

New Trier Township High School
Post-High School Counseling Office
Considerations for Sophomores

Now that my student is on the Winnetka Campus, what access does he have to the post-high school counselors?

The formal college search process begins junior year; however, post-high school counselors visit sophomore adviser rooms to respond to questions about junior-year registration. Your student is also welcome to consult with your counselor on drop-in Mondays as well, and parents may call or email with specific registration questions.

In January parents will be invited to a curriculum night for parents of sophomores, and at the end of the main session will be a break-out session with your individual, assigned post-high school counselor. Remember, though, that the emphasis for postsecondary planning remains with academic performance, discovering co-curricular opportunities your student finds rewarding, and developing independent living skills. Sophomores only have two to three semesters of high school level work under their belts, so the post-high school counselors function as generalist counselors dealing with curricular and co-curricular issues of adjusting to high school.

When should my student be taking college admission tests?

The ACT and now the SAT are both achievement tests designed for students who are near the end of the junior year curriculum, so students are advised to take those tests in the middle to the end of the junior year. Taking the test too early may yield results that undermine a student's confidence, particularly in light of the fact that the test is designed for the end of the junior year. Don't worry about these tests this year; from April of the junior year through the fall application process, students usually have six to seven opportunities to take the ACT alone! The State of Illinois provides a free SAT to all public high school juniors in the spring.

Just being at New Trier means that your student will be brought along in the standardized testing process; students take a Pre-ACT in the sophomore year, the PSAT in the junior year, and the state-sponsored SAT is typically in April of the junior year.

Do you have any advice specifically for students who might wish to pursue the arts in college?

Certainly! First, each prospective music, theater, dance, or art student should keep a file folder of all activities and awards earned from freshman year forward. That will make it easier to construct a resume in the fall of the senior year, and might help in completing college applications. Additionally, students should seek opportunities to continue their craft, whether that is through community theater or summer music camps. As a parent, you might wish to become involved in the New Trier Fine Arts Parent Association and check out their website.

In your response to the first question, you mention "independent living skills." What did you mean by that?

New Trier students don't drop out of college and university settings because they can't handle the academic demands placed on them; the larger issues that affect NT students' persistence in college concern their independent living skills. The post-high school counselors believe that as early as the sophomore year, students should begin to become increasingly self-reliant. Some examples include:

- Getting him/herself out of bed in the morning
- Going through the school day without texting, emailing or calling a parent

Structuring free time productively –
managing varying homework demands,
setting academic goals and following through to reach them,
attempting to solve study problems on his or her own before asking for
assistance,
finding time for relaxation, and
participating in an activity of interest

Additional opportunities for independence include money management, making meals,
doing laundry and doing chores without parental prompting.

You keep focusing on academics, activities and now independent living skills. When can we talk about college?????

In the beginning of the sophomore year, your student had only two of eight semesters of high school under his or her belt. Let's focus on making the most of New Trier before we move on to college! Having said that, if your student wishes to begin to research future colleges that fit his or her interests, promote the Naviance college search. Students will create a Naviance log-in during the second semester of the sophomore year in an advisory career counseling meeting. From that list, move into the individual websites of each particular college into areas like "majors" and "departments" to see the depth and breadth of courses of interest to your student.