



# Suffield High School Monthly Guidance Newsletter

## Summer School

Summer school information has begun to arrive from several area programs and is now available in the guidance office. Opportunities are available for students to make up credit in courses they have failed, but maintained attendance in and earned between a 50% - 59% average. Students may also earn "new" elective credit in a few courses as well. **Anytime a student enrolls in any course for new elective credit outside the Suffield High School curriculum, prior approval from parents/guardians and school administration is required.** Proper forms for this are in the guidance office.



### Summer Availability

A counselor will be available on Wednesdays during the summer, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> through August 12<sup>th</sup> to assist SHS students and parents as needed. Please call the School Counseling Office (860-668-3813) to schedule an appointment. Counselors will also return to work on Wednesday, August 19<sup>th</sup> and will be available through August 25<sup>th</sup> on a limited basis to assist with schedule questions etc. We wish all a happy and healthy summer vacation!

## Despite Protests, Teens Listen to Parents



Study after study reveals that the overwhelming majority of teenagers feel love and respect for their parents. Research also shows that teens want to be connected to their parents. If you are a parent, let this sink in: You are important to your teen! However, most parents will never hear these warm, fuzzy comments from their own teens. Their quest for independence makes it difficult to admit their need for parental guidance.

Many adolescents have a knack for making their parents feel unimportant. Sometimes parents wonder if their pearls of wisdom and parental advice ever get through to teens. But they do! More than you would imagine.

**No avoiding car talk-** How many times have you looked at the car next to you and seen a parent and a teenager sitting there in silence? What a wasted moment! Parents often have a lot to say to their teenagers. There is no better place than a car- there is no place for them to go. What a captive audience. You could talk about recent events, school, college, plans, friends, issues, problems, etc. You could even tell your teen how proud you are to be his or her parent. Teens really do listen, even if they appear not to. Try it. It really does work. PARENTS, TALK! YOUR TEENAGER IS LISTENING!

Taken from: The Springfield Republican  
Author: Tom McMahon

## Summer Top Ten Tips

What can students do during the summer to increase their chances of going to their top choice college? Here are ten great suggestions:

1. **READ** – If we had to suggest one thing that would increase your grades and ACT/SAT scores, make you a better writer, a better student, and increase your knowledge of the world, it would be to read as many good books as possible. Read newspapers and magazines; even check out a trashy novel or two. But read!



2. **VOLUNTEER** – One of the best things you can do this summer is to help your



community. It's never too late to sign up. Most charities need your help and are more than willing to work around your schedule. Call the Sierra Club, Ronald McDonald House, the Coalition for the Homeless, whatever meets your interest. Volunteer work is challenging and rewarding-and it looks great on college applications.

3. **WORK/INTERN** – Summer jobs and internships are learn new skills and meet new people. Although some probably gone by now, there's still time to find work. publishers, radio stations and offer to work for free. If baby sit, clean neighbors' houses, tutor kids, flip always something you can do to expand your horizons make some money.



great opportunities of the best are Call local law firms, you need the cash, burgers-there's and maybe even



4. **LEARN SOMETHING** – Just because school's out is no reason to shut off your mind. Instead of learning the complete curriculum, teach yourself something totally off the roster. Learn about jazz, cooking, modern art, French films, whatever interests you. Summer is the perfect time to take control of your education and to learn things that you're interested in at your own pace.

5. **CHECK OUT COLLEGES** – Go to a library or bookstore and check out the many books on colleges. Think about what you want in a college. Do you want to go to a large state university, a small liberal arts college, or something in between? Surf the web and check out different college web sites. If you can, visit some of the campuses you're interested in. Even if you're nowhere near the schools that interest you most, visit a college close to you and talk to professors and administrators to get a sense of what college life is about. SHS students are encouraged to use the "Naviance/Family Connections" College Career online program to begin exploring options. Students can access this program from the guidance department website ([suffield.org](http://suffield.org)).



6. **TAKE A HIKE** – No matter where you live in the U.S., it's a short trip to some form of wilderness. This summer might be the perfect time to start hiking, to get out of the city or suburbs, and hang with Mother Nature.



7. **PREPARE FOR THE SAT & ACT** – These are challenging tests, causing much anxiety. Unfortunately, they are important tests and your ability to take them could have a significant impact on your college options. If you don't prepare for them, you're losing out to the hundreds of thousands of students who are. Take courses, use your practice PSAT/PLAN score results, use books or software, but you better prepare and summer affords you plenty of time to do this.



8. **DO AT LEAST ONE (HEALTHY) THING THAT YOU'VE NEVER DONE BEFORE** – Experiment. Do something great. Act in a play, spend time with senior citizens, skydive, and learn karate. The beauty of it is you're making your own agenda. Nobody's telling you what to do, so go crazy.



9. **KEEP A JOURNAL** – Along with how well you read, the ability to write is one of the most important skills you can develop. Keeping a journal is a pressure-free way to express yourself in writing. And it's a lot more fun than writing essays and book reports.



10. **NETWORK** – Interested in the University of Michigan? Curious about a job in advertising? Talk to someone who goes to Michigan. Meet with someone who works at an ad agency. You'll get a good sense if you're still interested in following those paths. You'd be surprised how happy people are to talk to someone who's interested in what they do.



Source: [www.review.com](http://www.review.com)

### Parents and the College Application Process

*Coach not Quarterback.* That, in a nutshell, should be the role of parents in the college search and selection process. As parents get caught up in the hype about how hard it is to get into college, many become more and more anxious about the process, and more involved than they should be. Ideally, searching for the colleges that best fit a particular student should be a growth experience for the student. For the first time, students are asked to really think about their preferences, their goals, and how they learn best. Students who devote time to truly learning about themselves are the ones who find the best college matches.



The college application process is the beginning of a student's independent academic life. As part of the process, students develop research and organizational skills, learn to meet deadlines, and analyze data. They need to read critically and compare and contrast offerings at

different colleges in light of their own needs and wishes. By allowing students to take a primary role in the process, parents encourage growth and individual thinking, and help their children learn to make independent decisions.

Ideally, parents act as supporters and cheerleaders in this process. They should provide their children with the tools they need to get information or skills: the help of a college counselor, access to the internet, college guidebooks, test preparation aids. Together, parents and children, with the help of trusted advisors, should develop a college list that includes appropriate colleges that meet the student's profile and desires (and hopefully, the parents' too.) Families should plan a trip to visit as many of these schools as is feasible. Parents need to be upfront with students about their own goals for their children, and any limitations they need to impose such as location or cost.

To be fully invested in the process, students should be responsible for completing their own applications. While parents can play a role by proofreading, lifting a pencil to their paper is stepping over the line. Some students want their parents' input on essays, but often the college consultant or an English teacher can provide a more objective view.

Just as parents needed to step back and allow their toddler children to learn to walk on their own, here too, they must play a supporting role. By acting as coach rather than quarterback in the college selection process, you help your child to move on in his/her journey to independent adulthood.

*Taken From: The College Advisor*

**ACT/SAT National Test Dates For 2015-16**

<u>SAT</u>		<u>ACT</u>	
Test Dates (Regular Reg. Deadline)		Test Dates (Regular Reg. Deadline)	
Oct. 3, 2015	TBD	Sept. 12, 2015	Aug. 7, 2015
Nov. 7, 2015	TBD	Oct. 24, 2015	Sept. 18, 2015
Dec. 5, 2015	TBD	Dec. 12, 2015	Nov. 6, 2015
Jan. 23, 2016	TBD	Feb 6, 2016	Jan. 8, 2016
March 5, 2016	TBD	April 9, 2016	March 4, 2016
May 7, 2016	TBD	June 11, 2016	May 6, 2016
June 4, 2016	TBD		
PSAT – Wednesday. October 14, 2015		ASPIRE – TBD	

## Tips on Letting Go & the College Freshman Transition

### The Summer Before Entering College

**Educate your young adult about credit card debt.** A short lesson on the dangers of credit card debt can prevent some major hardships later on. Don't lecture, but do give some very specific examples of what can happen when you have to pay an 18 percent interest rate after an initial sign up "deal" runs out.



**Talk about issues your son/daughter might face in college.** Though you have talked about sex, drugs, and alcohol many times before, you might want to introduce these subjects in light of a college environment. Suggest some scenarios that your son or daughter might run into, so that he or she can think them through ahead of time and make more thoughtful choices about how to handle these situations.



### The Emotional Roller Coaster

**Letting go.** Letting go is part of the understanding that your sons or daughters are still a part of your family, even if they are living hundreds or thousands of miles away. They will be changing and evolving, but they want things at home to stay steady and secure. Obviously this can't always be so, but be sensitive to their need for this kind of stability.

*Advice from Karen Levin Coburn, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Students and Associate Dean for the Freshman Transition at Washington University in St. Louis*



## Upcoming Exam Schedule

**MONDAY, JUNE 15**

**PERIOD 1      EXAM 7:45 - 9:50**  
**BREAK            9:50 - 10:05**  
**PERIOD 2      EXAM 10:10 - 12:15**  
**BUSES LEAVE AT 12:20 AND 2:10**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 16**

**PERIOD 3      EXAM 7:45 - 9:50**  
**BREAK            9:50 - 10:05**  
**PERIOD 4      EXAM 10:10 - 12:15**  
**MAKE-UP        12:20 - 2:10**  
**BUSES LEAVE AT 12:20 AND 2:10**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17**

**PERIOD 5      EXAM 7:45 - 9:50**  
**BREAK            9:50 - 10:05**  
**PERIOD 6      EXAM 10:10 - 12:15**  
**MAKE-UP        12:20 - 2:10**  
**BUSES LEAVE AT 12:20 AND 2:10**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 18**

**PERIOD 7      EXAM 7:45 - 9:50**

**BREAK            9:50 - 10:05**

**MAKE-UP        10:10 - 12:15**

**BUSES LEAVE AT 12:20 ONLY**

**MAKEUP EXAMS ARE TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND THURSDAY WITH ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL. ANY STUDENT WHO IS ABSENT FROM AN EXAM MUST HAVE PERMISSION FROM THE OFFICE TO TAKE A MAKEUP. YOU ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO MAKE UP AN EXAM IF YOU HAVE AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. IF YOU MISS AN EXAM OR CHOOSE NOT TO ATTEND, YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO FOR THAT EXAM.**

### **What is the Common App?**

The Common App is a not-for-profit organization that serves to provide applications that students and school officials can send to more than 500 colleges. Put simply, the Common App is your key to successfully applying to multiple colleges using the same application. After signing up and making an account, one application can be sent to several colleges at once, eliminating time spent on filling out an individual app for every school you want to apply to.

So here's the scoop: The Common App will present you with an application similar to what you've probably seen a million times before when applying to jobs. You fill in all of your personal information, like your name, your address, your high school information, etc. Then, the Common App will give you a section where you can brag about all of your high school activities that set you apart from the rest of the pack. Finally, you get a selection of personal essay prompts that can be sent to each school you apply to.

What makes the Common App unique to every school is the supplemental part of the application. This is where each college you apply to can ask you individual questions that reflect what their admissions officers specifically want to hear. You can expect to see questions like, "Why are you the perfect fit for University X?" It's the part of the application where colleges test not just your GPA and your activities, but what you'll contribute to their specific school. In terms of deadlines, you'll have to stay on top of when your top colleges want the application by. Be aware of the early decision, early action and regular decision deadlines for every school, because the Common App will not remind you of those dates.

#### **Who uses the Common App?**

More than 500 private and public universities and colleges accept the Common Application. The odds are in your favor that your dream school could be one of those 500! Check out the list of schools who accept the Common App at [commonapp.org](http://commonapp.org). "Every school I applied to during my senior year of high school wound up accepting the Common App," says Nicole M., a junior at Marist College. "It made my life so much easier!"

### **Why is it worth filling out?**

As the Common App becomes more and more popular, it also could become your only option to apply to a college as colleges phase out their individual applications in favor of the Common App. "If you want to apply to many private colleges, the majority of well-known and highly ranked schools, they only use the Common App," says Michelle Podbelsek, a college counselor at College Counseling Associates. "That is their application." Prestigious universities such as Boston University, Columbia University, Dartmouth College, New York University, Northeastern University, Northwestern University and Yale University have all become known as "exclusive users," meaning that they only use the Common App for their admissions. "The Common App is much more convenient instead of having to fill out separate applications for every school you apply to," says Melissa, a junior at the University of Delaware. "It saves a lot of time and is simple to understand."

### **Tips and tricks for an application that can't be rejected**

If you're still uneasy about using the Common App, know that there are a ton of things you could do to make your college application shine! One of the most important components of the application is your list of high school activities. "Most of the Common App is just data about you - address, date of birth, your high school, etc.," Podbelsek explains. "The parts that require strategy are the activities section and the essay." Podbelsek suggests that "for the activities part, each student should first lay out all of their info on a separate Google or Word doc. List every single thing and then put them in the order of importance." Although you can only include your top 10 activities on the Common App, you can put any extra clubs or sports in the Additional Info section to be sure that colleges know all they can about you.

But perhaps the most important aspect of your application is the personal essay. The Common App requires one main essay that each college you apply to will receive and then the supplemental questions asked by specific colleges. Podbelsek recommends that applicants keep their essays personal and informal and show who they are through what they write about. College admissions officers are looking to get to know you through your essay, so be genuine and write about something that really means a lot to you. As heartwarming as a story about your father and how he is your hero would be, that's not something that helps admissions officers get to know you (instead, they'll get to know your dad!). Write about a tough time in your life, something that you volunteered for or an event that changed your life. These are the things that will show you have grown as a person and will continue to do so throughout college. You may not feel as if you stand out from the crowd as an average high school student, but think about it: your life is unique and you've had experiences different from everyone else's that made you who you are today.

The Common App can be one of your greatest assets when you apply to colleges. It saves you time and makes it easier to send everything you've worked so hard to accomplish in high school to every college you want to apply to. So now that you're a Common App expert, go write those essays and knock those admission officers' socks off!

*Taken From: Her Campus Author: Nicole Knoebel*

**At SHS we encourage rising seniors (that's you Class of 2016!) to get a head start on their Common App after August 1<sup>st</sup> this summer. While the Common App is in fact a great time-saver in the long run (because seniors can submit it to multiple colleges) it does take some serious time and effort to complete the**

many “layers” that are included. Students who get a head start on the Common App over the summer will find themselves in a much better position to finish it in a timely way early this fall and be ready to submit it to colleges well before their deadlines.

### Upcoming Events

As the school year comes to a close, we’d like to provide you with some important information about the events and activities planned during the next few weeks.

June 3	Scholar’s Breakfast
June 4	Senior Banquet
June 5	SHS Film Festival
June 6	SAT Administration
June 8	Spring Sports Awards Program
June 12	Yearbook Picnic
June 13	ACT Administration
June 15-18	Final Exams-Early Release Days
June 18	Senior Scholarship Night
June 20	Graduation Ceremonies
July 1st	Counselor available (7AM-3PM) for Summer School Questions.



**\*Juniors are reminded to request 3 letters of recommendation before school ends in June, and use the summer vacation to get started on a draft of a college application essay. Go to [commonapp.org](http://commonapp.org) to get started on the Common Application after August 1<sup>st</sup> too!**

### CONGRATULATIONS

**Class of 2015!!!**

**The Suffield High School Guidance Department would like to offer our congratulations to the Class of 2015! We have enjoyed working with such a great group of young people and wish them all the best in all their future endeavors!**

**The SHS Guidance Department wishes all of our students and their families a happy and healthy summer vacation! We look forward to seeing you again in August!**

**YFNSCD (Your Friendly Neighborhood School Counseling Department)**