



## Suffield High School Monthly Guidance Newsletter

### Report Cards Coming

First quarter report cards will be distributed to students on or around November 17<sup>th</sup>. Please ask to see your student's report card and encourage them to make their best effort in all classes for the remainder of the year. Parent conferences on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> will provide parents an opportunity to discuss their student's progress with individual teachers. Parent Conference appointments can be scheduled by following the link on the SHS website, or directly at <https://pickatime.com/client?ven=11608505&event=266955>. Schedules fill up quickly, so register today!

Mid-Semester grades are in...what side are you on?



### What To Ask At Parent/Teacher Conferences

Showing up to parent-teacher conferences is an important step, but so is asking the right questions. Asking the right questions can help parents and teachers get the most out of conferences. Parent-teacher conferences give parents some much-needed face time with their teen's teacher, but many parents don't take advantage of the opportunity.

"Parents need to be just as involved in teacher conferences, if not more, at the high school level as they are during the elementary years," says Rebecca Thiels, a language arts teacher at Red Lion Area Senior High School in Pennsylvania. "The sad reality is showing us that it's the opposite in many public schools."

As high school students inch closer and closer to college, parents can help ensure their student is on the right path by participating in teacher conferences. If a student is headed in the wrong direction, teachers can use the time to advise parents on how to help their teen change course. While showing up at parent-teacher conferences is an important first step, asking the right questions will help both parties have a productive meeting. Here are some questions teachers say they wish parents would ask:

#### 1. Is my student giving his or her best effort?

Conferences are typically a time for teachers to walk parents through their student's grades, progress, and areas for growth. But grades don't always tell the full story. Get three tips to decide if your teen needs tutoring. A bright teen could pull off acceptable grades with minimal effort, but teachers can often tell if a student is phoning it in. If this is the case, parents and teachers can work together to help the student work up to their potential.

#### 2. What could my teen do that he or she is not already doing?

Almost every student has room for improvement, and in an increasingly competitive college admissions landscape, each grade or activity could count. Whether it's taking advantage of internship or extra credit opportunities, filling out college applications, or simply turning assignments in on time, teachers can tell parents what their student needs to do to take his or her academic performance to the next level.

#### 3. What can I do to help?

Parents and teachers should be on the same team—the student's team. By investing time at home to ensure homework is done and teaching the teen to take ownership of his or her schoolwork, parents can help teachers

do their job more effectively, says Kirk Mango, a health and physical education teacher at Downers Grove South High School in Illinois. "Place the responsibility for 'doing well' and turning in work on time right on the person who has the most control over making that happen—the student themselves," Mango said.

Taken From: *highschoolnotes@usnews.com* Author: Kelsey Sheehy

### Homecoming



Plans are now underway to again host a "Homecoming Program" on Wednesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>. All Suffield High School graduates are invited to join us from 11:00 – NOON in the Commons to share their post graduate experiences. The guidance office is sending invitations to all members of the Class of 2014, but all Suffield High School alumni are welcome to join us. We look forward to seeing you from 11:00 – NOON on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

### Common College Application Errors

Seniors are reminded that now is the time to submit those college applications! The earlier a college receives an application, the more favorably it is generally viewed. Most colleges also practice what is known as "Rolling Admissions," meaning that they process applications as they are received, so those applying early often find out much sooner about their admissions status. This can be a big advantage later when having to make a final decision about where you'll attend in the fall. In addition, more and more colleges are now offering "Early Action" options where seniors who apply by an early date (usually mid-November) are promised an earlier notification about their admissions status. The bottom line – it pays to apply to colleges early and that's why we recommend that SHS seniors submit all of their college applications before the Thanksgiving break. It's also important to remember that students must submit a transcript request form (at least two weeks before the college's application deadline) for each college they have applied to. As always, any senior or parent with questions or needing assistance with the college application process is encouraged to call the guidance office (860) 668-3813.



### Common College Application Errors

**"I'll start the application next week."** Don't run out of time to complete the application. Give yourself at least two weeks to find mistakes.

**"I already ran a spell-check on my computer."** Words can be spelled correctly but used incorrectly. Ask a counselor, teacher or family member to proofread the application to catch any errors or poor phrasing.

**"One copy is enough."** Print out any online forms and keep copies of all paperwork.

**"I can submit my application as soon as I'm finished."** Before you click "Send" on your computer, double- and triple-check that you have included all necessary materials.

**"I assume this is right."** If you're confused by a question or any part of the application, ask someone. A quick call to the admissions office can save you from making an embarrassing error.



## The Perils of "Senioritis"



As seniors finalize their class schedules, one comment sometimes heard is: "I have worked so hard. Do I really have to take a tough schedule this year?"

Each student will have a different approach to his or her course selection. Some students mull over the difference between enrolling in four versus five Advanced Placement classes; others need additional encouragement to add more rigor to their schedules. While there is room for electives, a senior schedule should reveal a student who remains excited about

academic challenge. The bottom line: Students should enroll in the most rigorous set of classes in which they feel comfortable and confident about being successful. Here are four tips for warding off "senioritis:"

1. **Make the Grades.** There is no stronger message to send colleges than good grades during senior year. Students should aim to maintain or improve their performance compared to junior year. Strong grades in a challenging senior schedule can sometimes help to compensate for weaker marks earned previously.
2. **Remain involved without getting overwhelmed.** As we all know, students are dedicated to much more than classes. Senior year provides a whole new level of learning how to prioritize academic demands with the commitments that clubs require. Trying new activities and further developing current interests not only prepares students for a college schedule, but gives them an important stress-relieving outlet.
3. **Stay focused.** Even after being admitted to college, seniors need to maintain their grades. Students who commit to Early Action or Early Decision programs are expected to continue their academic progress. Colleges wish to see solid final transcripts. It gives no college pleasure to send a warning letter or, the worse-case scenario, to rescind admission to students who let their grades slide at the end of senior year.
4. **Enjoy the experience.** Students who can resist "senioritis" will be able to balance the academic, extracurricular, and social aspects of senior year. Universities look forward to welcoming that kind of well-rounded energy into the freshman class each year.

*Taken from: The Washington University in St. Louis Newsletter.*

## Selective Service Registration



A reminder to male students that they are required by law to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If they don't, they may find themselves permanently ineligible for federal college loans and grants, student aid in most states, job training, and federal or many state jobs. Students can register online at [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) or at their local post office.

## Focusing on Finances: Getting Ready to File the CSS Profile

Private colleges often have more money available to distribute as grants to their students than do publicly-funded institutions. Rather than relying solely on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) for their needs



analysis, these schools may also ask financial aid applicants to complete their own institutional aid form or may utilize the services of *CSS's Profile*. The *Profile* provides a more complete picture of a family's finances and has a section where families can discuss special circumstances that relate to their ability to contribute to their child's education.

If you plan on applying to any private institutions, you'll want to check to see which forms are required to apply for financial aid. If the *Profile* is needed, you can register for your application at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) under the section "pay for college." Sign up to create a user name and password, and complete the pre-application worksheet and application. After answering the registration questions, select the colleges and programs that will receive your *Profile* report, and pay the processing fee. After registering, print out the Supplemental Information worksheet to learn about any additional information that will be required by your selected colleges. Complete the actual online application at any time after registering. You can save the information and complete it in sections at your leisure.

Submit the completed application at least a week before the priority filing date specified by your colleges since it takes about a week for information to reach these programs. A list of all colleges and programs that require the *Profile* will be found online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

### Scholarship Tips for Students and Parents

The impact of scholarships cannot be overlooked in helping families reduce the cost of education at colleges and universities. Here are tips to help students get started on their scholarship search:

- Scholarships can be based on academic achievement and potential alone (also known as academic, or merit-based, scholarships) or on a combination of academic achievement and potential and the family's financial circumstances.
- Outside scholarships are funded by organizations outside the university such as corporations, foundations, service clubs, and local organizations.
- As you search for outside scholarships, try to narrow the search to increase the "odds" in your favor. One example would be to apply for scholarships for high school seniors who are sons and daughters of labor union members. There are many other examples, as well.
- Apply online whenever possible. This method will save weeks in processing your information, and you'll get a speedier response.
- If you use one of the free internet scholarship searches, find out how your address will be used. Anticipate the mail you might receive as a result of using the free search service.
- Before hiring a consultant to help you get scholarships, contact the financial office at the college or university that interests you. You'll be surprised at how much information and help you'll receive for FREE!
- Be sure you understand the guidelines and expectations governing scholarships. Are scholarships automatically renewable for all four years of college? Is there a minimum GPA requirement to remain eligible for a scholarship? Are there service requirements after graduation, such as with the ROTC programs?

***Taken from: Washington University in St. Louis Newsletter***

## ASPIRE (Practice ACT) Testing

Suffield High School will be administering the **ACT ASPIRE** assessment to all 10<sup>th</sup> graders on Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup> during periods 2 & 4. ACT Aspire provides sophomores with an opportunity to see what the ACT college admissions test is like and learn how to better prepare to maximize their performance as juniors. The assessment also provides students with information about which important skills and abilities they have now, and which ones still need to be learned in order to be successful in school in the future. ACT Aspire also provides specific suggestions for improving skills in English, math, reading, science and writing. Please remind your sophomore to get a good night's rest, eat a good breakfast, and bring a couple of #2 pencils and a calculator with them on test day. Parents are encouraged to visit [www.discoveractaspire.org](http://www.discoveractaspire.org) to learn more about this assessment or to download a free copy of *Why Take ACT Aspire?*



## Upcoming Events for November

- 1<sup>st</sup> All seniors should submit an application for FREE COLLEGE CREDIT available through the ACC College/Career Pathways program!
- 6<sup>th</sup> Deadline to register for the December 6<sup>th</sup> SAT administration
- 7<sup>th</sup> Deadline to register for December 13<sup>th</sup> ACT administration.
- 8<sup>th</sup> SAT Administration
- 13<sup>th</sup> ASPIRE (practice ACT) testing for all sophomores.
- 19<sup>th</sup> Parent Conferences (early release) 12:30-2:30 PM & 6:30-9:00 PM
- 20<sup>th</sup> Parent Conferences (early release) 12:30-2:30 PM & 6:30-9:00 PM
- 21<sup>st</sup> Parent Conferences (early release) 12:30-2:30 PM
- 21<sup>st</sup> All students in grades 9-11 currently enrolled in a College/Career Pathways course must submit the required application materials to the School Counseling Office.
- 25<sup>th</sup> Fall Sports Awards Night - 6:30 PM
- 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Homecoming Program – SHS graduates invited to return  
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Break

*Happy Thanksgiving, Everybody!*

