

## Mission Statement

The mission of the College Counseling Office is to help all students find the best match between what the student is looking for in a college and what the college offers so that each student is appropriately challenged intellectually, academically, socially, financially, geographically and personally.

*Faber est suae quisque fortunae!*

### Timeline

The world of college applications is often confusing to students and parents; thankfully, students have to go through it only once. The College Counseling Office is set up to make the process a bit easier, and we have created a website to further help you navigate the waters of applying to college, whether you are a student or a parent.

Starting with the premise that every college is a good college, and every college is a bad college, our goal is to find a four-year school for every student that meets her academic, social, emotional, financial and geographic needs. When we do that, we have found a good college for that particular student, and we have met our goal.

The second premise we use as a foundation of our program is the quote at the top of this page. Sure, we can help students find a college, we can facilitate the process, but ultimately, it is up to each student to take responsibility for his future. We want each student to take control of his destiny and be actively involved in choosing a college. Education is not something that just happens to you; it is something that each student needs to plan for and care about. The counselor is at school to help students do that.

Starting when students are in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the counselor works with each student to identify strengths and weaknesses, interests and to ensure students are working hard to get the best grades possible in their placement of classes. Students are encouraged to develop interests outside of class, and because colleges look favorably on the involvement and leadership in these activities, 9<sup>th</sup> grade is a great time to take advantage of the many club opportunities at CSP. Ninth grade is a time for students to find out what they are interested in and make a plan to pursue it!

## **Tenth Grade**

This is a good time to take a career interest inventory on Family Connection to learn or to reinforce where are interests are. Students should begin to think about what they want in a college: large/small, rural/urban, close/far away, etc. Come to a college visit or two to listen to what the rep has to say; it will bring up lots of questions you have about college. Begin to accumulate knowledge about college and the application process.

## **Junior Year**

A solid school record and being a contributing member of the CSP community is the best way to prepare for the college process. Colleges will look at how much you are challenging yourself in high school and what kinds of grades you are getting in those classes. Students should become familiar with the different aspects of essays, interviews, admissions decisions, standardized testing, and they should continue to learn about themselves and what they want from a college. Continue attending college visits to colleges you may be interested in, and remember that you will take the PSAT in October. You should also plan on taking the SAT in May. Plan for your senior year, and try to get an internship in the summer or during 12<sup>th</sup> grade. In the spring, make sure you are choosing challenging courses for senior year, and use Spring Break to visit college campuses, and go college fairs.

## **Senior Year**

As soon as senior starts, it is college application time. You need to be on Family Connection often, and you need to make time to give yourself enough resources to do everything you have to do. Applying to college is like a part-time job; you need to be organized and keep track of all deadlines. Know what you want at the end of all your hard work. Your counselor will represent you in a letter of recommendation, so the better he knows you, the better the letter will be. By mid-October, you should know which colleges you will be applying to. Continue to visit campuses on weekends and on days you don't have school. Attend college rep visits. Be sure your parent fills out the FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1. Budget your time and be sure you give the counselor and your teachers enough time to write letters of recommendation and to fill out paperwork. Three weeks lead time for a letter of recommendation is a minimum. When you receive an admissions decision, let the counselor know. Reply to colleges by May 1. Take AP tests. Keep working hard and enjoy your senior-ness.

See the Senior Year Checklist for more information.