

Postings

From The New Trier Post-High School Counseling Office
For Members of the 2020 Graduating Class and their Parents

March, 2019

Initial meetings continue through June; every time a student meets with his or her post-high school counselor, assignments will be given. Since this is a process with many possible options, there is no one “right” college for each student; many factors will determine what options a student has and may choose. The post-high school counselors will make suggestions and through an investigation process, students will return with additional considerations throughout the summer and early fall, and the list will be refined in the fall. Applications are submitted in August, September, October, and some through November, December and January.

Junior year transcripts are now available on Powerschool and will no longer be mailed home.

Updating test scores in Naviance – please know that the testing companies do not send scores to high schools for six to eight weeks after each examination date – and so the scores will always lag behind in Naviance and Powerschool.

Overwhelming! How to make sense of the process

First, remember that it is a process and will take some time and commitment.

Next, after your first appointment, check your Naviance “my colleges” and “colleges I’m thinking about” to see what initial suggestions your post-high school counselor made.

Feel free to add any other colleges of interest to the list.

Remember, this is a “starter” list, and is only the beginning; colleges will be added and subtracted in the coming months.

We divide this process into three general areas in terms of finding colleges that might be desirable for each individual student. First, what do you want to get out of the college experience professionally? Is there a specific career goal you have in mind?

Secondly, what do you wish to gain from the college experience intellectually? What kinds of information fascinate you, or do you wish to fit into your brain?

Finally, what do you wish to get out of the college experience personally? What kind of relationships, leadership opportunities, or qualities will you hope college helps you develop?

Access a *Fiske Guide to Colleges* (editions from 2008 to 2019 will do) or a *Yale Daily News Insider’s Guide to Colleges*. While not perfect, these books may help you determine if some of these places might be solid “personal fits” for you.

These guides only contain some 250 colleges, so do not panic if your colleges do not show up here. They contain opinions, not facts, and are designed to help readers determine if the colleges might be a good personal fit. Students will not read the entire book. Feel free to use other guides and the Internet.

Jot down notes about what you learn in two columns: items you like and items you do not like on the bright green “Gimme Five” worksheet. During your initial meeting, you were given a bright orange assignment sheet and a tennis-ball-green set of worksheets and general information.

For colleges you like, or for colleges not included in these guides, head for the colleges’ individual webpages. Google *college name admissions*.

Take some time to investigate information of interest to you. What enrichment opportunities do you find personally appealing? Do they have a knitting club? Club lacrosse? Fraternities or sororities? Continue to take notes to bring to your next post-high school meeting so your counselor will know how to expand or contract your list.

Explore the sections marked “Academics” and “Programs” to see what kinds of areas you can study at particular colleges and universities. Delve deeply and check out the catalog of courses the see how the depth and breadth of courses meets your expectations for intellectual material you find interesting. If you know, for instance, you wish to major in business, printout graduation requirements from colleges in which you are interested so you can not only learn about what business majors entail, but also provide you with the chance to compare programs with one another to see if you have preferences.

Always take notes and bring those notes to your subsequent post-high school counseling meetings. Use the worksheets in the right green section. That way, your counselor can determine if there are colleges to delete from the list and others to add. Your list will swell and contract throughout the spring and summer at least.

Typically, counselors ask that students do research to make sure they like certain colleges before you make plane reservations or jump in the car to visit colleges.

Try to be flexible. Understand that while there may be many colleges that are right for you, there may be things about each place you do not particularly like. You may have to be more flexible until you have a better sense of what is important to you. And this process is not perfect. Sometimes reading about all of these places is frustrating: they all sound good! In those cases, a quick visit to a local school might bring home some of the differences between colleges.

Talk money with your parents. It is vital to make sure that there are financial safety schools on your list.

If you are an artist, athlete, thespian, or have other talents you wish to pursue in college, talk to your coaches or specific teachers in the discipline of your choice for additional recommendations. Your post-high school counselor may know where there are popular music programs, but your specific teachers will know where students with specific talents or interests like yours thrive.

Students interested in the visual or performing arts may wish to attend “Pursuing your Passion in College,” a program sponsored by the NT Fine Arts Association and New Trier’s post-high school counseling office. It is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12, from 7-8:30 PM in room C234 of the Northfield Campus.

If you are considering a gap year, take a look at New Trier's extensive guide on the New Trier post-high school website.

If you have time on your hands over spring break and want to check out some colleges, listed below are some trips you might take to see some small, medium, and large colleges and/or universities. Before you decide on a trip – any trip – however, you should do your homework first! Check out the write-ups in college guides, peruse the website to see what academic majors the colleges offer as they relate to your interests, and determine how much time you have for visiting.

Close-to home, Illinois options:

Lake Forest College, Dominican University, North Central College or Elmhurst College; Northwestern, the University of Chicago, DePaul, Loyola of Chicago or the University of Illinois at Chicago;

Illinois Wesleyan University, Illinois State University, Bradley University and the University of Illinois at Urbana;

Knox College, Augustana or Monmouth College, Bradley or Lewis University, Western Illinois University, Millikin University, Eastern Illinois University, the University of Illinois at Urbana

Urban options in Illinois:

North Park University, DePaul or Loyola or Columbia College, Northeastern University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, or the University of Chicago

Highly selective Illinois colleges:

Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois at Urbana

Out-of-state trip options:

Valparaiso University or Kalamazoo College, Western Michigan University, Michigan State University, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Michigan;

DePauw University, Butler University, Purdue University, Indiana University;

Earlham College, the University of Cincinnati, Xavier University, Wittenberg University, the University of Dayton, Miami University, Ohio State University, Ohio University

Beloit College, Marquette University, the University of Wisconsin;

Coe, Cornell or Grinnell College;

Drake University or Iowa State University, the University of Iowa

Washington University, St. Louis University, the University of Missouri in Columbia

And at the risk of boring you, remember that this is a process. There is no wrong way to investigate colleges or post-high school options, and your ideas about life beyond New Trier may change in the next year and a half. Never hesitate to email your post-high school counselor at New Trier with questions.