



# School of Science and Engineering

*“SEM...Where the possibilities are endless”*

*Gearing Up For Success!*

*2017-2018*

## Sophomore/Junior Parent Meeting

Andrew Palacios, Principal

Amanda Ashmead

Karina Hernandez, ASP

Naveen Kashyap, Counselor

April 12, 2018

# Agenda

- STAFFING REPORT FOR NEXT YEAR
- UPCOMING EVENTS
- COLLEGE ACCESS OVERVIEW
- COLLEGE ACCESS TIMELINE
- SENIOR YEAR OVERVIEW

# Staffing Updates



# Upcoming Events: May and June

- ▶ Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, National Signing Day Celebration
- ▶ May 7<sup>th</sup> -May 11<sup>th</sup>, Teacher Appreciation Week
- ▶ May 7-18<sup>th</sup>, AP Exams
- ▶ TBD Yearbook Party, 4:30 - 9:00
- ▶ TBD: Awards Ceremony
- ▶ Tuesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, SEM Graduation
- ▶ Thursday, May 31<sup>st</sup> and Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup> ACP/ Early Release @ 1:30
- ▶ Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, Last day of school
- ▶ Monday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, Report Cards mailed with fall registration dates

# Upcoming Events: Summer

- ▶ Dates TBD:, Free SAT/ACT prep camps
- ▶ July 30-August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Physics Camp (invited rising sophomores)
- ▶ July 30 – August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Freshman NeSt (student volunteers needed!)
- ▶ August 1<sup>st</sup>-August 3<sup>rd</sup>, College Camp (all rising seniors)
- ▶ August 20<sup>th</sup>, First Day of School

# College Access



# What is the goal?

- ▶ For every students to be accepted to a college they are excited about
- ▶ For every student to have the money to stay at that school for four years
- ▶ For parents to have the knowledge they need to serve as informed advisors to their students
- ▶ To maintain emotional equilibrium

# Explore your options!

- Play interviewer:
  - Students: ask your senior friends what advice they'd give on the college process.
    - What did they do well?
    - What do they wish they did while they had more time?
    - What do they wish they would have known?
    - What surprised them?
  - Parents: These are good questions for you to ask as well!



# What do colleges want to know?

- ▶ Do you have hard skills?
  - ▶ Content knowledge
  - ▶ Reading/writing/math ability
  - ▶ Problem-solving
- ▶ Do you have soft skills?
  - ▶ Get along with people
  - ▶ Manage your time
  - ▶ Ask for help
  - ▶ Set goals and make plans
- ▶ Are you ambitious?
  - ▶ Do you have a passion for doing something?
  - ▶ Do you work to get the things you want?
- ▶ Are you interesting?
  - ▶ Do you have experiences or interests that give you insights or perspectives others might lack?
  - ▶ Do you actively participate in your community?

# What do colleges look at?

All components have equal importance

- ▶ Coursework
- ▶ Grade Point Average
- ▶ SAT/ACT/ PSAT
- ▶ AP scores
- ▶ Extraordinary Circumstances
- ▶ Extra-Curricular Accomplishments
- ▶ College Essays
- ▶ Supplements
- ▶ Recommendation Letters
- ▶ Application

# Your data: What do these things show to colleges?

- ▶ Coursework
  - ▶ AP vs. Regular classes
  - ▶ What electives?
- ▶ Transcript/Grade Point Average
  - ▶ Look at patterns across content areas and from year to year.
  - ▶ Cs are very bad.
- ▶ SAT/ACT/ PSAT
  - ▶ Percentiles are what matter
  - ▶ Colleges look at your best scores
  - ▶ Schools release averages
- ▶ AP scores

# Your life: What do these show to colleges?

## ▶ Extra-Curricular Accomplishments

- ▶ Academic Competitions
- ▶ Sports
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Community Service
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Summer Internships/Camps/Etc.
- ▶ Awards
- ▶ Any active hobby

## ▶ Extraordinary Circumstances

- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Death
- ▶ Illness
- ▶ First-Generation American
- ▶ Bilingual
- ▶ Underprivileged Minority
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Abuse

# Essays and Recommendations: Context

## ▶ Essay

- ▶ Use a specific event or experience to show how you embody some of the things the college is looking for
- ▶ Demonstrate that you have the ability to think reflectively about your life and your experiences—that you know how to grow
- ▶ Show you have communication skills

## ▶ Recommendations

- ▶ Professional insights on how you learn and interact in an academic environment
- ▶ Outside perspectives on your skills and accomplishments
- ▶ Information about circumstances that are awkward for you to mention

# SUMMER PROGRAMS

- Apply to summer programs!
  - Summer programs will prove to colleges that you can work in a setting away from home and will give you the opportunity to show your skills beyond school work.
  - Most summer programs feature final presentations or projects that can be used later to supplement your college applications.
  - Good way to meet new people and get ideas for college essays!



# SUMMER PROGRAM ALTERNATIVES

- Whether it's sports, music, community service (among other volunteer experiences), or a part-time job, you'll want to build your leadership skills!
- Take a class just for fun! Programming classes, cooking classes, photography classes or anything else is a great way to explore your interests. Whether it's through an online course, figure out what does (and doesn't) interest you!
- Remember, colleges want to know that you are more than grades and scores. Think about consistency and commitment in your summer activities. Dedication and depth count, no matter what it is!

# Funding Issues: How much does college cost?

- ▶ Tuition and Fees
  - ▶ what it costs to just attend classes.
- ▶ Room and Board
  - ▶ What it costs to live on campus and have a meal plan
- ▶ Estimated Total Cost of Attendance
  - ▶ Tuition and Fees + Room and Board + Estimated cost of books, travel, technology, etc.
- ▶ Need-Blind Admissions policy.
  - ▶ School accepts students without considering ability to pay. Does not mean that they will help you pay.
- ▶ 100% Needs Met Financial Aid Policy
  - ▶ School will fill gap between “expected family contribution” and estimated cost of attendance.
  - ▶ Usually filled with combination of loans, work study, grants, and individual contribution.



# Funding Issues: How do I pay for it?

- ▶ Institutional Grants and Scholarships
- ▶ Work Study
- ▶ Private scholarships
- ▶ Co-Op, Internships
- ▶ Subsidized Stafford Loans
  - ▶ Low interest, generous repayment plans
  - ▶ Annual limit is fairly low
- ▶ Parent Loans, Unsubsidized Private Loans
  - ▶ “Bad” loans

# Merit Aid

- ▶ Based on grades, test scores, or other qualities desirable to the university
- ▶ Widely offered by public and private schools
- ▶ Is non-existent at the most selective schools.
- ▶ Is difficult to predict
- ▶ Is always a grant or scholarship

# Need-Based Aid

- ▶ Based on ability to pay, as determined by two forms—FAFSA and the CSS.
- ▶ These look at income, household size and other factors to determine the **Estimated Family Contribution (EFC)**.
- ▶ You can estimate your EFC. Google “FAFSA4caster” and “College board EFC calculator”.
- ▶ The EFC expects households to have been saving for college expenses. The estimate is generally higher than what you could reasonably pay out of your income.
- ▶ Loans can be part of “need-based aid package”.

# Private Scholarships

- ▶ Offered by organizations, clubs, businesses, etc.
- ▶ There are thousands of these.
- ▶ Generally small, non-renewable awards (\$500-\$2000)
- ▶ Generally sent to school, but any excess is refunded to student by the school for personal expenses.
- ▶ Each of these has to be applied for individually.

# Timelines



# Rising Juniors, Spring/Summer

- ▶ Spring
  - ▶ Maintain your grades
  - ▶ Do your best work on your AP exams
  - ▶ Explore summer options
- ▶ Summer
  - ▶ PSAT/SAT practice—Khan Academy is easiest.
  - ▶ Some sort of engaging activity/accomplishment—a passion project
  - ▶ College visits: UTD, SMU, Austin College, UNT

# Rising Juniors, 2018-2019

- ▶ Fall
  - ▶ Maintain or raise grades
  - ▶ Work on a meaningful accomplishment
  - ▶ Stay engaged in your community
- ▶ Spring
  - ▶ Maintain or raise grades
  - ▶ Work on your meaningful accomplishment
  - ▶ Stay engaged in your community
  - ▶ Study for and take the SAT (in March) and SAT subject tests (in May)

# Rising Seniors, Spring 2018

- ▶ Spring
  - ▶ Grades! AP Exams!
  - ▶ Take SAT subject tests in May or June (waivers available)
  - ▶ Reflect on what you have accomplished and what you still can accomplish
  - ▶ Start researching colleges and creating a diverse college list
  - ▶ Do an extraordinarily good job on the senior survey after AP exams



# Rising Senior Parents, Spring 2018

- FAFSA/TASFA Requirements
  - File 2017 taxes
  - Order 2017 IRS Tax Return Transcript
    - Call 1-800-908-9946
    - Set appointment by calling 1-844-545-5640
    - Order online at [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov)

# Rising Seniors, Summer

- ▶ Secure an internship or other meaningful work
- ▶ Work on meaningful accomplishment
- ▶ Attend 1 day college camp Aug 1-3 here at SEM.
- ▶ Visit colleges
- ▶ Study for ACT
  - ▶ Consider taking June ACT

# Rising Seniors, Fall

## ▶ **September**

- ▶ Take ACT
- ▶ Apply for Fly Outs
- ▶ Finalize College List
- ▶ Work on Essays and supplements
- ▶ Request Rec Letters
- ▶ Attend College Recruitment Meetings

## ▶ **October**

- ▶ FASFA/CSS
  - ▶ Make Decisions about money
- ▶ Finish Texas public school applications
- ▶ Early Action/Early Decision due Nov 1<sup>st</sup>

# Rising Seniors, Fall/Spring

## ▶ **November/ December**

- ▶ Refine Lists
- ▶ Finalize Regular Applications
- ▶ Look for Early Decision Responses
- ▶ Turn in Award Letters
- ▶ Apply for Private Scholarships

## ▶ **Spring**

- ▶ Mid-year Reports
- ▶ Scholarship Applications
- ▶ Housing Deposits
- ▶ Review Financial Aid Packages
- ▶ Admitted Students Weekends

Senior Year



# Major Senior Milestones

- ▶ Fall:
  - ▶ Payments for Prom (~\$90), Picnic (~\$50),
  - ▶ Payment for Cap and Gown (~\$50)
- ▶ Spring:
  - ▶ Major events: Prom, Picnic, Post-AP field trips and luncheon, Panoramic Picture, Signing Day
  - ▶ GRADUATION
  - ▶ Fees to be determined
- ▶ Senior Night and other fundraisers: Flexible