

ISSUE

05

NOV-DEC 2011

# Higher Ed *Connection*

A community outreach service provided by Higher Education Servicing Corp.



## Who We Are

Founded in 1978 as private, non-profit sister organizations, North Texas Higher Education Authority, Inc. (NTHEA) and Higher Education Servicing Corporation (HESC) have worked persistently to ensure student access to higher education by assisting lenders throughout Texas to provide billions of dollars in loans through the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP), donating hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of scholarships to schools, providing industry leading repayment benefits to borrowers, and, over the last decade, administering over 600 college preparation and financial literacy outreach programs to more than 100,000 students and parents throughout Texas.

### OUR MOTTO

Inspiring students to achieve a higher education by promoting a college-going culture through educational

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## Common Core State Standards: "It's About Improving Education for All Americans. Bottom Line."<sup>1</sup>

*Courtesy of the Lumina Foundation*

In 2010, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers initiated the Common Core State Standards effort, and by the end of last year, a majority of states agreed to set college- and career-ready standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics and develop assessment systems that gauge student progress. This effort represents a historic opportunity to align K-12 and postsecondary education, and in particular, to drive student preparation for college.



## Could your Facebook Profile Damage Your College Chances?

*Courtesy of Education News*

These days it takes more than just grades to impress on your college application. Could what you post on Facebook or MySpace also impact your chances?

According to SafetyWeb, 38% of college admissions directors admit that what they saw on applicant's social profiles "negatively affected" their views of the applicant.

[CLICK HERE TO CONTINUE](#)

## Online Calculators may Help Parents, Students Estimate Real College Costs

*Courtesy of The Sacramento Bee*

Students applying to college this fall have a new tool to help them compare costs at various campuses.

This month, so-called "net price calculators" will appear on the websites of colleges nationwide, giving students and parents an idea of how much financial aid they could receive months before a formal offer arrives.

[CLICK HERE TO CONTINUE](#)

outreach activities, services  
and community partnerships.

#### CONTACT INFO

If you have questions about  
any of our services or would  
like to schedule an event,  
please feel free to contact  
Phillip Wambsganss at  
phillipw@nthea.com or  
(817) 265-9158 ext. 4160.

## Counselor Connect

We want your feedback! Is  
there an article you've  
recently read that you'd like  
to see in our next newsletter?  
Or some news that you  
believe other counselors in  
the area would benefit from?  
Send us an [email](#) with all of  
the details and we may just  
use it in our next newsletter!

## Additional Articles of Interest

### College Costs Rise, Student Debt Now at \$1 Trillion

*Courtesy of Education News*

### Time is the Enemy

*Courtesy of Complete College America*

### Deion Sanders' Charter School Applications Approved in Texas

*Courtesy of Education News*

### Get Smart About College<sup>2</sup>

*Courtesy of the Wall Street Journal*

### Is Choosing the Right Major the Key to Economic Growth?

*Courtesy of Education News*



## Simple ideas to help keep your students on track<sup>3</sup>

Incorporate these Easy Ideas, provided by  
*Adventures in Education*, into your counselor  
calendar to help better prepare your students for  
college and beyond!

### November

- *Test preparation sessions* - Solicit volunteers to host an afternoon math tutoring session. Hold these sessions the Wednesday before an ACT, SAT, or the PSAT. Have students complete the ACT, PSAT, or SAT practice math problems in the sample booklets prior to the meeting.
- *College essays* - Invite a local college admissions officer to make a before-school or after-school presentation on "How to write the college essay." Ask the PTA to provide snacks and refreshments for the session.
- *Letters of recommendation* - Contact an area college representative to present to teachers the elements of an effective letter of recommendation. This makes a great staff development activity for teachers.

### December

- *Host workshops* - Local colleges and universities in your area may also be conducting financial aid workshops.
- *Review college acceptance letters* - Seniors are now receiving acceptance letters from colleges. Collect copies of the letters and start a bulletin board that lists colleges and the names of accepted students. Students can connect with other students accepted to the same school. This is a good way to help students find potential roommates!
- *Invite alumni speakers* - Many of your graduates may come back to visit the campus during the holidays. Solicit volunteers to return the first week in January to speak to senior classes about the college experience. These graduates will give good, practical advice to the soon-to-be senior graduates!
- *Distribute the Senior Spring Checklist* - Print out and distribute Spring Checklists. The checklist will help students prepare for college and keep them up-to-date with the admissions process.

## Monthly Mentions

Keep your students up-to-date with these helpful monthly college planning tips

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#### November

- **Finish your application essays.** Proofread them rigorously for any mistakes.
- **Apply to colleges with rolling admission** (first-come, first-served) as early as possible.
- Make sure your **SAT and/or ACT scores** will be sent by the testing agency to each one of your colleges.
- Give your school counselor the proper **forms to send transcripts** to your colleges at least two weeks in advance.
- **Get PINs for the FAFSA** for both yourself and one of your parents from [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov).
- Encourage your parent(s) to **complete income tax forms early** so that you can apply for financial aid as soon as possible after January 1.
- **Apply for scholarships** in time to meet application deadlines.

### JR

#### November

- Ask your counselor for a **fall planning schedule**.
- **Learn about the SAT and ACT.** Go to [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com) and [act.org](http://act.org) for more information. Also, pick up the official bulletin at your guidance office.
- **Register for and take the PSAT.** You must take the test in 11th grade to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Begin to **research scholarships**.
- If you're planning to major in the arts (drama, music, fine art), ask your teachers about requirements for a **portfolio or audition**.

#### December

- Try to **wrap up college applications** before winter break.
- If you applied for **Early Decision**, you should have an answer by Dec. 15.
- **Turn in all required college forms** needed in December and early January to the appropriate school officials. School staff will be unavailable over winter break.
- Start gathering information to complete the **FAFSA on the Web** ([www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)).
- **Contact the financial aid office** at the colleges on your list to see if they require any **other financial aid forms**.
- All senior males are required to **register for the Selective Service** 30 days before or after their 18th birthday to be eligible to receive government financial assistance for college.
- Ask your counselor about local **financial aid nights** for students and parents.

#### December

- Review your **PSAT Score Report** with your school counselor.
- Spend time over the holidays to **think about what kind of college you want**. Big or small? Far away or close to home?
- **Make a list** of the college features that are important to you and use College Search to find colleges that match those characteristics.
- Begin **preparing for the SAT and/or ACT**.
- Talk to your counselor about your college plans and **attend college night and financial aid night** at your school.
- Start **exploring career options** and earnings potential.

### College Admissions Testing Schedule for ACT, SAT and SAT Subject Tests

**ACT** - To get more information about the ACT, access useful tools, or register, visit [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

**SAT and SAT Subject Tests** - To get more information on the SAT or SAT Subject Tests, access useful tools, or register, visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

Scheduled Test Date	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
Saturday, Dec 10, 2011	Friday, Nov 4, 2011	Friday, Nov 18, 2011
Saturday, Feb 11, 2012	Friday, Jan 13, 2012	Friday, Jan 20, 2012
Saturday, Dec 3, 2011	Tuesday, Nov 8, 2011	Sunday, Nov 20, 2011
Saturday, Jan 28, 2012	Friday, Dec 30, 2011	Friday, Jan 13, 2012

*Courtesy of Adventures in Education*

## Our Services<sup>4</sup>

Committed to supporting students in their goal of attaining a higher education

The school year is nearly half-way over, and before you know it, many of your seniors will be going off to college! It's more imperative than ever to make sure they're prepared for this next stage in life. And with the FAFSA filing season quickly approaching, there's no better time to offer our college prep and financial aid presentations to your students and parents.

- College Prep – focused on juniors and seniors, the program covers everything students should be doing to prepare for college during the fall semester including: admissions, ACT/SAT testing, paying for college, finding scholarships, etc.
- Financial Aid 101 – focused on seniors and their parents, the program covers the FAFSA in detail and how the financial aid process works.
- Ready2Go Lunch-n-Learns – focused on specific subjects related to preparing for college in short 30 minute programs such as: test prep, applying for admissions, scholarship searches, financial aid, etc.

Our presentation calendar fills up quickly this time of year, so be sure to [contact us](#) as soon as possible to schedule your event!

## Upcoming Outreach Presentations

**Nov 30**  
WED  
**Alvord High School**  
FAFSA Presentation  
6:00 pm

**Dec 5**  
MON  
**Mt. Olive Baptist Church**  
FAFSA Presentation  
7:00 pm

**Dec 6**  
TUE  
**Granbury High School**  
FAFSA Presentation  
6:00 pm

**Jan 10**  
TUE  
**Mesquite ISD Financial Aid Night**  
Financial Aid Presentation  
7:00 pm

**Jan 31**  
TUE  
**Arlington High School**  
Financial Aid Presentation  
7:00 pm

**Feb 13**  
MON  
**Sam Houston High School**  
FAFSA Presentation  
6:30 pm

**Feb 16**  
THR  
**Mesquite High School**  
FAFSA Presentation  
6:00 pm

**Feb 23**  
THR  
**Summit High School**  
FAFSA Presentation  
6:30 pm

**Mar 27**  
TUE  
**Sam Houston High School**  
FAFSA Presentation  
6:30 pm



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