

SENIOR INFORMATION SHEET 2014-2015

Dear Seniors and Parents,

The Student Services department at Paris Cooperative High School will be working with each Senior this year individually to help smooth the way to their goals after high school. You may access information and useful links mentioned below.

<http://sites.google.com/site/pariscooperativehighschool2/>

Senior Appointments

Mr. Thomas will see students with last names starting with A through J. Mrs. Skelton will see students with last names starting with K through Z. During the appointment, we will check on requirements and credits for high school graduation. At this time, we will outline in a folder, for students to use later, work experiences, high school activities, community activities, and honors or awards achieved during high school. We will discuss the student's plans for after high school. Any materials or information the student will need to put his/her plans in motion, the counselors will help them find.

Career Search/Resume Writer

If a student is undecided on a career choice, we have Career Cruising free of charge. You need to see Mrs. Kittell in the PCHS library to set up a time to take this assessment. Once you get the results of your interest inventory you may build your portfolio using the link located on the Student Services web site. You may search the careers that are linked to your interests, find schools that provide training, financial aid information, and prepare a resume to apply for your first job.

College/ Technical School/Military Information

If you want more information about different colleges, trade school, or specialty schools, we have many good resources in the student services office and library. Access the home pages of the colleges you are considering. This will allow you to get lots of information and in some cases apply on-line or print out an application form to fill out and bring to student services. We also have a Trade school book with addresses of schools across the U.S. for specialty training. We have access to military information on ROTC, reserves, academics, and enlistment.

College Applications

We have several Illinois college applications available and some Indiana schools. Please bring these back to **Student Services** when completed. Do not mail them yourself. We will check them to make certain they are filled out correctly. We will include an official transcript which needs to be received at the college in our high school envelope to ensure that it is not a fraud. We also include the courses in progress for the school to use to check entrance requirements in academics. There are fee waivers for those students

who qualify.

If you apply on line, most colleges will require you to print out a form to bring to **Student Services**. We must complete this part in order for your application to be considered for acceptance.

College Athletics

Students planning to participate in sports at a division 1 or division 2 college need to apply to the NCAA Clearinghouse to establish eligibility to participate as a freshman in college. Apply on line at http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html. Then select Prospective Student-Athletes. You may pay the fee with a credit card. If you wish to pay by check or money order, print out the forms and mail in the fee. To print out the forms go to http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html, select Parent from the Custom Home Pages pull-down menu, and click on Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete. Bring the transcript request form to student services to be processed.

College Campus Visits

Seniors are encouraged to visit the campuses of the colleges to which they are interested in applying to help determine their final selection. The guidance counselors will be happy to arrange individual visits for you to go as a family. We will set up appointments for you to see an admissions counselor, tour the campus, see the housing facilities, check on campus security, and talk with the financial aid office. Many colleges will also allow you to sit in on some of the classes in the field of study you wish to pursue and talk with the department head. PCHS will excuse a student two days for prearranged college visits. The College Day form is available from your counselor in the **Student Services** office. One week's notice is necessary for approval and time to clear the visit with the college. If you do not go through the student services office, such absences will be considered unexcused. Many days that the high school is not in session, the colleges are in session. This would allow you to visit and not use up a college day. See the student services bulletin board for college open house days. These are special days set up by the colleges just for prospective students to visit the campus while classes are in session. Also several colleges will require students to come to campus in the spring to take a placement test or for early bird registration. This may require you to miss school, so saving a college day for this would be wise. **THERE WILL BE NO COLLEGE DAYS IN THE MONTH OF MAY EXCEPT TO TAKE PLACEMENT TESTING OR REGISTRATION.**

College/Career Day

October 7th we will be taking seniors who wish to attend the college/career day at Lake Land College to Mattoon IL. Representatives from area colleges, universities, technical schools, and military will have booths set up for students to browse, collect

information, and answer questions.

Financial Aide Night

There will be a representative from Lake Land College to go over Financial Aide processes for both 4, 2 year colleges and tech schools on December 10, 2014. The meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. in the Library. Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) In order to fill out this form, the student and parent must have figured their 2012 income tax return and collected other financial information.

We suggest that you figure the 2013 income tax as soon as you have access to the necessary information. Many colleges want the federal aid report back to them by March 1 in order to award any scholarships from their college for the next school year.

There is a link to apply for the FAFSA on line on the Student Services webpage. It has a listing of all the information you need to collect to be able to file. It allows you to get a PIN number that you will continue to use throughout college to get information regarding your financial aid status. Please put this number in a safe place to refer to in the future. Applying on line speeds up the application process. Also if you are considering any Illinois school, it should be listed first in the list of schools. This causes the report to be forwarded to the State of Illinois where the state aid will also be figured.

Local Scholarship Information

Local scholarships are made available through our **Student Services** office. Most applications are filled out and mailed by you. The scholarships will be posted by deadline dates in front of the student services office on the bulletin board and on the PCHS web site. We encourage parents and students to check this information regularly. We also try to keep an updated description of scholarships in each senior English class and on the PCHS webpage. Sometimes if the scholarship is specific to a certain grade point, college, or major, the counselors try to contact the students we know would be eligible to apply. The applications are under the bulletin boards for students to pick up themselves. Please take only the applications for which you would be able to apply. Check the eligibility requirements listed for that scholarship on the bulletin board.

Pay attention to the deadline dates set by **Student Services**. It is also important to follow the instructions and use your best printing or typing whichever the instructions tell you. Fill out the information completely. If the question is not applicable, write NA in the blank. Most scholarships will want information about student's academic record, the activities the student has been involved in during high school, work experiences, letters of reference from a teacher or community member, what the student's plans are for next year, and after completing their training. Sometimes an essay will be required. We encourage you to go ahead and collect this information and organize it on the computer or in a notebook for scholarships. This will prepare you to rapidly complete several applications at a time and meet deadlines easily.

Scholarship Search

College Zone is a free service provided by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, an organization provided by the Illinois Board of Education. It is connected with a national scholarship search data bases.

You may access these searches through a link at the College Zone webpage. Locate the words Student/Parent 8-12 grade. Then click on the word financing, then scholarships. About half way down the page is a list of 6 different searches you may use to find scholarship information. Select the search you wish to use. You will answer questions about yourself and give your e-mail address. A report of all matches in the data base is prepared and sent back to you. Have plenty of paper in the printer. If you do not have e-mail, see a guidance counselor for assistance. Students would then have the responsibility to get the applications and apply for the scholarships that came back on the list they received from the search.

There is also a link for fast web scholarship search. It is also free. However, sponsors will e-mail you with advertisements if you choose to use this one. Several students have used this site last year and liked it. So we linked it for you.

Please be consumer wise to financial aid businesses seeking to provide information and finding you financial aid for college for hundreds of dollars. Some services charge you for information you could get yourself free through our guidance office. The money you could save could be applied directly to your college costs. If you are concerned about possible fraud we have a name and address for reporting this to the FTC for investigation.

College Aid Calculator

The College Zone web site has the College Aid Calculator. It is the perfect tool for students and parents to estimate what their expected family contribution, Federal Pell grant, and Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant amounts will be. The Calculator can be accessed through the Students 9th - 12th Grade Zone, under "Financing" and then "Financial Aid". The Link to the Calculator can then be found in the right-hand menu. If you do not have Internet access at home, students and parents may use the High School Library or Guidance computers to access this information. Please call for an appointment if you would need assistance running these programs.

Utilizing Your High School Counselors

We can set up an appointment for you to see the college financial aid advisor. The advisor can outline the options your family has for funding once the student aid report is sent to the college. He can also review your special circumstances if they change dramatically after the FAFSA is filed. An example may be a parent is laid off at work for a long period of time or is injured and cannot work. The college financial aid advisor has

the capability to make adjustments for these circumstances.

We, Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Skelton, realize we do not know all the answers to your questions. However, we are willing to take the time to help you find out what you need to know to make a wise choice for your future. We are looking forward to working with you.