

Postings

From The New Trier Post-High School Counseling Office
For Members of the 2018 Graduating Class and their Parents

October, 2017

Post-high school counseling junior PARENT meetings will be held next week

You were invited by your student's daily adviser. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information about:

- The philosophy of the department
- The landscape of college admissions
- The varying roles for counselor, student and parent in the college search and application process
- The timeline - including junior year through graduation
- Appropriate standardized testing to consider
- An overview of Naviance Family Connection, as well as distributing parent access codes

This program is intended for parents only; students have begun this process with their post-high school counselor in advisory.

The junior year can be stressful at any high school. New Trier juniors by now see how the expectations for their achievement may have been "ratcheted up" a bit. Teachers expect students to be increasingly independent, and to attempt to complete all homework, even newly challenging concepts and materials on their own, before seeking help from the teacher. Students in the large AS course may find classroom participation a challenge due to the number of individuals vying to make comments. Teachers anticipate all students, no matter how effortlessly the material may come to them, should meet with teachers individually to discuss various aspects of the course or subject.

As in the freshman and sophomore years, the post-high school counselors first and foremost want students to concentrate on their intellectual growth and development. Here are some of the academic tasks students should be fine-tuning this year:

- ✓ Getting organized: work out a system whereby all academic obligations are recorded and maintained. You may wish to obtain a weekly organizer in which you mark your big-ticket items, like examinations, in red, your daily assignment in blue and your other projects or quizzes in black. Or, you may wish to use your ipad or phone. Whatever system you use, *be diligent and maintain your schedule to stay on top of your assignments.*
- ✓ Approach your studies as if they are a job; in fact, learning IS your job right now, so make sure you focus on your education. Your achievement may affect your ability to enroll in the college of your dreams; although there are other aspects to admission, you can control your classroom efforts.

- ✓ If a concept or assignment is overwhelmingly problematic, take steps immediately to handle it. Try it on your own, phone a friend for assistance, create a study group, and arrange to meet with a teacher to tackle it. Remember that New Trier has other resources as well, such as the Reading and Writing Lab and the Math Resource Center for help. Do not leave it until all of your other homework is done – by then, you will be tired, and so you may not be putting forth your best efforts.
- ✓ Remember that part of life is figuring out how to handle stress and overcome obstacles. Use your time in high school as practice to determine what methods work for you. Be flexible and recognize that there will be aspects of learning that are particularly challenging for you and everyone experiences these obstacles. Use these situations to think about what you want to learn from the discomfort you are experiencing. Keep the big picture in mind.
- ✓ And keep your focus; you are just entering the halfway mark of your high school career. If your freshman and sophomore year grades do not reflect your best efforts, you can change that pattern NOW. You might be surprised at how a little additional effort can make a tremendous difference in your achievement.
- ✓ Remind yourself regularly that *balance* is an important aspect of your existence. Making sure you have adequate time for recreation, sleep, and your classroom obligations is an achievement that needs to be managed daily. Try to include one thing every day that brings you joy.
- ✓ Back away from the video games!!!! If you spend the majority of your free time gaming, start to cross-train. Read something. Help a parent with their chores. Walk the dog. Make a new friend. Volunteer. Get a job. In addition to varying your activities for the sake of your own development, colleges will want to know how *productively* you spend your free time.
- ✓ Think about who you are and how that person compares to who you want to be. High school is an ideal time to try on new roles, to change people's perception of you, and to stretch to see who you can become. In a couple of short years, you will be in college, and it's a clear, fresh start. Why not try to make junior year a fresh start, too?
- ✓ Develop your independence. It's great to have mom and dad around to do your laundry, make your meals, sew a button, and even get you out of bed in the morning, but when you get to college those obligations are all on YOU. Make a list of adult responsibilities you want to have figured out before you leave the house after graduation and choose one each month to perfect. Not only will you be grateful for the ability to learn these tasks

before you really need to use them, but your parents will be impressed by your resourcefulness.

- ✓ Work out money management issues. Talk with your parents about a checking account, debit card and how to budget money. Learning these things should not be left up to you in August of your freshman year of college.
- ✓ Oh, and while you are at it, clean your room. Take out the recycling without being asked. Do those chores your parents ask (nag) you to do BEFORE they become contentious issues. Your parents will be impressed by your responsible behaviors, and will be more likely to grant you other privileges because of your increasing maturity.
- ✓ Engage your family members. You actually may learn from them and you might enjoy your time at home more if they are your pals, not your enemies. Try to help your younger siblings with issues they face; chances are you have already dealt with similar ones. Ask older siblings for advice or for information about how they handled their last two years in high school and what they might have done differently. Be open-minded and fine-tune your listening skills.
- ✓ Regularly check your emotional well-being. If you have a friend or a group of friends who are consistently draining your energies and bring down your own mood, think about ways to minimize their impact on you. You deserve to have someone to lean on, too, and to listen to you when you are figuring out life's challenges.
- ✓ Keep yourself safe. Make decisions with your physical safety in mind. Hang out with individuals who promote solid decision-making and good judgment.
- ✓ Finally, keep your perspective. You only go to high school once, so make the most of the opportunities to join clubs or volunteer, to expose yourself to new people and ideas, and to expand your repertoire of skills. Have some fun every day!!!

All the best from New Trier's post-high school counselors.