

NOVEMBER 2023

Counselor's Newsletter



End of Q1!

We've made it through the first quarter of the school year already. I hope you are starting to see how fast the school year can go by. Many of you have been to see me about college applications, scholarships, etc. Keep it up! I am so proud of your dedication and hard work. This is a very competitive and motivated graduating class. I can't wait to see what the rest of the year holds.

If you are one of the few that hasn't started the college/career planning process, come see me. I'll help you get started!

In case you missed it:

Click on the picture below to access the presentation from LOSFA that was shared at Senior Night.



Useful Tips:

- Now is a good time to create your high school academic resume. Come see me if you have questions.
- Complete the recommendation questionnaire that I gave you at senior night and provide a copy to any teacher you want to give you a letter of recommendation for college or scholarships. Don't wait until the last minute! Give them several weeks notice.
- Make sure YOU are completing your college and scholarship applications. You may need information from your parents, but just make sure you are the one completing the application. If a recruiter calls or emails you with questions about your application, you need to be able to answer them.

Looking ahead:

- FAFSA opens- December
- ACT @ STA Dates
 - December 9th
 - February 10th
 - April 13th
- College Fair November 16th - more info to come!
- November College Lunch Visits*
 - November 1st - Southern Miss
 - (I will email if I get more scheduled.)

**College admissions representatives will be set up in the commons during your lunch period. You may drop by and ask questions, gather materials, and listen to their presentation. Some travel from hours away, so make every effort to attend presentations from schools you are interested in.*

College Visits/Tours:

Remember that in order to be excused from school for a college visit, you must complete the foreseen absence form. These forms can be picked up in the front office. They must be signed by your teachers and turned back in to the office at least A WEEK BEFORE you plan to be out. You must also bring back something from the college showing that you attended their event. They will usually give you an excuse or something on school letterhead that shows you were there.

Planning Ahead:



College/Career Planning:

College Admission Periods Explained

Early Decision - binding if accepted. This is great if you know exactly what college you want to attend. If they accept you, it is a contract and you cannot break it without paying a fine. This decision comes back quickly so you have time to apply to other schools if you don't get accepted.

Early Action - not binding. You hear an answer back sooner than regular decision, almost like a reward for getting your application in early. You can apply for early action at as many schools as you want.

Priority Decision - not binding. You hear an answer back sooner than regular decision. May give you priority on things like housing.

Regular Decision - deadlines usually between November through May of senior year.

Rolling Admission - students are accepted all year long.

College Preview Days in November:

Check college websites for more information about these events. There may be events at later dates, but I am only including October dates in this issue - some colleges have multiple dates. Obviously, not all colleges are listed here.

Loyola
November 3rd

Tulane
November 4th

Southern Miss
November 4th

Dillard
November 10th

Southeastern
November 17th

University of Louisiana Lafayette
November 18th

University of New Orleans
November 18th

LSU Eunice
November 18th

Nicholls
November 18th

Keep in mind that some colleges offer small scholarships and other incentives for those who attend preview events.

These events are open to any prospective students. Some colleges have preview days specifically for Juniors in the Spring.

College Planning Tips:



What Colleges are Looking For - “The Big Five”

There are five main things that will make you a strong college applicant. Let's call them the “Big Five.” Not all colleges care about these things or care about them equally.

1. Grades & Course Rigor

Colleges want to see consistently strong grades or, second best, that your grades improve over the course of high school. They also want to see that you have challenged yourself by taking the hardest courses (Honors, AP, etc.) you can handle. Colleges would rather see slightly lower grades in tougher courses than straight As in easy ones. Of course, they would really like to see straight As in the tough ones! (All colleges care about your grades and course rigor. More selective colleges will have higher expectations.)

2. ACT/SAT Scores

These are very important. Colleges use ACT/SAT scores to see how you compare to students nationally and how ready you are for college-level work. (Some colleges do not require test scores, but submitting them may work in your favor. For colleges that are test optional, you only want to submit scores if you feel they will benefit you. If you apply test optional, you may send in scores later.)

3. Essays

Many colleges require applicants to write essays, which is your chance to flaunt your writing skills and tell your story. Your essays show that you are far more than a bunch of letters and numbers. (Usually colleges that are smaller and more selective require essays.)

If essays are required, it means they matter a lot! Please have someone proofread your essay before you submit it!

4. Involvement

Colleges are looking for students who have been heavily involved in 2-3 activities outside of class. “Activities” include sports, clubs, jobs, internships, and family responsibilities. It’s especially awesome if you maintain your commitment to these activities over the course of a few years, and it’s even better if, by the end of high school, you hold leadership roles. (Almost all colleges like to see that you have been involved in something outside of class because it means you will enrich a campus community.)

5. Recommendation Letters

Most colleges require applicants to secure letters of recommendation from coaches, teachers, etc. Strong recommendation letters can set you apart. (Make sure you provide recommenders plenty of information about yourself so that they can write the most effective letter.)

6. Bonus - Demonstrated Interest!

“Demonstrated interest” is how much you show you want to attend a certain college. Ways to show interest include:

- Joining the college’s mailing list
- Attending information sessions and campus tours
- Attending open houses and other specialty events hosted by the college
- Following colleges on social media
- Contacting your regional admissions officer
- Watching for admissions officer visits at your school
- Attending college fairs
- Considering an admission interview
- Looking at detailed college webpages
- Applying early

Staying Healthy: Tip of the Month



Get Some Sleep!

Sleep is essential for teenagers because it plays an important role in their physical and mental development. Most teens should get between 8-10 hours of sleep per night. Unfortunately, research indicates that many teens get far less sleep than they need.

Why is Sleep Important for Teens?

Thinking and Academic Achievement

Sleep benefits the brain and promotes attention, memory, and analytical thought. It makes thinking sharper, recognizing the most important information to consolidate learning. Sleep also facilitates expansive thinking that can spur creativity. Whether studying for a test, learning an instrument, or acquiring job skills, sleep is essential for teens.

Given the importance of brain function, it is easy to see why teens who do not get enough sleep tend to suffer from excessive drowsiness and lack of attention that can harm their academic performance.

Emotional Health

Sleep-deprived teens are more likely to report anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Physical Health and Development

Sleep contributes to the effective function of virtually every system of the body. It empowers the immune system, helps regulate hormones, and enables muscle and tissue recovery.

Substantial physical development happens during adolescence, which can be negatively affected by a lack of sleep. For example, researchers have found that adolescents who fail to get enough sleep have a troubling metabolic profile, evaluated through blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and other factors. These findings may put them at higher risk of diabetes and long-term cardiovascular problems.

Decision-Making and Risky Behavior

Sleep deprivation can affect the development of the frontal lobe, a part of the brain that is critical to control impulsive behavior. Not surprisingly, numerous studies have found that teens who do not get enough sleep are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors like drunk driving, texting while driving, and failing to use a seatbelt. Drug and alcohol use, smoking/vaping, risky sexual behavior, fighting, and carrying a weapon are more common in teens who get too little sleep.

Accidents and Injuries

Insufficient sleep in teens can make them prone to accidental injury and even death. Of particular concern is an elevated risk of accidents as a result of drowsy driving. Studies have found that sleep deprivation can reduce reaction times with an effect similar to that of significant alcohol consumption.