From the Counseling Office

September 2017

Counselor assignments for the 2017-18 school year are indicated below. The assignments are by student last name and alphabetical for all grade levels.

**Fall 2017**
- A – G: Carly Van Alfen
- Go – N: Nelda Mackey
- O – Z: Bo Ahlgren
- Special Programs: Hannah Swaney

Appointments are necessary if parents want to see their student’s counselor. If parents need to contact one of the counselors, please call the Counseling Office between 7:00 am – 3:30 pm at 971-7436. If you would like to leave a message on the counselor’s voice mail, call 971-7996 for the voice mail system, except for Ms. Van Alfen. Their extensions and email addresses are as follows:

- Ms. Van Alfen 971-7452  carly.vanalfen@sanjuan.edu
- Ms. Mackey  x4608  nmackey@sanjuan.edu
- Mr. Ahlgren  x4610  bahlgren@sanjuan.edu
- Ms. Swaney  x4607  hannah.swaney@sanjuan.edu

Please allow at least 24 hours for a return call. Counselors are seeing students during the day and usually need to return calls after the school day is finished.

GRADING PERIOD INFORMATION:
- Grading period ends  Progress reports are viewable on Q/Parent Portal
  - September 8, 2017  September 14, 2017
  - October 5 - end of first quarter  October 12
  - November 17  November 30
- ★January 8, 2018 end of 1st semester; transcripts will be mailed home in early January 2018
- February 9, 2018  February 15
- March 23 – end of third quarter  April 5
- May 4  May 10
- ★June 6, 2018 end of 2nd semester; transcripts will be mailed home middle of June 2018

PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)

Taking the PSAT/NMSQT provides students with a midpoint check-in on their progress toward college and career readiness as well as detailed feedback that evaluates the knowledge and skills in need of strengthening before taking the SAT exam. By taking this exam, schools are able to identify students with potential to succeed in AP courses and encourage them to enroll, and students will be able to access additional college readiness materials targeted to their areas of need prior to taking the SAT. The test assesses students in reading, writing and language, and mathematical concepts. **This year the SJUSD will be providing the PSAT/NMSQT test to all 10th and 11th grade students at no cost on October 11, 2017.**

Eleventh graders who take the assessment can also qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program, the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding African-American students, and the National Hispanic Scholar Recognition Program for Hispanic-American students. These programs select recipients based on the PSAT/NMSQT scores earned their Junior year. This is the only qualifying test for these scholarships.
On Wednesday, October 11, 2017, the PSAT will begin at 8:05am for all 10th and 11th grade students. The exam will take roughly 3 1/2 hours. All freshmen and seniors will have a late start time. More information will follow later of the modified schedule.

**What tests do I need to take in order to apply to college? When should I take them? How many times should I take them?**

Most four-year colleges require the applicant to take a test before applying. Most colleges allow the student to select either the ACT or the SAT. Students are wise to take both since schools will select the student’s best score.

The SAT was redesigned March 2016 to better reflect what is taught in the classroom. The focus is on the knowledge and skills that evidence shows matter most for college and career readiness. The assessment consists of a reading, writing and language, and mathematical concepts. As part of the redesigned SAT, the essay will be optional. The SAT is 3 hours without writing and 3 hours 50 minutes with writing.

Students have the opportunity to take the tests more than once; however, a maximum of three times is best. Most students take each test during the end of their junior year and the beginning of the senior year. The tests are not administered during the summer. We feel that a student should plan to take the SAT Reasoning test either May or June of his/her junior year, and October or November of the senior year. The ACT should be taken April or June of the junior year and October or December of the senior year. **December is the last month for testing for students planning on attending college the following fall. Check websites for impacted programs and last test date acceptable.**

SAT subject tests are usually not required for college admissions; however, they may be necessary for some majors (for example Math 2 for engineering) so check specific requirements for the major of your choice, or may be recommended to enhance your application by some colleges. You can take up to three subject tests on a given test date. Students can also take just one specific test on any given test date if they choose. **Students usually earn their best scores by taking the SAT Subject Tests the same year they are taking an AP level course in the subject or at the end of the junior year.** Students who do not need to take the Subject Tests should not take them – save the time and expense.

**I’m planning to attend a community college. Do I need to take any tests like SAT or ACT?**

SAT or ACT tests are not required. Students must take the assessment test required by the community college. In this area, the Los Rios Community College District requires the Skills Assessment given at American River College (ARC), Sacramento City College (SCC) Folsom Lake College (FLC) or Cosumnes River Community College (CRC). Students must go to the community college of their choice and take the computerized Assessment Test in the Assessment Center. The schedule for dates and time is on the website [http://www.losrios.edu/lrc/lrc_centers.php](http://www.losrios.edu/lrc/lrc_centers.php)

Anyone who takes a class at ARC, SCC, FLC, or CCC must take the Skills Assessment Test before being allowed to enroll. Students need to take it only once.

**SAT & ACT INFORMATION**

Registration for the SAT and SAT Subject Tests can be done online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and for the ACT at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) If you plan on going to college, SAT or ACT scores are a part of admission requirements. The UCs and many private schools may also recommend two SAT Subject Tests (check college catalogs for clarification) depending upon the major chosen.
## Testing Information 2017-2018

### ACT TESTS

[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Date</th>
<th>Regular Registration</th>
<th>Late Registration Additional Fee Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 9, 2017</td>
<td>August 4, 2017</td>
<td>August 18, 2017</td>
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<td>October 28, 2016</td>
<td>September 22, 2017</td>
<td>October 6, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 9, 2017</td>
<td>November 3, 2017</td>
<td>November 17, 2017</td>
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<td>February 10, 2018</td>
<td>January 12, 2018</td>
<td>January 19, 2018</td>
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<td>April 14, 2018</td>
<td>March 9, 2018</td>
<td>March 23, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 9, 2018</td>
<td>May 4, 2018</td>
<td>May 18, 2018</td>
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### SAT & SUBJECT TESTS

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>August 26, 2017</td>
<td>July 28, 2017</td>
<td>August 15, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 7, 2017</td>
<td>September 8, 2017</td>
<td>September 27, 2017</td>
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<td>November 4, 2017</td>
<td>October 5, 2017</td>
<td>October 25, 2017</td>
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<td>December 2, 2017</td>
<td>November 2, 2017</td>
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<td>March 10, 2018</td>
<td>February 9, 2018</td>
<td>February 28, 2018</td>
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<td>May 5, 2018</td>
<td>April 6, 2018</td>
<td>April 25, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2, 2018</td>
<td>May 3, 2018</td>
<td>May 23, 2018</td>
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- PSAT will be administered at EC on Wednesday, October 11, 2017. Mandatory for all sophomores and juniors.
- AP (Advanced Placement) tests will be administered May 7 – 18, 2018.
- California State University System requires/accepts either the ACT (without writing) or SAT (without writing).
- University of California System requires/accepts either the ACT with writing or SAT with writing.
- University of California System no longer requires SAT Subject Tests but may recommend them for certain majors.
- Community College System does not require either test.
- Private Colleges and Universities usually require either the ACT or SAT. Some recommend SAT Subject Tests. Check their school catalogs and admissions requirements.
- SAT Subject Tests in Languages with listening are only offered in November each year.
- For SAT test, [https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply](https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply) ; use CSU Mentor Code 3594 to ensure that all campuses to which you submit an application receives your score.

*The December testing dates are the last testing times usable for Fall 2017 admissions and some impacted CSU campuses want testing done by November.*
A SIMPLE CHECKLIST HELPS TEENS
SELECT COLLEGES RIGHT FOR THEM

Choosing a college can be overwhelming. How will your teen know which colleges are right for them?

The best way to start is to make a list of what they want in a college. Naviance offers an online tool to help guide them through this process. They can research schools on Naviance – on the Internet, and/or by talking to teachers, friends and their counselor – to see which ones meet the needs they have listed.

Here are some things your teens may want to put on their list:

- **Place.** Do they want to stay close to home or try someplace farther away?
- **Size.** Colleges range in size. Do they want small, large or something in between?
- **Major.** No need to nail one down now, but your teen should write down some of the things they are interested in. Not every college may offer those.
- **Housing.** Do they want to live at home, in a dorm or in an apartment?
- **School life.** Does it matter to them if the school has a football team? Do they want a lively social scene?
- **Teaching.** Colleges differ in the amount of research they expect from their professors. That in turn dictates how much time professors have to spend with students. Will they want a close relationship with a teacher, or will they be fine working on their own?

**COLLEGE SCHOOL VISITATIONS** at El Camino will begin in September and continue throughout the year. Announcements are made in the Daily Bulletin (also available on the EC website) and sign-ups are in the Counseling Office. Juniors and seniors wishing to attend a presentation given by a visiting representative should use the following procedure:

1. A visitation will be announced in the Student Bulletin generally a week prior to the visit.
2. Sign up in the Counseling Office at least 3 days in advance.
3. Students are responsible for missed classes and work as well as notifying teachers of their plans to attend.
4. Students will sign in at the presentation and their names will be cleared with the Attendance Office.

**COLLEGE APPLICATION FILING**

Helpful information to fill out the application.

1. **File online applications.** Applications can be started and revisited. Be sure to complete and submit by the college’s/university’s deadline.
2. Fill out financial aid sections if applicable.
3. Honor all deadline dates carefully.
4. Proofread the final copy carefully.
5. Make a copy of your completed application and essays (if any) and SAVE them.

Links for the UC/CSU can be found on the Naviance student’s home page. Many private and out of state schools use the common application [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). Counselors will be presenting information to seniors during their English classes in late September regarding applications to college.

**Essays** – The requested topic is different from school to school. Career Center and Counseling have some helpful handouts. Also, see your English teacher if you have questions.

**Letters of Recommendation** – For a recommendation and/or a Secondary School Report from your counselor, submit all forms and requests in early October, even for a January deadline. Download a copy of the letter of recommendation worksheet available on the EC website, Counseling section. For teacher recommendations, pick your recommenders wisely, not just based on grade received, but also on their personal knowledge of you. Allow teachers at least three weeks preparation time. For both situations, provide complete student information, a copy
of your essay, and/or a personal description. Remember, nearly all recommendations will be completed online by
the faculty, and students will need to provide teachers’ and counselors’ email addresses to complete this process.

Interviews – This is mainly a private out-of-state school requirement. A few schools require on-
campus interviews. Some work locally either through a network of alumni interviewers or
informal meetings with students who need information. Some helpful guidelines follow:
1. The interview should be a conversation between people who are trying to get to know
each other. That means you ask questions too.
2. Read about the college before the interview, then avoid asking questions that are answered on
their websites. Ask only those questions for which you really want answers.
3. Anticipate the questions you will be asked, and then practice your answers. Some sample questions might
be: Why do you want to go here? What first brought us to your attention? What makes you believe you’ll
be successful here?
4. Unless asked, avoid conversation about your SAT/ACT scores or your grades.
5. Consider your personal appearance. Wear nice clothes, but don’t overdress.
6. Practice brings comfort and skill. If possible, arrange interviews so that your “most important” one is last.

UC and CSU Application Filing

The CSU application filing period is from October 1 – November 30, 2017 and the UC application period is from
November 1 – 30, 2017. The applications for UC are available online at www.ucop.edu/pathways CSU applications
are available online at https://www2.calstate.edu/Apply There is a fee for each school to which you apply.

For private/out of state colleges, look at the Naviance “colleges” tab for admissions information at each schools
website.

The Sacramento Public Library offers many online resources to help improve your
chances of getting in to the college that’s best for you. Log on to www.saclibrary.org
and click on Research, College, and then College Planning Guide. Listed below are the
areas you can choose from:

- Study for standardized tests
- College application process
- Select the right college for you
- Apply for government financial aid
- Find and apply for scholarships
- Student Loans
- College savings plans

It’s never too early to start the scholarship search. A district wide scholarship list is located under the
“college” tab on Naviance. You can also log onto www.fastweb.com to help in your scholarship search.

COUNSELORS ARE GENERALLY AVAILABLE to meet with their students before school, after school, or at lunch
for college prep questions in the Counseling Office on a first come, first served basis. You can also make an
appointment with the Counseling Office secretary during the school day. You will be responsible for making up any
missed classwork during this time.
Upcoming dates and events:

**September 7**
*Senior Parent Forum* at El Camino. Meeting begins at 6:30pm in the cafeteria. Important senior events and academic reminders will be discussed at the forum.

**September 14**
*District College Night* at Rio Americano High School, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

**September 16**
*Mock SAT* test is being held at El Camino. Registration is $25, Cash or checks accepted, made payable to ECHS PTSA. Please bring 2 sharpened #2 pencils and a calculator. Students should arrive 10 minutes early for check-in. Registration forms are available in the Principal’s office.

**October 1 – November 30**
*Applications accepted to the CSU* (California State University) system.

**October 21**
*California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE)*. Check their website at [www.chspe.net](http://www.chspe.net) for examination and registration dates. For further details ask your counselor for information. Regular registration deadline for this exam is September 22, and late registration deadline for this exam is October 6th.

**October 11**
*PSAT/NMSQT* Preliminary SAT (for sophomore and junior students)

**November 1 – 30**
*Applications accepted to the UC* (University of California) system. Absolute deadline is November 30, 2017.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Period(s)</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, August 28</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hawaii Pacific University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, September 7</td>
<td>12:00pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
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<td>Thursday, September 14</td>
<td>1:00pm</td>
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<td>University of Kansas</td>
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<td>Friday, September 15</td>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rochester University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oregon University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12:55pm</td>
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<td>University of Montana Missoula</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, September 18</td>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pepperdine University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Westmont College</td>
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<td>Tuesday, September 19</td>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>University of the Pacific</td>
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<td>12:50pm</td>
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<td>Mount Saint Mary’s University, LA</td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 20</td>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>UC Santa Barbara</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2:00pm</td>
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<td>United States Air Force Academy (USAFA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, September 21</td>
<td>9:30am</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dominican University</td>
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<td>Friday, September 22</td>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Boise State University</td>
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<td>12:50pm</td>
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<td>Saint Mary’s College</td>
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<td>Thursday, September 28</td>
<td>10:30am</td>
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<td>Syracuse University</td>
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<td>Tuesday, October 3</td>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>University of Nevada, Reno</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, October 4</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>University of San Francisco</td>
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