THE TITAN GUIDE

A RESOURCE FOR SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL
Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the latest edition of “The Titan Guide.” Your assigned counselors here at Shaler Area High School have put this guide together to try to help simplify the often overwhelming task of post-secondary planning. While we hope this guide proves useful, it is only meant to supplement the many services available for students and their families. Also, please note that every attempt has been made to consider the diverse planning needs of all our students. While the highest percentage of our graduates continues directly on to colleges and universities, there are many other desirable career and training paths our students take upon leaving high school.

Through the many duties they perform annually, assigned counselors want to continue serving the needs of all students. This is done for sophomores through standardized testing and interpretation, post-secondary planning with juniors and by visitations with seniors to help them finalize their planning and provide them with an introduction to financial aid. In an attempt to provide parents with much of the same information, evening programs are conducted both first and second semester at the high school. As always individual appointments can be scheduled with the assigned counselor.

We encourage your feedback or questions about any information in this guide. Please contact us about any services needed by your son or daughter.

Sincerely,

High School Counseling Staff
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Career Paths
(collegeboard.org)

Colleges

A **four-year college** grants bachelor's degrees (Bachelor of Arts; Bachelor of Science). Some colleges also award master's degrees, and some offer a two-year Associate of Arts (AA) degree. Colleges can be specialized (for example, in nursing) or they can offer a broad curriculum, like the liberal arts, which focus on the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. Classes tend to be smaller than those in universities. This provides students with more personal attention and better access to the faculty.

Universities

A **university** grants bachelor’s and master's degrees, and sometimes includes a liberal arts college, some professional schools or colleges, and graduate programs such as a law school or medical school. Universities tend to be larger than colleges, focus more on scholarly or scientific research, and might have larger class sizes. This means they can offer the two year and four-year degrees as well as graduate degrees in advanced studies beyond four years. Universities offer a huge course selection and may have extensive resources. Class size varies, depending on the size of the university, the subject area, and the course level. University professors are usually involved in research. Graduate students, rather than professors, teach some of the classes. (These graduate students are called Teaching Assistants or TA’s.)

Community Colleges

A **public two-year college** grants associate's degrees in two-year liberal arts programs and sometimes certificates in particular technical (career-related) subjects. Typically, community colleges are open admission. They are open to those 18 years of age or older. However, to be placed into a major, the individual must have a high school diploma, GED, or be placed according to ability to benefit. Some students start their postsecondary education at a community college and then transfer to a four-year school, either because a community college tends to be more affordable than a four-year college, or because admissions standards at community colleges are often less strenuous than at four-year schools.

Junior Colleges

Similar to a **community college**, except that a **junior college** is usually a private school.
Career school, Technical school, or Vocational/trade school:

These terms are often used interchangeably. These schools may be public or private, two year or less-than-two year. Programs at these schools prepare students for specific careers and may last weeks, months, or years, depending on career requirements. At these schools, students usually receive a license, a certificate, or an associate degree. Career schools offer courses that are designed to prepare students for specific careers, from welding to cosmetology to medical imaging, etc. The difference between technical schools and trade schools is that technical schools teach the science behind the occupation, while trade schools focus on hands-on application of skills needed to do the job.

Apprenticeship

If you like to work with your hands and your mind, you might want to consider an apprenticeship after high school. More than 850 occupations can be learned on the job through an apprenticeship.

An apprenticeship prepares you for a career through a structured program of on-the-job learning with classroom instruction, while you work and earn a salary. The programs can last from one to six years and you can choose careers in areas such as telecommunications, health care, computing, business support and the arts. The most common apprenticeships are in construction and manufacturing.

Most apprenticeships are registered through the U.S. Department of Labor, ensuring the program meets government standards for fairness, safety and training. If you complete a registered program, you will receive a certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor, which proves your qualifications for the career. In addition, classroom instruction often can be used to earn a license, certification or degree.

According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), apprenticeship is a typical entry path for 15 occupations:

- Boilermakers
- Brickmasons and blockmasons
- Carpenters
- Electricians
- Elevator installers and repairers
- Funeral Directors
- Glaziers
- Mechanical insulation worker
- Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters
- Real estate appraisers and assessors
- Reinforcing iron and rebar workers
- Sheet metal workers
- Stonemasons
- Structural iron and steel workers
- Terrazzo workers and finishers
Post-Secondary Education Options

Undergraduate Postsecondary Education

Undergraduate postsecondary education is the U.S. terminology for formal education after graduating from secondary school but prior to advanced study in the research disciplines or professional fields.

Undergraduate studies in the United States are generally divided into two phases: a set of distributed course requirements that must be completed involving basic study in several subjects, and a concentrated program of study in one or more subjects.

Two postsecondary degrees are awarded at the undergraduate level:

- **The Associate Degree**
  - Associates of Arts (AA)
  - Associates of Science (AS)
  - Associates of Applied Science (AAS)

- **The Bachelor's Degree**

Students at the undergraduate level may earn certificates or diplomas in addition to degrees or instead of them.

Graduate Postsecondary Education

Graduate education is the term used in the United States for studies undertaken after the attainment of a bachelor's degree. It corresponds to what is called post-graduate or advanced education in some other systems.

Education at this level in the U.S. can be of two types:

Professional studies that require the student to have already earned an undergraduate degree.

Research studies following either a bachelor's degree or a professional degree.

Two postsecondary degrees are awarded at the graduate level:

1. The **Master's Degree**
2. The **Doctoral Degree**
**Distance Education**

**Distance education** is considered to be a vehicle for delivering education to persons whose location, circumstances or work make remote links necessary or convenient, and is defined, for the purposes of accreditation review, as a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction occurs when student and instructor are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. It is not considered to be a separate type of education altogether.

Distance education is an increasingly popular way to study for everything; from a short professional course to a graduate degree in the United States. There are numerous institutions offering undergraduate degree programs using distance education teaching methods involving, "the process of extending learning, or delivering instructional resource-sharing opportunities, to locations away from a classroom, building or site, to another classroom, by using video, audio, computer, multimedia communications, or some combination of these with other traditional delivery methods."

Because distance education is less expensive to support and is not constrained by geographic considerations, it offers opportunities in situations where traditional education has difficulty operating. Students with scheduling or distance problems can benefit, as can workers, because distance education can be more flexible in terms of time and can be delivered virtually anywhere. Studies indicate that distance learning can be as effective as the traditional format when the methods are appropriate to the teaching tasks, there is student-teacher interaction, and the teachers provide students with appropriate and timely feedback.

For international students this means that they can study for a U.S. degree without leaving their home country, though they will almost certainly have to go to the United States for short periods of face-to-face contact and study on the campus. Studying for a degree using distance education requires students to have special qualities such as self-discipline and the ability to work on their own. If you are considering distance education, you should thoroughly research the quality of the program, the accreditation of the institution in the United States, and its recognition in your home country to make sure this option is the appropriate one for your future goals.
SEPTEMBER 1.) Receive registration materials in school for PSAT/NMSQT to prepare for the SAT Test and to be eligible for National Merit Scholarship competition.  
   2.) Get involved in activities.

OCTOBER  
Take the PSAT. Attend the North Pittsburgh College Fair.

NOVEMBER  
End of first grading period. Keep up the good work!

DECEMBER  
Receive results of PSAT/NMSQT. Determine how you might improve as you prepare for the SAT. Plan to register for spring SAT and/or ACT.

JANUARY – JUNE  
1.) Begin to think about which colleges you’d like to explore.  
   2.) Evaluate information about colleges. Develop a list using available resources.  
   3.) Attend a college fair with your family.  
   4.) Meet with college representatives.  
   5.) Take the SAT and/or ACT.  
   6.) Certain juniors in advanced level or AP coursework related to a possible college major may want to consider starting to take SAT Subject Tests – see your assigned counselor for advice on this.  
   7.) Ask teachers for recommendation letters if needed for college applications.  
   8.) Attend the Financial Aid evening program with your family.

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST  
1.) Visit colleges and take tours. Refine your list.  
   2.) Choose meaningful activities for the summer months – work, volunteer, and/or do community service.  
   3.) Create a resume, see Appendix  
   4.) Apply to NCAA Eligibility Center, see page 27.
SENIOR YEAR

AUGUST – 1.) Review transcript and schedule online. Check for accuracy of grades and credits. 2.) Make a calendar showing application deadlines for admission, financial aid and scholarships.

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER – 1.) Apply to colleges. Request transcript following the procedure on page 22. 2.) Apply for Financial Aid (Oct. 1 or later) 3.) Meet with college representatives. 4.) Take SAT/ACT. Take Sat Subject tests if required for admission to your school. 5.) Ask teachers for recommendation letters if needed for your college application. 6.) Attend the FAFSA evening with your family. 7.) Watch your deadlines!!

JANUARY – APRIL – 1.) Send mid year reports to schools who ask. 2.) Keep your grades up – avoid senioritis.

BEFORE MAY 1 - Make your final decision and make deposit.

CONGRATULATIONS, You’ve made it through high school! Enjoy your graduation.
**Post-Secondary Planning Goals:**

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<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>Talk to your parents and counselor about your interests, post-secondary possibilities, and career information.</td>
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<td>Research career possibilities and required schooling; take an interest inventory or other career assessment such as <a href="https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip">https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip</a></td>
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<td>Make a four-year schedule of classes that increases your eligibility to achieve the career or attend the college of your choice.</td>
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<td>Start developing a high school resume by keeping a scrapbook of your accomplishments.</td>
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<td>Check out NCAA requirements if pursuing athletics in college.</td>
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<td>Re-evaluate your high school course selection to make sure it meets career training or college requirements.</td>
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<td>Try to complete most academic requirements by your junior year.</td>
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<td>Find out about summer jobs and how to gain the skills necessary to obtain one.</td>
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<td>Research majors that might be a good match with your interests and goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Look into volunteer opportunities that will expand your experience and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take the PSAT in October if you are planning to go to college.</td>
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<td>Attend college and trade fairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a list of possible post-secondary schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In the spring, consider taking the SAT/ACT for the first time if you may go to college.</td>
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<td>Narrow your options and schedule campus visits.</td>
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<td>Start fine tuning resumes and developing portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact college coaches at your target schools if you plan to play sports in college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse.</td>
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<td>Explore careers and their earning potential with the Occupational Outlook Handbook search tool at <a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco">www.bls.gov/oco</a></td>
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<td>Investigate Job Shadowing</td>
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<td>Identify two people to write solid recommendation letters for you, and ask them to write a letter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make the final preparation of your resume, portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make sure you continue to meet high school graduation and college admission requirements.</td>
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<td>Meet with military personnel and/or visiting admissions representatives from the schools that interest you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take or retake the ACT or SAT in the fall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit your college admissions applications.</td>
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<td>Contact the coaches from the schools you are considering.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); <a href="https://falsa.ed.gov/">https://falsa.ed.gov/</a> opens 10/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Request that your high school send a copy of your transcript to the schools where you have applied.</td>
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WHICH TEST SHOULD I TAKE?

When the time comes to decide on the test you want to take for college admissions, you have two choices: ACT and SAT. Almost all four-year colleges and universities accept best results from either.

Both tests have the same goal—to help colleges predict your chances of success during the freshman year. These tests, along with your high school grades, are quite accurate predictors of freshman success. You should be aware; however, that ACT and SAT differ from each other and students may earn higher scores on one test than on the other.

You may choose to take both tests. In most cases, when college applicants submit scores from both tests, colleges will use the higher of the two scores, ACT or SAT, for purposes of admissions, scholarships, and athletic eligibility. So taking both tests may increase your chances of getting into your first-choice college.

No matter which test (or tests) you choose, it is very important that you use the free practice tests available online. When taking the practice test, try to simulate as closely as possible the time and other conditions you will experience on test day. This will help you pace yourself and become familiar with the test. GOOD LUCK!

RECOMMENDATIONS:

• **PSAT**—October of junior year is recommended for all students seriously planning to attend a four-year program after graduation; 10th graders, who all receive the same PSAT registration packet to take home, are advised that they only need to consider taking this test a year early if they want to get in extra practice before taking their junior year; students who took the PSAT as 10th graders should absolutely plan to take it again as 11th graders

• **SAT**— Twice, at least once during Spring of junior year

• **ACT**— Twice, April of junior year is preferred first date
Career Schools

About Career Colleges and Schools

Career schools are postsecondary, occupationally oriented, education institutions. Schools offer entry-level skills training focused on specific careers.

Courses stress training in specialized job requirements along with technical writing and math skills. Programs vary in length from three months to three years. Students spend approximately 23 hours in class each week.

Career schools offer over three thousand separate programs throughout Pennsylvania. They include information and computer technologies, paralegal, secretarial, biomedical; technology, diesel mechanics, electronics, accounting, aviation maintenance, avionics, hair design, computer aided drafting (CAD), graphic design, commercial/fine art, engineering, business and allied health.

About Career College and School Students

Most students want specific training to improve their employment opportunities. Most look for quick job market entry.

The student body profile at private career schools consists of:

- Recent high school graduates
- Older students who are making life and career changes
- People supported by government programs (Unemployment, disability, welfare, workmen's compensation, etc.)

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of private career school students have previously attended a community college or four-year college or university.
Selecting a Career College or School

If you plan to train for a career, it is essential that you thoroughly research the quality of training before you enroll. Take steps to ensure that the training that you select is high quality. The following are some tips on how to choose a school that's right for you whether it's a private career school, public vo-tech, community college or four-year technical college.

Visit the school and ask yourself these questions:

1. Did you receive a tour of the school?
2. Did you receive a school catalogue?
3. Was information about the school’s completion rate available?
4. Was the option of talking with graduates or employees available?
5. Did the school permit you to observe classes, meet instructors and talk with students before enrolling?
6. Did the school admissions representative clearly explain admission procedures, paperwork, agreements and refund policies?
7. Did you receive copies of everything you signed?
8. Did the school explain the various financial assistance programs?
9. Did the school explain your repayment responsibilities when using a student loan?
10. Did the school clearly explain: What skills you will learn? How many classes are lectures? How many hands-on classes?
11. Are there courses required that are outside your specific career area?
12. Does the school have modern and adequate equipment?
13. Was a list of companies which hire the school’s graduates available?
14. If the school offers externships, internships, or apprenticeships, were guidelines and hours clearly explained?
15. Does the school help you prepare for your job search? Did the school specifically explain how the placement department will assist you?
Choosing a College or University

Choices, choices, choices! With hundreds of options, this task can seem overwhelming. Just remember that the decision is yours and there is no wrong choice, except the one that is not your own.

When making/reaching your decision, consider the following factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Preferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admissions Requirements (highly selective to open admissions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Cost/Availability (married, fraternal organizations, military operated, same sex, coed, off campus, on campus, co-ops, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public or Private</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Options (NCAA sports, intramural athletics, student organizations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majors Offered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit the Campus!</td>
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</table>

STEP ONE: ASSESSMENT OF INTERESTS

This is best done by sharing your dreams with someone (your parents, a friend, or the school counselor). What would you like to study? What skills do you have? Do you like to work with people? information? things? all three? What are your best subjects in school? It is not necessary for you to know exactly what you want to do; what is important is that you think about the future and the importance of a college degree in achieving your dreams. Explore different options.

STEP 2: WHAT TYPE OF UNIVERSITY ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

Think in terms of:

(a) LOCATION - Do you want to stay close to home? How far are you willing to travel? Do you want to be in a small town? In a large city?

(b) SIZE - Would you like to be in a small college/university where you will get more personalized attention? How about a larger university that might have a greater variety of resources and academic offerings? Or maybe a middle sized one that may offer a bit of each?

(c) TYPE OF UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE - Do you want to go to a public or private institution? A liberal arts school or a technical college? A four-year institution or a two-year college?
STEP 3: MAKE A LIST OF UNIVERSITIES

After completing the first two steps, figure out what type of school best fits your interests. Based on this information, make a list of universities that meet your needs. In order to come up with this list, you may want to talk to other family members or friends, and your school counselor. We recommend that you explore a school’s website or look at a university/college guide. Request the schools selected for a catalog, an admissions application, and a financial aid application via the web or by phone. College Board (www.collegeboard.org) has a college search feature that is a great starting point in developing a college list. Try to attend some college fairs and take your parents along.

STEP 4: NARROW DOWN THE LIST

Review the materials that the universities send you. Which ones have the majors/programs in which you are interested? Highlight the schools that are a good match with your interests. Look at the academic requirements. Do you meet their standards?

It is always a good idea to visit the campus. Do so if you get an opportunity and ask many questions. Remember, you are also interviewing them to see if they meet your requirements.

STEP 5: DECIDE WHICH UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU WILL APPLY

Based on the search done in steps 1 through 4, select the universities/colleges that meet your requirements. It is always a good idea to discuss your selections with family members, friends, and your school counselor, since they may have some information about the schools you are considering. The Shaler Area Counseling Department suggests that you apply to at least four universities/colleges: the best school you can gain admission to/ideal school, two where you might be accepted, and one where you are certain you will be admitted.

Do not eliminate a university/college simply because it appears to be too expensive! If you are not certain you can afford the costs, remember that all universities/colleges offer some type of financial aid. However, you need to fill out the financial aid forms early (beginning in October). Universities and colleges in Pennsylvania, generally speaking, require that you submit a PHEAA (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) application to qualify for state grants as well as a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Schools have their own deadlines for financial aid forms. Remember to submit all applications before their due date.
RESEARCH AND SEARCH TOOLS

1.) **COLLEGE CONFERENCES** – Representatives from colleges and career/technical schools visit our high school during the school day. Students are permitted to attend five conferences per year. They must obtain their passes at the conclusion of announcements from the Counseling Office. They must take their pass to the teacher of the class that they will be missing to have it initialed to verify their absence. Attendance is taken at the college visit.

2.) **COLLEGE FAIRS** – There are several opportunities throughout the year, although primarily in the fall, to meet with representatives from colleges and universities throughout the country. Dates for the local fairs are found on the yearly test bulletin.

3.) **WEB-BASED COLLEGE SEARCH TOOLS** – See Appendix C
PROCEDURES FOR CAMPUS VISITS

Shaler Area High School encourages students to schedule planned visits to post secondary schools. Because it may be necessary for students to schedule visits during the school day, evidence of the college visits should be given to the attendance secretary upon return.

HINTS FOR CAMPUS VISIT

Before you visit the school, consider some of the options below. It is also important to develop a list of questions and plan specific activities in order to accomplish your goals.

- Meet with an admission officer.
- Verify admission requirements (test and high school preparation).
- Obtain a school calendar and a catalog.
- Determine college costs.
- Ask about financial aid opportunities, as well as deadlines, forms required, etc.
- Meet with faculty in the academic area of interest to you.
- Ask questions about academic requirements/offerings.
- Attend a class to get an idea of typical size, teaching style, academic atmosphere.
- Ask about the placement record for graduates in the field you might study.
- Identify career-planning services for undergraduates.
- Tour the campus. (Be sure to check out the dorms, dining hall, library, etc.)
- Talk to students about the general academic environment and the study commitment necessary for success.
- Find out what student activities (clubs, organizations, intramurals, etc.) are available.
- Inquire about campus life and social activities
- Investigate transportation options.

There is no substitute for a college visit as a way of assessing the school.
**COLLEGE EVALUATION CHART**

**SELECTION FACTORS**
Evaluate each college from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)

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<th>Factor</th>
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<th>College 2</th>
<th>College 3</th>
<th>College 4</th>
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<td>Academic program and atmosphere</td>
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<td>Student-faculty ratio</td>
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<td>Accessibility of faculty outside of class</td>
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<td>Faculty teaching reputation</td>
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<td>Opportunities for independent study</td>
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<td>Opportunities for international study</td>
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<td>Opportunities for off-campus work internships</td>
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<td>Academic counseling program</td>
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<td>Campus setting and architecture</td>
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<td>Academic facilities (classrooms, labs, practice rooms)</td>
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<td>Library as a place to study and do research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural facilities (theaters, galleries, concert halls)</td>
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<td>Opportunities to hear visiting lecturers</td>
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<td>Opportunities to see visiting artists and performers</td>
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<td>Personal counseling program</td>
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<td>Recreational facilities (gyms, tracks, pools, etc.)</td>
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<td>Student health facilities</td>
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<td>Location of campus</td>
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<td>Size of student population</td>
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<td>Opportunities for part-time work</td>
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<td>Opportunities to participate in clubs, sports and activities (list all that interest you)</td>
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<td>Residence halls or other types of college housing</td>
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<td>(special houses, fraternities, sororities, etc.)</td>
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<td>Opportunities for entertainment and social life</td>
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<td>(movies, concerts, dances, coffee houses, etc.)</td>
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<td>Food</td>
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<td>Other factors of importance to you (list below)</td>
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**THIS CHART MAY BE USEFUL WHEN MAKING SCHOOL VISITS.**
THE COLLEGE APPLICATION

All schools have information and instructions for applying on their home sites. Students applying online may also use a commercial version of an electronic application like the Common Application to which the school has a link. Students are cautioned, however, to avoid services that charge a fee for filing electronic applications.

Before you complete an online application, print a copy to use as a rough draft. Double-check the rough draft to make sure the information is complete, accurate, and that essays are well-written. Make sure that you have presented yourself in the best possible light and that you have included all achievements, activities, and awards. Make a copy for your files, noting the date it was submitted.

All applications require a transcript, so please make sure to request it at least two weeks before the deadline. Understand that it takes time and thought to complete an application correctly and/or write a letter of recommendation. Remember that schools are closed the last part of December. Applications with January deadlines should therefore be turned in by the first week in December.

If the application requires the counselor to write a recommendation, he/she would welcome written information and anecdotes with regards to your strengths, interests, talents, leadership skills, and educational plans. You should also give the counselor a résumé (Appendix A).

In addition to counselor recommendations, many colleges and scholarship applications also require teacher recommendations. If a student needs a teacher recommendation, he/she should put the request in writing, explaining exactly what is needed, when it is needed, and instructions on where to submit it when it has been completed. Please ask the teacher to give it to the assigned counselor to keep on file. It would also be helpful for the teacher to know the student’s goals and plans, and to have a copy of the student’s activities and awards.

Even if an application does not require a counselor or teacher recommendation, you may still include one. Also, if there is information that you want the admissions office to know or to take into consideration, you can always write an essay or letter and include it with your application.
APPLICATION PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

1. _____ Complete application

2. If you need a letter of recommendation:
   
   _____ a.) Submit personal résumé to person asked to write the letter (teacher, counselor, coach, etc.)
   _____ b.) Give person ample time to write letter
   _____ c.) Provide instructions to person as to whom letter is to be sent (directly to college, counselor, to you)

3. If submitting a paper application:
   
   _____ a.) Bring ENTIRE package to Counseling Office (fees, essays, recommendations) Postage will be provided
   _____ b.) Complete transcript request form located in the Counseling Office
   _____ c.) Submit application package and transcript request to the Registrar. After the counselor reviews the transcript and any accompanying materials, the student will receive verification of the date sent. Please keep for your records

If submitting an online application:

   _____ a.) Submit a transcript request form located in the Counseling Office
   _____ b.) Make sure to attach items to be sent with transcript (i.e. letter of recommendation, check)

* Scholarships follow the same procedure as paper applications.

APPLICATION PACKAGE MUST BE IN THE COUNSELING OFFICE TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE POSTMARK DATE

PROCESSING TIME MAY BE DELAYED BY HOLIDAY SCHEDULES AT BOTH SHALEAR AREA AND RECEIVING INSTITUTIONS
FAILURE TO FOLLOW DIRECTIONS MAY RESULT IN A DELAY IN PROCESSING YOUR APPLICATION
Information for the Student-Athlete Initial Eligibility for NCAA Division I and II

The below website contains information on all aspects of academic eligibility for student athletes who may have the opportunity of participating in sports at a college or university that has Division I or II athletic programs. These programs have additional requirements for which student-athletes must qualify, in addition to the standard admission requirements of getting accepted into a particular school. Keep in mind that these “Clearinghouse” rules only pertain to the NCAA Division I or II programs.

Basically, this process involves students submitting their high school transcripts to the NCAA Clearinghouse by registering on-line after the end of their Junior Year, and having a certain number of their credits from the List of Approved Core Courses (including only those determined to be Academic, College-Preparatory Courses) for Shaler Area High School recalculated to determine eligibility, along with their best ACT or SAT scores. Division I schools require a certain “Recalculated GPA” to match a certain test score, on their “Sliding Scale” (the higher the GPA is, the lower the test score can be, to a minimally accepted score). Division II schools do not use the Sliding Scale, but do not require a minimally accepted Recalculated GPA and test Score.

Pay particular attention to the Math and Science requirements, including an increase in the number of academic and math credits required (Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II required!)

To View the “Guide for College Bound Student-Athletes”
- Go to www.eligibilitycenter.org
- Click on NCAA college bound athletes
- Click on “Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete”
- You will be able to Download PDF copy

To View the “Shaler Area H.S. Approved Courses”
- Go to above site and click on Resources
- Click on List of NCAA Courses
- Enter High School Code (Shaler Area 391550)
To Register (Do Not Attempt Until After 11th Grade Year is Completed)

- Go to above site and click on “Perspective Student Athlete”
- Click on Registration Form for U.S. Students

See Your Assigned Counselor If You require Help With Any Of This Process

National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Regulations

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has a set of different eligibility requirements for student-athletes. To be eligible for participation in intercollegiate athletics as an incoming freshman, two of the following three requirements must be met:

1. Have a 2.0 (C) or higher cumulative final grade point average in high school
2. Have a composite score of 18 or greater on the ACT assessment or 860 total score or higher on the SAT Reasoning on a single test administered on a national test date (this Sat score does not reflect the current SAT Reasoning Test with Writing)
3. Have a top half final class rank in his or her high school graduating class.

Student-Athletes must also have on file at the college an official ACT assessment or SAT score report from the appropriate national testing center. Results reported on the student’s high school transcript are not acceptable. Students must request their scores be forwarded to the college’s admission office.

If you have additional questions about NAIA eligibility, contact them at:

NAIA
23500 W. 105 Street
P.O Box 1325
Olathe, Kansas 66051-1325
Phone: 413.971.0044
Web: http://www.nania.org
THE TRANSCRIPT

The Transcript is a record of a student’s secondary school program and is only part of the student’s permanent record. The full permanent record includes family registration information and the entire history of the student’s standardized testing.

The Transcript includes what schools and colleges expect to see:

- Student’s name, birth date and other basic identifying information
- Courses taken in grades 9-12, grades and credits earned
- Grade point average and class rank
- Test scores*
- Attendance

*SAT Reasoning, SAT Subject Tests, ACT and Keystone Exams are the test scores that appear on all student transcripts. PSAT results do not appear, as these are test experiences taken for academic and career planning purposes.

Any of these scores, except for the Keystone Exams, may be “suppressed” from the Transcript by the written direction of the parent to the student’s assigned counselor. It is suggested that students and their families talk with the assigned counselor before making any such decision.

Unofficial transcripts are updated annually and uploaded to senior students’ online portal.
RESOURCES:

ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL FINANCIAL AID MEETING
and
FAFSA PREPARATION NIGHT

Please refer to the school calendar for scheduled date

WEB SOURCES FOR FINANCIAL AID

Please refer to Appendix C

PHONE NUMBERS
General Information about Federal Student Aid/FAFSA: 1-800-433-3243
AES and PHEAA Grant and Loan Division: 1-800-692-7392

FINANCIAL AID FORMS

1) FAFSA — Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It should be completed online at fafsa.edu.gov. Only one FAFSA needs to be completed each year, even if you are considering several different colleges. You may use the FAFSA to apply for state and college aid as well.

2) CSS FINANCIAL AID PROFILE — The PROFILE is a supplemental need analysis document used by some colleges and private scholarship programs to award their non-federal aid funds. Early in your senior year, participating colleges may ask you to file a PROFILE so that a pre-determination can be made of your financial aid eligibility at that school. The PROFILE does not replace the FAFSA — you must still file a FAFSA in order to be considered for federal student aid.
You should file a PROFILE only for those colleges and programs that request it. It should be completed online at collegeboard.org.
APPLYING “SMART” – LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The largest amount of private scholarship money available to our students is from parents’ employers and other fraternal and religious groups with which their families are affiliated. The next largest amount is the money our students receive from the 100 scholarships directed to our District and posted locally within the High School Counseling Office and on the District Web Site. All of these are open to students on a variety of criteria, from academic and extracurricular achievement to type of program or major entering after graduation. Many have multiple criteria, including financial need. The great majority of these are only open to seniors.

SCHOLARSHIP POSTINGS

In addition to listening to daily announcements and reading the postings in the High School Counseling Office on a weekly basis, the best way for our students to stay informed is by regularly reviewing the Scholarships on the High School Counseling Page.

- LOCAL DEADLINES for submission of scholarship applications TAKE PRECEDENCE over any dates on printed or downloaded applications.
- You must TURN IN COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND ANY ATTACHMENTS with request for transcript NO LATER THAN DEADLINE ON THE SHALER AREA SCHOLARSHIP POSTING in order to be guaranteed having transcript processed and mailed by deadline of scholarship sponsor.
- Scholarships on our web site are listed by due date
Avoid Financial Aid Fraud
Don’t Get Scammed on Your Way to College!

Avoid scams and paying for free services when you’re searching for scholarships, filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and sharing your personal information.

Don’t Pay for Help to Find Money for College

Commercial financial aid advice services can cost well over $1,000. You might have heard or seen these claims at seminars or online:

• “Buy now or miss this opportunity.” Don’t give in to pressure tactics. Remember, the “opportunity” is a chance to pay for information you could find yourself for free. Check out our list of free sources of financial aid information below.

• “We guarantee you’ll get aid.” A company could claim it fulfilled its promise if you were offered student loans or a $200 scholarship. Is that worth a fee of $1,000 or more?

• “I’ve got aid for you; give me your credit card or bank account number.” Never give out a credit card or bank account number unless you know the organization you’re giving it to is legitimate. You could be putting yourself at risk of identity theft.

Try These Free Sources of Information

• description of U.S. Department of Education financial aid at StudentAid.gov/types

• tips for finding financial aid from other federal agencies at StudentAid.gov/types#federal-aid

• a college or career school financial aid office

• a high school or TRIO counselor

• your state grant agency; find it at www.ed.gov/sgt

• the U.S. Department of Labor’s free scholarship search at www.careerinfonet.org/scholarshipsearch

• your library’s reference section

• foundations, religious or community organizations, local businesses, or civic groups

• organizations (including professional associations) related to your field of interest

• ethnicity-based organizations

• your employer or your parents’ employers

• the Federal Student Aid Information Center by e-mail at studentaid@ed.gov

Don’t Pay for the FAFSA

Several websites offer help filing the FAFSA for a fee. These sites are not affiliated with or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. We urge you not to pay these sites for assistance that you can get for free elsewhere. The official FAFSA is at www.fafsa.gov, and you can get free help to complete it from

• the financial aid office at your college or the college(s) you’re thinking about attending;

• the FAFSA’s online help at www.fafsa.gov; and

• the Federal Student Aid Information Center (studentaid@ed.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID).

If you are asked for your credit card information while filling out the FAFSA online, you are not at the official government site. Remember, the official FAFSA site address—www.fafsa.gov—has .gov in it!

Report Financial Aid Fraud

A company charging for financial aid advice is not committing fraud unless it doesn’t deliver what it promises. To report financial aid fraud, contact the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov or the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General Fraud Hotline at www.ed.gov/misused or 1-800-MIS-USED (1-800-647-8733).

Don’t Pay to Fill Out the FAFSA

The FAFSA is a free application. Fill it out at www.fafsa.gov.

For more information on federal student aid, visit StudentAid.gov or call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).
APPENDIX A

RÉSUMÉ PREPARATION

Students are encouraged to prepare a résumé prior to the application process. It can be enclosed with the application or provided to a teacher when requesting a letter of recommendation. The assigned counselor finds it especially useful in completing their part of college or scholarship applications. A sample résumé format is found below but the students may use any design that they may find desirable. Résumé Wizard found in Microsoft Word provides templates that students may find useful in creating their résumé.

RÉSUMÉ OF:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

SHALER AREA HIGH SCHOOL CEEB CODE: 391550
381 WIBLE RUN ROAD COUNSELOR’S NAME: 
PITTSBURGH, PA 15209 PHONE NUMBER: (412) 492-1200

ACADEMIC AWARDS OR HONORS:
List by grade

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:
List by grade

COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES:
List by grade

HOBBIES AND SPECIAL INTERESTS:

JOB EXPERIENCE: List dates employed, company, street address, city state, zip code, phone number, manager’s name, your job title or responsibilities (list most current job first).

PERSONAL REFERENCES: List three persons you have contacted for personal references. Use the full name, address, phone number, and relationship of the reference.
GLOSSARY

TESTING

1) **PSAT/NMSQT** - Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The PSAT/NMSQT provides a practice test in October designed to prepare juniors for the SAT. Further, it is used in the selection of the top scholars in the country for the award of merit scholarships. PSAT scores are reported in the range of 320 (low) to 1520 (high), scores are not usually used by colleges as admission criteria.

2) **SAT Test** – This is a multiple-choice and writing examination and is designed to test a student’s reasoning aptitude in an academic context. SAT is *not* a test of intelligence.
   
   Low scores are not indicative that a student is unable to do competitive work in college, merely that someone with higher scores may be able to do the same work with more ease. Before you take the SAT, you should read and study The College Board booklet, *Taking the SAT*, available in your counseling office.

3) **SAT Subject Tests** – SAT Subject Tests are administered in a variety of academic subjects and are designed to test the level of knowledge of a student in particular academic disciplines in relation to other students throughout the country. These are scored on the same basis as the subsections of the SAT Reasoning Test. Some colleges use the SAT Subject Tests only for placement in various levels of freshman courses; some use them as additional supporting information in the admission process.

4) **AP** – Advanced Placement Tests. Administered in May to students enrolled in AP courses. Students *may* earn college credit based on score and individual college guidelines.

5) **ACT** – The American College Test is a curriculum-based test prepared by the American College Testing Program, used widely throughout the country by college and university admission offices. The ACT tests students’ ability in four distinct areas of study: English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning, plus the “optional” writing test. Each is scored on a scale of 0 (low) to 36 (high). Some of the colleges and universities require ACT rather than SAT, others allow either ACT or SAT to be submitted as the required test for admission.
GLOSSARY

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GLOSSARY

ADMISSION

1) ROLLING ADMISSION – A college using rolling admission reviews applications and all supporting data and returns decisions within a few weeks.

2) EARLY ADMISSION – Many colleges have a program under which a student may apply for admission during the junior year. The early admission program at most colleges is reserved for truly exceptional students whose academic preparation and achievement level are sufficient for early entrance to college. You should seek the advice of your school counselor if you are considering early admission.

3) EARLY DECISION – Not to be confused with early admission. ED is a plan under which a student applies to the first-choice college early in the fall of the senior year and agrees by contract to enter that college if offered admission. Decisions are rendered to early decision applicants in early December. If not accepted under early decision, a student is usually reconsidered for admission later in the senior year.

   A student should not apply to more than one college under an early decision plan, since the student, if admitted, is usually required to withdraw any applications which might have been filed at other colleges.

4) EARLY ACTION – Early action is used primarily in highly selective colleges. Early action follows the same application/notification timetable as early decision but allows the accepted candidates until May 1 to accept or decline the offer of admission. In early action programs, it is possible for an applicant to be denied admission outright and not be automatically deferred for later consideration. If your junior year credentials are not truly superior, you must be careful about applying under a plan which could harm your chance for admission.

   IMPORTANT NOTE: There are several variations of early decision and early action at different colleges. Read the literature of each college carefully, and ask questions if you don’t understand the option completely.
APPENDIX C
High School Counseling Website – www.sasd.k12.pa.us click “schools” then “Shaler Area High School” then “Academics” on the left side of the screen then “Counseling Office”

COUNSELING OFFICE GOOGLE CLASSROOM CODE
ex29cm

COLLEGE SEARCH SITES
www.collegeboard.org
www.petersons.com

TEST REGISTRATION
www.collegeboard.org  - SAT Test
  - SAT Subject Tests
www.actstudent.org  - ACT

CAREER SCHOOL SEARCH
www.papsa.org

FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES
www.fafsa.ed.gov  - complete FAFSA online
www.pheaa.org  - state loans, grants and work study
www.collegeboard.org  - scholarship search and financial aid calculator
www.educationplanner.com  - scholarship search and financial aid calculator
www.finaid.org  - overview of financial aid
www.fastweb.com  - scholarship search
www.sasd.k12.pa.us  - access Counseling site for listing of posted scholarships

CAREER AND OCCUPATION RESOURCES
www.educationplanner.com  - Career Assessments and Information
www.pacareerzone.org  - Career Assessments and Information

STUDENT ATHLETES
www.eligibilitycenter.org