.collegeboard.org.

Useful Websites – (Just a few) *Never pay for these kind of services.*

- www.scholarships.com
- www.fastweb.com
- www.blackexcel.org (scholarship service for African-Americans)
- www.petersons.com
- www.unigo.com/scholarship
- go.salliemae.com/plan
- www.finaid.org
- www.whatsnextillinois.org

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION AT OPRF

The local community scholarship bulletin is printed and posted online in February. The most comprehensive resources are the *Scholarships and Financial Aid* page on our school website and the *Scholarships and Money* section of Naviance, which is located under the *College* tab.

SOURCES OF FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid comes from a variety of sources.

1. The Federal Government.
2. The State Government.
3. The College (also known as institutional aid), and
4. Outside/private sources.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

An apprentice is a paid worker who becomes an expert in a field through a one- to six-year training program. More information on these programs can be found on the websites below:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov)
- O*NET (www.onetonline.org)
- JIST Career Solutions (jist.emcp.com)
- www.jobbankinfo.org
- United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (www.doleta.gov/oa/stateagencies.cfm)
- Unions in the community

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Most two-year institutions like Triton College are called community colleges. These public community-based colleges, which are often part of state-wide college systems, provide educational services to meet the diverse needs of a mixed student population. As a result, community colleges are constantly working to expand the educational opportunities they offer and to help students make better educational choices by emphasizing personalized career guidance. Students who attend two-year colleges may enroll in various kinds of programs.

Associate Degree programs (usually two years in length)

Associate Degree/Transfer programs for students who plan to continue study at a four year college or university

Career-oriented programs (some awarding a certificate or associate degree) for students who are primarily concerned with finding employment after six months to two years of post-secondary education

Community colleges are generally less expensive while offering an excellent quality of education. Call Triton for information (708) 456-0300.

TRITON SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Triton College offers scholarship opportunities, including the Scholars Program and Trustee Honors Scholarship, designed for students with an ACT of 25 or a minimum GPA of 3.5.

Military Services

The United States Military Services offer career training opportunities for high school graduates. Military recruiters can provide complete information about the benefits and requirements involved in a military career.

The **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (A.S.V.A.B.)** is the test which determines admission and eligibility for military training programs. Testing arrangements may be made with a local military recruiter.

In addition to full-time military service, opportunities exist in reserve units, National Guard units, university Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) programs, and military academies. A variety of educational benefit programs can help finance a college education for members of the military. The information which follows will help you decide if a military career can assist you with your future.

ENLISTMENT OPTIONS

A variety of enlistment opportunities are available, including active and reserve duty options. Most active duty programs range from two to six years, with three and four year enlistments the most common.

General Enlistment Qualifications: Although specific enlistment requirements for each service may vary, all branches have certain general qualifications. Enlistees may be either single or married and they must be between the ages of 17 and 42. All branches prefer a high school diploma. Both a written examination (A.S.V.A.B.) and a physical examination are required. An interview is conducted to qualify the applicant.

Military Academies: U.S. Air Force Academy (www.usafa.af.mil), U.S. Coast Guard Academy (www.cga.edu), U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis (www.usna.edu/welcome), the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (www.usma.edu), U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (www.usmma.edu). The federal service academies provide a four-year college program leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. Free room and board, tuition, medical care, and a monthly allowance are provided. Graduates receive regular or reserve commissions and have a five-year active duty obligation. Applications to the service academies should start at the end of the junior year.

R.O.T.C.: The Reserve Officer Training Corps trains students in about 500 Air Force, Army and Navy/Marine Corps units at participating colleges and universities. Trainees take two to five hours of military instruction a week in addition to regular college courses. Students in the last two years of an R.O.T.C. program and all those on R.O.T.C. scholarships receive a monthly allowance while attending school, and additional pay for summer training. After graduation, they serve as officers for a stipulated period of time. Upon being commissioned, they may receive an appointment to active duty or to a reserve or National Guard Unit.

Air National Guard/Army National Guard: This is equivalent to having a part-time job while still in school or working full time. Students may join while still in high school (if 17 years or older). After initial training and specific job training, commitment is for one weekend a month and two weeks of annual training. Membership after a stipulated period of time in the State of Illinois National Guard qualifies for grants of 100 percent in tuition and most fees at any state-supported institution.

Reserves (Army/Air Force/Coast Guard/Marines/Navy): Military Reserve units involve individuals committing to an initial basic and specific job training period followed by continued regular meetings and training activities. Educational benefits may be acquired in a similar manner to other active branches of the military while obligations are met over a protracted period of time in a manner like that of the National Guard.

Vocational Or Technical Schools

In the Chicago area and throughout the country, many private vocational schools offer a wide variety of career training programs. Virtually all vocational-technical programs are directly related to specific occupations. Because these schools advertise extensively in the media, some schools have achieved a high level of name recognition. Programs vary in quality; parents and students should practice savvy consumer skills when investigating and contracting for vocational education. This is particularly true for those in need of special support services, since the additional trained personnel required to provide these may incur costs which are prohibitive to a private school.

There are more than 210 career schools that indicate they provide accommodations for students with disabilities. Those accredited by **N.A.T.T.S.** (the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools) receive federal assistance and must comply with program accessibility requirements contained in Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN SELECTING A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

1. Be certain to read all papers carefully especially those involving costs. Some schools use contracts which obligate you to pay for the whole program, even if you don't complete it.
2. Do not sign any contract or agreement without having thoroughly investigated the school and its credentials or without having compared the program with that of the community college as well as other vocational schools.
3. What are the specific programs offered by this school? How will this school provide the specific support services you need? Can you transfer from one program to another within the school? Can you transfer credits from this school to another?
4. Are you certain you want to go into this vocational field? How will your special needs affect your performance in this career? Does the school provide a testing program to help you find out if you are qualified for the training program?
5. What kinds of jobs do people obtain when they complete the program? Does the school provide placement services? What is their placement rate? Are these placements audited?
6. Is there a current demand for people in this field in your home area?
7. How can you judge the quality of this school?
 - a. Talk to people who have attended the school and to those who are currently enrolled. Seek out those who received support services.
 - b. Visit the school yourself. You can observe such things as composition and age of student body, equipment, and facilities.
 - c. Check with the **Illinois State Board of Education-Vocational Schools Certification Division**, a professional accrediting agency, and with the Better Business Bureau.
 - d. Ask for the names of employers of former students, and check with these employers to see how they regard the school.
 - e. Ask to see the school placement report. It will list the rate of placement and starting salaries earned by graduates.

Statement Of Students' Rights And Responsibilities

In The College Admission Process

OAK PARK & RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
is a National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) member
and has endorsed the principles of this statement.

An outgrowth of NACAC's Statement of Principles of Good Practice, the Students' Rights Statement makes clear to entering college students those "rights" that are only alluded to by the Principles of Good Practice. It also spells out the responsibilities students have in the admission process.

WHEN YOU APPLY TO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, YOU HAVE

RIGHTS

Before You Apply:

- You have the right to receive factual and comprehensive information from colleges and universities about their admission, financial costs, aid opportunities, practices and packaging policies, and housing policies. If you consider applying under an early admission plan, you have the right to complete information from the college about its process and policies.
- You have the right to be free from high-pressure sales tactics.

When You Are Offered Admission:

- You have the right to wait until May 1 to respond to an offer of admission and/or financial aid.
- Colleges that request commitments to offers of admission and/or financial assistance prior to May 1 must clearly offer you the opportunity to request (in writing) an extension until May 1. They must grant you this extension and your request may not jeopardize your status for admission and/or financial aid.
- Candidates admitted under early decision programs are a recognized exception to the May 1 deadline.

WHEN YOU APPLY TO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, YOU HAVE

RESPONSIBILITIES

Before You Apply:

- You have a responsibility to research, and to understand and comply with the policies and procedures of each college or university regarding application fees, financial aid, scholarships, and housing. You should also be sure you understand the policies of each college or university regarding deposits you may be required to make before you enroll.

As You Apply:

- You must complete all material required for application and submit your application on or before the published deadlines. You should be the sole author of your applications.
- You should seek the assistance of your high school counselor early and throughout the application period. Follow the process recommended by your high school for filing college applications.
- It is your responsibility to arrange, if appropriate, for visits to and/or interviews at colleges of your choice.

WHEN YOU APPLY TO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, YOU HAVE RIGHTS (continued)

If You Are Placed on a Wait/Alternate List:

- The letter that notifies you of that placement should provide a history that describes the number of students on the wait list, the number offered admission, and the availability of financial aid and housing.
- Colleges may require neither a deposit nor a written commitment as a condition of remaining on a wait list.
- Colleges are expected to notify you of the resolution of your wait list status by August 1 at the latest.

WHEN YOU APPLY TO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, YOU HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)

After You Receive Your Admission

Decisions:

- You must notify each college or university that accepts you whether you are accepting or rejecting its offer. You should make these notifications as soon as you have made a final decision as to the college you wish to attend, but no later than May 1. It is understood that May 1 will be the postmark date.
- You may confirm your intention to enroll and, if required, submit a deposit to only one college or university. The exception to this arises if you are put on a wait list by a college or university and are later admitted to that institution. You may accept the offer and send a deposit. However, you must immediately notify a college or university at which you previously indicated your intention to enroll.
- If you are accepted under an early decision plan, you must promptly withdraw the applications submitted to other colleges and universities and make no additional applications. If you are an early decision candidate and are seeking financial aid, you need not withdraw other applications until you have received notification about financial aid.

If you think your rights have been denied, you should contact the college or university immediately to request additional information or the extension of a reply date. In addition, you should ask your counselor to notify the president of the state or regional affiliate of the National Association for College Admission Counseling in your area. If you need further assistance, send a copy of any correspondence you have had with the college or university and a copy of your letter of admission to: National Association for College Admission Counseling, 1631 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2818.

COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENT ATHLETE NCAA ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**

The NCAA's outreach and education efforts related to initial eligibility continue to remain a priority. These efforts are centrally focused on NCAA Division I requirements..

For the most recent information about changes to the eligibility process or to view the new NCAA Core GPA/Test-Score Index, please refer to www.eligibilitycenter.org or the newly established outreach site, www.2point3.org.

Download the *2017-18 Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete*. This NCAA publication is a highly comprehensive tool that has been designed to help you understand the NCAA initial-eligibility process and to prepare student-athletes for transitioning from high school to becoming an NCAA Division I or II student-athlete. It is available for at www.eligibilitycenter.org

OTHER IMPORTANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- Division I uses a sliding scale to match test scores and core grade-point averages (GPA). The ACT minimum sum score is based on the English, Math, Reading and Science sections only.
- Division I requires 16 core courses, with 10 of the courses completed prior to the 7th semester of high school.
- Division II will have a sliding scale for students enrolling at a Division II school on August 1, 2018 or later.
- Division II requires 16 core courses.
- SAT and ACT scores must be reported directly to the Eligibility Center from the testing agency. Scores on transcripts will not be used.

****Please consult the NCAA Eligibility Center for the most accurate and up to date information.**

Sign up for College Callers

Sign up to receive text and/or email reminders of scheduled College Caller visits. Use the instructions below.

College Callers would like you to join
College Callers OPRFHS!



To receive messages via text, text **@7bc68h** to **81010**. You can opt-out of messages at anytime by replying, 'unsubscribe @7bc68h'.

Trouble using 81010? Try texting **@7bc68h** to **(630) 755-3351** instead.



*Standard text message rates apply.

Or to receive messages via email, send an email to **7bc68h@mail.remind.com**. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.



