

HIGHLAND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL-12760 TROXLER AVENUE-HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS 62249

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Dear Parents of Seniors,

The counselors look forward to working with seniors during this coming year at Highland High School. The senior year is important in planning for education beyond high school. We want to take this opportunity to inform parents of the counseling activities planned for the Class of 2010.

Senior College Presentations: The counselors will give college presentations in the senior English classes during early September. Seniors will receive a packet of information that gives an overview of the college application process, financial aid, and important dates for senior year. If a senior misses this presentation, packets will be made available in the counseling office.

First Semester Senior Conferences. Individual conferences with counselors can be scheduled anytime throughout the school year. Topics for these conferences will include checking for graduation requirements and planning for the year following graduation. It is important that students are responsible for scheduling a conference. We stress that students should make their own counselor appointments and not expect to be called to the office. We encourage students to confer with a counselor as much as necessary during this important senior year. It is our goal to provide students with assistance in preparing to take the next step beyond high school.

Dual Credit. Students have the opportunity to take high school courses and receive college credit through Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC). This is a great first step to receiving tuition free college credit while still in high school. Credit for these classes is given by SWIC at the end of the senior year. The Dual Credit Coordinator at SWIC will come to HHS in the fall to assist students in completing SWIC application and registration forms. **Public Speaking and Introduction to Marketing require the ASSET placement test for dual credit.** Students must test into English 101 to be eligible to receive college credit.

Testing. College bound students should have taken the ACT (as part of the PSAT) and/or the SAT during the second semester of their junior year. **The ACT is widely accepted as admissions testing to colleges around the country.** The SAT is used by many universities and private colleges throughout the east and west coasts. Some students may want to repeat a test at the first opportunity in the senior year. Highland High School offers the ACT for some of the national test dates. Registration deadline for the September 12th test is August 7, 2009. ACT registration materials will be available when seniors register for high school in August. Students must pick up test registration materials, complete the forms, and mail them to ACT by the postmark deadline, or register on-line at www.actstudent.org. All test dates and registration deadlines are posted in the guidance department or on the website. The CEEB/ACT code for HHS is 142-265.

Parent Sessions. School counselors know how important it is to communicate with parents concerning guidance activities and our role in working with your child. On September 23, 2009 from 6:30 -8:00 p.m. counselors will present on the college admissions process. A parent panel will share personal experiences and provide tips to help parents navigate successfully through the process. Parents are invited to attend.

College Fairs. The first regional college fair is scheduled for October 20, 2009, 6-8 p.m., at SIUE. St. Louis University hosts a national college fair Sunday, October 18, 2009. These are excellent resources for obtaining information from a variety of colleges.

Financial Aid Night. HHS will be hosting a Financial Aid Night sponsored by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) on November 18 (tentative) at 6:30 p. m. **This is an excellent opportunity to hear about the process of applying for the FAFSA.** An ISAC representative will be the guest speaker. A follow-up session on FAFSA completion will be January 13, 2010 (tentative) at 6:30 p.m.

College Representatives. Throughout the year, the guidance department hosts college representatives. Scheduled college visits are posted on the guidance office windows facing Bulldog Square. Students may meet with representatives during their lunch periods.

College Planning. Seniors should be completing their research of possibilities for education beyond high school. This research involves gathering information from various sources including college fairs, websites, college representatives, the colleges, friends, and counselors. Careful research is the best way to create a good match between the student and college. It should be noted that the single greatest reason that students change colleges is not because of academics, but because of the social climate of the college. Campus visits taken the first semester of the senior year are vitally important. **Students should be ready to apply to several colleges at the end of September through November.**

Daily Announcements and Bulletin Boards. We remind students to check the announcements through PowerSchool and guidance department bulletin boards. This is how we inform students about activities such as college fairs, open houses, scholarships, etc. Parents and students can also check on the HHS web site at www.highlandcusd5.org/hhs and click on **Counselor Corner.**

Senior Exit Meetings. At the beginning of May, seniors are asked to meet with a counselor to complete an exit interview form. At this time, students are given their ICP folders and are able to request final transcripts from HHS and SWIC (for dual credit classes) to be sent to the college they will attend in the fall of 2010. Students provide scholarship information to the counselors to be included in the May Honors Convocation.

We encourage seniors to see counselors anytime during the year for help with a particular situation or for information relating to school or careers. Parents are invited to call the counselors with questions or concerns. Our aim is to assist students in obtaining the best education possible in high school and becoming well prepared for what they will be doing after high school. Remember: **The primary goal of students during their senior year should be to do well academically, to take appropriate steps in testing and educational planning for beyond high school, and to continue the consideration of possible careers based on interests, abilities, and employment opportunities.**

We look forward to working with you and your child. Best wishes for an excellent year.

Sincerely,

HHS School Counselors (654-7131)
Mrs. Barb Heyen, Director of Guidance, Special Education Counselor
Mr. Michael Wartick, Class of 2010 and 2013 Counselor
Mrs. Staci Brown, Class of 2011 and 2012 Counselor