

11th Grade Parent/Guardian Meeting
10-8-10
Meeting Notes

WELCOME

Ms. Beth Thomas, 11th Grade Administrator (Beth_F_Thomas@mcpsmd.org)
Ann Joiner, PTSA Co-Chair 11th Grade Parent/Guardian Group (joiner457@aol.com)
Jackie Reeves, PTSA Co-Chair 11th Grade Parent/Guardian Group (jackiereeves@motorola.com)

AFTER-PROM – PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP!!!

Dany Burns, PTSA After-Prom Chair (danyburns@yahoo.com)

- * After-Prom will start on the night of Friday, May 13, 2011
- * Please contact Dany if you're interested in helping with After-Prom for any of the following activities:
 - Planning
 - Help setting up/cleaning up
 - Help during the event (80 parents are needed that night)
- * Dany will be holding a planning meeting on 10/18

KEY DATES FOR JUNIOR YEAR (see notes on college-related items at end of this document)

- * **PSAT – October 13, 2010**
 - Because of the link to scholarship opportunities, Juniors are required to pay \$13 to take the exam
 - 2 Blake students from the class of 2010 and 3 Blake students from the class of 2009 were awarded Merit Scholarships based on their performance on the PSAT
 - As of Thursday, October 8, only 181 out of 452 Juniors had registered for the exam
 - Registration deadline was extended to Monday, October 11th and 11th grade parents were notified via Edline and ConnectEd phone calls
- * PSAT Results Meeting – December 2010
- * **JUNIOR STUDENT AND PARENT MEETING for College Info and Introduction to Naviance – January 2011**
- * **Mock SAT, ACT, Accuplacer – March 4, 2011**
 - Students will choose among these mock exams and take it during the school day on March 4th
 - The ACT is an alternative test to the SAT and is more commonly taken by students in the Midwest and Western US
 - The Accuplacer test is given to students who are interested in attending Montgomery College and the results are used to determine placements in classes

- Mr. Keegan will be holding a workshop for parents and students in December 2010 to help determine which test a student should take
- **It is recommended juniors take SAT in May / June and again early in senior year**

* **College Daze – April 6, 2011**

- Held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Panel discussion with admissions counselors from several schools on the college admissions process
- Overview of key elements of the college admissions process by the Blake Guidance Counselors

* **AP Exams – May 2 – 13, 2011 (Financial help is available for students)**

* **Prom – May 13, 2011**

* **Graduation for Class of 2011 – June 14, 2011 at 10 a.m.**

* **SAT/ACT TEST DATES (Spring 2011):**

- SAT: May 7, 2011 and June 4, 2011
- ACT: June 11, 2011

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES (School Policies, New Rules)

* **IPods or Ear Buds can be seen and used before school, during lunch and after school**

* **No Cell Phones During the School Day**

- First time caught – phone will be taken away and student can get it back at the end of the school day
- Second time caught – adult will have to come to the school to pick up the phone
- PARENTS: Do NOT text your children during the school day! Call the main office (301-879-1300 and leave a message for them – the secretaries are very diligent about getting messages to students).

* **MCPS abolished the Loss of Credit (LC) Policy; Review of Absence Procedures:**

- If your child will not be in school, notify the attendance office by calling 301-879-1322
- Follow up each absence with a note for your child to turn in to the attendance office
- If the absence will be more than 3 days, you will need to provide a doctor's note
- If your child will be leaving school during the school day, have your child turn in a note to the attendance office at the **beginning** of the school day; this allows the school to notify the teachers and have your child ready to leave at the requested time
- No note results in an unexcused absence and teachers are not required to grade any work related to the date of the absence

NEW PROMOTION POLICY

- * **Ms. Thomas reviewed the June 30, 2010 letter from Mrs. Goodman (see attached)**
 - Shows credits needed for graduation as well as the credits needed for each type of class (e.g. English, math, science) in order to be promoted each of the four years in high school
 - All parents should have received their child's transcript last July
 - Transcripts are sent home twice a year (in July and January)
 - Copies of transcripts may also be obtained upon request from Blake's counseling office

READING A TRANSCRIPT (credits your child should have earned at this point)

- * **Ms. Thomas reviewed the transcripts in the attached handout:**
 - 22 credits are needed to graduate (the handout specifies which credits are required for each academic year)
 - A total combined HSA score of 1602 is required for graduation

COLLEGE VISITS

- * Juniors and seniors are allowed 5 excused absences per year for college visits (for a total of 5 school days)
- * The attendance office needs to be notified in advance of planned college visits (ideally at least 5 days before the planned absence); the note should include the date(s) of the visit and the school(s) to be visited
- * Ms. Thomas distributed the attached current list of college visits to Blake's Career Center; juniors may attend these visits by signing up in advance through Mrs. Moore in the Career Center.

NOTES FROM MAY 2010 10th GRADE PARENT/GUARDIAN MEETING ON COLLEGE-RELATED ISSUES

Presenter: Ms. Bernadette White – Resource Teacher of the Blake Counseling Department
(Bernadette_White@mcpsmd.org)

PSAT

- * PSAT will be taken in October.
- * PSAT for Juniors is tied to scholarships (National Merit)

SAT

- * Tests aptitude – what a student should know
- * “East coast” test designed by ETS in New Jersey
- * Test has a required writing component
- * Recommended that students take their first SAT in May/June of Junior year
- * Depending on how scores turn out, student may want to retake again in the fall of senior year
- * SATs are offered at some of the local high schools (Springbrook, Blair, Good Counsel)
- * For information on SAT test dates, see the College Board website at <http://sat.collegeboard.com/register/sat-dates>
- * Blake offers an SAT prep course, which is filled for the next school year, but you can check with your child’s guidance counselor to see if they’re signed up for the class
- * Practice tests for APs and SATs can be found on the Montgomery County Public Library website
- * A lot of information can be found on the Career Center section of Blake’s website. This link: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/blakehs/staff/moorek/> under SAT preparation has helpful information such as:

Please make sure you take advantage of the NEW TCA Final Prep SAT/ACT & PSAT practice program. MCPS is providing this online prep resource so that our students can use it at any time to prepare for both the SAT and ACT. To access this resource, visit the MCPS homepage, www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org, and click on the “for students” tab. The link for "SAT/PSAT & ACT Prep" is in the top left hand corner. Directions for how to access the site are clearly stated. Click on “James Hubert Blake H.S.” Enter your student I.D. as both your username & password. Choose the test for which you wish to prepare. Students can pace themselves through the online course, but should be setting goals, such as 1-2 hours per week for SAT/ACT Prep.

Students who wish to prepare for the ACCUPLACER college placement test, should try the ACT prep questions. Those will best prepare one for the ACCUPLACER.

For the self-motivated student, here are more free SAT or ACT practice sites:

<http://www.number2.com>

http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/prep_one/prep_one.html

<http://www.actexampracticetests.com>

ACT

- * Alternative to the SAT
- * Tests achievement – what you're studying
- * “Mid west” test, Iowa based
- * Test has an optional writing section
- * Most colleges will accept both SATs and ACTs
- * Blake recommends that students take both tests – some students do better on one test versus the other

ACCUPLACER

- * Placement test to figure out where to place a student once they are admitted to a school
- * Montgomery College uses Accuplacer to place students in classes
- * Blake offers Accuplacer to seniors in February

SAT SUBJECT TESTS

- * Required by some colleges (typically the more competitive schools)
- * Not all subject tests are offered on a given at every test date. For example, the world history subject test is only offered in June and December. Since the world history class is taken junior year, the ideal time to take this subject test would be June of Junior year.
- * The SAT notes above have a link for the SAT test dates; this link also includes the SAT subject tests that are offered on each date (attached is a PDF file with the information from this link)
- * Blake offers Accuplacer to seniors in February

NAVIANCE

- * Students will be introduced to Naviance at the beginning of Junior year
- * Naviance is an on-line tool with a wealth of college-related information
- * Naviance has assessments to help students determine a list of colleges, has detailed information on colleges, provides a comparison of the student's scores to colleges they are interested in, compares the students GPA/test scores to all other Blake students who applied to a given school, and provides a means for the Blake guidance/career staff to alert students to upcoming school visits as well as possible scholarship opportunities

APs

- * Blake encourages students to take AP tests, where feasible
- * Per Ms. White, from a college admission perspective, it is better for a student to have a “B” in an honors level class rather than a “C” or “D” in an AP class
- * Only AP Chemistry is being offered next year; AP Physics did not have a big enough enrollment to have a class. There may be an option for students to take AP Physics at Paint Branch.
- * MCPS does offer on-line AP classes, but students need approval from Blake's administration to take these classes

CAREER CENTER

- * Blake's career center has a wealth of resources and students/parents are encouraged to check it out!