

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

1. If you have not mailed your college applications yet, **you need to do it immediately**. You **were supposed to have done this no later than Thanksgiving**. Everything about the college admission process is done on a “first come, first served” basis, so you need to act quickly.

This also includes the community college. Yes, they accept everyone who applies, BUT, you may not get the courses you want if you apply late. You might get stuck with the “left over” courses that other people don’t want, and you’ll definitely reduce or even eliminate your chances for financial aid if you apply late.

2. After 2nd quarter report cards have been distributed, we will double-check with you about which colleges you want us to mail your mid-year transcript to. You **don’t** need to give us “mid-year forms” from any of the colleges you’ve applied to because we have our own form which has always been accepted by all colleges. Also, you don’t need to pay us any additional transcript fees, and you don’t need to give us any additional envelopes.

If a college contacts you about not having received your mid-year grades in time for the college’s “deadline,” **YOU should mail a copy of your mid-year report card to that college**. Please remember that the Baltimore County School System has more than 100,000 students and needs time to revise transcripts at mid-year. This school cannot mail revised transcripts until we receive them from Baltimore County, but we know from experience that some colleges want those revised transcripts before we receive them. Obviously, this is impossible. If you have to mail your own mid-year report card, remind the college that **we will** mail revised transcripts as soon as we can. Please note that county regulations do not permit us to fax transcripts. In the meantime, you may need to encourage that college to be patient.

3. Every family--both rich and poor--needs to send in a FAFSA as soon as possible, definitely before Valentine’s Day. Even if you qualify for lots of financial aid, once it’s been given to other people, it’s gone, so you and your parents need to act quickly. And even if your family is wealthy, you should still send in the FAFSA . Wealthy families can get financial aid too. The FAFSA is on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov . If your parents need help filling out the FAFSA, they need to contact the Financial Aid Office of the college you’re most likely to attend.
4. In the part of the FAFSA where you’re asked to list the colleges you’ve applied to, list them from most likely to least likely that you’ll attend. If you’re not sure yet, list them from most expensive to least expensive. Whatever you do, **do NOT** leave this section blank.
5. If a college sends you a “rejection letter” despite your confidence that you meet and may even exceed their admission requirements, DON’T PANIC. You have every right to appeal their decision. Phone them. Sometimes you’ll discover that they may have simply confused you with someone else who has the same name as you or may have mis-filed some of your “stuff,” and just need a phone call from you to straighten things out.
6. If a college “defers” you or puts you on its “wait list,” DON’T PANIC. It’s 1000 times better than a rejection letter. Be patient. An “acceptance letter” might come later.
7. After a college sends you an “acceptance letter,” phone their financial aid office periodically and remind them of your interest in scholarships. This might increase your chances of getting a scholarship, as long as you don’t “over-do” the phone calls.
8. Also remember that scholarships are free. You and your parents need to be on guard against “scam artists” who will try to sell you their scholarship services.

TURN OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE

“SENIORITIS ?”

The days when seniors could let their grades slip during the 2nd semester with no penalty have ended. Getting into college has become so competitive that a growing number of colleges will not tolerate “senioritis” anymore.

In recent years, some Pikesville students who made this mistake have received letters during the summer from the college they thought they were about to attend, and basically these letters stated the following:

- a. “We are not happy about the fact that your grades dropped during the 2nd semester.”
- b. “You are required to write us an explanation of why this happened.”
- c. “You are also required to send us your plans for making sure that this same thing does not happen while you are a college student.”
- d. “If we don’t receive these things from you within 2 weeks, or if the explanations which you do send are not acceptable to us, your scholarship and possibly your acceptance to this college might be withdrawn.”