



College Counseling Crier

November 2020

Volume 4, Issue 3

Upcoming Standardized Test Dates

ACT Test Dates*

December 12, 2020
(registration deadline
was November 6; late
registration is still
available)

SAT Test Dates*

December 5, 2020
(registration deadline
was November 5; late
registration is still
available)

ED is The New PSL



It seems like nowadays, it isn't really "fall" until you can get your pumpkin spice latte, baking mix, or scented candle. Why has Early Decision become as prevalent as the ubiquitous spice blend? Should every student be applying Early Decision somewhere? Is it the right choice for every student? In his recent *Forbes* article, "The Pumpkin Spice of College Admission," Brennan Barnard, Director of College Counseling and

Outreach at the Derryfield School in New Hampshire, shares his thoughts on these questions and more.

November by the Numbers

Our seniors have been working in and out of the College Counseling Office to finalize their applications. With many schools having Early Decision, Early Action, and Priority deadlines of November 1, students and counselors have been processing applications, essays, supplemental writing pieces, portfolios, and Bullis School materials.

To date, our students have submitted **615 applications** (and Document Request Forms). With in-person and virtual meetings, the College Counseling office has been buzzing with excitement.

Some of our students who have applied through Rolling Admission have already received some decisions! 12 acceptances have been offered. Some of our next big deadlines are **November 15**, **December 1**, and **December 15**.

As a reminder to our seniors, please let us know of all admission decisions.

We want to celebrate with you and provide sound advice and counsel.

**If you will be taking these tests with accommodations, please contact Mrs. From*

Save the Dates

Virtual December Drop-In Days

December 8, 9, 10
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Further details will be provided at a later date

Financial Aid Follow-Up

Last month, we shared helpful information for families who plan to apply for need-based aid. As we noted, the “standard” financial aid application form is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, also known as the FAFSA. Before completing the FAFSA, both students and parents need to create unique FSA IDs. The ID grants access to federally-funded loans and serves as a signature for the FAFSA itself. Farran Powell, an Investing Editor for *U.S. News & World Report*, wrote an article, “[10 Common Mistakes Made on the FAFSA](#)” in 2018. Although we are a few years ahead of the original publishing date, the same mistakes often ring true!

In addition to the FAFSA, many private colleges and universities require families to submit a completed CSS Profile. Unlike the FAFSA, which gathers mostly income-based tax information, the CSS dives a bit deeper and aims to form a clearer financial picture by taking asset-information into account. Emma Kerr, a reporter for *U.S. News & World Report*, authored a helpful how-to guide for “[How to Complete the CSS Profile](#)” just last month.

Tulane’s Director of Admission Tells it Like it Is

Jeff Schiffman, Director of Admission at Tulane, is widely known for his transparency. In addition to running a candid blog that provides advice for all high school students – not just those interested in Tulane, this D.C. native recently posted an hour-long YouTube video titled “[Tulane Admission Session for Parents.](#)”

Jeff talks about several topics we think can help all Upper School Parents. In addition to highlighting the Making Caring Common Project – of which Bullis is a member – Jeff encourages families to listen to the experts in the field, namely admissions representatives and college counselors, those in the profession who have an understanding of the deeply complex and nuanced context necessary to navigate the changing admissions landscape. He provides sound and honest advice for how parents can help and how to keep the college search process an empathetic and authentic one. We highly recommend carving out time to watch!



December Drop-In Dates

On Tuesday, December 8, at 9:00 a.m., we will dive into our fourth year of December Drop-In Days to meet with underclassmen families. Unlike the past, where parents and guardians could drop into the College Counseling Office, this year we will have an online appointment system (more information coming in a few weeks). We will continue our Drop-In Days on Wednesday, December 9, and Thursday, December 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sophomores – PSAT and PreACT Updates

PreACT: The PreACT was scheduled to be administered to all sophomores on Monday, December 7th, however, due to health and safety guidelines, we have decided to **postpone** the exam until after the New Year.

The ACT Corporation allows high schools to determine their own testing windows, thus, we are not constrained by predetermined test dates. Once we find the optimum testing period for Bullis (most likely late January or early February), we will send an announcement with instructions about testing protocol.

The PreACT simulates the ACT testing experience with shortened sections on each of the four ACT subject areas: English, Math, Reading and Science. The test predicts future success on the ACT and provides both current achievement and a projected ACT score on the familiar 1-36 scale.

PSAT: In addition, the College Board has offered **January 26th** as an alternate date for the **PSAT**. We are surveying interest from sophomore families. If we have enough students interested in taking the PSAT, we will order exams.

Sophomores, please check your email and complete the [Google Form](#) indicating your interest in both the PreACT and the PSAT by this **Friday, November 13**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the College Counseling Office at 301-983-5727.

Juniors – PSAT Update

The College Board has offered **January 26th** as an alternate date for the **PSAT**. This exam will be an official qualifying exam for National Merit Scholarship consideration.

Juniors, please check your email and complete the [Google Form](#) indicating your interest in PSAT by this **Friday, November 13**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the College Counseling Office at 301-983-5727.

College Counseling Visitors – Come and Gone

We've wrapped up with our college representative virtual visits this fall. Students and counselors had the opportunity to meet with **56** college and university representatives to learn more about their respective institutions and ask questions about campus, the admissions process, and how they've had to shift due to the pandemic. Our representatives enjoyed their time meeting with our students and learning more about our curriculum and school culture.

