

Class of 2005
Junior Winter 2004 Newsletter
Mrs. Comella, College & Career Advisor
http://66.5.3.2/Teacher_web_pages/Comella/default.html

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've just completed the first half of your junior year, often considered one of the most academically challenging parts of high school. It's also one of the most important. Many colleges will pay particular attention to the grades you get this year. If you didn't do so hot during the first semester, don't panic. You still have time to whip those grades into shape in the second half of the year. If you're already aceing your classes, check out these six tips to help you keep up the good work. **Six ways to boost your second semester grades.**

* **Practice good reading skills.** Find time to read. Read anything - newspapers, magazines, a good book. Just about anything counts...except the back of the cereal box. Write down words you don't know, look them up, and keep a list of the words and definitions to help build your vocabulary.

* **Practice good writing skills.** Take some time to write letters to friends and relatives (maybe Christmas thank you notes). The more you write and think about sharing your thoughts and experiences, the easier it will be to do it when it comes time to write your college application essay, or that English paper.

* **Learn to focus and concentrate.** When it's time to get engrossed in your book or magazine article, find a nice quiet spot where the TV, computer, phone, and stereo aren't distractions. Get comfortable there and get used to reading without distractions.

* **Psych yourself up for next semester's hard classes.** Studies suggest that if you find a subject boring or uninteresting, you'll have a harder time learning it. Obviously, you don't have to love every subject you take, but convince yourself that you can learn the material, and it'll be that much easier to do it.

* **Practicing making "to do" lists.** The hardest part of getting organized is getting into the habit of staying organized. If you start making lists of all the fun things you want to take care of each day (call a friend, go shopping, study), you'll get into the habit of organizing your time and using it more effectively. That way, when it's time to go back to school, the process will be second nature to you. You'll also get a sense of how much more you can get done. Don't forget: Put your most important tasks at the top of the list. Cross off each task as it's completed.

* **Practice creating schedules.** Schedules, like "to do" lists, help you focus your time and energy so you can get more done, and get more of the things that are important to you done. Think about when you work best. Are you a morning person? Or do you think better as the day goes on? Use this insight to your advantage when you schedule activities.

**TESTING IN THE JUNIOR YEAR
IS MOST IMPORTANT!**

I recommend all juniors having at least one ACT or SAT score before August of their junior year. This will enable

students to apply for scholarship that have first semester deadlines in the senior year.

If a student waits until the first testing date in the senior year (October 2004), they will not have a score until late November 2004. But more importantly, students need scores to guide their study to make improvements.

CHS Test Code # is 430410
CHS Test Site Code # 194260

Spring ACT test dates
www.act.org

<u>ACT test date</u>	<u>Registration deadline</u>
February 07	January 02
April 03 - quest/answers	February 27
*June 12 - quest/answers	May 07

* test not given at CHS

Spring SAT test dates
www.collegeboard.com

<u>SAT test date</u>	<u>Registration deadline</u>
*January 24	December 22
*March 27 (SAT I only)	February 20
*May 01	March 26
*June 5	April 29

* test not given at CHS

Every post secondary institution has their own testing and admission requirements. It is the responsibility of each student and their family to inquire about these requirements and to take the appropriate tests. Students may take these tests as often as they wish to improve their scores. All test scores will be kept on the student's individual test card to be sent with the transcript.

Students may register to take these tests at Ridgeway High (43199) or Lemoyne-Owen College (43185) using their test center location codes. Students should always bubble in the CHS test code number (430410) so the scores will be sent to CHS regardless of where the test is taken.

It is to the student's advantage to send test scores directly to the universities you are interested in attending. Many universities want the scores sent directly to them and it will cost you \$8.00 to send the score at a later date. You may send the score to a number of schools free at the time of registration.

COLLEGE VISITS

The following is a list of helpful hints when visiting:

1. Plan ahead
2. Dress appropriately
3. Ask the experts (the current students)
4. Dodge the statistics
5. Relax
6. Don't forget you'll be living there
7. Take advantage of overnight hosting
8. Try the food
9. See a dorm room
10. Look at the bulletin boards
11. Disregard the weather and the tour guide
12. Look around and REALLY observe
13. Visit a class
14. Reflect and write down your thoughts
15. Do you feel at home there?

** Students who are honor graduates are allowed one college day visit during their junior year. Forms for a college day visit are in the attendance office. Mrs. Rainey will verify that students are honor graduates.

Want to attend a selective college or university?

Here are some *Tips for Success*

In The 12th Grade

* Take Physics and one more challenging math course.

* It's time to begin the application process. Relax: this is a great time to make a big decision on your own and to learn about yourself.

* Select the colleges to which you'll apply carefully. Don't apply to any more than six (approximately). Be honest as you fill out every portion of the application. Colleges are not looking for wonder kids, they want real, live students who have real, live interests. As you write your application essay, make sure the real "you" comes through.

* Note application deadlines carefully, so you won't miss them. Make sure you ask for information and guidance with financial aid. All colleges have financial aid available for talented and deserving students who have a real need. Financial Aid meetings are held early in January at Collierville High for parents of seniors.

* And, remember why you applied to several colleges. There is no one perfect college for you. If you aren't accepted to your first college choice, you may find that your second choice was an even better fit anyway.

Birmingham - Southern College

Choosing Senior Classes

Many times students will tell me they chose to drop out of honors and AP classes in the senior year to keep their GPA high for college acceptance. DO NOT FALL INTO THIS CATEGORY OF THINKING! Most students are accepted to colleges during the first semester of the senior year using the sixth semester GPA - first three years of high school. Seniors do not have a seventh semester GPA until January 2005.

All colleges will look at the classes seniors are enrolled in for their fourth year of high school. Colleges are looking to see if the student has completed all the course work required for acceptance into their college. Selective, competitive colleges will look to see if students are continuing to take a rigorous course load. Students applying to competitive colleges must also be enrolled in competitive high school courses.

All students should continue to work hard, enroll in stimulating classes, keep up their GPA, and study for the college entrance exams.

The National Merit Scholarship program looks for students who have maintained a rigorous course load all four years.

Colleges look for a student who is becoming stronger each year. A student who has a slow start and ends with a BANG is more appealing to colleges and will have a better chance at being accepted.

During your sixth semester of high school:

*work on getting the highest GPA possible.

*take your college entrance exams and be ready to apply to colleges in the fall of 2004.

*participate in community service and activities at school to build your resume'. Update your resume' of activities.

*look up my web site for "Summer Opportunities". Many universities invite students to live on campus for a week and take mini courses.

*check out scholarship opportunities for juniors by visiting my web site. Juniors can earn scholarships this year. For an individual internet search go to: www.fastweb.com

I will make classroom visits to talk to all the juniors during the month of January, 2004.

Have a Happy Holiday!