

Class of 2026 College Counseling Timeline

Please note that updates will be made to this timeline throughout your Upper School career!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON OUR COLLEGE COUNSELING WEBSITE [LINKED HERE](#)

[Bush School College Money Method Website](#)

(Password: bscmm2223)

Sophomore Year: 2023-2024

As you enter 10th grade, you may see college admissions popping its head up over the horizon. While it's hard to ignore, we need to reassure you that you will be exactly where you need to be at this point in your Upper School life. 10th grade is a year for continuing to learn about who you are and what you love, develop your student skills, and enjoy time with friends and family. We also are extraordinarily fortunate to have a designated member of our team, [Renea Harris](#), Coordinator of College Counseling and Student Success, who serves as our primary point of contact for ninth and tenth-grade students and parents/guardians. While the nitty-gritty details and highly individualized aspects of the college counseling process will not begin in earnest until December of junior year, please do not hesitate to contact Renea with any questions in the meantime.

September 18 – November 1

Registration window to sign up for [May 2024 AP Exams](#) through the [Bush APTS website](#). Please see [this document](#) for Bush-specific information about AP exams in addition to the [2024 AP Exam schedule](#). The final AP registration deadline is 11/1/23. It is important to note that it is rare for sophomores at Bush to sit for AP exams and more likely for students who choose to test to do so during their junior and/or senior years. Please note that AP exams **are not** required for admission to any domestic college and the majority of Bush students will never take one.

October 1

UNCF Black Student College & Career Fair & Tennis Shoe Brunch from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm at Garfield High School - [more information can be found here](#). The annual UNCF Black Student College & Career fair at Garfield HS will consist of a series of workshops and panels for students and their families. Adults are encouraged to attend.

October 7

Seattle National College Fair at the Seattle Convention Center from 12:00 to 4:00 pm. More information can be found [here](#). This event is designed primarily for eleventh and twelfth-grade students but interested tenth-grade students and parent/guardians are welcome to attend.

October 17

College Counseling: Applying to Colleges in the UK Webinar from 6:00 - 7:00 pm. Students and parents/guardians are invited to join the College Counseling team for a session on applying to

schools in the UK. Students and parents/guardians can log on to the webinar here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83681611180> (Meeting ID: 836 8161 1180). Please note that this event will be recorded and posted on the College Counseling website for those who cannot attend the event live.

October 26

Mastery Transcript Presents StriveScan 6x6 Virtual College Fair from 3:00 to 5:45 pm. Interested students can [register here](#) to virtually connect with colleges and universities from around the country for free. Colleges and universities will be assigned in groups of six and each school will present for six minutes, for a total presentation time of 45 minutes. Students can move between concurrent sessions and ask questions to the live presenters. Participants must register ahead of time in order to participate: [Check out the schedule, list of colleges, and register now!](#)

November 3

Students interested in pursuing the arts in college may consider attending the [National Portfolio Day](#) from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm at Cornish College of the Arts.

November 4

Black College Expo Seattle from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm at Rainier Beach High School - [more information can be found here](#). The 6th Annual Seattle Black College Expo is coming back to Rainier Beach HS School - a chance for juniors and seniors to meet one-on-one with HBCUs, other colleges, universities, and educational programs. EVERYONE is Welcome - this is for students of ALL Ages!

November 13

College Money Method: Navigating the New Systems of College Pricing and Financial Aid. This workshop kicks off the curriculum with an in-depth overview of the new and evolving ways that colleges price their education and provide financial assistance. Evaluate which financial aid policies – need-based and merit-based aid – best match your goals. 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom - [log on here](#), the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.

February 8

All Upper School parents/guardians are invited to join Upper School Director Matt Lai and the College Counseling and Student Success team for a virtual roundtable discussion from 8:30 - 9:30 am - [Zoom link here](#). Director of College Counseling and Student Success Melissa Lanctot, Associate Director of College Counseling and Student Success Michelle Naito-Lo, College and Student Success Counselor Rebecca Delacruz-Gunderson, and Coordinator of College Counseling and Student Success Renea Harris, will be on hand to answer general-interest questions related to college admissions from parents of all Upper School grades.

February 13

College Money Method: Building Aid Generosity and Affordability into Your School List. This workshop gives you the tools and resources to evaluate how generous colleges will be with their

need-based and merit-based aid and calculate your expected awards and costs. Use these resources to understand your financial commitments for the colleges on your list. 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom - [log on here](#), the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.

February 29 (*Date Change)

Join the College Counseling and Student Success Team for 'Looking Ahead: College Counseling Virtual Event for 10th Grade Students and Parents/Guardians' to discuss what to expect in regard to college counseling, junior internships, and Senior Projects during the 11th and 12th grade years. 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom - [log on here](#), the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.

March 6

Virtual Planning Ahead for Prospective College Athletes from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. This joint event with College Counseling and the Athletic Department will help students and families prepare for the role that sports and athletic recruitment can play in the college search and admission process. [Log on here](#), the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.

March 20

Optional Virtual Mock digital PSAT for Tenth Grade Students administered through Compass Education Group. **Students must [register here](#) no later than Thursday, March 14 to receive detailed instructions on how to log onto the exam from Compass.** The virtual Mock d-PSAT is designed to be taken at home and at your convenience at any time of the day on March 20. **Students who would like to take the mock d-PSAT but are unable to test on 3/20 should still register by the 3/14 deadline!** Compass will email these students on 3/21 with a two-week opportunity to take a make-up exam. ***Please note that if you would like to use Gracemont 214 as your testing area for reliable internet or a quiet testing area, please contact [Renea Harris](#) by March 14.*** Students who choose to take this mock exam at Bush will take the exam from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm and must arrive on time. Late arrivals will not be accommodated. While we will staff Gracemont 214, the exam will not be proctored. Taking the virtual Mock d-PSAT at Bush cannot and will not replicate the true d-PSAT experience. Finally, students who work with the Learning Specialists and qualify for accommodations through the College Board may select 'Accommodations' during the registration process. Contact [Katie Holmes](#) in the Support Services department with any questions about accommodations.

April - May

Optional student *Meet and Greet Sessions* with the Coordinator of College Counseling and Student Success, Renea Harris - [register here](#). Students can use this opportunity as a chance to talk about course selection, college, identity building...really anything you want! Parents and guardians may also contact the Coordinator to connect virtually over Zoom with any questions they might have about the upcoming college counseling process.

April 4

Tenth Grade Student College Counseling Roundtable from 10:10 - 11:00 am in Gracemont 214. Tenth-grade students are welcome to stop by College Counseling for a casual conversation

about the college search and exploration process. Come with questions or just listen! Snacks will be provided.

April 24

Tenth Grade Student College Counseling Roundtable during lunch from 12:45 - 1:30 pm in Gracemont 214. Tenth-grade students are welcome to stop by College Counseling for a casual conversation about the college search and exploration process. Come with questions or just listen! Snacks will be provided.

April 27

Spring PNACAC College Fair in the Redhawk Center at Seattle University from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. [Click here for more details](#). This event is designed primarily for eleventh-grade students but interested tenth-grade students and parents/guardians are welcome to attend.

May 6

College Money Method: Understanding how colleges assess your financial situation and aid eligibility. This workshop details the financial factors colleges use to determine your ability to pay with an inside look at their formulas and decision-making processes. These insights provide you with strategies to maximize your eligibility for need-based financial aid. 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom - [log on here](#), the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.

May 6 – 17

Registered students take AP exams at The Bush School.

Junior Year: 2024-2025

11th grade is when we kick off our work together in earnest. It's exciting and it will keep you busy, but it's so important not to let junior year mark a point where your focus shifts entirely to the college admissions journey. We are here to support you, and that means keeping the process manageable so you can continue doing what you love and digging into your deepening and emerging interests. You've got this! Let's go!

Early September

The College Counseling Office will activate [Scoir](#) accounts for both students and parents. This is where students will organize their college list and sign up for college admissions visits to Bush throughout the fall. Scoir is also the platform College Counseling uses to send transcripts, recommendations, and other supporting documents to colleges come senior year.

September - November

College admissions representative visits to Bush! Visits will be posted in Scoir, and the College Counseling Office will make some college suggestions based on student surveys that we will send to students in early September. There will be lots of other opportunities to engage with

colleges: virtual tours and information sessions, national and regional college fairs, and the extraordinarily expensive and wasteful piles of mail that colleges will start sending you 😞.

Mid-September – November 1

Registration window to sign up for May AP exams. Students can search through a list of FAQs and register through the Bush APTS website which will be up and running by mid-September. Students should consult with teachers and/or College Counseling with questions about whether or not to sit for exams. [This guide](#) and our APTS FAQ sheet are meant to further help students decide whether or not they want to take AP exams. Please note that AP exams **are not** required for admission to any domestic college and the majority of Bush students will never take one. However, institutions abroad may require AP exams as part of their application process.

October TBD

Students sit for the Digital PSAT (d-PSAT), typically offered on a weekday at The Bush School. The d-PSAT is offered to juniors in order to prepare students for standardized tests that may be associated with the college admissions process. These tests are almost entirely for practice, although the results may qualify a small number of eleventh-grade students for National Merit recognition. The primary purpose of the d-PSAT is to demystify the experience of taking these exams and help students identify their preference between the SAT and ACT before official testing begins during the winter/spring of the junior year. See below for information on the mock ACT.

October TBD

Students have the option of taking a free virtual Mock ACT with Compass Education Group. This mock exam is scheduled right after the d-PSAT so students have the opportunity to gain exposure to and compare the SAT experience to the ACT to see which one they prefer.

October 16

College Counseling: Applying to Colleges in the UK Webinar from 6:00 - 7:00 pm. Students and parents/guardians are invited to join the College Counseling team for a session on applying to schools in the UK. Zoom link TBD. While this session will be designed mostly for eleventh and twelfth-grade students, tenth and ninth-grade students and parents/guardians are invited to listen in as applying to schools in the UK typically involves earlier standardized testing plans and a different application platform. Please note that this event will be recorded and posted on the College Counseling website for those who cannot attend the event live.

November 1

Assuming the College Board keeps the registration timeline the same, this will be the deadline to register for May AP exams.

November

Juniors and seniors are encouraged to attend the [NACAC National College Fair](#).

December (Date TBD)

College Kickoff for Juniors and Parents/Guardians.

January-February

Students will be assigned a 45-minute initial college counseling meeting which must take place before Mid-Winter Break after completing the Junior Student College Counseling Survey. Priority will be given to students taking part in travel Cascades. Students *cannot* miss class or community time to meet with their college counselor. (These initial meetings are just the student and college counselor. Family meetings will follow in March.)

February or April

Typical time to take a first ACT for students who think standardized tests might be a part of their college application process. There are other opportunities to take the ACT in June, and July of junior year in addition to September and October of senior year. [Please note that many schools are test optional!](#)

March

Typical time to take a first SAT for students who think standardized tests might be a part of their college application process. There are other opportunities to take the SAT in May and June of junior year in addition to August, October, and November of senior year. [Please note that many schools are test optional!](#)

March

Initial College Counseling Family Meeting: After the student meeting and both the student survey and Junior Parent/Guardian College Counseling Survey have been completed, families schedule their college counselor (assigned in Scoir) via Calendly. Parents/guardians are welcome to fill out one survey together or two separate surveys individually – whatever works best. Students must be present at family meetings and cannot miss class, advisory, or community time to attend.

May

Registered students take AP exams. Dates and times TBD.

May

Students attend the Senior Panel for Juniors during the school day in early May and parents/guardians attend an evening panel with parents/guardians of seniors later in the month.

May

Case Studies program with college admissions officers for students and their parents/guardians. This collaborative event with University Prep, Seattle Academy, Northwest School, and Rainier Scholars will be offered on two nights, but students and parents/guardians are required only to choose one to attend.

May

Virtual and in-person mock interview program with college admissions representatives.

Late May

[College Kickstart](#) workshop for junior students to familiarize themselves with the platform before summer.

Late May

Deadline for students to select two academic teachers from different departments to write their letters of recommendation.

June - August

The College Counseling Office will be closed for summer break. Consider visiting colleges over summer break if it works for you and your family, if not, no worries - there are plenty of ways to engage with colleges online and/or at Bush during the fall of senior year. Students heading into 12th grade should also consider the optional one-week Writing the College Essay course through Bush Summer Programs.

Senior Year: 2025-2026

Senior year. You're applying to college, you're capping off your K-12 career, and you are setting an example for the entire Upper School. We're not going to lie: this is when the pace picks up. You'll have big decisions to make, and you'll go through the process as a class, supporting each other through the celebrations and the disappointments. At the end of the day, you will choose your next community beyond Bush. We can't wait to watch you blaze that trail.

Summer

We will send you off into the summer with a checklist of tasks to complete before we get back for senior year, e.g. the first draft of your personal essay, starting on your application's activities section, completing a senior survey, and identifying a balanced list of colleges you're considering applying to.

Back-to-School Meetings

Once we're back on campus, we'll be back into the swing of college counseling meetings. Students are required to meet one-on-one with their college counselor by the end of September, and family meetings during senior year are optional but available.

College Visits

Just like junior year, the fall is an opportunity to connect with admissions officers during their visits to Bush. Unlike junior year, your visits may be more targeted toward the schools you're planning to apply to.

September - November

Weekly *Appy Hour* workshops for seniors are offered throughout the fall to work on applications together with the College Counseling Team. Snacks provided!

October 1

[Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) opens. Families applying for need-based aid are encouraged to complete the FAFSA, in addition to the [CSS Profile](#) for schools that require it, as soon as possible. Students and guardians should refer to individual colleges' financial aid websites for specific priority deadlines.

First Round Application Confirmation

By early October students will need to identify any applications they are submitting with early deadlines. That includes ED and EA applications, but also colleges like the UCs and the University of Washington, which have regular decision deadlines in November. During this meeting, you'll also notify your teacher recommenders and parents/guardians of your initial list and early deadlines.

Application Workshops

Each fall, the College Counseling Office hosts admissions representatives from the University of California and California State University for a senior workshop that explains the intricacies of those colleges' applications. Keep an eye out for details in the fall of senior year.

November 1 or November 15

Application deadlines for most Early Decision and Early Action schools. *Note: 11/15 is also the only application deadline for the University of Washington.*

November 30

Application deadline for all University of California and Cal State schools.

Second Round Application Confirmation

By early December students will need to identify any and all remaining applications that they plan to submit, most of which will have deadlines in January. This deadline also applies to students who applied Early Decision/Action and are awaiting their decisions.

Early-Mid December

Early Decision/Early Action decision notification from most colleges.

Winter Break

The College Counseling Office is closed.

January 1 or January 15

Deadline for most Regular Decision and Early Decision II applications.

January 1 – February 1

If not already completed, FAFSA, CSS Profile, and all other required financial aid forms must be filed for families applying for need-based financial aid. Specific financial aid deadlines vary, so students must either meticulously identify their colleges' deadlines or plan to submit financial aid materials before the application deadlines.

Mid-February

Early Decision II notification. Note: If you are admitted under an EDII plan you *must* withdraw all other submitted applications.

March 1 – April 1

Approximate window of when admissions decisions and financial aid packages arrive for Regular Decision applicants.

May 1

National Candidate Reply Date. Time to break some hearts! You must decide on one college, and one college only, by this date.

June

GRADUATION!

**9th Grade
(2022-2023)**

Welcome! We are so happy you are here with us in the Bush Upper School. 9th grade is all about settling in, finding your academic, social, and extracurricular groove, and learning how to be in high school! This is also a year to try new things, read lots of books, begin to forge connections with teachers, ask lots of questions, make some mistakes, and wake up excited to come to school each day. The College Counseling Office is here in the background, excited to learn about you, your journey, and what makes you tick both in and outside of the classroom. We also are extraordinarily fortunate to have a designated member of our team, Meg Manning, Coordinator of College Counseling and Student Success, who serves as our primary point of contact for ninth and tenth-grade students and parents/guardians. While the nitty-gritty details and highly individualized aspects of the college counseling process will not begin in earnest until December of junior year, please do not hesitate to contact Meg with any questions in the meantime.

November 15

College Money Method: Learning how the financial aid process works and exploring your financial fit.

This workshop provides families with an orientation on the various college financial aid policies and how colleges use expected family contribution and financial need to determine aid so that families understand their future financial aid potential. 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom - [log on here](#) the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.

November 17

*A Webinar for *Sophomore* Families: Preparing for the Future of Digital Admission Testing.* College Counseling is pleased to host the experts at Compass Education Group as they lead a thoughtful and pragmatic discussion of the future of college admission testing. In the fall of 2023, paper-based administrations of the PSAT/SAT will be replaced by an adaptive, computer-based format. While this event is designed for sophomore families, parents/guardians of ninth-grade students are also welcome to attend. **Attendees must register here in advance - the event will be recorded for those who cannot attend live.**

February 8

All Upper School parents/guardians are invited to join Upper School Director Matt Lai and the College Counseling team for a virtual roundtable discussion from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. Director of College Counseling Melissa Lanctot, Associate Director of College Counseling Michelle Naito Lo, College Counselor, Rebecca Delacruz-Gunderson, and Coordinator of College Counseling and Student Success, Meg Manning, will be on hand to answer general-interest questions related to college admissions from parents of all Upper School grades.

May 4

College Money Method: Understanding how colleges assess your financial situation and aid eligibility

This workshop supports families with in-depth knowledge of how the applications' (FAFSA and CSS Profile) formulas assess their income and assets so that families can make decisions earlier in high school to increase their eligibility. 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom - log on here, the event will be recorded for families who are unable to join live.