

GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

WINTER '09

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COMING UP:

- ◆ **Dec. 24-Jan. 1**
Winter Break
- ◆ **January 5**
Registration Deadline
for February 6 ACTs
- ◆ **January 13**
Scheduling for
2010-11 begins
- ◆ **January 20**
Evening with
College Reps
6:30pm—Media Center
- ◆ **January 25—28**
Mid-Term Exams
- ◆ **February 4**
Registration Deadline
for March 13 SATs
- ◆ **February 9**
Master Schedule
Presentation
7PM—Media Center
- ◆ **February 17**
Juniors—College
Planning Night
6:30PM—Auditorium

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Here in Guidance, we're busy working closely with students as they strive to achieve and develop. As we approach the winter break and the end of the first semester, I'd like to formally share with you a big change that we're all very excited about.

As I am sure you are aware, JTHS is moving to a new type of master schedule called a *rotating, drop schedule*. This is a positive step toward providing our students with a depth of instruction and a relaxed educational environment that will further ensure their success at JTHS. It will also enable them to reach their full potential as self-directed, creative and responsible adults.



The new master schedule will provide our students with an optimum learning environment. It is structured to provide more time for varied teaching methods and provides, intentionally, a less stressful day for the students. Ultimately, the new master schedule will allocate time very differently so that students graduating from JTHS will be better prepared to compete with students from across New Jersey and around the country for college admissions.

We are particularly excited about the unit lunch component of the new master schedule. Unit lunch is a block of time when clubs, activities, and guidance services will be available to all students. Students will have the opportunity to visit guidance during the unit lunch to meet with counselors to discuss personal, academic and college/career issues. They will also be able to participate in guidance groups without interfering with classroom time. Additionally, many colleges and universities are scheduled to visit JTHS throughout the fall and spring. In the past, only juniors and seniors were permitted to miss a class to attend college visits. Our new schedule allows us to encourage all interested students, grades 9—12, to attend!

You may ask - "Why talk about the new master schedule now?" The answer is that those of us in guidance are already planning for next year! Simply stated, now is the time to get excited about the new schedule, and now is the time to begin to prepare for next year. I encourage

every parent or guardian to discuss course offerings with their child.

One way to start is to view the Program of Studies booklet available on the high school's web page – www.jefftp.org. This document details all of our scheduling policies and procedures. It is also a place to find descriptions of all courses offered at JTHS. Every parent or guardian should review this document with their child before their scheduling appointment.

To help all students gain an understanding of the benefits of the new master schedule, current class officers will present the scheduling process and materials to them in an extended homeroom on December 22, 2009. Also, as always, students will have individual conferences with their school counselor to discuss course requests for the upcoming school year beginning on January 13th, 2010.

Finally, as we begin to usher in this exciting new era at JTHS, I invite all parents to join the administration in a discussion of the new master schedule on Wednesday evening, February 9, 2010 at 7pm in the high school media center. This brief yet thorough presentation will answer any questions you have about the change to a rotating, drop schedule and what it will mean for JTHS students.

Have an enjoyable holiday season and I hope to see you on February 9th!

Charles G. Dimiceli

GUIDANCE & COUNSELING DEPT.

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MR. HANNAWAY	EXT. 5830
MRS. MONTEGARI	EXT. 5859
MS. NEWMAN	EXT. 5854
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SCHOOL-WIDE EVENT ENCOURAGES STUDENT SUCCESS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

On October 14, a school-wide initiative engaged all students in activities that focused on their lives as students and beyond.

FRESHMEN participated in a full schedule of activities that encouraged them to meet and interact with fellow students, learn more about themselves and pick up valuable study skills. All freshmen met with their Peer Development Program (PDP) leaders, participated in study skills workshops with teachers, and completed career interest inventories on Career Cruising with school counselors.

While 93 **SOPHOMORES** took the



Freshman begin career exploration with a career cruising interest inventory.

PSATs, the majority of the class participated in adventure-based activities in the gym. The activities focused on team-building and the development of social and leadership skills.

JUNIORS took the PSATs—an opportunity

that provided important practice for SAT's and encouraged all students to begin to consider their options after high school. Over the next few weeks, students will be meeting with their counselors to further discuss their results and how they can use them to prepare for the SATs in the spring.

SENIORS were given choices! Many took the opportunity to work on various school projects, while others registered on NAVIANCE and learned about the many useful features of the program. Others used the day to visit college campuses—an extremely important step in the application and decision process.

"I TOOK THE PSAT, NOW WHAT?"

Congratulations to those students who took the PSAT in October! You've taken a big step on your journey to life after high school!

In early December, sophomores and juniors received their PSAT scores. Students will also sit down with their counselors to talk a little more about what their scores mean and how they can be used to prepare for the SAT's.

So . . . What's next? Well, along with talking with their counselors, students should visit **My College QuickStart** at www.collegeboard.com/quickstart. When they took the PSAT, students were assigned a code (found inside the score report) that will allow access to some valuable (and free) college and career planning tools including:

- View question and answer explanations
- Get a personalized SAT study plan
- Search for colleges that best suit student's needs
- Take personality tests and explore colleges and careers

If students no longer have their access codes, they can see Mrs. Montegari in guidance for instructions on how to sign in to My College Quickstart without the code.

Also, book stores have a wide selection of helpful SAT study guides—many even include CDs to help you personalize your study program.

Another option is to participate in an **SAT Prep Course**. You can find information about prep courses offered here at the high school by visiting the guidance department section of the high school web page.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . . SATs

Check out this sampling of the average SAT scores of incoming freshman at the following schools:

	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Penn State	530-630	570-670	
Ramapo	520-600	550-630	530-610
East Stroudsburg	450-520	450-540	430-520
NJIT	480-590	550-650	480-580
U Rhode Island	490-590	500-600	
Quinnipiac	540-610	560-630	

A good way to judge what your SAT score might have been based on what you PSAT score is . . .

53 on PSAT = 530 on SAT

Remember . . . Your test scores are just one piece of the 'puzzle' that adds up to you—the student. Colleges also look at extra-curricular activities, volunteerism, recommendation letters, the classes you've taken, and more! As you begin to think about and plan your future, consider which pieces of the 'puzzle' may be missing and fill it in with positive pieces like more rigorous classes, more participation in after-school activities, etc...Your counselor, teachers, and parents are just some of the people who can help you develop a picture that is uniquely you and helps you stand out to your colleges of interest. *It's never too early to begin!*

USING COLLEGBOARD.COM TO EXPLORE MAJORS & DISCOVER COLLEGES

~ Robin Montegari, School Counselor

Did you know that collegeboard.com offers so much more than PSAT and SAT results? Although you don't need to register to access many of the resources, setting up an account is free and, if you do log-in when you are researching your future, collegeboard.com can save your information and personalize the experience.

One of my favorite resources available on collegeboard.com can be found within the "Find a College" section (the link is red). If you click on "Careers and Majors," you will be re-directed to the "Majors and Career Profiles" page. Click on any of the offerings, and you will begin discovering valuable information about the major that you are considering.

Let's say for example, that you are interested in broadcast journalism as a college major. If you explore the information available on collegeboard.com, you'll find

that students in broadcast journalism learn all aspects of broadcasting including reporting, writing *and* working behind the camera. You will also learn that taking classes while in high school that focus on writing, public speaking and computer applications would be helpful, and if you add AP English Language and AP U.S. Government & Politics to your schedule, you *really* boost your appeal to colleges.

Equally important to knowing what classes you *should* take in high school, is knowing what types of classes you *will* be taking in college. Those are listed under the heading "Typical Major Courses."

Another 'click' that you won't want to miss is under the heading that asks "Which colleges offer a major in?" Once you have generated this list (there are 259 colleges that offer broadcast journalism!), you can refine it by location, size, etc...

until you've developed a list that suits you.

Once you've developed your list of colleges, it's time to begin *visiting!* Now that you've researched what major you may be interested in, you will need to know what questions to ask potential colleges, and collegeboard.com can help with that as well! Simply click on the "College Checklist" and you'll see a list of 'must know' questions. For example, important questions to ask as a broadcast journalism major would include "Does your college have a radio and television station?" and "Will the program help students get internships with local media?"

Finally, researching your future should be fun, and it's never too early to start! There are many sources of great information out there. Collegeboard.com is just one—check in with your school counselor to learn about more!

An Evening with the Reps

Come spend an evening with college admissions representatives and get valuable information about college exploration and the application/admission process!

Sophomores, Juniors and their parents/guardians are encouraged to attend!

Kate Brittain

Admissions Counselor
Rutgers, The State University



Jessica Chambers

Director of Admissions
County College of Morris



Brion Morro

Assistant Director of Admissions
Moravian College



BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS INFORMATIVE EVENT!

JANUARY 20, 2010

6:30 to 8:00 pm

JTHS AUDITORIUM

COLLEGE PLANNING—FOCUS ON FINANCIAL AID

Earnings After College Make Reasonable Borrowing a Good Investment for Most Students

- In 2007, almost 7 million students borrowed through the federal government to go to college. Among the approximately 60 percent of those graduating with a bachelor's degree in 2006-07 who had borrowed to finance their education, average debt was about \$22,700.
- The federal government also helps parents borrow to pay for their children's college expenses. In 2007, the parents of 700,000 undergraduate students took out federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), averaging \$11,700.
- Federal education loans generally offer lower interest rates and more protection for borrowers than loans from private sources.
- Within 11 to 12 years after completing a bachelor's degree, the typical college graduate earns enough more than the typical high school graduate to make up for four years out of the labor market and is also able to repay loans for full tuition and fees at a public four-year college.
- Over a working life, the typical full-time year-round worker with a four-year college degree earns more than 60 percent more than a worker with only a high school diploma.
- Those with master's degrees earn almost twice as much, and those with professional degrees earn almost three times as much as high school graduates earn over their working lives.

The above information was taken from College Board's Trends in Higher Education Series. For more information about college and financial aid, visit www.collegeboard.com

WHAT IS FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND HOW DO I APPLY?

WHAT IS FEDERAL STUDENT AID?

Federal student aid is financial assistance through the U.S. Department of Education available to eligible students enrolled in eligible programs at schools participating in federal student aid programs. Federal student aid covers school expenses such as tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies and transportation.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID?

1. Get free information and help from your school counselor, the financial aid office at the college or career school you plan to attend, or the U.S. Dept. of Education, Federal Student Aid at www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID. **Assistance is always free—you should never have to pay for help.**
2. Get a PIN (personal identification number). A PIN lets you apply, "sign" your online *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA), make corrections to your application information, and more—all online. Apply for a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov. *TIP*—Both student and parent must apply for separate PINs!
3. Collect the documents needed to apply, including income tax returns and W-2 forms (and other records of income). *TIP*—If your tax returns are not completed when you apply, you **can** estimate and correct the info later.
4. Complete the FAFSA as soon as possible on or after January 1, 2010. *TIP*—You may also need FAFSA information to be considered for financial aid from your state government, schools you are accepted to or private scholarships. Be aware of deadlines which vary for each organization and *complete your FAFSA early!*
5. Receive and review your *Student Aid Report* (SAR) which you will get from Federal Student Aid. Make changes or corrections if necessary. *TIP*—Your complete, correct SAR will contain your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) - the number used to determine your federal student aid eligibility.
6. Watch for *award letters* from schools. Compare the aid being offered by schools you've been accepted to. Use the information to help you with your decision process!

Information from U.S Department of Education Federal Student Aid

Websites YOU Should Know

www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov (FAFSACASTER)

www.hesaa.org

(NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority)

FRESHMEN

Keep up your hard work, make adjustments as necessary . . . And talk to your school counselor frequently!

- Join winter school activities, including student government, clubs, athletics and service organizations.
- Visit the Career Center in the Guidance & Counseling Department to get to know your skills and interests better, investigate careers and explore colleges.
- Rededicate yourself to achieve better grades—evaluate your study habits and organization—Prepare for mid-term exams, and make the changes that will lead to success!
- Begin planning for course selection for your sophomore year.

SOPHOMORES

Consider the following, and talk to your school counselor frequently!

- Rededicate yourself to achieve better grades—evaluate your study habits and organization—Prepare for mid-term exams, and make the changes necessary to succeed!
- Join winter school activities and consider volunteer opportunities in your community. Take leadership positions when possible.
- Continue to research colleges and careers that you may be interested in by using Career Cruising and websites available through the JTHS Guidance & Counseling web page.
- Begin planning for course selection for your junior year.

JUNIORS

Senior year is right around the corner . . . Be sure to talk to your school counselor frequently!

- Rededicate yourself to getting good and/or better grades! Prepare thoroughly for mid-term exams.
- Join winter school activities and consider volunteer opportunities in your community. Take leadership opportunities when you can.
- Understand your PSAT scores and don't forget to check registration deadlines for SATs and/or ACTs.
- Continue to research colleges and careers that you may be interested in by using Career Cruising and websites available through the JTHS Guidance & Counseling web page.
- Begin planning for course selection for senior year.

SENIORS

This year is probably flying by . . . Stay on track, and be sure to speak with your school counselor frequently!

- Prepare thoroughly for mid-term exams and continue to work for solid grades. Colleges want strong mid-year reports!
- Keep your eye on deadlines. Submit college applications early.
- Continue to search for possible scholarship opportunities.
- Prepare (with your parents) to file your FAFSA in January.
- Visit colleges that you have not yet visited or that need a second look. Be sure to check out overnight visits and class visits for your most likely schools.
- Stay focused and meet with your school counselor whenever you have questions or concerns.

~ SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ~

If You Qualify ~ Apply!

- Elks National Foundation — The Elks National Foundation has a variety of scholarships available. Deadlines and qualifications vary, so visit www.elks.org/enf/scholars/ourscholarships.cfm for details.
- Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Scholarship—Sponsored by the National Center for Learning Disabilities and awarded to a high school senior with an identified learning disability who is committed to pursuing an undergraduate degree. Visit www.nclcd.org
- NJ Association of College Admissions—Awards three \$1000 scholarships to students who demonstrate a commitment to learning, leadership and community service. Visit www.njacac.com for details!

Visit the Guidance & Counseling Department for an extensive list of national, state, county and local scholarships.

Other scholarship information can be found at:

- www.studentscholarshipsearch.com is loaded with advice and tips regarding scholarships and financial aid.
- www.hesaa.org offers NJ State scholarships and financial aid information
- www.fastweb.com offers an extensive scholarship search tool.

Seniors are encouraged to apply for all scholarships for which they meet criteria. Be sure to stop by Guidance for more information!

College Corner ~ Focus on RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NJ

www.ramapo.edu

Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, the college offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. Undergraduate students choose to concentrate their studies in one of five schools with more than 700 course offerings and 40 academic programs.

Ramapo College of New Jersey is listed in the December 2008 issue of Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine as among the "100 Best Values in Public Colleges" for 2009, and is also listed as one of 212 institutions recommended by The Princeton Review in the "Best in the Northeast" section in the 2009 edition of The Best Northeastern Colleges.

- ⇒ Total Undergraduates: about 5,560
- ⇒ Average SAT scores: 520-610 reading
540-630 math
520-610 writing
- ⇒ Athletics: 19 Division III Sports
- ⇒ Tuition w/Housing \$23,000/year (estimate)

~ 2010—2011 SCHEDULING UPDATE ~

It's that time of year again! Scheduling will kick off with an informative presentation by the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade class presidents. On Tuesday, December 22, we will have an extended homeroom at which time the officers will present key points related to scheduling to all students.

- ⇒ At this meeting, students will also receive their course selection worksheet which they must review with their parents prior to scheduling with their counselor.

All students will meet individually with their counselors to review their academic history, assess their post high school plans,

and develop a schedule that helps every child meet his or her goals.

- ⇒ Parents and students should review the Program of Studies which is available on line right now. This details all scheduling procedures and deadlines, as well as provides descriptions and requirements of all courses offered at JTHS.

Scheduling will conclude by late February and students will be able to make adjustment throughout the spring. Schedules will be mailed in early June and schedule change dates for the summer will be established. Please be aware that there will

be no schedule changes in September!

TUTORING AVAILABLE

Tutoring is now available after school in the Media Center Monday-Thursday 2:30-3:15. The schedule is as follows:

- * Monday - English
- * Tuesday - Math
- * Wednesday – Science
- * Thursday – Social Studies/Foreign Lang

More info? Ask in Guidance