

New Trier Township High School Post-High School Counseling Handbook

Welcome to the post-high school counseling process at New Trier Township High School. This comprehensive handbook is meant to serve as a guide to you throughout your planning process. We hope you will find it a useful at-home reference to supplement the individualized support provided by your post-high school counselor. Divided into five sections, the following information is included:

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New Trier Township High School Post-High School Counseling

This is an exciting time for those involved in the post-high school planning process. Our goal is to help each student create a plan for their time after New Trier as well as to assist with each task or decision along the way.

Post-high school counseling staff members include:

Jill Cervantes, department chair (847-784-2238)

Heather Ecklund (847-784-2237)

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Lateef Abdulaziz, secretary (847-784-2233)

Room 201, New Trier Winnetka Campus

385 Winnetka Avenue

Winnetka, IL 60093-4295

CEEB Code: 144430

- To schedule appointments, please contact Ms. Perlongo or Ms. Abdulaziz.
- Appointments are best made in person by students during the school day.
- The first individual appointment can be made on your prescribed date in December for a meeting beginning as early as January. A letter describing the procedure is distributed at junior parent nights, emailed in November, and posted on the post-high school counseling website under Junior Information, Initial Appointment Brochure.
- After the first appointment, students are responsible for arranging follow-up meetings.

The office is located in room 201. Available resources include college guides, college catalogs, financial aid information, and occupational handbooks. We also maintain information about the credentials of our NT applicants and their admission results by college on the Naviance program. Students received their Naviance password sophomore year, and parents will receive theirs via email after the November evening parent night or at the initial appointment.

Our web page address is <http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/phsc/>

General Information – Philosophy

The post-high school counseling department at New Trier High School believes in each and every individual student and the individual's capability for continuing success and happiness beyond the high school setting.

As a result, we believe in the concept of making a match between the student and the prospective college or university setting. We are open to a variety of settings that best fit each individual student. We strive to develop relationships with our students and serve the best interests of the individual and the family.

We encourage students and parents to:

- Investigate all options – big, medium, and smaller settings; institutions of varying selectivity; financially affordable options, and; places of which you've not yet heard of.
- Be gracious to all students and respect their choices, and refrain from making negative, judgmental comments about colleges and universities.
- Consider and apply to a financial safety school that you identify to be an affordable option to your family.
- Consider a geographical safety school. Again, during the course of the senior year, it is not unusual for students to have a change in their family situation that might make it desirable to be within a five-to-six-hour drive from home.

General Information – How Your New Trier Counselor Helps

Your counselor is available to provide the following services:

- Provide group guidance through advisery room visits and e-newsletters beginning in sophomore year;
- Available to all students through the year on "drop-in Thursdays;"
- Learn how to investigate college and university options, and other post-secondary opportunities as appropriate;
- Select a suitable list of colleges, including schools where students are generally certain of gaining admission, and possible geographical and financial "safeties;"
- Discuss the pros and cons of enrolling in particular colleges;
- Organize the application process to ensure that applications, test scores, transcripts, application fees, essays, and recommendations are filed in a timely manner;
- Process transcript request forms and automatically send seventh-semester grades to all colleges where students applied;
- Understand and participate in early admission programs as appropriate;
- Assistance in applying to colleges electronically;
- Review essay options, and help brainstorm and review essays until they are ready to be submitted;
- Conducts free summer essay writing and common application seminars
- Host the Application Processing Night in August of the senior year, Financial Planning Night in September, and the Gap Year Fair every January;
- Search for scholarship and need-based financial aid sources;
- Make thoughtful and responsible decisions about which college to attend;
- Write a school letter of recommendation for each student.

The post-high school counselors hope to achieve these objectives through regular meetings with each student. When a student leaves a meeting, either the counselor will make arrangements for another meeting or the student should stop at the front desk to arrange the next meeting; students and families are encouraged to email or call as questions arise.

Historically, approximately 98% of the graduating class will enroll in college. Of those, 95% enroll in a residential, four-year college setting and 3% enroll in two-year programs. We have an increasing number of students heading for gap-year opportunities.

The office is called the Post-High School Counseling Office so that we can do more than college planning. If you wish to select options other than college, you should still use the services offered. Because the majority of New Trier students select college immediately upon graduation and because that takes the most pre-planning, we tend to focus on college counseling more than other opportunities.

Room 201 is located on the southeastern corner of the second floor of the Winnetka campus. Office hours are from 8:00 am until 3:30 pm. We are closed during school holidays with the exception of summer vacation, when there will be a counselor on duty – although not on a walk-in basis. We do not offer “Student Drop-In Thursdays” during the summer.

General Academic Information

Your student’s unofficial academic transcript is accessible through your individual PowerSchool portal. Please review and check for accuracy.

Because student records will be matched with official documents from the testing agencies and letters of recommendation, students should consider using their formal names in each setting. Make sure that is on the New Trier transcript as well.

Although class rank has not been determined or given to colleges for years, the School Profile that is on our website and which accompanies every transcript to the colleges does include the weighted and unweighted grade point averages that separate the top and bottom halves of the class. The midpoint of the class on a weighted grading scale usually hovers around a 4.1; so a 4.1 weighted GPA separates the bottom and top halves of the class. On an unweighted scale, the midpoint is typically a 3.4 unweighted GPA that separates the top and bottom halves of the class.

Aspects of the Student, Family and Counselor Roles in the College Admission Process for New Trier Students

The Parent

As the parent, you are responsible for initiating discussion and setting the parameters for the search. That should include a discussion about finances as well as any other specific expectations you have of the process.

Think hard about the boundaries you set and the reasons you set them. Your most critical judge this year is your own student. Abstain from pre-judging other colleges and universities as a “good school” or “party school” nor letting the media run your college selection. Remember, there is not a list of “A” colleges out there to which all NT grads must gain admission. This is about what is best for your student, not about

bragging rights. Be proud of your student for making the best choice considering his or her own personal goals and preferences.

Talk to your student about geographic and financial boundaries. Speak clearly about the amount of money available for college and begin the parent part of the financial research early.

Once your student has a preliminary college list, get onto each of the college's respective websites and find the Net Price Calculator; enter your financial information and sometimes your student's academic information to obtain a closer "guesstimate" of how much each particular college will cost you. Then, as necessary, have another conversation with your son or daughter about college finances.

Remember that IF you contact college representatives, your conduct is important. Please remember that you are the role model for your student and be a terrific one.

Finally, check the final section of this handbook, "Issues to Discuss Before You Send Your Student to College," for guidance on how to help students adjust through the academic and social transition to college.

The Student

The role of the student is obviously the most critical, for it is the student who will spend the next four years in the college environment. It is imperative for the student to have a good handle on his or her strengths, interests, and hopes for the college setting and the people in it. A clear self-image helps define appropriate colleges. Honesty is essential. Critical thinking and clarity between the student's head and heart help. We believe that there are many schools that may be appropriate for each student, not that there is just one perfect fit.

Many students are swayed by the gossip in the halls of NT; we're interested in determining the best school for your son or daughter in relation to interests, parameters set by the family and NOT by what others say about the school. Focus on the positive and don't fall prey to the "I've-never-heard-of-it-so-it-can't-be-good" syndrome. Open heads, open heart.

The Counselor

The role of the counselor is multi-faceted. In addition to providing ideas, general guidance, and support, the counselor is responsible for educating the students, parents and community members with whom the counselor works. The counselor balances advocating for the student with a realistic, nonjudgmental view of the options.

The counselor will confuse, frustrate and support each student. Each NT counselor confuses students by presenting possible choices that attempt to match their expectations with potential schools. Frustration is inevitable when students search for schools that are perfect; most schools will meet some portion of their wishes, but may not meet all of what the student desires. Frustration also occurs when students realize

that the college admission process is severely limited and not at all fair or based on what students “deserve.” Support comes from the recognition we reach together of the admission process, and the advocacy role counselors play for each individual student. Understand that New Trier’s philosophy is to encourage students to take risks and to encourage them to attempt to obtain admission to places of honest interest to each of them.

If you use a private college counselor: You and your student still need to meet with the New Trier post-high school counselor. Your NT counselor is your school liaison with colleges. Your post-high school counselor, not your advisor, writes the school letter of recommendation. So, feel free to do whatever is in your best interest, but know that your private counselor supplements and does not replace your New Trier post-high school counselor.

Ethical Implications in the College Process

Each of us has rights and responsibilities in the process. Colleges agree:

- To provide accurate information about the college and its programs, financial aid, and the application process
- Not to require a deposit on fall-term fees until May 1
- To treat each student with fairness and equity
- Not to base any admission solely on a standardized test score
- Not to ask students to rank or disclose where else they are applying

Students and parents agree:

- To be responsible for researching their college options
- To abide by the guidelines set up for the various restrictive admission programs (restrictive early action, early decision)
- To be responsible for reporting accurate grades and test scores, when asked
- To make only one enrollment deposit to one college by May 1

College counselors agree:

- To help students and parents through the application, financial aid and selection process
- To abide by the guidelines set up for all admission programs

College Conversation Starter

What are your priorities in selecting a college?

This exercise is designed to start the conversation between students and parents when it comes to selecting colleges to investigate.

On the following pages are common items or reasons why students select particular colleges. In order to understand the student and parent priorities in the college search, we encourage you to:

- Take out the following pages
- Cut along the lines in order to have fourteen sections for the student and an identical fourteen sections for a parent.
- The student and parent separately put the items in order of importance, with the top card having the most importance all the way down to the fourteenth card which is of the least importance.
- Students and parents take turns discussing why they selected the first most important consideration down to the last to understand the other's perspective.

This might help each party better understand one another and help students understand what, if any parameters the parent needs to place on the college search before everyone is too deeply invested to change their ideas.

Academic Programs/Majors	Size of College
Surrounding Community	Prestige
Cost	Student Body
Geography	Religious Orientation
Academic Atmosphere	Extra-Curricular Opportunities Internships, study broad, clubs, Greek life etc.
Social Atmosphere	Sports/School Spirit
Diversity/Inclusion	Support Services (academic, medical, mental health, etc.)

<i>Academic Programs/Majors</i>	<i>Size of College</i>
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<i>Diversity/Inclusion</i>	<i>Support Services (academic, medical, mental health, etc.)</i>

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College Planning Checklist

For Students at New Trier Township High School

Overall considerations

- Students, take your junior grades seriously; they may be among the most important grades considered in the admission process.
- Take your relationships with your teachers seriously; you will need letters of recommendation written by one or two junior year teachers. Build good relationships with them. The behavior and attitude you display are as important as your intellectual prowess and class preparation.

Fall of Junior Year

- Parents attend an evening meeting in November to hear an overview of the process. Students will hear this information in their daily adviser room.
- In December students complete and submit post-high school forms in advisor room; these provide important background information to help us prepare for your initial family meeting and for our letter of recommendation.
- Parents can call 847/784-2234 from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM on appointed days in December to schedule the first post-high school appointment in January-May. Both a parent and the student attend. Appointments are schedule during a student free period during the school day. Specific days are listed on the handout provided at the November meetings, emailed home, and are currently viewable on the post-high school webpage (see Initial Appointment Brochure).

January

- Begin investigating schools on your own through your Naviance account search engine or www.collegeboard.com's Big Future search.
- Counselors will visit adviser rooms to discuss senior year course selection options and PSAT interpretation.
- Meetings with individual post-high school counselors begin.

February

- Build a senior year schedule for success. Select a challenging but not overwhelming course load. Choose at least four “solids” from any combination of the five traditional academic subjects: English, social studies, mathematics, laboratory science, and foreign language.
- Note: Enrollment in one or more AP course is NOT going to “get you into” a different set of schools.
- Consider registering for the SAT and/or ACT in April, May, June or July.

- Students considering *highly* selective schools may also need to complete two SAT Subject Tests in May or June.
- Check your unofficial transcript on PowerSchool for accuracy.

March

- Plan to visit any campuses in which you are *very* interested over spring or summer break. Call ahead to make sure you can attend an admission session and take a campus tour.

April

- New Trier juniors will take a state-supported SAT in April. Students are not required to do any outside registration for this.
- Continue to meet with your post-high school counselor to determine your plans for beyond New Trier. You should meet with your counselor every three to four weeks after spring break and only after you have completed your homework for each meeting.

May

- If you are interested in very competitive schools, register for and complete any two SAT Subject Tests – choose the disciplines in which you are well-versed, but also check college webpages for any specific, required exams. A list of colleges requiring Subject Test is provided in the Test Information section of our website www.newtrier.k12.il.us/phsc/
- Completing the SAT Subject Tests in May or June for a course you are finishing as a junior will ensure your mind is refreshed with the subject matter. SAT Subject Tests are also administered in October and November of your senior year.

June, July, and August

- Continue investigating college options
- Attend a New Trier essay seminar and common application workshop over the summer. Dates and locations will be available on our website.
- Schedule a check-in meeting with your post-high school counselor. Consult our website to see the dates your counselor will be holding office hours.

Registering for Senior Year Courses

There are a few basic considerations to deliberate when registering for senior year classes.

- Make sure your schedule contains a minimum of four academic courses (English, social studies, mathematics, lab science, or foreign language). Colleges do not focus on if a class is taken as a major or minor. They are checking for the volume of traditional academic “solids” as listed here.
- It’s not about fulfilling the minimum requirements you need to graduate or get into college – it’s about making sure you continue to prepare yourself for the challenges a college education will provide, and keeping yourself competitive for admission.
- Your schedule should continue to reflect the strength of your previous achievement; colleges will be suspicious if you decide to lighten significantly your senior year schedule. Their philosophy is that you should make an effort to remain committed to your intellectual growth and take advantage of the offerings New Trier has for you.
- Achievement during your senior year counts! All offers of admission are contingent upon your maintained academic performance. Colleges expect you to continue your typical level of achievement during the senior year.
- Two to three years of the same foreign language may be required by your colleges and universities. Even though your language or algebra courses completed before freshman year are not included on your transcript, all colleges assume you completed them and grant automatic credit for admission consideration if, for instance, you begin ninth grade language in “FRENCH 2.” The same applies for Algebra I completed in junior high.
- Illinois State University and all of the schools in the University of California system as well as some other public schools *require* one full year of the same visual or performing art. Disciplines that qualify include art, art history, dance, music and theater. Speech, debate, web design and multimedia courses typically do not meet the requirements.

New Trier Post-High School Counseling Department Course Guidelines

Academic Areas	New Trier H.S. Graduation Requirements ¹	Public or Private, Four-Year Universities Recommend or Require	Highly Selective Colleges and Universities Recommend ²
English	4 years	4 years	4 years
Mathematics	3 years – junior high courses do <u>not</u> count	3 to 4 years, including junior high courses not on transcript	Enrollment through senior year
Lab Science	1 yr. Biology & 1 yr. Chemistry, Physics, or Geoscience	3 to 4 years	4 years
Social Studies	1 yr. World History & 1 yr. U.S. History	3 to 4 years	3 to 4 years
Foreign Language	None	2 years of the same language	3 to 4 years
Electives³	2 semesters of Fine or Practical Art	If required, 1 year of the same arts course	1 to 2 years
Other Requirements	Driver's Ed., Consumer Ed., Civics & 4 years of Kinetic Wellness/Health		

¹ Additional New Trier requirements are listed in the *Program of Studies*.

² A highly selective college or university, as defined specifically for the purposes of New Trier PHSC, would be any public or private institution that is generally admitting under 15-20% of applicants from their respective applicant pools.

³ Some colleges and universities have specific visual or performing arts requirement.

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Section III

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Using the Fiske Guide, Insiders' Guide or other independent research options...

Usually opinions will help you assess if you might like student life on campus and might be happy there

If you like what you have learned, move on to the website of the college and see what the intellectual fit is. Go to "Academics," then "Programs," and even "Majors" to see what you can study and what those college majors even mean; check out course descriptions and graduation requirements to discern if this is either a program of interest or a college of continued interest.

Consider the social side, too: What have you enjoyed doing in high school? How would you describe your identity? What do you need to be happy? And do you see that reflected in their offerings?

Consider arranging a campus visit to find out first-hand if it is a place for you! Attend the information session, take the tour and meet with advisers in academic areas of interest to you.

If you like this school – it's a WOW school and will be one where you will apply!

If you do not like what you have learned, then you might not like the social and living conditions of that college; write down your reasons and let your PHSC know why not. This is helpful in making new suggestions.

Delete that college from your Naviance list

Investigating College Options

Most of your preliminary investigation will be done independently. Resources such as the Internet, college guidebooks and automatic mailings from the colleges will be valuable to you as you begin your search.

First, take time to complete a brief assessment. Consider the following:

- Your educational strengths and weaknesses. Will you learn best in small classes or large lectures?
- Is it important to you to learn from professors or from graduate student teachers?
- If you are not a terrific test taker, you may wish to avoid large schools where standardized-type testing procedures are used heavily freshman and sophomore years. Are your test results consistent with your classroom grades?
- Do you wish to commute from home every day or to attend a residential college?
- If you are looking for a residential setting, are there specific areas of the country in which you would like to attend college? How far away from home are you comfortable considering?
- What kind of academic programs are you interested in studying?
- How important are athletics, sororities and fraternities, or other special interests?
- Will religion play a role in your college selection?
- What parameters have your parents placed on the process (location, cost, etc.)?

We also encourage you to refer to the New Trier Post-High School publication, *Four Steps to your Future and Step Three, Assessing your Personal Priorities*.

Next, review recommended sources like the *Fiske Guide to Colleges* or the *Yale Daily News Insiders Guide*. Although not all colleges are included, for those that are, these books provide an “objectively-subjective” view of campus life.

Now, take a look at college search engines. New Trier utilizes Naviance as a data base and search engine. Students received a registration number and account in a career presentation sophomore year, and parents will get registered at the initial meeting. We highly recommend you use this program in your college search. Also recommended are the search engines at collegeboard.com, mymajors.com, educationplanner.org.

Begin with the New Trier web page and click on “Students” at the top. Among the pull-down options, click on Naviance. Log in and begin your research. Your email address is your username and you have been given a registration code to use until you are asked to create a password. If you lose your password, you can create a new one.

We know that all college websites look the same anymore, so hope you use the website for objective information, such as college majors, programs, catalog information, club or sport information. If you wish to be an athlete, check to see how your credentials stack up – and how many individuals in your position will be graduating before you would enroll.

Just by completing the PSAT, you will receive unsolicited college information. Admission personnel purchase names of prospective students based on performance on the PSAT. You may receive mail, email, texts, or phone calls in the spring of your junior year. These solicitations are designed to entice you to apply for admission whether or not you are admissible.

Receiving information from highly selective schools in no way implies that the college wants you or guarantees you admission. Sadly, in most cases now the colleges are simply trying to drum up a huge number of applications so they can brag about how popular they are by denying admission to a large number of students. Also, the number of students denied translates into a higher ranking in college ranking polls.....so be a smart consumer.

Finally, consider the validity of word-of-mouth conversations. There are always individuals who try to judge our choices. Maintain your integrity and graciousness. Be happy for your friends and their choices. Make a choice that suits you and all the many reasons that college is the best one for you. Worry less about impressing others and more about your own happiness.

However much you would like it, there is no formula you can follow to find the perfect college for you. It's one of those life decisions that have many acceptable options and no one correct answer. As we find our careers in life largely by happenstance, you will find a college that fits your needs and desires. This is a choice with many possible options, but it is up to you to determine which is the best one for you.

Naviance Tips and Tools

Naviance is a wonderful electronic tool used by students, parents and post-high school counselors to communicate information, and to research colleges, careers, and scholarship information. The historical admission information is New Trier-specific.

To access Naviance:

- Go to New Trier's webpage <http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/>
- At the top, right-hand side, click on "Students."
- In the pull-down box, click on "Naviance"
- Register yourself with the registration code from New Trier's post-high school counseling office; you will be given instructions for entering your username and creating a password for yourself

A few things to know about Naviance:

- Parents can add colleges to his or her student’s list but cannot delete them. Both students and parents can access the scattergrams, the college compare/match features, and information about scholarships and enrichment programs. Naviance is designed to be a guidance tool to help families make informed college choices, so we hope students and parents spend time *together* on the site.
- It is important to know that colleges do not have access to Naviance. The only people who can view a student’s account are the student, parent and the New Trier post-high school counseling staff. Because the test scores and grade-point-average information are confidential, we encourage users to maintain the security of your username and password and not let anyone else view the student’s information.
- The grade-point average we use in Naviance is the *weighted GPA*; we find that most of the colleges in which our students are interested will take the weighted GPA right off the transcript. A few might re-calculate an academic-only, unweighted GPA and then fold back in consideration for the strength of the student’s individual program.
- Test scores are electronically uploaded as soon as the testing agencies send us their information, but this typically takes up to three months *AFTER* the testing date.
- Naviance is only as accurate as the information entered and sometimes college profiles are misleading. For instance, some students are admitted into a “bridge,” or “mentorship” program and have credentials lower than the typical freshman, while other students may have been admitted with lower credentials as recruited athletes or legacies; these admissions will skew the New Trier statistics and may make colleges appear to be easier to get into than they truly are.
- Don’t let the statistical information in Naviance overwhelm you. Remember that your NT counselor knows the history and the nuances of admission that Naviance cannot express.

Creating your Resume of Activities

Although most applications no longer want a resume, you may bring one to any individual interview you might arrange; typically, this is with an alumnus who lives in the area. The objective of this resume is to provide a brief overview of your abilities, interests, and values.

Your resume summarizes your educational experience and personal achievements. Important extra-curricular activities, community service, and relevant work experience from your freshman year to the present should be included.

If you are a visual or performing arts candidate, a thorough resume may be vital for your application. You may have some pertinent information on your resume from before high school. You should bring a copy of your resume to any audition or portfolio review. Potential student athletes may wish to send a resume to coaches or bring them on campus visits. Samples are included in the publication *Four Steps to the Future*.

You may wish to organize your resume in the following categories:

Contact Information Your contact information should be listed at the top of the page. This includes your name, address, telephone number and email address. *Please make sure your email address is appropriate.*

Education High school name, address, and phone number should be included here. Add your graduation year, GPA (usually weighted, but the one which is the higher) and test scores.

Academic Honors If you have received any academic honors, be sure to include these awards. *This includes honor roll and honorable mention.*

Extra-Curricular Emphasize any leadership positions affiliated with school or other organizations. Use action verbs to describe your responsibilities. Include the number of years in which you have participated. List activities in chronological or date order.

Volunteer Experience List any school, church or community service. Use action verbs to describe your responsibilities.

Work Experience Name the employer, year(s) you were employed, position and description of your duties.

Community Involvement State any participation in the community including religious organizations, student leadership boards, and so on.

Interests Relate your personal interests outside organized activities. Examples include photography, bass guitar, travel

Follow these tips to make your resume easier to read and easier to scan into a database:

- Use white or off-white paper
- Use 8-1/2" x 11" paper
- Use a font size of 11-14 point
- Use non-decorative typefaces

See other sample resumes in the New Trier publication, *Four Steps to the Future*.

Meeting with College Representatives Who Visit New Trier Township High School

- Meeting with the college representatives who visit New Trier is a privilege.
- Students may not miss a class to meet with a representative; however students may try to prearrange a partial class absence with the appropriate teacher to visit with a college representative. Students should remember to add their name to the sign in sheet or they will be considered unexcused.
- Meeting with a college representative at New Trier will not count toward your admissibility at that school.
- If you have visited campus, you need not attend the rep visit at NT.
- Reps stay at New Trier for one class period. Students should only plan to stay 20-30 minutes at most.
- Dress appropriately. These meetings are considered professional, and students are asked to dress and present themselves appropriately.

Much of the information you can obtain from our visiting representatives will be of a general nature. You may learn about the credit-hour framework for acquiring credits for graduation, or about how college differs from high school. You may also learn more specific information about that school in order to compare it to others. Remember, the representative with whom you are meeting is a visitor to New Trier and should be treated with your usual good manners, courtesy and respect.

- What are your admission requirements?
- Would you please describe the admission process (deadlines, paperwork, etc.)?
- Could you tell me about the _____ (program)? What kind of classes do students complete, for what kind of careers does that program prepare students, what other requirements are necessary to gain admission to that program?
- Do you have a club sport/intercollegiate/ intramural team in _____?
- Would you describe a college student's typical freshman class schedule?
- What qualifications must students have to be considered as a freshman for the honors program?
- How do you provide services for students with learning disabilities? What responsibilities does the student have to be sure his/her special needs are met? Is there an office or a person I can contact for more information?
- May I have your card or your name again, so that if I have any other questions, I might contact you? Do you prefer phone calls or e-mail?

Making the Most of Your Campus Visit

Nothing compares to the information you can gain from a campus visit. After all, you wouldn't buy a house without first seeing it, so why would you select your home away from home for the next four years without personally assessing the students, faculty and setting? Here are some tips for making the most of your college trips.

Before the visit

Do as much of your homework as possible before expending the time, energy and money to travel. Spend some time talking openly and honestly about college options with your parents before you decide to visit.

Whenever possible, visit colleges when their school is in session. You will gain a sense of how busy the campus is and what the students and faculty are like. Seeing an empty campus during the summer will not provide you with a true sense of being a student there. If your only chance to visit is during a crowded student open house, understand that you may not receive that school's typical personal attention. You will acquire a feel for the kinds of other students who are considering enrolling with you.

Even if your sibling attends a school you are visiting, go through the official campus visit program. When you have a day and time in mind, call the admission office to see how much you can accomplish, such as:

- Attending the admissions information session
- Going on a guided campus tour
- Meeting with the Office for Disability Services coordinator
- Meeting with an academic adviser or professor in your intended major
- Meeting with an athletic coach
- Seeing a residence hall room
- Eating a meal in the dining hall

Not all of your requests may be accommodated, but by asking you will have a clearer picture of the limitations and opportunities of your visit.

Dressing for the interview is typically dress casual and comfortable. Rain gear and solid walking shoes are essential.

Prepare questions to ask the admission staff, student tour guide, faculty member or adviser. This is your chance to obtain specific information about earning that scholarship, understanding the admission process or arranging to room with a friend.

Securing permission at school for your absence. Make arrangements *at least* seven days *before* you leave by bringing in a parent note describing the days you will miss to the adviser chair. Take your permission card around to all teachers and make sure they know you will be responsible for any make-up work.

During the visit

- Arrive ten to fifteen minutes early. If you are going to be late, call to let the office know how late: your visit may include meetings which may need to be rescheduled.
- Ask for names or business cards from the individuals you meet. Develop a network of campus representatives to whom you may address questions later.
- Even if you are not lost on campus, pretend that you are! Every school has a student center or union, admission office and library – ask for direction as an icebreaker and try to engage a student in conversation. Find an opportunity to obtain the student viewpoint concerning areas of campus life important to you.
- Take pictures on the tour – after so many visits, it gets confusing to remember which was which!
- Compare answers. Ask the same questions to different people on campus to compare the official and unofficial views.

After the visit

- Trust your feelings. On a sheet of paper or in a notebook, record your impressions immediately after each visit so you can later compare all schools. Once you have listed your impressions, talk them over with your parents. While you looked at other students, they considered campus safety; when you talked about activities, they learned about academic programs. Together you will have a balanced assessment of each school.
- Write thank-you e-mails to your hosts.
- Complete and return campus visit evaluation cards to let the school know honestly what worked and what didn't with their campus visit system.

Interviewing Tips

Although few schools interview anymore, it's good to have some tips if you need them. Interviews have varying degrees of effect on your admission; you are rarely, if ever, able to talk your way into a college. More important are the rigor of your academic program, your achievement in them (grades) and your standardized test scores.

Interviews are typically informative or designed to give the candidate information so he or she can make an informed decision about the whether or not the "fit" exists. They may be conducted by upper class students.

Very few interviews are evaluative or meant to evaluate the candidate for admissibility. The interviewer writes up a sheet about the interview and it may become a part of the applicant's admission file. Again, an interview will not be the one component that admits or denies a candidate. Many interviews are conducted by college alumni and vary considerably from interviewer to interviewer. An alumni interviewer should not have any of your confidential information and so you determine

how much you wish to share. These interviews typically occur in a local coffee shop or the home of the alumnus.

Before the interview

Prepare. Read the web pages, take notes and know why the school is a good fit for you. Evaluate yourself: identify your strengths, interests, weaknesses. Compose a list of questions about this college and its admissions process. Dress comfortably but appropriately.

At the Beginning: Shake hands with the interviewer; look the interviewer directly in the eye; know the interviewer's name-ask him or her to repeat it if you did not hear it the first time; introduce your parents, if they are with you, and then invite them to leave.

The Interview: An interview can last an hour and can be divided into six different parts:

- **Personal Background:** Where you have grown up, your parent's occupation/interests, information about siblings and colleges attended by family members. The purpose is to put you at ease.
- **Academic Background:** Information about New Trier and your curriculum. Why you have taken certain classes and any academic awards.
- **Extracurricular:** What activities mean the most to you and why? Have you had any specific roles within an activity?
- **Academic Interest:** What are you interested in studying and how have these interests developed? What are your future career goals?
- **College Choice:** What are you looking for in a college/university? What expectations do you have in a school?
- **Why this school:** What brings you to this particular school? How does this school fit into your criteria?

During the interview

Questions to expect:

- Tell me about your high school – what kind of environment does it have?
- What has been the most difficult course you have taken during high school?
- Is there a specific teacher or course that has really caught your interest? Can you explain why?
- What has been the most exciting academic project you done in high school? What has been your most significant academic accomplishment?
- Tell me what you have read outside of school lately.
- How would you use your talents at our university?
- What has been the most significant personal challenge you have ever faced?
- If I were to visit your school and talk with some of your friends, how would they describe you to me?

- What are your plans for after college?
- What specific questions can I help you with?

Relax and be yourself. The interviewer wants to like you. Generally, discussions may begin with “Tell me a little bit about yourself” and progress to why you think the school is a good fit, what specific majors or career fields you might be considering, what you do for fun, what your favorite or most challenging class is. Be ready with responses that are to the point and advocate for your candidacy. Feel free to practice with your counselor.

At some point in the interview, ask your interviewer what he or she liked best about being a student there, what other colleges were considered and why the interviewer enrolled at that school, and what things the interviewer might change if the chance for doing things over were offered. Showing interest in your interviewer’s perspective and background turns the interview into a discussion instead of a one-way interview.

After the Interview

Thank the interviewer, shake hands, say good bye. Write a thank you note to the person who interviewed you.

Remember, you are your own best advocate. This is a chance to demonstrate your maturity, your warmth and your friendliness; show the interviewer that you would be a superb addition to that campus!

The Post-High School Planning Process New Trier Township High School

Section IV

Preparing and Submitting College Applications

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Admission Decision Plans

Colleges determine the conditions under which you may apply, so not all colleges offer all of the following options.

Rolling Admission

Schools like Iowa, Missouri and Kansas operate on a rolling admission basis; they review completed applications and respond in forty-eight hours to twelve weeks with a decision. Students are admitted based on set criteria and applicants are not compared to one another for available spaces.

Once admitted, students may wish to return housing applications (check to make sure any deposit is refundable), but should not submit an enrollment deposit until the final decision to enroll has been made for one school only.

All admitted students remain admitted until May first, which is a postmark or submission date when one enrollment deposit should be sent to the school where the student will enroll; if the deposit is not received by the deadline, admission will be cancelled and typically cannot be reinstated. The only exception is for students admitted under a binding ED program who are required to deposit earlier.

Early Decision

Early decision describes the application process which commits admitted students to enrolling. Students typically apply by November first to fifteenth of their senior year and are notified in mid-December. Admitted students must enroll; deferred students are released from the commitment and will have their credentials reviewed again with the regular decision candidates. Students who select an ED option may only apply ED to one school, but may, and should still send applications under an early action or rolling admission plan. If admitted to the ED school, students must immediately email all other schools and withdraw their application whether or not they have received a decision from those schools.

ED I is as previously described; ED II is offered with late December to early January deadlines to accommodate students who either did not have enough information to make a decision to commit ED by November or were deferred or denied as ED I candidates at other institutions. Candidates denied ED I may not reapply to the same institution ED II.

Students who seek financial aid for college should have their parents first complete the Net Price Calculator on the prospective college website to determine how financially feasible it is to attend, and if cost is an issue, parents may contact the financial aid office to determine if and under what conditions the student might be released from the binding commitment. Colleges may say no, that only students whose families are prepared to pay full costs should apply ED.

Early Action

Candidates who apply under an early action plan are applying earlier than most candidates but if admitted are not required to attend. Regular EA plans provide these applicants with decisions in mid-December or in January, depending upon the timeline set by the particular school. Students who apply under the regular early action plan may apply to as many early action or rolling admission schools as they wish.

Restrictive early action

Restrictive or Single-Choice Early Action is a plan implemented by schools such as Princeton, Stanford, and Yale, whereby candidates only may apply to their one early action school, but may still apply to schools that offer rolling admission. Candidates may not apply ED anywhere. Hybrid programs exist for some colleges, and we all need to check college websites yearly for changes in the rules.

Regular decision programs

Regular decision deadlines are usually in January or February. Students receive an admission decision in March or April and have until the May 1 common reply date to notify the school of their attendance via the enrollment deposit.

Deferral decisions

Students who are deferred are neither admitted nor denied, but their applications are rolled into the regular decision pile for consideration in the general pool. Colleges typically will request mid-year grades; seventh semester transcripts are automatically sent to any college the student previously requested transcripts be sent.

Waitlist

Waiting lists are designed for colleges to hedge their bets; students are left hanging while the college waits to learn how many students send in enrollment deposits. If fewer students deposit than anticipated, colleges go to their waiting lists and select candidates to fill the available spaces. Students who are waitlisted might wish to forward additional information to strengthen their case for admission, but only as designated appropriate by each college. This includes third quarter progress reports; new honors, awards or accomplishments; and notification from the waitlisted student that he or she will enroll if selected off the list. Waitlisted students still should deposit by May first to one of the colleges or universities where they were admitted to have a college to attend. Colleges should notify waitlisted candidates by August first of their final status; not hearing from the college by August first turns your waitlisted status into a denial. If, however, you are taken off the waiting list and accept that spot, you should then notify the school where you deposited (your backup school) that you will not be enrolling, but attending the place that took you off the wait list.

Student responsibilities in the application process include knowing and respecting the rules of ethical conduct. These are listed on page six of Section I. College counselors serve as liaisons to make sure both colleges and students adhere to these admission guidelines as sanctioned by the National Association for College Admission Counseling. Sanctions will be levied against high schools where students violate these regulations. Please apply responsibly and deposit only to one college or university. If you have any questions or believe your rights have been violated, contact your post-high school counselor for assistance.

The Common Application **www.commonapp.org**

The common application was designed in 1975 to help seniors spend their time on academic classes instead of on completing many different college application forms. College admission officers agreed on a common set of questions central to each of their applications. Over 800 colleges and universities accept the Common Application and each sign an agreement annually to pledge full and equal consideration of the Common Application as their own application, so there is no advantage to completing the college's own application over the common application.

Most colleges do not even have another version of an application; they are exclusive Common Application schools. Please consider:

- You can register yourself at any time and complete the information under the “Common Application” tab; it will be saved.
- The sections that are college-specific, which include the teacher recommendation section, will be wiped out for revision each year and should thus not be completed until at the earliest, August of the senior year.
- You fill out one version of the Common App that is submitted to each of your Common App schools.
- Colleges personalize the Common App by requiring supplements, which may or may not include another essay. These are listed under the “My Colleges” tab.

Step-by-Step Instructions

- In mid-August, the Common App webpage will have a chart listing:
 - which colleges use the common application,
 - what their respective deadlines and application fees are,
 - what their testing requirements are, and
 - how many teacher recommendations, if any, are required.
- Register yourself by creating your user name and password and complete the application; you do not have to complete it at one sitting; save page-by-page and return later.
- Navigate the common application by using the tabs marked Dashboard, My Colleges, Common Application and Search for Colleges.
 - Add colleges under the “College Search” tab.
- Complete the sections under the “Common App” tab when you are ready.
- Once you complete the “Common App” items, you will still have to complete college-specific information under the “My Colleges” tab.
- Please waive your rights under “Recommenders and FERPA” and under “Invite recommenders” invite your teacher recommender and your NT post-high school counselor.
- Do NOT invite your adviser to review your CA; this is for students who don't have school counselors and who are working with foundations.
- Bring your log-in to your NT counselor to review your CA before submitting.
- Print preview the entire application BEFORE submitting.

- Transmit your application and appropriate supplements – after you have let your post-high school counselor review them.
- You submit the application one-by-one to your colleges.
- Failing to click the “submit” button is a common mistake. Look for the green checkmark on your dashboard next to the college name to ensure you have successfully submitted the application.
- Your application can be submitted without regard to whether or not your teacher recommendations have been uploaded.
- Complete transcript request forms in New Trier’s post-high school counseling office for every school to which you will transmit applications.
- Teachers you’ve invited to recommend you and who elect to complete their recommendations still need the yellow form to know when your recs are due.

Information you need for the “Education” and “Academics” sections

New Trier Township High School – CEEB code 144-430
 Address: 385 Winnetka Ave., Winnetka, IL 60093

Your post-high school counselor’s name, phone number, and email:

Ms. Cervantes	847/784-2238	cervantj@newtrier.k12.il.us
Ms. Ecklund	847/784-2237	ecklundh@newtrier.k12.il.us
Ms. Graf	847/784-2239	grafk@newtrier.k12.il.us
Mr. O’Connor	847/784-2296	oconnorm@newtrier.k12.il.us
Mr. Rogan	847/782-2235	rogand@newtrier.k12.il.us
Mr. Shorrocks	847/784-2243	shorroct@newtrier.k12.il.us
Ms. Stauder	847-784-2236	stauderg@newtrier.k12.il.us
Mr. Zigmund	847/784-2242	zigmundr@newtrier.k12.il.us

Under “Title” or “Position” please list “Post-High School Counselor.”

Our grading scale is a weighted, 4.0 scale even if your GPA is over a 4.0. Typically, we recommend you use your weighted grade point average, always available to view on your Naviance account in the “about me” section or your transcript in PowerSchool.

Please type in your course titles as listed on your transcript. For course level designations, Level 2 courses are “College Preparatory,” Level 3 or 9 courses are “Honors,” Level 4 courses are “High Honors,” AP classes are AP, and Level 8 can be designated as “Regular/Standard” or “N/A.”

The number of students in your class varies, and will be set after school starts next fall.

Applying to College

There are four main parts of a typical application:

1. The online application
2. A transcript of New Trier courses and grades earned
3. Standardized test scores: ACT, SAT and rarely SAT Subject Tests
4. A teacher recommendation; fewer than 70 colleges require two letters

It does not matter what order these items are sent or uploaded to an admission office.

Students complete applications online. They bring their account log-ins to meetings with their New Trier post-high school counselor to go over applications before submitting them.

Students will fill out a transcript request form for each college to which they will apply. The first three transcripts are paid for in the senior fee bill and beyond those, students will be asked to bring in \$5.00 for each subsequent transcript. Cash, checks made out to New Trier; or credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover) are accepted. If scholarship agencies need a transcript, there is no fee. NCAA transcripts for potential athletes are also free of charge.

Unless the applications are test-optional or allow self-reported scores, ACT or SAT scores will be required to complete an application. Please consult the lists posted in the Test Information section of our webpage www.newtrier.k12.il.us/phsc/. Students go to either www.actstudent.org or www.collegeboard.org to log in and pay to send scores to each college to which they apply. Test scores are not included on the New Trier transcript. AP scores are only sent to the one school where the student will enroll AFTER the student has been admitted and has made up his or her mind.

If a teacher recommendation is needed, see the procedure outlined later in this section.

Some students may have earlier deadlines for auditions for performing arts programs. Portfolios and audition tapes are typically sent to colleges through slideroom.com. There is a fee for this.

After you apply

- Allow four to six weeks for colleges to match all the parts of your application and note on your account what is missing.
- Check your email. Many colleges correspond with you over email.
- If admitted ED, you should immediately email all other colleges to withdraw any submitted applications.
- EA, Single Choice EA, Restrictive EA, deferred ED or rolling admission candidates have until MAY 1 to deposit at ONE college or university.
- If you are waitlisted at your top choice, you still must deposit somewhere by May 1 and then you can see if or how you move on the waiting list.

Writing for College

Colleges and universities that require writing samples will request an essay. Some may also ask for a copy of a graded writing sample completed as a high school assignment. Your New Trier post-high school counselor looks forward to reviewing your writing with you.

Students who will be presenting an academic record which may need explanation or students who wish to disclose a learning disability should consider composing a letter of self-advocacy or self-disclosure. Even colleges that do not require writing will appreciate the additional information students present in this format. New Trier's post-high school counselors recommend that students whose records are not accurate portrayals of their abilities write an explanation so that the college admission officers may evaluate the students' records appropriately and fairly.

Steps in Creating the Essay

Assessing the task

- Using your short list of schools, or places where you know you will apply, check online applications to determine what type(s) and how many writing samples you need. Check for similarities between questions to minimize your work.

Beginning to Write

- If background reading or research is necessary, begin today. Keep notes as you deliberate your responses and thoughts to particular ideas or passages. Write down pertinent page numbers.
- If the topic is too broad, ("Tell us about yourself"), narrow it by reviewing a diary or journal. Ask friends how they would answer the questions on your behalf. Take notes and ask questions about their suggestions or responses.
- Think about what you want colleges to know about you.
- Make a list of whatever is appropriate in response to the question. Be serious, be silly; just begin to organize your thoughts and options. Collect the data you will need: log travel experiences, significant events, accomplishments, hopes and dreams. List any quotes or sayings that have particular meaning for you.
- Forget modesty and humility. Express aspects of your life about which you are proud. Your readers don't know anything about you except what you convey.
- Write until all of your ideas are covered – you can condense later.
- Allow time to think and review. Jot down ideas before you write.
- If you tend to be organized, develop an outline from the lists you have compiled. If not, try a freeform outline or initial writing sample as a first draft.

Sharpening your focus

- Once the first draft is completed, read it and ask yourself what main ideas you are trying to express. As yourself how you illustrate those ideas.
- Does the writing ramble? Are the points pertinent to your main focus? Do you appropriately answer the question asked?
- Put your first draft away at least overnight. Evaluate it with some distance.
- Look for coherence and connections. Reread it as if it is someone else's story.
- Incorporate humor appropriately. Review your draft for genuine communication.
- If you are bored or confused, your reader will be, too. Trust your feelings. If you can't find meaning in your own story, will your reader?

Polishing the drafts

- Family members, friends, trusted English teachers and your post-high school counselor may be helpful reviewers or proofreaders. Sit with them to discuss your essay.
- Consider these ways of evaluating your work:
- Would more detail be helpful?
- Are there repetitive phrases you can delete?
- Can you combine sentences for a smoother flow of ideas?
- How can this idea be best expressed?
- Are you comfortable with these words?
- Does the writing sound genuine and believable?
- Check for typographical errors; they are easier to spot in your own work if you read the essay backwards, looking only at the words and not reading for content.

Following the instructions – the formula

- College admission counselors read hundreds of essays each year. Try to avoid common themes and over-used generalizations. Insert your personality in your work.
- Brevity is appreciated. Keep your essay within the word limit. Do a print preview to make sure everything you wrote will be viewable.
- Application readers are more interested in your interpretation of the event than in the event itself; this allows them to learn more about you. The story itself should take up no more than a quarter-page of a 500-word essay.
- Finally, your reader understands you are nervous. Try to relax and offer your best efforts.

Steps for Securing Letters of Recommendation

Not all colleges require letters of recommendation. If you need letters, please follow these instructions for teachers at New Trier.

Whom/How to Ask

- First, gather your applications to determine if, how many, and what kind of recommendations are needed. Please do not ask more teachers than necessary, more is not better.
- Consider whom to ask.
 - Teachers from your junior year are typically best.
 - Colleges want as recent an assessment of your academic talents as possible.
- What teacher can best represent you as a student: who can discuss your learning behaviors, struggles and successes; communication skills, critical thinking, classroom citizenship?
- You are not required to use an English teacher, but should use teachers from academic subjects. Colleges want to know about you as a learner.
- Special exceptions exist for individuals who apply as fine arts majors. If you are a music major, include a recommendation from a school music instructor.
- Meet face-to-face with the teacher(s) whom you intend to ask and say, “Would you be comfortable supporting my applications for college this year by writing me a letter of recommendation?” Ideally this should occur in the fourth quarter of junior year.
- Ask if they would like any additional information from you, such as the PHS form included in this section or if they have their own form.
- Follow up at the beginning of senior year. Contact your teacher at least four weeks before the application deadline to allow him or her ample time to compose your letter of recommendation.

Organize the work for your recommender(s):

Complete the form marked “New Trier High School Teacher Recommendation Form” so your teacher knows when your recommendations are due. Teachers have until after the deadline date to transmit recommendations. Your post-high school counselor can help you do this.

Teachers only need to know when your FIRST Common Application is due; you decide which colleges get to view the letter. Teachers cannot upload their letters to the Common App until you invite and assign their teacher letter to at least one school. You have to have complete most of the “Education” section, then invite to each teacher, go to “My Colleges” and click on “Recommendations and FERPA.” Then scroll down and click on “Invite teacher,” add the teacher name, department and email address. Close out the recommendation box and click on “Assign.” Now your teachers can upload their letters for you.

For non-common app schools you will either need to write in a link to an electronic recommendation form, send an electronic invitation through the application system, or provide envelopes for a paper letter to go to your schools.

The majority of schools have an electronic system, so you have to put the correct teacher and counselor emails in your application. Very few schools want a letter in paper. If there is no mention of a teacher or any letter of recommendation, do not send one.

Further into senior year, write a brief thank-you note to your teacher. Remember, teachers complete this task on their own time and with no secretarial support. The easier you make it for them, the more appreciative they will be. Be grateful that they are willing to support you with your college admission and keep them updated on your admission decisions. Keep your supporters informed of your application progress, such as where you are admitted and where you eventually attend.

Colleges Requiring Two Teacher Letters of Recommendation

American U. in Bulgaria	Duke	Reed
Amherst College	Duke Kunshan	Rice
Bard (& Simon's Rock)	Durham U. (UK)	Sarah Lawrence
Barnard	Emory	Scripps
Bates	Franklin Olin Sch.	Skidmore
Bennington	of Engr.	Smith
Boston College	Goddard	Spelman College
Bowdoin	Grinnell	St. Lawrence
Brown	Harvard	St. Louis Col of
Bryn Mawr	Harvey Mudd	Pharmacy
Cal Tech	Haverford	Stanford
Capitol Tech. U.	Hillsdale College	Stockton U.
Carleton	Hofstra	Swarthmore
Case Western Reserve	Johns Hopkins	Syracuse
Claremont McKenna	List College –JTS	Trinity College (CT)
Colby College	Macalester	Underwood Int'l College
Colgate	Middlebury	U. Chicago
College of Saint	MIT	U. Dubuque
Elizabeth	Mt. Holyoke	U. Penn
College of the Atlantic	Northwestern U.-	Vanderbilt
Colorado College	Qatar campus only	Wagner College
Columbia College	Notre Dame (MD)	Washington and Lee
Hollywood	Oberlin	Webb Institute
Columbia University	Occidental	Wellesley
Connecticut College	PA Academy of the	Wesleyan
Cornell University	Fine Arts	Williams
Dartmouth	Pitzer	Yale
Davidson	Pomona	Yale-NUS College
Doshisha U.	Princeton	Zaytuna College

New Trier High School Teacher Recommendation Form

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Student email address: _____

Adviser: _____ NT post-high school counselor: _____

Student Responsibilities:

- Refer to the college binder, yellow section, pages 9 & 10 for detailed instructions.
- Please include a thank-you note with this form; teachers donate their personal time to write and upload or send your letters of recommendation.

Common Application

- Confirm your recommender's email address BEFORE inviting him or her to the Common Application
- List the Common App school with the earliest application deadline:

Common App College/University Full Name College Application Deadline

Non-Common Applications

List colleges and universities in order of application deadline

College/University Full Name	College Application Deadline	For recs that will be uploaded to online forms, write "Electronic Invitation" here
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

New Trier Township Teacher Recommendation Form

- Complete this form with the same thought and care that your teacher will exercise in writing your recommendation.
- Check with your specific recommender(s) to determine:
 - If he or she has a different form for you to complete, and;
 - If your teacher(s) wants the information from the questions below by the end of the spring semester to write your recommendation in the summer.
- Type the following responses on a separate piece of paper for readability.

CLASS TITLE: _____ PERIOD: _____

If your application materials will be filed under your formal name, please write your formal name here: _____

1. How did this class help you grow as a learner? How will this prepare you for the future?
2. What do you see as your greatest achievement in this class?
3. What ideas, understanding, and knowledge did you take away from this class?
4. How did you prioritize the demands of this class with your co-curricular activities?
5. One of my strengths in this class was my _____
as exemplified when I _____
6. How did you contribute to the classroom experience throughout the year? What was your most significant contribution?
7. If there is any additional information that will help your teacher write a better letter for you, include it here.

The Post-High School Planning Process New Trier Township High School

Section V

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Standardized Testing for College Planning at New Trier

Freshman and sophomore years

- PSAT 8/9 is administered to all freshmen in April.
- PSAT10 is administered to all sophomores in April.
- Students enrolled in honors or high honors courses in which they are particularly successful are encouraged to attempt the SAT Subject Tests in those subject areas by June of the year the courses are completed. A list of colleges requiring Subject Tests can be found in the Test Information section of our webpage www.newtrier.k12.il.us/phsc/

Junior year

- Students can elect to take the PSAT NMSQT in October; registration information is mailed home the summer prior to junior year.
- The highest-scoring students may earn the chance to participate in various National Merit Scholarship Corporation programs, including the National Merit Semi-finalist, Finalist, or Commended Student Programs; the National Hispanic Scholarship Recognition Program; the National Scholarship Service; and the Telluride Program for Fine Arts. Validation of high scores for these programs requires candidates to take an SAT or an ACT in the spring of the junior year.
- Students who miss the PSAT but who still wish to be considered for the National Merit Program should register for an SAT Reasoning Test in the spring and have scores automatically sent to the program at code 0300.
- Although test prep agencies promote the December ACT for juniors, the test is curriculum-based and is designed to assess the majority of the junior year. Therefore, testing too early may provide scores that are inaccurate because the student's curriculum may not reflect the majority of the junior year information. Students have seven other test dates from February of the junior year until colleges need scores.
- Students are encouraged to take both an SAT and an ACT in the spring of the junior year. Scores can be compared to determine which is higher for submission to colleges. Registration for the April State SAT is paid by the State of Illinois as these results are required for public high school graduation.
- Students considering highly competitive college admission should take two SAT Subject Tests, specific subject area exams. Students can either take an SAT or up to three SAT Subject Tests on specified dates.
- As of 2007, every college or university in the U. S. will accept either an ACT or SAT without preference. An ACT-SAT conversion chart is posted on the New Trier post-high school website.
- Testing in May or June allows students to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge.

Senior year

Additional attempts of the ACT and/or SAT are encouraged if:

- Previous results are not representative of the student's abilities nor consistent with his or her academic achievement; or,
- Previous results are close, but not high enough for admission, honors or scholarship consideration at the school(s) of choice.

It is the student's responsibility to forward official test results to the colleges as required in the application process. Scores may be sent after the test date by phone, mail or internet request at www.actstudent.org or www.collegeboard.org for SAT. AP scores are not required to be sent until AFTER the student decides where he will enroll.

Test scores may take three weeks to be sent as regular score reports. The New Trier post-high school webpage links to lists of:

- Test-optional schools
- Colleges that do not consider the writing section of the ACT or SAT,
- Colleges that will accept self-reported scores from applications
- Colleges that require SAT Subject Tests
- Colleges that "superscore" the ACT or SAT
- College score choice reporting policies

Special education testing considerations

Students who expect to receive special testing accommodations due to a diagnosed learning disability may need to register up to four weeks in advance of the regular registration deadlines so that the testing agency can assess the need for appropriate accommodations. An informational packet will be sent to all families of students with 504 Plans or in the special education program; please direct any questions to Ms. Peg Stevens, test coordinator, 847-784-2259.

International students

Students whose native language is not English and/or who have resided in the United States fewer than two years are encouraged to complete the TOEFL or Test of English as a Foreign Language. This test serves to assess a non-native speaker's language and mathematics skills and is often considered or required by admission offices. Since test results are not reported automatically back to New Trier, please bring a copy of your scores to your post-high school counselor. Registration packets are available through New Trier's Test Make-Up Center.

ACT/SAT Information

The SAT was redesigned in March 2016, to better reflect the high school curriculum (and coincidentally, become more like the ACT).

This new version will not contain the verbal analogy section, but will have additional reading comprehension items, the writing sample, and more advanced math than the previous exam. The writing section is optional, but some colleges may require it; the State test in April will require students to complete the writing section. The writing section does not affect the student's combined score. The ACT also has an optional writing section, which may or may not be required for admission to certain colleges.

Mixing and matching SAT subscores to create a higher combined score has been common practice for years by college admission officers, but the ACT was not designed for such mixing and matching. Superscoring, or the practice of mixing and matching ACT subscores from different test dates to calculate a new composite score, is done by a small number of colleges. Most admission offices uphold ACT's philosophy against superscoring. There is no centralized list of colleges that superscore; however, the New Trier post-high school webpage has a third-party chart for your reference. Students should verify by checking the websites of individual colleges to determine if they superscore the ACT.

The Common Application asks students to enter their highest subscores and composite score but not to recalculate a new composite. Most colleges, like Northwestern University, will look at subscores from different dates to see the student at his best, but will not superscore, or recalculate a new composite. Colleges have verified that they consider the peaks, or high points of a candidate's subscores, not the low points.

Financial Aid Primer

Need-based aid

Need-based aid is money offered based on the family's estimated ability to pay for a college education. This money can be in the form of grants, or free money students need not repay; loans, which must be repaid; and work-study, which is federally subsidized work whereby a student is employed on campus and earns a paycheck.

A family's ability to pay is determined by the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA which assesses a family's income and certain assets that may be available for the student's education. It is the government's view that the parents are generally liable for the cost of the student's education. In the case of divorce, the student will file the FAFSA with information from the custodial parent's income and stepparent's income, if a stepparent is in the household.

The FAFSA must be completed each year for each student in college. Submit the FAFSA early in October of the senior year in order to receive any money for which the student qualifies – at least by mid-November. Colleges are allocated money by the

federal and state governments and can run out before all qualified students are accommodated. The earlier you apply, the more assured you are of receiving what you are due.

Grant Money

- Grant money may come from the federal government, state government, or the college itself. Federal grant money can be used at any college or university. State grant money can only be used in Illinois; Illinois has no reciprocity with any other state. Institutional grants are only valid for the particular university that is offering it for the student.

Federal work-study

- Work-study money is money the student earns after securing and maintaining a job on campus (information available at the college financial aid office) and is allocated on a biweekly or monthly basis directly to the student.

Loans

- Loans are now coordinated and allocated by colleges. Loans are offered to qualifying students and parents from the federal government and must be repaid.

Non-need based money

This category includes scholarships or monies awarded to students based on academic excellence or other special talents or qualifications. Colleges tend to be the biggest source for scholarships and will often automatically review students for available awards during the admission application review process. It is advised to consult the Scholarships section on each college or university's website to check for any additional, more selective scholarship opportunities that may require an additional award-specific application.

The best search sources for scholarships awarded from outside organizations include www.studentaid.ed.gov and fastweb.com. Although there is no central source for all scholarships, some options are listed in Naviance. The New Trier post-high school counseling office also posts a monthly scholarship newsletter, The Green Sheet, which can be found on our webpage under the "Scholarship Newsletters" section.

Awards are free monies allocated based on non-scholastic talents, such as dance, athletics, or art. Many of these are included in the scholarship web searches listed above, but others may be offered from colleges themselves.

Financial Aid Timeline for the Senior Year

The FAFSA will be available annually by October 1 of the Senior year; please complete the form at www.fafsa.gov as soon as possible to guarantee that candidates for aid will receive the maximum amount for which they may be eligible – funding is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and money runs out every year.

September/October

- Once you have your “short list” of colleges, look up the Net Price Calculator on each of your college’s websites and complete them for a closer estimate of what you will pay.
- Check websites for any special, separate scholarship applications.
- If you are applying under an early plan and financial aid is anticipated, read the college materials to determine if the CSS Profile form is required.
- Families who use the ED option generally assume the cost of financing college; however, if you are applying ED and financial aid is essential, contact the college financial aid administrator to make sure that if the package is not financially feasible for you, you can be released from the commitment to enroll.
- The core document required for all need-based aid, the FAFSA, will now look at your most recent “documentable” tax year to document eligibility for funding. This means that parental and student taxes filed in the student’s junior year will be used to consider students for aid.
- The first step is to go to www.fsaid.gov to obtain both a student and a parental financial aid ID; parents will keep this FSA ID for all children for whom they filed previous or will file a subsequent FAFSA. Students secure a separate FSA ID that they, too keep for life!
- The FAFSA determines your eligibility for all need-based federal and state monies. You won’t be considered for any federal or state financial aid without completing this form.
- The FAFSA allows parents who filed taxes electronically to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool which automatically imports the family’s adjusted gross income from the tax form onto the FAFSA. Because of a large-scale hacking incident in 2016-7, you will not be able to view the numbers that are imported from your tax return. If you use the DRT, you will not have to provide IRS transcripts to colleges later. If the student did not file taxes, the student will likely be asked to provide an IRS transcript; the college financial aid office is looking for documentation that the student did not file, so the correspondence from the IRS that indicates the student has no IRS transcript suffices as the documentation.
- Your Student Aid Report (SAR) should be emailed to you within two weeks after you submit the FAFSA. Review it for corrections and resubmit if there are changes or if you estimated your income and need to correct or revise it.
- The EFC code in the upper right-hand corner of page one provides an index figure of how much money the government thinks your family should have available for the student’s education.
- If extenuating circumstances have affected your family’s finances and there will be less money available for your student’s education, or there are significant expenses that don’t show up on the FAFSA, write a letter to the financial aid officer of the college the student hopes to attend. Include as many details as possible about your new financial situation and request the financial aid officer use professional judgment in putting together the student’s package. The college

is bound to specific aid limitations set by the government, however, special consideration can be granted from the college coordinating the aid.

November/December/January/February

- Colleges to which you sent the FAFSA will send you individual award letters describing how much and what kind of money are offered. The college the student attends must receive the signed SAR (keep a copy for yourself) and will instruct you on completing additional paperwork.

Freshman year in college

- It gets easier; usually the college will send the student a partially completed FAFSA to review and update for the sophomore, junior and senior years.

Questions to ask

- Feel free to ask the financial aid office to assign one counselor to your case; that way, you need not explain the basic situation repeatedly, but will have one person you will get to know.
- Ask if the money you are given is renewable; if there are specific conditions under which certain scholarships are given such as a minimal grade point average needed to obtain that money in future years.
- Scam alert: NEVER pay anyone to complete your FAFSA; there are plenty of individuals out there preying on your fear and charging for doing a form that you can do on your own or with which your NT post-high school counselor can help you.

Specific Steps for Applying for Need-Based Financial Aid

Step One

- On or before October 1 of the senior year, a parent and the student who will be applying for need-based aid should secure their FSA ID. The student and one parent create individual FSA ID's, a lifelong identification used for creating and accessing federal financial aid documents and records.
- Cut-and-paste this site into your browser and create your FSA ID:
- <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>
- Parents will use this ID for all of the children in their household. Students use it throughout the time they use financial aid for college.
- Make sure to submit your federal income taxes (due April 15) before October 1 of the application year. This information is required before you will be able to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Step Two

- On October 1 or at least by November, use your FSA ID to begin to complete the FAFSA, at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> which is the basic document required for any need-based financial help for college.
- If you submitted your taxes electronically, you can use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) to import pertinent tax information directly onto the FAFSA, saving you from digging up your tax information.
- We get aggressive about doing the FAFSA as soon as possible, because the allocation of federal and state dollars always runs out before all needy families can be accommodated. Money is allocated on a first come, first served basis, so get this form in by early November.
- Parents fill out one section of the FAFSA, students another. Each student in the household who is going to college must complete and submit a FAFSA each year to be considered for aid.

Special circumstances:

In cases of divorce, the parent with whom the student lives the most in any calendar year is the parent who should complete the FAFSA, regardless of custody arrangements or who pays or receives child support. Please know that the FAFSA considers household income, so any divorced parents who have remarried must include the new spouse's income on the FAFSA.

In case a family's income is expected to be significantly lower than your income on which FAFSA eligibility is based, you will need to still use that income information on the FAFSA. However, you may write a letter to the financial aid administrator at the colleges your student is considering requesting that individual to "use his or her professional judgment in allocating a package for my student, (name of student)." You must include as much documentation as possible, including but not limited to any notice of job termination, increase in family expenses (credit card bills are not considered), bankruptcy, or other situation. This documentation allows the campus financial aid officers to make exceptions in order to provide a fair financial aid award to your student. This letter should be submitted within a week or two of the FAFSA in order to better assure reasonable financial aid consideration and help the financial aid officers have time to request any additional information from you.

Potential Step Three

Some 300 colleges and universities require additional information from families before they will allocate any need-based financial aid. Check the websites of the colleges on your student's list to see if they require the CSS PROFILE form. There may be fees associated with this form; one to register and another to send the results to individual colleges and universities so make sure you really need this form before completing and submitting it. It is a "smart form," so that as you respond to their questions – which can be considered highly intrusive – your fees may be reduced or disappear entirely based on your responses.

The purpose of this form is to make sure that all avenues of a student's resources are considered in creating a fair financial aid award. It includes financial information that the FAFSA does not consider.

What happens next?

According to the Office of Federal Student Aid, three days to three weeks after the FAFSA is submitted electronically, you will receive an email asking you to log into your FAFSA account (using that handy FSA ID) and see if any corrections are requested.

You will now be looking at the SAR or Student Aid Report which is a synopsis of your financial aid form. You make corrections as necessary, and as directed. The EFC or Estimated Family Contribution is an index that approximates the amount of money your family may be expected to pay for your student's college.

From college or university financial aid offices, since the federal government does not allocate financial aid money to colleges until February of your graduating year, you have a large window of response, from December 1 through mid-April. Colleges will estimate a financial aid package for your student and email your student a chart of the type and amount of expected financial aid available along with a guesstimate as to the actual college costs. Those costs are typically not set until May by each college's board.

The Student's Responsibilities

Each student who has been awarded a package has the right to accept or deny any specific parts of the financial aid offered by each college and university. The student and parent should review the awards from all colleges before determining whether or not they are financially feasible to manage.

The Parents' Responsibilities

Teach your student fiscal responsibility. While it is perfectly acceptable to call a college financial aid office and politely ask if there could be additional money available for your student, remember that one answer may be "No." Many colleges put forth their best package first, but others may find additional money as other students decline their offers in the spring. It is possible that you may have to tell your student that some colleges are simply out of reach financially.

Private Loans

When you read about individuals who are leaving college with over \$30,000 in student loans, please know that they have used private sources for college money. The current maximum amount of money a student can borrow from the federal government for an undergraduate degree is/was \$57,500 – only \$23,000 in subsidized loans. Some private financial sources prey on uneducated consumers who are simply trying to

secure a college education; please consider the repayment schedules of any loan you take out!

Scholarship Options

Any scholarship information that comes to New Trier is included on the student's Naviance college page. Also, attached to the home page of the individual student's Naviance page are links to several scholarship search sites. Whatever you do, don't pay anyone to fill out the FAFSA or to be considered for scholarships!

Additional Web Resources

Basic need-based financial aid information can be found here at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types>

We also like:

<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>

<https://collegecost.ed.gov/catc/Default.aspx>

<https://www.isac.org/>

After the FAFSA – More Details

What happens after you submit the FAFSA

After you submit the FAFSA online, it may take up to two weeks for the central processing agency to respond via the email address of the student. The response is a form known as the SAR or Student Aid Report, and is a compilation of all of the information the student and the parent entered in the FAFSA.

In the upper right-hand corner of page one is an EFC. This stands for Estimated Family Contribution and represents an index regarding what the federal formula believes your family should be able to contribute to the student's year of college expenses.

What do you do with the SAR?

First of all, review it for errors and changes. If income information on the original FAFSA was estimated, make appropriate changes here. If the SAR is correct and the student is applying to more than the original list of schools listed on the FAFSA, change those schools now and resubmit. The schools listed will receive a copy of the SAR and will put together an award letter from this information, but if the student would like to be considered for possible aid for additional schools, please change these schools so that the next group can receive, too, the information to determine their individual award packages for the student.

What do the colleges do with the SAR?

Colleges will put together an award letter for each candidate for aid. Schools that notify candidates of their admission in April will send an award letter with all admission offers. Most other schools will put together an award letter as soon as possible – usually four to six weeks – and email it to each admitted student. They may email a link and password for this information.

What is an award letter?

An award letter indicates the amount and types of federal, state (as appropriate) and institutional aid that has been allotted for the student. An award letter might look something like this:

Based on the FAFSA, you have been awarded the following financial package from The University of Winnetka:

	Accept/Reject*	Semester 1	Semester 2	TOTAL
U of W Grant	_____	\$2000	\$2000	\$4000
Pell Grant	_____	\$2025	\$2025	\$4050
Work Study**	_____	\$750	\$750	\$1500
Stafford Loan	_____	\$1313.50	\$1313.50	\$2625
PLUS Loan	_____	\$8000	\$8000	\$16000
TOTAL		\$14088.50	\$14088.50	\$28177

*Students write “accept” or “reject” in this column.

**College work study money is contingent upon the student securing an on-campus, part-time job. That funding is money not held on account for the student, but is paid to the student as he or she works.

Sometimes award letters include the total COA or Cost of Attendance, but often this is not yet determined. Estimated COA includes tuition, room and board, and an estimated amount for books, transportation and incidental expenses, such as laundry detergent, haircuts, and toothpaste.

Resources for the Enrichment Year (Gap Year) Between High School & College

Now is a wonderful opportunity to chase a dream, to do something fulfilling or to explore the world and take a break from the educational treadmill. After all, students have been going to school since they were three years old in many cases. A gap year is the time to explore and experience new people, cultures, activities and opportunities.

Students who take a gap year usually emerge more mature, self-confident and focused. They have new interests and much to talk about. Sometimes the intended course of study changes after completing a gap year. They develop newfound interests and ideas and often will clarify their goals for the future. For those students who are undecided, sometimes a new course of study based on their new experience will be selected.

New Trier hosts a Gap Year Fair every January at the Winnetka Campus. This is the largest gap year fair in the nation. Please see our website details on the date, time and precise location. Please refer to the GAP brochure on the post-high school counseling website under “Document Links” at www.newtrier.k12.il.us/phsc/

Questions to consider when deliberating a gap year:

- When would you like your gap time to begin, and how long should it last?
- What work and/or volunteer experiences have you had and enjoyed?
- What hobbies do you enjoy? How do you use your free time that is rewarding?
- What subjects in and out of school have intrigued you?
- What languages have you studied and for how long? Is there a language proficiency you would like to attain?
- Where have you already traveled in the U. S. and abroad?
- Have you attended organized programs outside of school or work? If so, what and where?

A Word about Oakton Community College

We feel compelled to dispel some of the myths commonly heard about Oakton Community College, and all community or junior colleges. Oakton is a fully accredited two-year college designed to provide two-year vocational programs and the first two years of regular college and/or university work. Annually Oakton usually ranks as one of the top ten to fifteen destinations for our students based on the number students who enroll.

Oakton offers state-of-the-art facilities, a group of faculty members who are interested in teaching, and it attracts students with a wide range of academic backgrounds. Some students are there due to family or financial considerations, some because they are not ready to leave their job, some because they are not ready to jump into a residential college setting. There is an honors program and study abroad opportunities at Oakton, attracting a high caliber of students from across the high schools that comprise their district.

Courses at Oakton transfer. As long as students complete the courses with “C” grades or better, and the course is listed in the articulation guide for the school to which the student plans to transfer, the credit will transfer. In fact, there is even a state articulation agreement between all Illinois community colleges and all public and most private Illinois colleges; take the first two years of prescribed courses at the community college, earn a specific grade point average, and transfer to the college where you will only need the last two years to complete your degree. Specifics are documented at www.itransfer.org

There is a Transfer Office at Oakton where students can pick up brochures called “transfer guides.” These guides list the courses students should complete at Oakton in order to transfer and complete their degrees at their respective college of choice.

Students enroll at Oakton for a semester, a year, a year and a half, or two years. There are no restrictions imposed on students to remain there for two full years.

New Trier’s admission contact at OCC can be reached at 847/635-1703.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign - UIUC

The University of Illinois is a selective state school which admits students based on the academic program or major they wish to study. UIUC maintains rigorous, competitive admission requirements and does not admit students based on whether or not they will be successful, but admits the best candidates from the pool in each undergraduate academic unit, or college. Far too many qualified high school students graduate each year, so UIUC has become selective as it also attempts to build a freshman class that reflects the diversity of the state.

- Students who wish to be considered for scholarship or honors opportunities and priority admission consideration must apply by the priority application deadline of November 1 of the senior year.
- We strongly encourage New Trier students to apply by the November 1 deadline.
- The application includes basic demographic information and a student self-reported grading section. You may access a copy of your transcript in PowerSchool to use as a reference to complete this section.
- Please follow the guidelines for your essay. UIUC admission representatives discourage students from submitting essays that do not follow the guidelines.
- One essay per major is required, so you may need two if you have an alternate choice. Providing a second choice major will expand your opportunities to gain admission.
- No teacher/counselor or other recommendations will be considered.
- After an application has been sent, students may check their status electronically through their my illini account. If you applied using the Coalition application, you will be emailed a PIN number and account link. Students whose application folder at UIUC contains the completed application and application fee and self-reported courses, grades, and test scores on the application will have some kind of response posted electronically in mid-December of the senior year. This could be an admission, deferral, or denial.
- Exceptions to this notification process include students applying to art foundation, theatre foundation, music and/or dance programs. These students will be notified after auditions or portfolio review sometime in mid-March.
- Students that apply by January 5 will be notified of their decision in March.
- The student's achievement (grades) at UIUC and the number of spaces available in the prospective program determine a student's eligibility to transfer colleges at UIUC.

Please consult information on the UIUC admission webpage. This will offer insight on their admission standards.

Information about Illinois State Schools other than UIUC

New Trier sends a significant number of applications to the following schools. Many of these schools are changing the way they admit students, moving from a cut-and-dried formula of certain ACT scores and GPA's to a more holistic review. This means that admission standards will be fluid and vary from student to student, depending upon the particular strengths and weaknesses seen in each individual candidate.

Required high school courses vary from school to school but generally include four years of English; three years each of lab science, social studies and mathematics, and; two years of the same foreign language. This is based on Public Act 86-0954, which defines the minimum high school requirement for admission to public universities in the state of Illinois. Note: The University of Illinois in Urbana is not in compliance with this.

Please check each website for current information.

- Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, IL. Applications reviewed holistically, considering the curriculum, grades, personal statement, test scores and recommendations.
- Governors State University in University Park began freshman admission recently. November 15th EA deadline, but rolls after that.
- Illinois State University in Normal, IL. November 1 priority deadline; students are considered by rigor of high school courses, grades, standardized test score and optional personal statement. Midrange ACT 22-26.
- Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, IL. Housing now offered. 19 ACT recommended.
- Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, IL. Top half of class and 21 ACT or no rank considered with an ACT of 23 or higher.
- Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, IL. Grades, ACT scores considered for admission and vary by program. Aviation/flight, interior design, architecture and automotive technology require higher credentials for admission. May 1 deadline.
- Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, IL. Subject pattern of high school courses and grades, ACT scores considered. No foreign language needed. May 1 deadline.
- The University of Illinois at Chicago, IL. Exclusive user of the common application. All application materials must be received by the admission office at UIC no later than January 15th of the senior year. Students who do not meet published guidelines must have a written statement and letter of recommendation.
- The University of Illinois at Springfield. Applicants reviewed holistically.
- Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL. Recommends 2.5 unweighted academic only GPA and 20 ACT. Other candidates are considered on a case-by-case basis.

New Trier Applicants to the University of California Schools or Cal State Schools

All applications for the University of Cal schools must be transmitted by November 30th. No teacher recommendations will be considered, unless requested after the application has been submitted.

The University of California system receives over 500,000 applications from prospective freshmen each year. Although each program at each campus sets minimal quality requirements, admission is highly competitive and may change significantly from year to year.

University of California Subject Requirements

These are subject to change. Always check the web site for the University of California system admissions to verify specific course requirements.

The academic subject requirements represent the minimum academic preparation freshman applicants must meet to be eligible for admission to the University of California. To be competitive, you should complete a challenging program which prepares you well beyond these requirements.

- a. History/social science: two years required – to include: one year of U.S. history or one-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of civics or American government; and one year of world history, cultures, or geography.
- b. English: four years required – four years of college preparatory English that include frequent and regular writing and reading of classic and modern literature, poetry, and drama.
- c. Mathematics: three years required, four years strongly recommended – three years, including elementary algebra, geometry, and second year (advanced) algebra.
- d. Laboratory science: two years required, three recommended. Two years of lab science in at least two of these three areas: biology, chemistry and physics. Earth science is no longer acceptable but may be used in the “g” elective category. AP Environmental Science will remain acceptable in this “d” category, because it requires prerequisite study of a full year of biology, chemistry or physics.
- e. Non-English language – two years required, three years recommended – two years of the same language other than English. Courses should emphasize speaking and understanding and include instruction in grammar, vocabulary, reading and composition.
- f. Visual and performing arts (dance, drama/theater, music, visual arts): a single yearlong VPA course in one discipline is required. Art history is approved. New Trier’s multimedia, web design, debate, and speech courses may not meet this requirement, it is up to the discretion of the individual campus.
- g. College prep electives – two years required above, chosen from the following areas: the visual and performing arts, history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, and language other than English (a third year of the same language used for the language requirement or two years of another (single) language).

Quirky Things You Should Know About Some of the Popular Schools for NT Students

1. Indiana University requires seven semesters of math: two years of algebra, one year of geometry, and one semester of precalculus.
2. The University of Iowa and Iowa State ask candidates for their weighted GPA, ACT or SAT scores and will admit, defer or deny based on student-reported data within 48 hours of the application submission.
3. Purdue University, the University of Arizona, the University of Maryland, the University of Minnesota and the University of Missouri want four full years of mathematics for admission. Algebra taken in the junior high setting counts as one year.
4. Although the University of Texas at Austin says they require one year of economics, they waive this requirement for out-of-state students.
5. The University of Wisconsin does not recognize AP Statistics as a math class for admission purposes unless students will have four other years of high school mathematics.
6. The University of California schools require one full year of the same visual or performing art from the following areas: studio art, photography, art history, theatre, choir or dance.
7. Although the Ohio state university system says it requires one full year of a visual or performing art to admission, Miami University will waive that admission requirement. You will, however, have to enroll in a semester course once you matriculate to Miami.
8. Most colleges will review an admitted student's final high school transcript of grades to determine if the student is still eligible to enroll – do NOT let your senior grades slip, please!

For Parents: Issues to Discuss Before You Send Your Student to College

Residence Hall Living

Discuss the kind of living environment in which your child is comfortable:

- Is your student a night owl or morning person?
- Does your student study with noise in the background or not?
- Is your student chronically neat or messy, shy or social?
- Request a freshman roommate on all housing applications.
- Feel free to look for substance-free living options as well; all colleges offer this.

Begin to consider your student's communication habits

Work on opening the channels of communication so that your student will be able easily to discuss their needs with a roommate, for instance. Discuss the conditions under which your student needs to live to be a successful and happy student. Help practice the tactics of conflict resolution – use family examples this year to promote the process.

Talk about money

Talk about how and how much money your student will have for personal expenses. Decide where you will keep the primary bank account and how, when and if family money will be allocated to the student.

Talk about security issues related to money as well.

Self-advocacy Skills

Encourage your student to make the most of the educational experiences college allows. For specific hints, check out *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds* by Richard Light. Meeting with professors and advisors, asking questions and attempting enrichment opportunities are just some of the ways our students distinguish themselves in college settings.

Try not to text or call your student every day. Once a week is fine, but this is the first significant step your student is making to individuate, or to become independent.

Time Management

Granted, most NT students are better at time management than CEO's of major corporations. However, the less structured environment of college offers the opportunity for many problems. Encourage students to make good use (i.e., studying) of the "dead time" between classes and to find a routine and stick with it for success.

Studies have consistently shown that no significant difference in grades between students who work and those who do not work while in college. Work-study jobs typically take 12-20 hours each week and hours run around the student schedule.

Decision Making Skills

Talk about absolutely everything. Discuss the implications of security if taking medication to college. Talk about GHB, the date-rape drug. Consider a self-defense course for all students before they go off to college.

Security Issues

Discuss with campus personnel and with your student campus safety measures. No campus, small or large, is immune from outsiders. Discuss safety measures for personal safety and for property safety – walking at night, jogging with headphones, how much money and identification to carry, securing possessions in the library and in the residence hall room.

When your student accepts a ride home with someone you don't know, be sure to coach your student into leaving a calendar of departure and arrival times with you and the roommate as well as the name, address and phone of the student providing the ride. Car models and license plate numbers are good to have, too.

Tips for First-time Parents

Many college and universities report grades and send bills directly to the student, not the parent. Be sure to discuss with your student the process by which you will be kept informed of your student's academic progress. This line of communication will be between the student and parent, not the parent and the university. Some universities even interpret the FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) to determine that faculty in Offices for Special Needs, for example, will not disclose to parents whether or not the student is receiving services for a disability.

Obtain a copy of your student's schedule so that in case of emergency you will be able quickly to tell campus officials or a roommate where your student is.

Be sure to have handy the name and telephone number of your student's residence hall advisor – again, in case of emergency or if your student's phone is busy for an extended period and you need to be in touch.

Obtain the name, phone number and address of your student's roommate's parents.

Secure a list of hotels and restaurants in the area will help for parents' weekends and general visits.

After your student decides where he or she will enroll, make your visit plans early – even a year in advance – in order to secure hotel reservations on overcrowded parent weekends, homecomings, and so on.