

NOTES FROM JUNIOR CLASS OF 2011 MEETING

DECEMBER 7, 2009

Next meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 19 at 7 p.m. in the MLK Room**. There will be a parent panel discussing what parents need to know before Guidance Night.

Our following meeting on **Wednesday, February 3 at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium** will be Guidance Night, an overview of the college application process and group meetings with your son or daughters guidance counselors.

SENIOR PANEL:

The seniors on the panel shared their strategies and approaches regarding college testing and applications. There was wide variability in scheduling, approaches and advice. Here are some of the highlights:

One senior, who is on the football team, knows that he wants to major in physics at a school that is strong in sports, like Villanova. He suggested that juniors begin to think about location suburb vs. city.

- Another senior, who has two older siblings, felt the process was relatively easy. She picked her schools by the end of junior year and did her applications and essays over the summer. She used the College Board web site (collegeboard.com) and applied to 6 schools early action, which is non-binding. Her applications were in by October 1 and she has already heard back from 4.
- There was one senior on the panel who had a personal tutor for the college application essays. She wrote 6 different essays and adapted them for each of the schools. She learned about schools by word of mouth, visited 3 -4 over April vacation (when college students are still in session) and the rest over the summer. Her advice is to start early!
- A fourth senior emphasized making the decision between going to a huge, medium or small school to help narrow the search. She has applied to 15 schools. She also said to get the essay done early. Her essay was done by the end of junior year.
- Not everyone had completed his/her applications at this time. One of the seniors was still working on hers. She had a computer problem and recommended that you back up everything you do on your computer.
- Meeting with your guidance counselor regularly was highly recommended. If you build a relationship with your guidance counselor, students felt that you get a better recommendation.
- A senior who took the SAT in May had visited schools during April break. She wished that she had worked on the applications during the summer. There is a summer school course devoted to writing the college essay.
- A good question to ask when you tour campuses is What don't you like about your school?

- Some students liked to use Naviance and found the scattergrams particularly helpful. Others just used collegeboard.com.
- By the end of junior year, decide who you want to ask for a recommendation, usually 2 academic teachers in addition to the guidance counselor. Some ask a favorite elective teacher, coach or social worker.
- Its important to visit schools when students are there, making April break a good time.
- Colleges want kids who show interest and really want to go there. Consider a summer program.

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Class of 2011-Co-chairs

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