

COUNSELING SERVICES INFORMATION

FHS Guidance Department

Counseling services are an integral part of the educational program and are available to all students within the school. The aim is to aid in developing each individual's full intellectual and social potential and to help in his or her achieving maturity and self responsibility. Counselors assist all students with educational, personal, and social problems so they may perform as well as possible in the high school environment. Specifically counselors will:

1. Have a key role in student scheduling
2. Participate in IEP meetings for students with special needs
3. Meet with their designated students individually at least twice a year or on an as need basis
4. Present post secondary options to parents and students as well as aid students in the college search, application, and financial aid process
5. Familiarize parents and students with the programs available at the Erie County Technical School and college courses through the RCI program
6. Participate in STAR, Student Assistance Program (SAP) team meetings and cases
7. Help coordinate, advertise, and administer all testing: PSAT, PSSA, AP
8. Coordinate and advertise scholarship applications for students
9. Participate in a program to address student failures on a weekly basis
10. Provide emotional and social counseling and provide advice on community resources to families and students

Guidance Staff

Mrs. Tann-Guidance Secretary

Mrs. George-Students in the first three alphabetical homerooms for every grade. Standardized testing, RCI, dual enrollment, and Erie County Technical School liaison.

Mrs. Crawford-Students in the last three alphabetical homerooms for every grade. Monthly newsletters, PATS liaison, Career Day, college entrance process.

Mrs. George and Mrs. Crawford will be breaking the student body in half and will be following their students throughout their high school careers. This will be helpful when working with the families and students.

A student who wants a conference may stop at the guidance office to arrange an appointment. Attention to walk-ins will be given depending on availability. Students must always obtain permission of the classroom teacher if a class is to be missed.

Students at Risk Team (STAR)

The Students At Risk Program (STAR) at Fairview High School is designed to work effectively with the growing problems of clinical use/abuse and behavioral health among our youth. Staff members have received specialized training by the Hamot Institute for Behavioral Health.

Program Goals:

1. Identify and assess students in need of mental health or drug and alcohol intervention and support.
2. Provide education and awareness activities for students, teachers, and community.

If you or someone you know could benefit from this program, please see a guidance counselor.

College Entrance Exams

SAT

Register online at www.collegeboard.org

Please enter 391-365 as our school code so that test scores are sent to the high school to be included on your transcript.

SAT FACTS

- The SAT has 3 sections: Math, Critical Reading, and Writing. A perfect score on the SAT is a 2400.
- Most students take the SAT for the first time during the spring of their junior year and a second time during the fall of their senior year.
- You can send your SAT scores to four schools for free. Make sure to make your selection of schools when registering. If you want to send it to more than four schools it will cost \$10.50 per score report. Some colleges will accept SAT scores that are printed on your official high school transcript. If this is the case save money by having the guidance office send your official transcript instead.
- See the guidance office if you would like to register for the test by mail. Always remember that the deadline for registration is usually a month before the test date. Don't be late or you will have to pay high late fee costs.
- If you have a financial hardship, please talk to the guidance office about the possibility of a fee waiver.
- Not sure if your scores will get you into your school of choice? Go to: <http://sat.collegeboard.org/scores/>
Under FIND A COLLEGE, put in your school of choice. Then click the SAT tab for average SAT scores for currently enrolled students.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS

SAT Subject Tests are hour-long, content-based tests that allow you to showcase achievement in specific subject areas where you excel. These are the **only** national admission tests where **you** choose the tests that best showcase your achievements and interests. SAT Subject Tests allow you to differentiate yourself in the college admission process or send a strong message regarding your readiness to study specific majors or programs in college. In conjunction with your other admission credentials (your high school record, SAT scores, teacher recommendations, etc.), they provide a more complete picture of your academic background and interests. There are 20 SAT Subject Tests in five general subject areas: English, history, languages, mathematics and science. Some colleges and universities require these subject tests as part of the admissions process. The schools that usually require them are the more competitive schools. Go to the admissions webpage or talk to an admissions counselor at your school of choice to see if these exams are required. (Information taken from the College Board Website).

IMPORTANT: It is best to take the SAT subject exams as soon as you have completed the equivalent high school course. If you wanted to take the Biology SAT Subject test, you would want to take this exam in your sophomore year upon completing your Biology course. For more information on SAT Subject Tests, please visit <http://sat.collegeboard.org>

PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT)

All 11th grade students and all 10th grade honors students considering higher education should take the PSAT exam. The PSAT is a practice SAT exam that has no bearing on the admissions process. It allows students a glance at what the SAT exam entails and will show students how they compare to other students across the nation taking this exam. Juniors who do exceptionally well may qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Corporation Scholarship. The exam costs \$14 and will be offered at FHS in October of every year. Stop by the guidance office to ask questions or to register.

ACT

Most colleges also accept the ACT exam. It can be beneficial to take the SAT and ACT exam and compare your results. The ACT exam consists of a Math, Reading, Science, and English section with an optional Writing section. Each section receives a score of 1-36. The Composite Score is the average of the four test scores (Math, Reading, Science, and English), rounded to the nearest whole number. It is encouraged that all students take the writing section. More information and test dates can be found at: www.actstudent.org

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NCAA Clearinghouse

Thinking about playing a sport at the Division I or Division II level? Here is what you need to know.

When should students register with the clearinghouse?

The NCAA recommends that student athletes register with the clearinghouse at the **beginning of their junior year** in high school, but many students register after their junior year. There is no registration deadline, but students must be cleared by the clearinghouse before they receive athletic scholarships or compete at a Division I or Division II institution.

How do students register with the clearinghouse?

Students can register online at <http://eligibilitycenter.org> They will have to enter personal information, answer questions about their athletic participation, and pay a registration fee. The website will then prompt them to have their high school transcript and ACT or SAT scores sent to the clearinghouse.

Can students have the registration fee waived?

Students who have received a waiver for the SAT or ACT are eligible for a waiver of the clearinghouse registration fee. The student's counselor must submit confirmation of the student's test fee waiver. See the guidance office for questions on this.

What records does the clearinghouse require?

Students should arrange to have their high school transcript sent to the clearinghouse as soon as they have completed at least six semesters of high school. The transcript must be mailed directly from their high school. They must also arrange to have their SAT test scores reported directly by the testing company to the clearinghouse. Students can arrange this when they register for the SAT. When choosing your four schools to send your tests results to, please mark code "9999" the NCAA clearinghouse as one of your choices. The clearinghouse needs scores directly from SAT and will not accept scores from a high school transcript.

Letters of Recommendation

Do I really need a letter of recommendation to get into college?

The answer is...it depends on the school. Many colleges and universities are now requiring at least one letter of recommendation from a teacher, coach, or guidance counselor. This can be important information for an admissions counselor as it can provide insight into the type of person you are, the type of student you are, and overall what you could add to their college or university. Here are some tips:

- Ask someone that really knows you to write the letter. Never ask a family member, but ask a teacher or coach that you have known for a few years to write your letter.
- Fill out the Student Request for Letter of Recommendation form and attach a resume of activities. Give this resume and form to every person writing a letter on your behalf. This form and a sample resume can be found in the guidance office.
- Ask the recommender early. Don't say, "I need this letter in 3 days." Give the recommender at least 3 weeks, but follow up if necessary.
- It is a good idea to have your letter of recommendation tailored to the school/schools you are applying to. Tell your recommender what schools you are applying to and what your major will be at each of these schools.
- Some colleges require a specific evaluation sheet. Check your college's website or ask an admissions counselor to see if there is an evaluation sheet or if a letter is sufficient.
- Keep a copy of all of your letters of recommendation or ask for an extra copy for your recommender. These letters may come in handy for scholarship applications in the future.
- Some letters of recommendation need to be kept private and the recommender will seal the envelope and sign over the flap. You may want to ask your college if this is necessary.

College Essay

You are required to showcase a piece of your written work. This is a big deal as it is your chance to tell the reader more about you. You may not write directly about yourself, but it still shows the reader your writing skills and your interests. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Write about a summer or after school job you had. You may want to relate this job to your choice in major. Or maybe this job showed you how important a college education is.
- Write about adversity in your life. Always show how you overcame the adversity and how it made you grow as a person.
- Talk about someone inspirational in your life. Describe that person in great detail and why they are inspiring to you.
- Write about something that excites you. Maybe you love photography, cooking, running, or playing videogames. Talk about why you love these things and how they have impacted your life.
- Talk about your generation as a whole and how you see the people of your generation impacting society.

Some colleges have a specific essay that they have chosen for all applicants to answer. This is difficult, as you need to find a way to stand out. Most importantly, PROOF READ. Ask a parent to read your essay, ask a friend to read your essay, ask a teacher to read your essay. Have at least three other's read your essay before mailing it in. Lastly, don't write about something that the reader already knows about you. If you were to write that you really want to go to Big State University, you want to major in Biology, and you feel ready for Biology curriculum because you have received all A's in your high school science courses. The reader already knows this. You have applied to their school, you listed your major on the application, and your transcript revealed your grades. Talk about something that the reader would not know about you. Be creative!

The Common Application

The Common Application was created to simplify the admissions process. A common application is one application that you fill out online and send to all of your colleges of choice. This saves time in applying to 10 different schools with 10 different applications. The only issue is that not all colleges will accept the common application (more than 400 do). You must check with your specific college to see if they accept the common application. You can find out more about the common application and start the process by visiting: www.commonapp.org

Important Information for 9th and 10th Grade Students

- Get involved in meaningful activities now, colleges like to see consistent dedication to your high school activities, volunteer work, and athletics.
- Talk over your course of study plan with a guidance counselor. Plan ahead and consider taking AP, honors, or college courses.
- Start thinking about your interests in career paths. Think about what high school classes you like and dislike. Start speaking with your parents, teachers or counselor about possible career choices.
- If you are considering college or technical school, start researching schools early. Read brochures, look at college websites, and start to attend college fairs. Creating a long list now will help you shorten your list for when you apply.