

## First Edition – Class of 2019 Senior Notes

IT IS OFFICIAL! You are the parent of a senior, and graduation is a mere 360 days away. For some of you, that may be a daunting thought. I must admit, I struggle a bit with it myself. The senior year of high school can be an exhilarating and exciting time for our kids; it can also be a little stressful. With that in mind, each month I will send information, important dates, and tips to help alleviate some of the stress of the upcoming year. Here is the first edition...

### Summer Tasks

If I could encourage my seniors to work on the application process this summer, the following would be my recommendations:

1. **Make a calendar** - Research any schools you are considering and map out application requirements/deadlines to avoid being surprised later on.
2. **Write your essays now**- The ApplyTexas and CommonApp applications each have essay requirements. These essays are the NUMBER ONE reason students are delayed in application submission. Spend June writing the rough draft for Essay A, July for Essay B, and early August for Essay C. Students will then be able to take advantage of the College Essay Bootcamp to revise and be done!
3. **Determine if additional tests are needed** – When considering an additional ACT/SAT exam, look at BOTH entrance and scholarship requirements. Many students that are admitted to a school still find it valuable to re-test so that they are more competitive for scholarship opportunities.

[SAT Registration](#)

[ACT Registration](#)

4. **Visit Campuses** – This is an exceptionally helpful step in the process. It is amazing how impactful this is for students. If you have the opportunity, walk a nearby campus for an hour or two. Even better, set up a tour with the admissions office!

### ACT Scores

Score reports from the April administration have been mailed, but students will still need to synch their scores to an ACT account in order to send scores to schools. Here is the easiest way I have found to do so:

1. Go to: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/help.html#contactus>
2. Under the first tab “General ACT Test Registration...” there is a Live Chat option. Use the live chat and explain that you/your student took the ACT on February 27<sup>th</sup> on the HHS campus and that you would like to know your student’s ACT ID in order to set up your account. Live Chat will respond with a few questions and then provide you with an ID.
3. Create a New Account (unless you have already done so) at [https://services.actstudent.org/OA\\_HTML/actibeCAcdLogin.jsp](https://services.actstudent.org/OA_HTML/actibeCAcdLogin.jsp).
4. When prompted to do so, enter your ACT ID and it will pull your scores into the account you have created.

### Mark Your Calendars

**July 1<sup>st</sup> - ApplyTexas Application opens**

**August TBA - College and Career Center Parent Information Session** – general information about the college application process, financial aid/scholarships, etc. Parents and students are welcome to attend.

**July 25 & 26 – TSI Testing Opportunities (limited space)**

**August 9<sup>th</sup> - College Essay Boot Camp** –1:30pm - see details below

**August 13<sup>th</sup> – Freshman TAKE FLIGHT Orientation**

**August 16<sup>th</sup> – First Day of School**

### College Essay Boot Camp

College Representatives will be on campus in early August to assist students in the resume and essay revision process. During this boot camp, students can submit rough drafts of any college application items and get valuable feedback from the reps involved in the admissions process. This is the best chance a student will have to get good feedback on their essays before submission.

**College Essay Boot Camp  
Pflugerville High School  
Thursday, August 9<sup>th</sup>  
1:30pm  
PHS computer labs**

### Call for Student Volunteers

We are searching for student volunteers for our TAKE FLIGHT Freshman Orientation on Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-11:00am. This is a great way to bulk up your resume with some volunteer hours. If your student is interested in helping out, please have them email me at [leigh.spradlin@pfisd.net](mailto:leigh.spradlin@pfisd.net)

## Deadlines, deadlines, deadlines...

The admissions process can be a tricky one to maneuver. It is crucial that students complete all aspects of the application process prior to the university's final application deadline. However, many schools fill their seats in programs based on a first-come, first-served basis and many programs (Honors programs, scholarship applications and selective majors) have deadlines that are weeks and/or months prior to the school's standard application deadline. Our recommendations:

1. Make a calendar of important dates for each school you are considering. Consider including:
  - a. Application deadline
  - b. University scholarship application deadline
  - c. Special Program Deadlines (Honors, Specific Majors)
  - d. FAFSA priority deadlines
  - e. Housing application openings/deadlines
  - f. Campus visit days
  - g. Potential orientation dates
  - h. SAT/ACT registration dates (if needed)
2. Submit ALL application components (ie, Application, fees, transcripts, test scores, essays, etc) several weeks before the final deadline to ensure they are processed in time.

## Senior Talon

There has been a lot of conversation about the seniors having a Talon period this year. It is true! We will utilize Talon this year to ensure that students have the support needed to achieve post-secondary goals. Seniors will be assigned to a Talon period during which they will receive support with the college application process, work/study time for classes, etc. Students will have the opportunity to be exempt from Talon based on the following:

1. Grades/Attendance in classes –Students must be sufficiently progressing with coursework/attendance.
2. Resume – because a resume is strongly encouraged for ALL employment, college and scholarship applications, we will be working with students to develop resumes. I encourage you to work on your resume this summer. Feel free to submit it to me for feedback/proof of exemption from Talon or to reach out to me with questions.
3. College Application submission – We certainly don't expect ALL applications to be submitted in August, but we encourage students to submit applications early! I will have several opportunities for application support in August and encourage students to attend. Dates will be announced in late June. Please see my office hours listed on my website!
4. Successful completion of TSI requirements – we will utilize Talon time to run test preparation for students still needing to meet TSI requirements.

## More About the TSI Exam

The TSI exam is a test utilized by Texas schools (out of state schools usually use the Compass or Accuplacer) to determine college readiness in Math and English. If a student doesn't successfully complete the TSI exam, they will be required to take developmental course work in Math and/or English before being able to enroll in standard university courses. This coursework traditionally costs the same as a standard college course but provides no college credit. The good news - Many of you are exempt from the TSI based on your test scores.

For the **SAT** exemptions scores are:  
Evidence-Based Reading/Writing: 480  
Math: 530

For the ACT (must meet all scores), exemption scores are:

English – 19  
Math – 19  
Composite – 23

Students not meeting the above criteria will be expected to take the TSI exam. We will offer 2 test dates this summer for students hoping to clear their requirements for TALON. Testing will begin promptly at 9:00am on the following dates:  
July 25<sup>th</sup>  
July 26<sup>th</sup>

Additional Dates will be offered beginning in September.

Email [leigh.spradlin@pfsd.net](mailto:leigh.spradlin@pfsd.net) to sign up!

## **Summer Office Hours**

Counselors will return to campus in August to begin working with you for the 2018-2019 school year. Please feel free to email me with any questions you have over the summer. I am happy to answer, but please know there may be a delayed response time as I will only intermittently check emails. Please check my website for office hours. Looking forward to working with you this year!

- Mrs. Spradlin