

Important Dates

April 4-5
**SDP Report Card
Conferences (Half Day)**

Wednesday, April 10
**SDP Closed for
Eid al-Fitr**

Tuesday, April 23
**SDP Closed for
Election Day**



Greetings, Scholars and Families —

Spring is in full swing, and believe it or not, summer's not far behind! We'll soon be emailing details and sign-up info for **Talent Search Summer 2024** programming, so keep an eye on your inbox.

In this month's newsletter, read about our new Spring/Summer Book Club, upcoming College Corner Sessions, why the PSSA matters for Philly students, and more.

Have questions or need assistance? Email us any time at vpse.talentsearch@upenn.edu.



'First Gen' Book Club

This spring and summer, Penn Talent Search will host a chapter of the Council for Opportunity in Education "Opportunity Matters" Book Club featuring Alejandra Campoverdi's memoir *First Gen*.

The Book Club is **open to enrolled Talent Search scholars in grades 6 through 12** and will meet both in person and online. Book Club participants will receive a free copy of the book and be invited to attend the virtual Speaker Series, including two events with the author.

Our first in-person Book Club meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 23 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. Space is limited, and you must register to participate in Book Club.

[Click here to register no later than Sunday, April 14!](#)

READ WITH TS!

Spring/Summer **Book Club**

Virtual & In-Person Meetings



Free Webinar

Financial Aid

Reading your financial aid award letter

Join Ms. Sofia on Zoom for a presentation and live Q&A!

Wed., April 24
6-7pm

[Link on Canvas!](#)

College Corner is a webinar offered 1-2 times a month!

College Corner: Financial Aid Award Letter

Join Talent Search Counselor Ms. Sofia for College Corner on select Wednesdays at 6 pm. This month's session will focus on **reading your financial aid award letter from colleges.**

Wednesday, April 24
6:00 to 7:00 pm

Join on Zoom:

[https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92476792898?](https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92476792898?pwd=UHlmZlhvdFU2NTUrUzB5VEVJbVdZdz09)

[pwd=UHlmZlhvdFU2NTUrUzB5VEVJbVdZdz09](https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92476792898?pwd=UHlmZlhvdFU2NTUrUzB5VEVJbVdZdz09)

Coming in May: Sessions on college room and board, classes and majors!

Why the PSSA Matters for Philly Students

This year's **Pennsylvania System School Assessment (PSSA)** testing begins on Monday, April 22 and continues through Friday, May 3.

The annual PSSA is a standards-based assessment that measures students' proficiency in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. These standards **identify what a student should know and be able to do at varying grade levels**. Every student in grades 3 through 8 is assessed in English Language Arts and Math, and every student in grades 4 and 8 is assessed in Science. The individual student scores provided to schools can be used to help teachers identify students who may need additional educational opportunities.

PSSA scores are also considered when students undergo the School District of Philadelphia's school selection process. Criteria-based high schools (like Central, Masterman, Palumbo, Girls High, and others) have their own set of admissions criteria related to attendance, punctuality, behavior, grades, and standardized test scores. Students citywide may apply to these schools but must meet the criteria to be considered for admission.

For an 8th grader applying to 9th grade, the following data from the student's 6th and 7th grade years is used to determine eligibility for criteria-based high schools:

- Best grades in the four core subject areas (ELA, math, science, and social studies)
- Best attendance record for unexcused absences
- Best percentile in ELA and/or math (depending on the school's requirement)

[Click here for a list of criteria by school.](#) The high school you attend can affect the opportunities you have as you prepare for college. If you want to be accepted to your first-choice high school, your 6th and 7th grade PSSA scores matter!

Tips for PSSA Success

- Attend school every day, and be on time, especially on testing days.
- Get enough sleep each night. The CDC recommends 8-10 hours each night for teenagers and 9-12 hours each night for preteens.
- Eat a good breakfast, whether at home or at school. Few students (or adults!) work well on an empty stomach.
- Talk about the test at home beforehand to address any concerns or anxiety.
- Listen to test directions and read all questions carefully.
- Take your time answering each question.
- Be confident in your knowledge and skills - you've got this!

FAFSA Survey for 12th Graders

Every high school senior should fill out their [FAFSA \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\)](#) to get help paying for college.

12th grade scholars, have you filled out your FAFSA? If the answer is *not yet*, Talent Search can help!

[Click here to let us know your FAFSA status.](#)

High School Survey for 8th Graders

We're very proud of our Talent Search 8th graders who are making the important transition to high school.

So that we can update our records, where are you going to high school?

[Click here to let us know where you're attending high school in the fall.](#)

Opportunities for Talent Search Scholars

Philadelphia City Rowing Summer Learn-to-Row Camps

Philadelphia City Rowing welcomes new student-athletes to their Summer Learn-to-Row Camps. During camp, students will learn basic rowing technique and receive a general introduction to fitness, nutrition, and the sport of rowing.

Summer camps run from 9:30 to 12:30 Monday to Friday and are open to anyone in grades 7 through 12 in a Philadelphia public or charter school. All camps are completely FREE, and PCR provides students with daily SEPTA passes and snacks.

Southwest Belmont Community Association Scholarship

Southwest Belmont Community Association helps empower women and girls to promote positive self-image, to develop their capacity to deal with the changing environment, be effective leaders, communicate with efficacy and strengthen family systems.

The Southwest Belmont Community Association, Inc. will award (1) \$5,000, (1) \$2,500 scholarship and (1) \$1,000 book scholarship. To be eligible, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Be college or vocational school bound
- Be a **SENIOR** in a Philadelphia

Dates for 2024 summer learn-to-row are as follows:

- Session 1: June 17th to Thursday, June 27th (returning middle school participants)
- Session 2: July 8th to July 26th (new participants)
- Session 3: July 29th to August 16th (new participants)

Space is limited and priority will be given to students who have not previously participated in a PCR program. Proof of swimming ability is requested for participation but is not required. All abilities are welcome to join!

[Click here to learn more and enroll by May 1.](#)

Wilt Chamberlain Memorial Fund Scholarship

The Wilt Chamberlain Memorial Fund Scholarship Program is available to **high school seniors with financial need** who are furthering their studies in the fall at a four-year college or university, a two-year community college, or a vocational school.

This competitive scholarship includes:

- **Up to \$5,000 per year** to attend a four-year accredited undergraduate school; up to \$2,500 per year to attend an accredited community college or vocational school
- Ability to pursue any area of study
- Mentoring support during and after the transition to post-high school schooling
- Award may be used for the student's educational expenses, including tuition, living expenses, books and required fees.

[Click here to learn more and apply by April 22.](#)

- **public, charter, or parochial school** with a GPA of 2.5 or above
- Show leadership potential and have past community service
- Be a student from an underrepresented group
- Demonstrate financial need

[Click here to learn more and apply by May 13.](#)

FamFrequency Productions Music Fellowship

Applications are open for the FamFrequency Productions Music Fellowship, a program for **rising 9th through 11th graders** who are:

- Passionate about making music and have demonstrated some ability to do so
- Interested in becoming effective entrepreneurs
- Living in Philadelphia

This fellowship is a **commitment over two summers**. The first summer will focus on music production, marketing and branding. The second summer will focus on audio engineering and music business. By the end of the second summer, **students will have the opportunity to open their own LLC**. During the school year, students may be placed with a paid internship (dependent on availability).

[Click here to learn more and apply by May 10.](#)



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