

Orchard Park Central School District

2240 Southwestern Blvd. West Seneca, NY 14224



David Lilleck
Superintendent

www.opschools.org
(716) 209-6200

College & Career Selection / Class of 2024

The college selection process can be overwhelming. Listed below are suggestions and procedures that will help guide you. Please make an appointment to see your counselor as often as necessary to answer all your questions.

1. You will have a full period “Junior Appointment” with your counselor in the spring of your junior year. Parents are welcome (not required) to attend. At this meeting we will verify your graduation requirements, discuss post-high school plans, and review your list of colleges to which you plan to apply. If you do not have a list, we will help you develop one. We will discuss the OP application process, as well as Brag Sheets. No recommendation letters will be written without the brag sheets. **You must apply for OP Pride by filling out an application at <https://www.opschools.org/Domain/141> by 3 PM on November 1st if you wish to be considered for an OP Pride Award.** If a recommendation is needed from a faculty member, be considerate. Do not ask the teacher a day before the deadline – allow several weeks for a teacher to write for you. Give your teacher the Teacher Brag Sheet and include a stamped, addressed envelope with your request if needed.
2. If a counselor recommendation is required, please advise your counselor. Do not assume that one will be written automatically. Please give at least two weeks’ notice. You must have the required **Student Brag Sheet and the Parent Brag Sheet** on file before requesting a letter of recommendation as indicated on the Transcript Request Form.
3. Applications for most schools may be obtained on-line through the college’s website or by using the **Common Application**. Students applying to only SUNY colleges and universities may wish to use the **SUNY application**.
4. Anytime you are asked to enter an email address (college application, ACT/SAT/AP registration, Scholarship application, financial aid forms, etc...) be sure to use a personal email address. If you use your OPHS email address, the spam filters may prevent you from receiving important information.

Jonathan Wolf
High School Principal

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5. When requesting information from schools, make sure to ask about the financial aid process. You must fill out a **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) on or after October 1st at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA produces a Student Aid Report which indicates your eligibility for grants, loans, work study, and private loans. It may also be used to determine your eligibility for institutional scholarships. Some schools also reference the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Be sure to submit this financial aid form by going to <http://css.collegeboard.org> if it is required for any of the schools to which you are applying. Please be aware that a thorough introduction to the financial aid process will be given at our Financial Aid Night in the OPHS Commons on May 11 at 7:00 PM.

6. Regardless of whether you apply on-line or on paper, you must complete a Transcript Request Form (TRF) available at <https://www.opschools.org/Domain/129> or in House Offices. No transcript leaves the office without having a TRF on file. An electronic request does not replace the TRF. The TRF must be completed for all transcripts including NCAA and scholarships. Please allow at least two (2) weeks before the deadline for processing. When all information requested is complete, the transcript will be mailed or submitted electronically. **Please note the following application deadlines and when the TRF needs to be turned in to the Counselor:**

- **11/1/23 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 10/18**
- **11/15/23 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 11/1**
- **12/1/23 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 11/17**
- **1/1/24 college deadline: Turned in to Counselor by 12/11**
- **1/15/24 college deadline. Turned in to Counselor by 1/2**

7. If you are planning to apply to college, be realistic about your choices. Do not under-estimate nor over-estimate your abilities. Don't be afraid to consider competitive schools, but also have a 'safe' school among your choices. If you are not considering college, military service offers educational as well as career opportunities. You should take the ASVAB (Military Entrance Exam) and meet with a recruiter. Students not interested in college should explore employment opportunities. Check the job board in the cafeteria for further information.

8. Copies of scholarship notifications should be given to Mr. Behm or Mrs. Stahl in House 1 for inclusion in the graduation program by June 1st – **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Only outside scholarships and specific colleges will be listed. No amounts or specific awards from schools will be announced.

9. Keep track of dates and deadlines for tests, college interviews and applications. Please note transcripts do not include SAT/ACT/AP scores. This means they must be sent directly from SAT or ACT.

10. Encourage your parents to share in the college search process and final decision about where to attend. Speak with friends, family and the faculty about schools. You have a natural resource in these contacts. What are your special talents (music, athletics, and theater)? Look for schools with strong programs in these areas as well as the major you are looking for.

11. **DEMONSTRATED INTEREST** is the degree to which you show a college you are sincerely interested in attending their institution and may be taken into consideration when admissions decisions are made. One way to demonstrate your interest is to meet with college representatives when they visit OPHS. Sign up online at www.opschools.org to receive reminders in homeroom when specific colleges are coming to OPHS. Additionally, listen to the morning announcements, check postings in homeroom, and go to www.opschools.org for the college visitation schedule. In order to meet with college representatives, you must get a pass from the teacher of the class you will miss.
- 12.. Check scholarship listings at <https://www.opschools.org/Domain/145>
13. Check with colleges for special campus visitation programs and interviews and remember to send a thank you note after an interview. It helps the person to make a connection between the name, face and application.
14. Whenever possible, spend time on the campus of schools to which you are applying. (Would you ever consider buying a car without test driving it first?)
- 15.. After you have been accepted and you have made your choice, be sure to let the other colleges know that you will not be attending. Many schools have waiting lists. Be considerate of others.
16. Keep us informed about decisions you receive from colleges and also any changes in your plans as the year progresses. We are interested and want this to be a productive year for you.
- 17.. If you are a male, you must register with the Selective Service within 30 days of your 18th birthday. It is the law. If you don't register, you will not qualify for Federal College loans and grants, student aid in most states, employment training or federal and many state jobs. Register on-line at www.sss.gov.
17. If you want to play college sports, be sure to register with the NCAA. You can get information at www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.org. Please be aware that Drama, American Cultural & Media Studies, Sports Literature, and Fundamentals of Algebra do not meet NCAA compliance requirements. Check the school's 48H for further information. This is your responsibility for eligibility.
18. Check the School Counseling page of the school website (www.opschools.org) on a regular basis. All documents referenced above (OP Pride Form, Brag Sheets, etc.) can be found there.