

The Millennium High
School
College Handbook

Class of 2011

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December, 2009

Dear Juniors and Families,

We look forward to working with you this spring! In your College Advisory Workshops, we will explore your interests and possible careers on Naviance, discuss types of colleges, learn how to group schools into Reach, Possible and Likely categories, research colleges through Naviance and view books, and complete a practice Common Application and a draft of a college essay. Over the summer, you will compile a list of schools to which you are thinking of applying, and continue polishing your essay.

We also are very much looking forward to meeting with you individually. We will begin scheduling appointments in January. You will not be given an appointment until your Junior Questionnaire (which we introduced to you last spring) is completed. These Junior Questionnaires serve two purposes – the information you provide helps us to make suggestions for colleges. We also use the JQ when we write your college recommendations, so we are looking for thoughtful, detailed responses. We would prefer if Parent Raves were completed before the meeting as well.

We created this Handbook so that you will have a resource to consult outside of the College Advisory Workshops. Please let us know if we have overlooked something that needs to be included. We expect you to consult this guidebook before asking simple factual questions like “what’s our school code?” or to review procedures that we have gone over in class.

Please download this PDF to your desktop so that you will be able to refer to it as needed, both this semester and next!

Sincerely,

**Betsey von Burg and Holly Barton
College Counselors**

TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) I & II

Registration is online - website: www.collegeboard.com

Test Fee for SAT I - \$45.00

Test Fee for SAT II - varies by test from \$9.00 - \$20.00 + \$20.00 Registration Fee

FEE WAIVERS AVAILABLE FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

You are eligible for consideration for fee waivers if you are a high school student who meets the financial eligibility guidelines (such as participating in the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch/National School Lunch Program at your school). Your guidance counselor can share any additional eligibility guidelines with you.

Recommended test taking timetable:

**First SAT-March of junior year,
SAT II (if necessary)-May or June of junior year
Second SAT-October of senior year
Additional SAT II's –November of senior year**

Below are Income Eligibility Guidelines for Fee Waivers. See your college counselor ASAP to receive Fee Waivers.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES	
Number of Members in Household	
TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME (including head of household) (in preceding calendar year)	
1	\$20,036
2	\$26,995
3	\$33,874
4	\$40,793
5	\$47,712
6	\$54,631

Millennium High School CEEB CODE: 333798

CEEB is required or your scores will not be sent to Millennium.

ACT TEST

Registration is online- website: www.act.org

(Test Fee for ACT - \$47.00)

Consult the websites for test dates and location of test centers – **you must register early to obtain a seat at the testing site of your choice.**

TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE

Junior Year

September - January

- Take the PSAT (Practice SAT/Qualifying Test for National Merit and National Achievement Scholarship Competition).
- READ WEEKLY COLLEGE ANNOUNCEMENTS
- Attend college nights and college fairs.
- Research and get involved in after-school and week-end programs in your school or community. Look at internships at a corporation or non-profit organization. Note these opportunities have deadlines.
- Continue college/career exploration and community service and extracurricular activities.
- Plan to take the SAT this year in March. Start preparation for SAT's in January
- Register for the SAT or ACT online
- If you choose to take the ACT, Start prep in February for the April test
- Make sure your Junior Questionnaire is complete by January 4th

February

- Spend time becoming familiar with the resources in the College Office. Look for colleges or professional schools offering your program choice(s) and find out admissions requirements. Determine your priorities.
- Think about which 2 teachers you would like to ask to write your recommendations (ideally one Math/Science and one Humanities teacher).
- Begin to research summer programs and jobs. Colleges pay close attention to how you spend the summer before senior year so make sure to choose an activity that you will grow from and enjoy. Note deadline for applying for admission to summer programs, internships and jobs.
- Meet with College Counselor & family.

March- April

- Decide** which 2 teachers should be your recommenders and give them the Request for College Recommendation(distributed in College Advisory Workshop).
- Plan ahead** to take SAT II's in strong subjects in which study is being terminated – especially if you are taking an advanced course. Many selective colleges require SAT II's which are subject-based exams. Check to see if the colleges you are interested in require them. We suggest the following: science, math – after 3 years of math or at the end of pre-calculus or calculus, foreign language.

TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE

(continued)

- If desired, register for the ACT (an optional exam) to be taken at the end of the junior year.
- Discuss college options and finances with your family.
- Visit college campuses during spring break.

May - June

- Be sure you have completed and updated your Junior Questionnaire, Personal Essay draft, Resume, Teacher Praise Sheets, Parent Rave Sheet and any other recommendations from extra curricular activities (jobs, volunteer work, internships) to the College Office
- Take SAT I or II if you haven't done so.

Summer

- Participate in a summer program, internship, youth employment or volunteer work.
- Visit campuses of prospective college choices. Call selective colleges early regarding personal interviews. Write to colleges for catalogs, applications and financial aid information. Look at college web sites and download applications.
- Update your resumé.
- Continue to work on essay drafts and downloaded applications which are available in August.
- If the colleges and programs you will be applying to require a portfolio or an audition, use this summer to prepare.
- Do your summer assignment – the My College Choices" worksheet. Make sure to categorize your colleges (Reach/Possible/Likely).

TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE - Senior Year

September

- Continue to explore college choices. Register for October and/or November SAT I or SAT II. Prepare a calendar of test registration deadlines, test dates, and college application deadlines.
- Prep for the November SAT starts in September
- Polish essays for college applications
- Speak to representatives from colleges who come to visit in the College Office. Check NAVIANCE for their schedules
- READ THE WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE

(continued)

- Give the **Teacher Evaluation Forms (we will give those to you)** to your recommenders
- Check to see if any of the colleges you will be applying to require the CSS/PROFILE, a private school financial aid application (see www.collegeboard.com). If so, begin filing in October

October

- Complete applications for Early Decision/Early Action and schools with early/preferred deadlines. Submit envelopes to Betsey & Holly by October 1st
- Go to College Fairs to speak to representatives and pick up information. Continue to review list of colleges
- Complete online CUNY and SUNY applications. Give confirmation to the College Office
- Register for December SAT I or SAT II if necessary.
- Check for scholarships online and in the College Office
- Begin filing the CSS/PROFILE if your college requires it
- Apply for a financial aid PIN at www.pin.ed.gov (one parent, one student)

November

- Early Decision/Early Action application deadline. Continue to review list of selected colleges. **Envelopes to colleges with a January 1st deadline are due in the College Office by November 16th, 2009 – but we WELCOME THEM EARLIER!**
- Keep a copy of everything you send out!** If something should get lost in the mail, it can quickly be re-sent.
- Be aware of the fees and expenses. All colleges charge an application processing fee. Remember to ask about fee waivers. An application will not be processed without this fee unless you are eligible for and have a fee waiver.
- All colleges require a tuition deposit upon acceptance. A room and board deposit is also required if you plan to live on campus.

December

- FAFSA worksheets will be available in the middle of the month in the College Office. Explore FAFSA on line and file for PIN Number. If you haven't already done so, check for scholarships online and in the College Office.
- Attend the Financial Aid Workshop
- Let the College Office know about your admit, deny or waitlist status by entering it on NAVIANCE,**

January

- File FAFSA application for financial aid
- Envelopes for colleges with January 15th or February 1st deadlines are due in the College Office the day after the Winter Recess.

TIMETABLE FOR COLLEGE

(continued)

February – March - April

- Any student who has not as yet filed a college application should come to the College Office. Check for scholarships online or in the College Office
- Fill out the FAFSA online by February 15. Some schools have a February 1st deadline.
- College acceptances/denials/wait lists, scholarship letters will be sent by colleges. Update NAVIANCE to reflect your outcomes.
- Review financial aid offers, enter information onto NAVIANCE, confer with College Counselor.
- Let the College Office know about your admit, deny or waitlist status by entering it on NAVIANCE**

May

- May 1st is **the last date** to notify colleges if you are accepting their offer of admission and to send a deposit for dormitory rooms.
- Notify** colleges if you are declining their offers of admissions.
- UPDATE NAVIANCE TO REFLECT YOUR FINAL DECISION.**
- All colleges require a tuition deposit upon acceptance. A room and board deposit is also required if you plan to live on campus.
- Complete and submit the **Final Decision Form** on NAVIANCE. Bring stamped, pre-addressed (to the school you will be attending) envelope to the college Office. This will not be necessary if you will be attending a CUNY- they will receive your transcript electronically.

June

- GRADUATION** - Congratulations and good luck to all of our graduates!

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

A college will use many factors in determining whether or not to accept an applicant. Individual colleges may use information in different ways. Most schools place a great deal of importance on a student's G.P.A. Below is a list of the most common factors colleges will consider when determining admissions. In addition, there are many other factors which may be considered: the school's desire for geographic, ethnic and gender diversity; special talents. Relatives of alumni as well as a student's financial need can play a role in the selection process.

- grade point average (GPA):

A	=	4.0	=	95
B	=	3.0	=	85
C	=	2.0	=	75
D	=	1.0	=	65
F	=	0	=	64 and below

- strength of transcript (Advanced Placement, number of years a subject is studied)
- strength of senior program – all seniors should be taking English and at least four (4) academic subjects
- SAT I / SAT II / ACT scores
- recommendations
- extracurricular activities, awards, community involvement
- personal essays
- interviews (if possible)
- demonstrated skills relevant to career goal; such as: taking courses in a related field, volunteering or working in a related field

SEEK / EOP / HEOP PROGRAMS

SEEK/EOP/HEOP are state-funded programs which are for students who meet specific **financial and academic** guidelines.

SEEK

Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) and College Discovery (CD) are the two programs of The City University of New York (CUNY) for students who need academic and financial support in order to compete successfully in college. SEEK is a program available at CUNY's senior (four-year) colleges. College Discovery is a program available at CUNY's community (two-year) colleges. These programs provide concentrated and specialized counseling, remedial instruction, tutorial services, and sometimes financial aid for book expenses.

Class of 2011 applicants for SEEK and College Discovery must adhere to the financial guidelines obtained at the fall after-school Opportunity Program Workshop, in the College Office or on:

<http://web.cuny.edu/admissions/undergraduate/appcenter/appworksheets/SeekCDWorksheet-2010.pdf>

See SUNY Opportunity Guidelines on:

http://www.suny.edu/student/academic_eop.cfm

or SUNY Viewbook.

EOP

The State University of New York's (SUNY) Education Opportunity Program (EOP) provides academic support and financial aid to students who show promise for mastering college-level work, but who may otherwise not be admitted. Offered primarily to full-time students who are New York State residents, EOP accepts students who qualify, academically and financially, for the program.

Note: You cannot apply for both the EOP and Early Decision/Early Action programs.

HEOP

HEOP is for private colleges which choose to participate in this program. Individual colleges may have their own name for this program. The financial guidelines are the same as EOP and each college sets its own academic guidelines. Students must demonstrate strong potential for success academically but be ineligible for admission under traditional standards.

COLLEGE SELECTIVITY

Compare your profile with the requirements of the colleges you are considering. Colleges are listed in most guidebooks as:

Most Competitive: Even superior students will encounter a great deal of competition for admission to the colleges in this category. In general, these colleges require high school rank in the top 1% to 10% and grade averages of 93+. Median freshman test scores at these colleges are generally between 1350 and 1600 on the SAT (Critical Reading and Math) and above 28 on the ACT. In addition, many of these colleges admit only a small percentage of those who apply -- usually less than one-third.

Highly Competitive: Colleges in this group look for students with grade averages of 88+ and accept most of their students from the top 10% to 15% of your high school class. Median freshman test scores at these colleges range from 1200 to 1350 (Critical Reading and Math) on the SAT and from 26 to 27 on the ACT. These schools generally accept between one-third and one-half of their applicants.

Very Competitive: The colleges in this category admit students whose averages are no less than 85+ and who rank in the top 15% to 25% of their graduating class. They report median freshman test scores in the 1100 to 1200 range on the SAT (Critical Reading and Math) and from 23 to 25 on the ACT. The schools in this category generally accept between one-half and three-quarters of their applicants.

Competitive: This category is a very broad one, covering colleges that generally have median freshman test scores between 950 and 1100 on the SAT (Critical Reading and Math) and between 19 and 22 on the ACT. Some of these colleges require that students have high school averages of 85 or better, although others state a minimum of 80 - 85. Generally, these colleges prefer students in the top 50% to 65% of the graduating class and accept between 75% and 85% of their applicants.

Less Competitive: Included in this category are colleges with median freshman test scores below 950 on the SAT and below 19 on the ACT; and colleges that admit students with averages below 75 who rank in the top 65% of the graduating class. These colleges usually admit 85% or more of their applicants.

COLLEGE SELECTIVITY

(continued)

Non-Competitive: The colleges in this category generally only require evidence of graduation from an accredited high school (although they may also require the completion of a certain number of high school units). Some require that entrance examinations be taken for placement purposes only, or only by graduates of unaccredited high schools or only by out-of-state students. In some cases, insufficient capacity may compel a college in this category to limit the number of students that are accepted; generally, however, if a college accepts all its applicants, it automatically falls in this category. Colleges are rated non-competitive if they admit all state residents, but have some requirements for non-residents.

Remember, these selectivity terms are based on the number of applications per seat a school will receive. A school with a national or international draw will most likely receive more applications per seat than a school that recruits primarily from a more local area.

COLLEGE SEARCH

You are now ready to begin your preliminary college list. Information about colleges is available from many sources. The following is a guide to where you will be able to gather the information you will need in order to create your own list of possible college choices. Use the information gathered in the advisory workshops to guide you in your search.

- In making up the list of colleges you intend to apply to, you should include two (2) reach schools (colleges where your grade point average, rank and percentile are below the average scores for that school); six (6) schools where your academic profile is in the middle of the range for which the college is looking; and (2) likely schools, which are schools where your academic profile is above the average scores for that college.

- Download information and application forms from the college web site.

- Look through the college guide books; such as: *Barron's*, *Peterson's*, *Fiske Guide to Colleges*, *College Costs and Financial Aid Handbook* and *The College Board Book of Majors*. Use NAVIANCE search engine.

- Meet with college representatives. See the list posted in Announcements, in NAVIANCE and on the bulletin board.

- Attend College fairs in the fall and in the spring.

- Read the notices posted on the Bulletin Boards outside the College to find out about scholarships and colleges. You should also sign up on FastWeb (www.fastweb.com) to learn of scholarships. Pick up applications/information on scholarships, mentorship programs and college visits in the College Office. Visit college websites for additional scholarship information as well as college visit information.

- Visit college campuses (see suggestions for getting the most out of your visits).

COLLEGE SEARCH

(continued)

- **Read the College Office email announcements.** Parents can help by “editing” the relevant items pertaining to their child and encouraging them to follow through.
- Look at videos/DVD’s/CD/s and visit web sites of the colleges you are interested in. You may borrow them from the College Office. Explore virtual tours available on many college websites.
- When creating your list of colleges, remember you should apply to **no more than five** (5) private schools (this includes state schools outside of New York State).

BE AN INFORMED CONSUMER!!
LEARN ABOUT COLLEGES.
CHOOSE COLLEGES CAREFULLY.

COLLEGE WEBSITES

We DO NOT recommend that you use any site that charges for its services. Privacy: Does the site sell your personal information? In order to be effective, you will have to enter personal information. Check the privacy policy. Due to the number of websites, we have been unable to check them all out. Generally those with an **.edu** or **.org** address are safest. Those with a **.com** address are commercial sites and we urge you to be careful. The following is a list of sites which have been recommended to us.

Most colleges have web sites you can visit to get information on that specific college. In addition, there are several sites which will allow you to explore a variety of colleges. For example:

General Information:

www.fastweb.com

www.collegeanswer.com

www.act.org/ACT (American College Testing)

www.collegeplan.org (College Planning)

www.review.com (Princeton Review)

www.catholiccollegesonline.org(NationalCatholicCollegesAdmission Association)

www.xap.com (information on college and financial planning)

www.ed.gov (United States Department of Education)

www.collegenet.com (College Net)

www.collegeboard.com (College Board Online)

www.commonapp.org (Common Applications)

www.kaplan.com (Kaplan Review)

www.collegelink.com

<http://www.nymentor.com> (information on college and financial planning)

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu> (U.S. News and World Report)

<http://www.petersons.com> (Peterson's Guide)

Scholarships, Loans & Financial Aid:

<http://www.collegeboard.com> (College Board Online - Financial Aid CSS/ Profile)

<http://www.collegenet.com/mach25/> (MACH 25)

[http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/Student Guide](http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/Student%20Guide) (The Student Guide)

<http://www.fasfa.ed.gov> (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) **Do not confuse this site with fafsa.com which charges for services.**

<http://www.fastaid.com> (Fastaid Free Scholarship Search)

<http://www.fastweb.com> (Fast Web)

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/scholarship/> (Scholarship Scams)

COLLEGE WEBSITES

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<http://www.finaid.org> (FinAid)
<http://www.finaid.org/finaid/tiv.html> (Listing of college codes for the FAFSA)
<http://www.freschinfo.com> (Free Scholarship Information)
<http://www.hispanicfund.org> (Scholarships for Hispanic Students)
<http://www.mapping-your-future.org> (Mapping Your Future)
<http://nelliemae.com> (Nellie Mae)
<http://salliemae.com> (Sallie Mae)
<http://www.StudentRewards.com> (Student Rewards)
<http://www.uncf.org/programs/> (Scholarships for African American Students)

Athletics/Athletes:

<http://www.ncaa.org> (National Collegiate Athletic Association)

Useful Numbers/Websites to Know

- ◆ Your social security number _ _ _ _ _
- ◆ MHS' CEEB code is **333798**
- ◆ The college office is located in room 1120
- ◆ The college office phone number is (212) 825-9008 x 1121
- ◆ The college office fax number is (212) 825-1054
- ◆ SAT phone number customer service – (609) 771-7600
- ◆ CSS/Profile Registration – www.collegeboard.org/profile.html
- ◆ FAFSA on the web www.fafsa.ed.gov
- ◆ FAFSA PIN application: www.pin.ed.gov
- ◆ TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) (518) 454-5642
- ◆ Federal Student Aid information – 1-800-433-3243
- ◆ New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association – www.nysfaa.org
Useful information on financial aid
- ◆ FINAID – www.finaid.org or 1-800-4FED-AID
EXCELLENT general information on financial aid
Link to most major scholarship databases (such as fastweb)
- ◆ HESC Customer Support Service 1 (888) 697-4372
- ◆ CUNY automated admissions line (212) 997-2869
- ◆ SUNY Office of Enrollment Management 1-800-342-3811
- ◆ Hispanic Serving Institutions – <http://web.file.com/web/mol>

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

All applications for college and scholarships must be processed through the College Office. We include important information about our school, the school's official counselor recommendation, an official copy of the student's transcript and information about any special programs you are involved in. **Transcripts can be considered official only if they are sent to the colleges directly by the high school.**

SAT I/SAT II results must be sent directly by the Educational Testing Service (ETS/College Board)) to your colleges. The College Board gives you 4 free electronic submissions, which you MUST indicate online when you register for the SAT in the Fall.

If you do not indicate the schools upon registration, or if you have additional schools that need electronic submission, you will be charged \$9.50 per school by ETS.

For every non-CUNY, SUNY, & non-online Common Application school to which you apply, you must provide the College Office with a pre-addressed, MHS envelope. You must write the **application due date** and your name on the inside flap of the pre-addressed envelope.

*******Be sure you have a hard copy of everything you send. On rare occasions colleges misplace portions of your application. Do not rely on a computer file.*******

Essays are an opportunity for you to let the Admissions Committee see who you are and how well you can convey your ideas. Take time to plan your essay; you may want to make an outline before you begin to write. When you have finished the essay, put it away overnight and read it over the next day. What sounded good the day before may need some adjustments. Let a teacher read your essay as well. Good essays can make a difference, especially if you are applying to the more selective colleges. See the list of suggestions regarding essays and interviews.

Waiving Rights to Review – On many college applications, the student is offered the option whether or not to **waive rights** to read recommendations that have been submitted as well as other information in the student's file. **We recommend that you waive your rights since colleges may trust the honesty of the recommendation more if a student does not have access to the letter.** Students who wisely select those who will write about them should not be insecure about the content of recommendations. Usually, if a person feels unqualified to write on a student's behalf or questions the merit of the letter he or she could write, that individual will more than likely decline the request to provide a reference.

Envelopes for transcripts and Counselor recommendations must be in the College Office at least three (3) working weeks prior to their due date in order to assure they are processed in a timely fashion. Due to the volume of applications, we cannot guarantee that applications brought in less than three (3) working weeks prior to their deadline will be processed by their due date.

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

(continued)

Types of College Applications:

City University of New York (CUNY): You can apply to any of the colleges of CUNY by using a single online application and may list up to six (6) colleges in the order of your preference apply at www.cuny.edu. Complete the worksheet beforehand.

State University of New York (SUNY): The 2011 SUNY Viewbook is mailed directly to your home over the summer. Apply using the SUNY online application. **DO NOT use the Common Application mentioned below for SUNY applications.** (There is a fee for each school- fee waivers are available for eligible students).

Private Colleges: Applications for private colleges may be obtained from the schools themselves or through the school's website.

Common Application: Over 250 private universities accept the Common Application. This form, which is produced by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, can be downloaded or completed online at www.commonapp.org. We encourage you to use the common application whenever possible (**except for SUNY applications- DO NOT use the Common Application for SUNY applications.**) It is the most efficient way to apply to college. It is essential that you check to make certain that you have completed all parts of the application which the specific college requires and that you check to see if a supplemental application is required. The Common Application consists of four or five parts: (Keep a hard copy of all applications).

- Ø Student Personal Data Section
- Ø Secondary School Report- **The customized MHS Form takes the place of this.**
- Ø Mid-Year Report – MHS customized form takes the place of this
- Ø Teacher Evaluation(s) - MHS Customized form takes the place of this
- Ø Supplement (for many schools –check on www.commonapp.org to see if your school(s) require a supplemental application form)

GUIDE TO INTERVIEWS AND ESSAYS

The purpose of an interview is to give the Admissions Office more information about you. Dress appropriately and remember your manners. Have your written questions handy. It is normal to forget things you wanted to ask so plan ahead. The questions you ask will show how well prepared you are and how interested you are in that school. What do you want the Admissions Office to know about you that may not be covered in the application? Be yourself and smile. For practice refer to the questions below. **It is a good idea to write a note of thanks to whoever interviewed you** (see the section on Campus Visits for additional information).

Personal essays and interviews can tell the admissions personnel a great deal about a candidate. Take time to think about yourself and what is important to you. Organize your thoughts and questions, consider what you have accomplished and what you would like to accomplish in your life and, of course, how college may help you toward your goal. The following questions may help you to focus on yourself as a unique individual.

- How do you define success?
- What type of person would you like to become?
- What values are important to you?
- What did you like most about high school?
- What person or event has had a significant impact on your life?
- What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience?
- What person living or dead do you most admire and why?
- Are there any circumstances which may have interfered with your academic performance? Consider such things as jobs, home responsibilities, English not spoken at home, problems in course scheduling, or other factors which may be unique to your situation.
- Courses you have taken outside of high school.

GUIDE TO INTERVIEWS AND ESSAYS

(continued)

- Have you had the opportunity to travel or live outside of New York City?
- What contributions would you like to make to the world?
- What was the last book you read?

Your personal essay, junior questionnaire, teacher praise sheets, the parent rave sheet and other information you have provided are used by your College Counselor to write the school's official recommendation. In order for your essay to be helpful, it should give a clear picture of who you are and any special circumstances which have affected you. We have a copy of your transcript, so please do not list the courses you have taken. If you choose to write about your courses, you should elaborate on how the course material or teacher affected you, your career goals or understanding of the world. Perhaps you have a family member who has had a significant influence on you. You may decide to write about how that person was a positive or even a negative role model for you. You may choose to describe how you overcame difficulties in your life or how you are coping with current problems.

Each of you is a unique individual; your essay should reflect who you are.

The Junior Questionnaire which we ask you to complete will give us additional information about you for the school's appraisal and scholarship selection. Fill out the form as completely as possible giving specifics about your activities. If, for example, you did community service, tell us exactly what you did, when you were involved, and for how long. Did you hold any offices? What were your duties? Did you organize any special events? List all of your high school and community activities. Do you play in a band? What instrument?

CONTENTS OF YOUR COLLEGE OFFICE FILE:

**Please be sure to have these forms in the
College Office (or on Naviance)
before the end of June:**

Resume – including awards or accomplishments outside of school (make sure to update in senior year), **Junior Questionnaire** on NAVIANCE (make sure to update relevant info in senior year), **Personal Essay**, **Parent Rave Sheet**, **Teacher Praise Sheet(s)**, and if relevant, **letter(s) of recommendation** (to the *College Counselor*, not the college) from a boss, internship or community service supervisor, coach, tutor, or any supervisor of any out-of-school involvement (clergy, music teacher, etc.) .

CAMPUS VISITS

When searching for the right college, it is a good idea to visit the different schools you are considering. If possible, plan your visit during the school term on a weekday so you can visit classes and see how students live. Many students make an initial visit to a college during the last two weeks of August. Call the Admissions Office to find out when they run tours and to **arrange for an interview** (alumni in the New York City area may also hold interviews). Writing a thank you note to the interviewer is advisable. It will help them remember you when they read your appraisal. Some schools will schedule overnight campus visits which will allow you to get a much more in-depth picture of what life is like at that college. College tour guides are usually very knowledgeable about their school and are hired to promote the school. As you walk around the campus, ask students what they like about the school and what they do not like. You may not have thought about some of the things they mention and this way you will get an additional perspective about the school. Ask them what other schools they applied to and why they chose this school. Meeting with students will help you discover how friendly the campus is and whether the college will suit you.

It is a good idea to write down questions you would like to ask about the school. Take notes on the answers to your questions; when you get home you may forget which college said what about this or that. Before visiting a college, you should read the school's viewbook and a guidebook; such as, *Peterson's* or *Barron's*, and look at the school's web site to become familiar with the basic information about that school or visit the college website.

In preparing your own list of questions, you may want to consider the following:

- How large is the department you want to major in?
- How accessible are the professors?
- What are the most difficult required courses?
- What is the social life like? Are fraternities and sororities a major influence on campus? Does the college offer activities during the week and on weekends?
- Did the interviewer attend the school? What was the thing she/he liked best about it? What was the thing he/she liked least?
- Will you be able to keep a car on campus?

CAMPUS VISITS

(continued)

- Are drugs and alcohol prevalent on campus?
- What is the safety and security like on campus? If you work late at the library, how do you get back to your dorm? Do students avail themselves of the security measures?
- What percentage of students graduate in four years?
- What percentage of students go on to graduate schools?
- What corporations recruit graduates on campus?
- What types of dorm facilities are available and how are freshman assigned to them? Are there specialty dorms? Do they guarantee housing for all four years? Can you see what typical dorm rooms look like?
- What is the food like? What options are there at each meal? Are there several different cafeterias and can you eat in any of them?
- If you are not a member of a team, what athletic facilities are available and how accessible are they?
- What scholarships are available and how are candidates chosen?
- Ask to see the buildings, classrooms and laboratories of the department you are interested in.
- What percentage of the student body receives financial aid?
- What do students do on weekends?

ON THE TRAIL OF YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

**ALL COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING MUST BE ENTERED
ON NAVIANCE**

1. Students must complete **all** portions of the application which are for the applicant and family. Be sure to sign in the appropriate places if using a paper application.
2. CUNY applications are online only (www.cuny.edu). **You must enter your OSIS #** (student ID #) and must send your SAT scores electronically (use search code 2950 on www.collegeboard.com to send scores). SUNY applications must also be done online. Students eligible for fee waivers need to get them from the College Office, have them signed and return them to the College Office. **NO PRE -ADDRESSED ENVELOPES ARE NEEDED FOR CUNY OR SUNY.**
Each envelope is “logged in” to indicate the date it was received and when it was sent out. Envelopes must be submitted three (3) working weeks prior to their deadline at the college. We cannot guarantee your materials will be processed in a timely manner unless we have three (3) working weeks to prepare them. We work on sending materials by deadlines: first come, first served for each deadline. **You do not have to send out your portion** of the application **prior** to submitting your envelopes to the College Office. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR NAVIANCE UPDATED!

REMINDER: Your teachers have taken the time to write on your behalf to college Admissions Offices. Please take a moment to write **them** a thank you note for their efforts.

- E. The completed Secondary School Report, recommendation and official transcript are checked for completeness and placed in the envelope that you have pre-addressed to the college. It is logged out and it is delivered to the post office.

ON THE TRAIL OF YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS (continued)

- F. If you apply online using the Common Application, we will be able to send your materials electronically. There will be no need to give us an envelope.
- F. If you have any questions concerning the processing of your application, please ask. We will be happy to assist you.
- I. In June you will be asked to submit a stamped envelope for your final transcript to be mailed to the college you will be attending.
- J. The Final Determination Form must be completed on NAVIANCE Office by April 27th.

MHS POLICY FOR SENDING TRANSCRIPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the Fall of 2010, the College Office is planning to send transcripts and Counselor Recommendations electronically (through NAVIANCE), where possible – which at this point is ONLY ONLINE COMMON APPLICATIONS.

For some other schools, you will need to pre-address an MHS envelope, write your name and the college's due date on the inside flap, and submit it to the College Office **NO LATER THAN 3 weeks before the due date**

College Office Envelope Review:

CUNY – no envelope (the DOE retrieves it electronically)

SUNY – no envelope for the College Office (the College Office sends them in bulk),
YES stamped, pre-addressed MHS envelopes for teacher recommenders

Online Common Application – no envelope for College Office. Ask teachers if they are submitting recommendations through NAVIANCE

Paper Common Application – pre-addressed MHS envelope for each school to College Office, and stamped, pre-addressed MHS envelope for each school to EACH teacher recommender

Out of State -State Schools – pre-addressed MHS envelope for each school to College Office, and stamped, pre-addressed MHS envelope for each school to EACH teacher recommender

Any Application submitted on paper – pre-addressed MHS envelope for each school to College Office, and stamped, pre addressed MHS envelope for each school to EACH teacher recommender

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

FINANCIAL AID CAN BE A CONFUSING TOPIC. COLLEGE EXPENSES CAN BE EXTREMELY INTIMIDATING. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE THE ABILITY TO PAY FOR COLLEGE, **DON'T** THINK YOU CANNOT GO TO COLLEGE. MOST STUDENTS APPLY FOR AND USE FINANCIAL AID TO PAY FOR COLLEGE.

To receive any financial aid, *all colleges* require that you complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). You cannot begin filing a FAFSA until JANUARY 1, ²⁰¹⁰. Some private colleges require that you complete the **CSS/PROFILE** as well. It is your responsibility to go to www.collegeboard.com to check to see if a school you are applying to requires the CSS/PROFILE and what the school's deadline date is. IT IS IMPORTANT TO SPEAK TO YOUR COLLEGE COUNSELOR AND THE FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATOR OF THE COLLEGE YOU ARE CONSIDERING IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

LOANS ARE BORROWED AND MUST BE REPAID (USUALLY OVER TIME) WHEN COLLEGE IS COMPLETED.

SCHOLARSHIPS OR GRANTS ARE AWARDS FOR WHICH THERE IS NO EXPECTATION OF REPAYMENT OR SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED. *Grants are often based on financial need. Scholarships may be based on need, on need combined with other criteria, or solely on*

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): This application must be filed by all students who are requesting financial aid. The student will collect household and financial information used to calculate the expected family contribution and the basis for all financial aid. The FAFSA is filed January 1 of the senior year in high school. It is preferable to file online as soon after January 1st as possible. It is possible to get a PIN number prior to January 1st. This must be used to apply for the Tuition Assistance Program, Federal Pell Grant, Federal Stafford Loan, Federal Campus-Based Programs, and it may be the basis for college scholarships as well.

Expected Family contribution: The total amount that a student and the student's family are expected to pay toward college costs from family income and assets. The amount is determined by a need analysis of the family's overall financial circumstances. A Federal Methodology is used to determine student eligibility for federal student aid. Colleges, state agencies, and private aid programs may use a different methodology in assessing eligibility for nonfederal sources of financial aid.

Federal Pell Grant: An award to help undergraduates pay for their education. This money does NOT have to be paid back. This is aid that is based on financial need. Current maximum per year is \$5500.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION(continued)

Federal Perkins Loan: A low interest loan (currently 5%) to help students pay for their education. These loans are for both undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need as determined by the school. For undergraduate students, priority is given to Federal Pell Grant recipients. Federal Perkins loans are made through a college's financial aid office. Current maximum per year for undergraduates is \$4,000.

Federal PLUS Loan: Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students; parents borrow to help pay for their children's education. This loan is made to the parent by a bank, credit union/savings and loan association. Interest rates are linked to the 52-week Treasury bill rates, but they may not exceed 9%. May be used to replace EFC.

Federal Stafford Loan (Subsidized and Unsubsidized): Low interest loans are made to students attending college at least half-time. Loans are made by a bank, credit union, or savings and loan association. These loans are insured by the guaranty agency in each state and reinsured by the federal government. The federal government pays the interest on the loan while the student is in college (subsidized), or the student is responsible for paying the interest (unsubsidized). Repayment rates will vary between the subsidized and unsubsidized loans under this program. *******It is highly recommended that interest be paid while in college on the unsubsidized loans!!!***

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG): One of the campus-based programs; grants to undergraduate student of exceptional financial need who have not completed their first baccalaureate degree and who are financially in need of this grant to enable them to pursue their education. Priority for SEOG awards must be given to Pell Grant recipients.

Federal Work-Study: Provides part-time employment to students attending institutions of higher education who need the earnings to help pay the cost of their postsecondary education. FWS gives students the opportunity to earn money to help pay educational expenses. This money does NOT have to be paid back.

Merit Award: Financial aid which is awarded based on demonstrated academic excellence, professional promise and personal merit.

Financial Aid Package: The total financial aid award offered to you. It may be a combination of aid that includes both gift aid (which doesn't have to be repaid) and self-help (work-study and/or loans). Many colleges try to meet a student's need, but availability of funds, the institution's aid policies, and the number of students needing aid all affect the composition of a financial aid package.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

(continued)

Financial Need: The difference between the cost of attending the college and your expected family contribution.

Non-Citizen: A person who is not a U.S. citizen can apply and go to public (CUNY, SUNY) or private colleges. A non-citizen is ineligible for financial aid and in most cases, private bank loans. However, a non-citizen can receive a merit-based scholarship. A non-citizen can apply to private colleges. If accepted, the student must demonstrate the ability to pay, will possibly be given a scholarship and will be treated as a “foreign student.” **Eligible non-Citizen:** A person who was not born in the U.S., but can legally live and work in the U.S. An eligible non-citizen has a “Green Card,” refugee status, or has been granted asylum.

Student Aid Report (SAR): The federal “output document” printed by a FAFSA processor and mailed to the student. The SAR contains the family’s financial and other information as reported by the student on the financial aid application. The student can make corrections/update information on the SAR and submit it to the federal processor. The student’s eligibility for aid is indicated by the EFC printed on the front of the SAR. Colleges receive an electronic version of the SAR from the FAFSA processor, called an ISIR. The maximum award a student can receive is \$4050.

TAP, Tuition Assistance Program: A grant sponsored by the New York State for New York residents attending an approved postsecondary institution in **New York** on a full-time basis. Range of awards is \$275-5,000. Applicants must meet income and residency eligibility. Apply using the FAFSA application online and at the end of the form clicking the link to TAP.

Some Common Terms and Abbreviations

Associates Degrees (A.A.): The degree earned at a community or junior college after two years of full-time study. Credits earned for the A.A. degree can be applied toward a B.A. degree at a senior college. The Associate in Applied Science degree (A.A.S.) may be used to transfer to a 4-year college or can lead directly to employment.

Bachelors Degree (B.A or B.S.): The degree granted at a senior college after 4 years of full-time study.

CEEB code: Our CEEB code is 333798

College: An institution of higher learning beyond high school.

- Two-year, junior, or community colleges award Associates degrees.
- Four-year or senior colleges award Bachelors degrees. Some four-year colleges also award Associates degrees.
- Universities award Bachelors degrees as well as Masters and Doctoral programs and degrees.

Common Application Form: A standardized admissions application form accepted by over 150 colleges in place of their school application. Colleges using this system may ask for supplemental information.

Cooperative Education: In “co-op” programs students spend periods of time working at a paid job for which they receive course credit. Co-op education provides hands-on experience in one or more career areas, career exploration opportunities, and resumes building opportunities.

Core Curriculum: This program requires students to take courses in a variety of subjects, not just their major, to graduate.

CSS/PROFILE Is the financial aid division of the College Board. Some colleges require the profile and the FAFSA to help them award student aid funds.

EOP, HEOP, SEEK, COLLEGE DISCOVERY: Opportunity programs offered by colleges within New York State that offer special admissions criteria and services for historically disadvantaged groups. These programs include specific financial and academic criteria.

Some Common Terms and Abbreviations

(continued)

CUNY: (City University of New York): This university system consists of numerous two-year and four-year colleges located in the five boroughs of New York City. Acceptance is based on successful completion of high school courses, grade point average, level of difficulty of courses, Regents scores, and SAT I scores.

Deferral: If a student applies using Early Action or Early Decision and is not accepted through either of those decision processes and their applications transferred into the regular spring application cycle, they are said to be deferred. Students who are deferred should continue to earn high grades and inform the college of any special achievement or award earned in the interim. Students should always inform the college office of the status of their application.

Early Action: An option for early notification of acceptance. Students using this option are not obligated to attend the school or to withdraw all other applications. Accepted students are allowed to use the Candidate's Reply Date of May 1 and therefore hear from all their schools before making a decision. Some schools have a Single Early Action Policy –meaning you can apply to only one Early Action school. It is your responsibility to know the policies of the schools to which you apply.

Early Decision: An option for early notification of acceptance. Students using this option agree that if they are accepted they will attend the school and withdraw applications to all other colleges. The deadline for this option is early November. Using this option indicates to a college that it is the student's first choice and may save you money and time on additional applications. However, colleges usually scrutinize Early Decision applications more intensely than regular cycle applications; November is very early to make final decisions on college; and, using Early Decision may not allow you to negotiate the best financial aid package.

EFC (Estimated Family Contribution): The money the family is expected to pay as calculated by a formula established by the government using the information on the Free Application for Student Aid and/or CSS Profile.

Extracurricular: Activities done outside of and/or after school. Extracurricular activities add to your student profile and distinguish you from other students with comparable grades and scores. You should be active. Join a club or a team. Develop interests that are indications of maturity and commitment such as community service, internships, jobs, and family care responsibilities.

Some Common Terms and Abbreviations

(continued)

FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid): This form is used by the Federal Government to determine a student's eligibility for aid. Colleges require this form for all financial aid requests. It is to be filled out by the student's legal guardian.

Fee Waiver: Families with financial need may use these to pay registration and application fees. Tax forms must be submitted to prove need. The college office has waiver applications. All requests are kept confidential.

Financial Aid Package: The combination of grants, loans, and job/ work-study earnings the college financial aid office recommends for each student in response to the financial aid forms filled out by the family.

Graduate Student: A student who has successfully completed a Bachelors program and is engaged in advanced study for a Masters or Doctoral degree.

Grant: Money for college expenses (which does not have to be paid back) given to the student.

HESC (New York State Higher Education Services Corporation): This organization administers state and federal student financial aid in New York State, either directly to students or through their educational institutions.

Liberal Arts: A general education program consisting of humanities, social sciences, arts, physical and natural science classes. Liberal Arts Programs require students to choose a major area of concentration for their studies as well as encourage students to observe, think, read, and write creatively and analytically across disciplines.

Major: The area of concentration. Requirements vary by institution. Students typically choose majors after freshman year.

Matriculated Student: A student enrolled in a college and working toward a degree.

Non-Matriculated Student: A student who is taking courses in a college but not working toward a degree.

Need Blind Admissions: A process that does not look at financial need in considering a student for admission. Regardless of the label a college uses, it is felt that most schools are "need aware."

Some Common Terms and Abbreviations

(continued)

Need Aware: A process that looks at financial need in considering a student for admission. The majority of colleges are need aware – they review the freshmen class before letters are sent to ensure that they can afford to offer financial aid packages to all on the list. If they cannot meet the needs of all applicants, they may revise their list.

Open Admissions: An admission process that offers seats to high school graduates with either H.S. diplomas or G.E.D. certificates.

Recommendations: Letters written by teachers and the College Counselor in support of the student's application. Most colleges require two academic recommendations in addition to the College Counselor recommendation. Recommendations are weighted differently than your grades and courses and should enhance the information on your transcript and application. The two teachers who know you best and in whose classes you did well (you were an active participant, and satisfactorily completed the course work) should write the letters. You must give the teachers pre-addressed stamped envelopes. Most recommendation forms ask if students will waive their right to see the recommendations. **We strongly recommend that students waive their right to see recommendations because this carries more weight with the admissions committee.** Since the College Counselors do not know you as well as your teachers, you need to make sure that the questions on your Junior Questionnaire are complete and rich with information about who you are. We rely on the JQ, the Parent Rave, your resume, your essay drafts, teacher comments and **most importantly who YOU have shown us to be**, when we write your recommendation.

Rolling Admissions: A system used by some colleges in which admission decisions are sent to applicants as the applications are processed. Schools using this process continue to accept applications until they are full.

School Code: Same as our CEEB code—333523.

SUNY: (the State University of New York): SUNY is a college system composed of four university centers, four health science centers, thirteen university colleges, six colleges of technology, four specialized colleges, five statutory colleges, and thirty community colleges. These colleges are located in urban and rural communities throughout New York State. The application booklet for SUNY explains the programs and strengths of each location.

Some Common Terms and Abbreviations

(continued)

Undergraduate: A student studying for either an Associates or Bachelors degree.

University: An institution of higher learning made up of an undergraduate division which awards Associates and/or Bachelor degrees and a graduate division which awards Masters, Professional, and Doctoral degrees.

Wait List: An admission decision is delayed due to the number of available seats in the entering freshman class. If a student is wait-listed and interested in being further considered, the student should reply indicating their desire to remain an active applicant. The student should inform the NYCMS college office and of any positive developments that can be shared with the admissions officers.

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