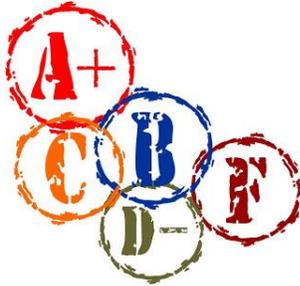




Suffield High School

Monthly Counseling Office Newsletter

Q3 Progress Reports



Third quarter progress reports will be mailed home the week of February 27th. Hopefully, your student is doing well and making positive progress as the year quickly “moves along.” If you have ANY questions about your student’s status in a particular course, please feel free to call the high school (860-668-3810) or email the appropriate teacher. Any student needing some academic assistance can find it after school on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in our Media Center from 2:30-3:30. Teachers in all core subject areas are available on these days to help any student, so please encourage your student to take advantage of the opportunity! A late bus leaves SHS on these days at 3:45PM so transportation is provided!

Special Program – College Connections

College Connections is a unique program of dual credit for high school juniors and seniors interested in the exciting world of high technology manufacturing careers. The program offers coursework in ***Precision CNC Machining and Welding Technologies***. Students participate on a partial-day basis, 5 days a week in program activities. Students receive both high school and college credit while participating in college pathways programs that offer both personal development and career employment in the high tech manufacturing sector. Manufacturers today are seeking well educated young people. Asnuntuck Community College is a leader in preparing young people for real and well-paying long-term careers in aerospace and other leading edge industries. College Connections graduates also have greater access to scholarship and internship options. Please contact your school counselor if you’d like to learn more about participating in this program. ****Asnuntuck Community College will host an Open House on Thursday, March 30, 2017 from 5:30-7:30 pm. Interested students and parents are encouraged to attend to learn more about the Machine Technology and College Connections Programs.***

\$ CT Dollars & Sense \$

A partnership of State agencies has launched *CT Dollars & Sense*, a new on-line portal that provides one convenient website for Connecticut students and parents to find out how to plan, save and pay for college. *CT Dollars & Sense* - www.CTDollarsandSense.com - combines college planning and financial literacy information from five separate agencies: the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET), the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA), the Office of Higher Education, the Department of Banking, and the Department of Consumer Protection. Students can get information on scholarships, loans, and college savings plans, and also learn how to budget their money or find internships. In addition, iGrad provides financial literacy information and resources on the site.

The site’s welcome message reads, “Welcome to CT Dollars & Sense, Connecticut’s one-stop shop for helping you plan, save and pay for college. We have the information that you need – whether you’re trying to save, looking for scholarships, considering a loan, or just want to figure out how to put it all together. CT Dollars & Sense – a great resource for Connecticut students and their families.”

State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier, Trustee of CHET, Connecticut's 529 College Savings Program, stated, "College affordability has become an important issue for families across the state and the country, with a lack of adequate financing causing an increasing number of students to go deeply into debt or, in some cases, drop out. CHET is proud to play a part in making college education more accessible for Connecticut families despite the headwinds of our time. This new website – by offering information on saving for college, student loan options, financial aid, and scholarships, all in one place and in easy to understand language – should prove invaluable to our State's students and their families."

CHESLA Executive Director Jeanette W. Weldon added that "this new website is informative and easy to use. Students can learn how to handle their finances and plan for future careers using a lot of fun, interactive content that will help improve their financial literacy."

Keith Norton, Acting Executive Director of the Office of Higher Education also emphasized that "Financial literacy is a critical skill which our young people must possess as they prepare for both careers and running their own households. CT Dollars & Sense provides students the opportunity to develop a keen understanding of personal financial responsibility while at the same time providing critical information used to determine how best to finance higher education costs."

CTDollarsandSense.com is accessible on a computer or mobile device. The site is being promoted through school counselors and financial aid offices, and will be regularly updated with new information.

Fight Cyber Bullying

According to the National Crime Prevention Council, an increasing number of young people are being victimized by cyber bullying. In a recent survey, half of the 3,000 youth contacted said that they or someone they knew had been victims or perpetrators of cyber bullying – using email, instant messaging, text messages and defamatory personal web sites to threaten, embarrass, and ostracize their peers.

Unlike traditional bullying, cyber bullying can take place any time of the day or night. A cyber bully can be anonymous and can distribute hurtful messages and images to a very wide audience. The most common way that young people are cyber bullied is through instant messaging. Somewhat less common ways involve the use of chat rooms, emails and messages posted on Web sites. Girls are nearly twice as likely as boys to be both victims and bullies.



What can teens do to keep from becoming victims of cyber bullying? According to the National Crime Prevention Council:

- Do not give out personal information online, whether in instant message profiles, chat rooms, blogs or personal Web sites.
- Never tell anyone your password, even friends.
- If someone sends a mean or threatening message, don't respond. Save it or print it out and show it to an adult.
- Never open emails from someone you don't know or from someone you know is a bully.
- Help peers who are harassed online by not joining in.

Stop Bullying Now also suggests steps parents can take to help their children:

- Keep home computer(s) in easily viewable places, such as the family room or kitchen.
- Talk regularly with your child about online activities he or she is involved in.
- Encourage your child to tell you if he or she is aware of anyone who may



be the victim of cyber bullying.

- Explain that cyber bullying is harmful and unacceptable behavior.
- Tell your child that you may review his or her online communications if you think there is a reason for concern. Explain that your concern for his or her safety outweighs their need for privacy.
- Consider installing parental control filtering software and/or tracking programs. (More than 70 percent of teens reported to the National Crime Prevention Council that being able to block cyber bullies was the most effective method of prevention.

CYBER BULLYING RESOURCES

For more information about preventing cyber bullying and promoting cyber safety, check out the following resources:

www.ncpc.org: The National Crime Prevention Council's Web site features its Cyber Bullying Research Report, which includes information from a survey of 824 teens on aspects of cyber bullying such as reasons for bullying, reactions to bullying, effective ways to prevent bullying.

www.wiredsafety.org: Wired Safety provides Internet safety information for children, teens, and adults. The Web site also has an important resource for parents – a downloadable translator for cyber-lingo and acronyms used by teens.

www.stopcyberbullying.org: Provides relevant cyber bullying prevention and Internet safety information for parents, teachers, and police officers, as well as children and youth.

Taken from: The Springfield Republican

Author: Lauren Solotar, Ph.D., chief psychologist and senior vice president, behavioral health services, May Institute

Reminder To Junior Parents



Junior Parents are reminded to call the School Counseling Office (860 668-3813) to make an appointment to meet with their counselor to discuss college planning. Counselors are hoping to meet with every Junior and their parents/guardians to assist in planning for life after SHS. During the meeting, counselors will review a college planning calendar; encourage juniors to plan ahead on visiting colleges during the upcoming school vacation; seek letters of recommendation later this spring; and begin thinking about ideas for a college application essay. Counselors would also like to show parents the Naviance/Family Connections online college planning program that we recently demonstrated to all juniors as part of a classroom lesson. This customized program is an excellent tool that juniors have been encouraged to use frequently throughout the college search process to identify schools that fit them best in terms of personal preferences and academic qualifications. We look forward to meeting with you and your junior, so please call to arrange an appointment at your earliest convenience.

ACT/SAT Registration Deadlines Near!

Juniors are once again reminded that April 7th is the regular registration deadline for the May 6th SAT Administration. Most juniors should be planning to take the SAT (with writing) at this time. **All juniors will take the SAT (without the written essay option) here at SHS during the school day on April 5th**, but many should plan to take the test again this spring in May or June (with the optional essay this time). Students should register online at www.collegeboard.com. When

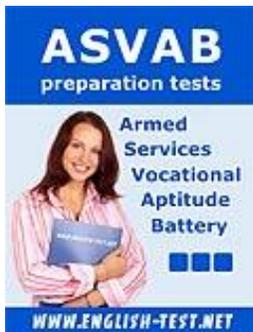


registering online, remember that SHS is located in West Suffield.

Juniors are also reminded to register now for either the April 8th or June 10th ACT (with writing) administration at www.actstudent.org. All juniors should plan to take both the SAT and ACT this spring, as colleges will accept results from either the SAT or ACT, so it's in the student's best interest to **take both tests** to see which one yields the stronger scores before submitting scores to colleges.

What's an ASVAB?

Is your junior or senior just not sure what career direction to follow? On March 23, 2017, the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) will be administered at Suffield High School. The ASVAB, sponsored by the Department of Defense, is a vocational aptitude battery consisting of ten short tests which cover the areas of General Science, Arithmetic Reasoning, Word Knowledge, Operations, Coding Speed, and Auto and Shop Information. The results of the ten individual tests are combined to provide three "academic" and four "occupational" composite scores. The academic composites are Verbal, Math, and Academic Ability; the occupational composites are Mechanical and Crafts, Business and Clerical, Electronic and Electrical and Health, Social and Technology.



Taking the ASVAB and completing the workbook, which accompanies the results, will provide your student with information that will help to determine a career direction.

The Department of Defense administers the test at no cost. Even though the test is government sponsored, it does not mean your son or daughter is under any military obligation of any kind. Interested students should sign up in the guidance office by Monday, March 13, 2017.

Juniors Take Note

The following information was taken from a letter to prospective college students from a local college. It is very representative of the kind of message all colleges want to send to potential candidates for admission! It's also very timely considering that juniors will soon begin finalizing their schedules for next year.

Dear Prospective Students:

Your senior year courses and grades matter very much in the college admissions process. Don't become one of the students denied admissions to a college of your choice because you opted to take a minimal and lightweight course load for your last year of high school.
You still have time to avoid this mistake.

Colleges are looking for motivated learners, and there are several ways we evaluate motivation: course selection and levels, AP exams, attendance, and effort reflected in teacher comments and recommendations. Colleges view a willingness to take a challenging curriculum throughout high school as a good indicator of success in college. The more you challenge yourself, the better prepared you will be for college.

Note that doing well on the SATs or ACTs will not make up for a weak senior year curriculum.

Our college definitely looks at senior year grades and course load. A lightweight or unchallenging academic load in senior year can be the basis for a decision to deny admission to an applicant. For

example, one applicant, who had already met the high school's minimum graduation requirements, was taking only Human Relationships and Film Appreciation for the entire senior year! The Admissions Committee voted to deny this applicant.

Students who are enrolled in AP courses are strongly encouraged to take the AP exam. This is one way to continue to challenge yourself; plus your grade on the exam could earn you college credit. Taking the exam cannot hurt your academic record, regardless of how you do on it; not taking the exam is a lost opportunity. **At SHS, school policy requires students enrolled in AP courses to take the AP exam in order to get AP credit and recognition on their transcript.**

If you have questions about course choices available to you here at SHS, be sure to speak to your school counselor. Colleges also welcome your call or e-mail to their admission office if you have questions about our their specific requirements/recommendations.

National College Fairs

The National Association for College Admission Counseling will host two local National College Fairs, one **on Monday evening, April 3rd from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Eastern States Exposition (The Big E) in West Springfield, MA**, and the other on **Tuesday, April 4th from 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM at the CT Convention Center in Hartford**. SHS students, particularly juniors, and their folks are encouraged to attend and take advantage of these opportunities to speak with some of the hundreds of college representatives who will be in attendance at both fairs. Students should see their counselor prior to the fairs to identify a list of colleges that best fit their needs so they'll use their time at the fair most efficiently. A complete listing of colleges represented at each fair is available at www.nacacnet.org.



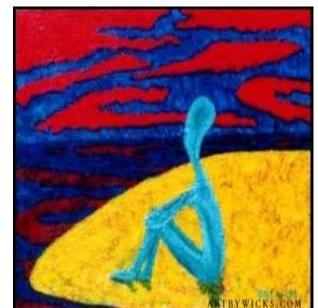
Questions to Ask College Reps

- ❖ **How can I arrange a campus visit? Are there any special visitation days on your campus?**
- ❖ What are the applicant's deadlines for admissions and financial aid?
- ❖ How do you assign faculty advisors to students, especially those who are undecided about their majors?
- ❖ When must I choose a major?
- ❖ What percentage of the students are commuter students?
- ❖ What types of extra-curricular activities are there on campus?
- ❖ How accessible are the professors outside of class?
- ❖ How are roommates selected?
- ❖ What additional academic services do you offer to students (tutoring, career counseling, and study skills workshops)?
- ❖ What types of internship/co-op experiences are available?
- ❖ How safe is your school? Where can I obtain statistics about crimes on your campus?



Wallowing on the Waitlist

You rip open the long-awaited admissions letter, only to find the waiting isn't over. Expecting either admit or deny, you find yourself in limbo on the waitlist. Increasingly, colleges are using the waitlist as an enrollment management tool – unsure of how many students will accept their offer of admission, colleges place otherwise qualified applicants on hold. What do you do now?



First, consider your choices. If you would really prefer to attend one of the other colleges that accepted you, write a note to “Wait List University”, thanking them for their interest, but refusing their offer of a position on the wait-list. On the other hand, if W-L-U is your number one choice, immediately write a letter expressing your continued interest in attending, and letting them know that you would be very receptive to an offer of admission. Call the admissions office and find out how their wait-list works (are students ranked, when do they expect to go to the waitlist?), and ask if they’d like to receive your latest grades, samples of work, additional recommendations. Speak to your counselor, too, about a phone call on your behalf.

If “Wait List University” is still high on your list (but not first choice), you might still choose to remain on the waitlist. Keep in mind, though, that few colleges will accept waitlisted students who have not expressed further interest in the form of a phone call and/or letter. Statistically speaking, being accepted from the waitlist is unlikely (you might want to ask how many were offered admission in the last few years) so you may need to make an emotional and financial commitment to one of the colleges that have already accepted you. So treat the waitlist as an “unlikely”, and consider all the reasons your other colleges are right for you.

Taken from: *The College Advisor*

Scholarship Reminder

Seniors are reminded to check the local scholarship board in the counseling office weekly as many new applications continue to arrive! Seniors needing transcripts to accompany scholarship applications are also reminded to request them in writing at least two weeks before the application due date to allow sufficient time for processing. Don’t miss out on an opportunity to gain some financial assistance for college. Check the scholarship board weekly and ask your counselor if you need assistance.



Comparing Financial Aid Award Letters

You may receive award letters from different colleges. Keep the following in mind when making your final decision:

Look carefully at your award letters: Letters from different schools will probably have their figures and costs in different formats. Compare award letters to see how their offers measure up. Ask if outside scholarships will affect your aid.

Compare loan offers: Interest rates, how interest compounds, repayment terms and cancellation provisions can vary widely from loan to loan.

Compare affordability of aid offers over time: Ask how your financial aid package will change over time. The aid package made available to you in your senior year may look very different from the one you were offered freshman year.

Look beyond the “sticker price”: The school with the lowest cost of attendance may not be the most affordable. The amount and type of aid offered will influence affordability.

Don’t accept an offer just because it has the lowest “unmet need”: You may save more by accepting an offer with a higher unmet need, if the aid package offers scholarships, grants and work-study instead of loans.

Compare like terms: How do the schools determine cost of attendance? Do they all include direct costs as well as indirect costs? How do they handle outside scholarships? What work-study options are available? What are wages like? Can you substitute work for a loan?

How to Help Your School Counselor Help You

Ask your counselor if you’re on the right track for graduation and college preparation. Make sure you’re taking the kinds of courses that will make you a competitive college applicant when that time comes.

- ❖ Keep your counselor “in the loop.” He or she will be your best advocate throughout the college application process. If there are personal circumstances that affect your record, your counselor will be the one to explain them in a letter of recommendation.
- ❖ Find out which AP courses and exams are available at your school. Taking an AP course helps prepare you for college work. Even better, the vast majority of colleges and universities in the U.S., and many outside the U.S., grant either academic credit, advanced placement, or both to incoming students with qualifying AP grades. This can save you money!
- ❖ Your counselor might also organize after-school or evening sessions for college planning, preparing for the SAT, or financial aid. Ask when the next event is scheduled.
- ❖ Ask about college fairs at your school or in your community. A college fair is a great opportunity to talk to admission personnel about what a college is really like.
- ❖ Tell your counselor about the colleges that interest you. Your counselor knows you and your record and can probably suggest other colleges that would match you well.
- ❖ If you’re undecided about what major or career you want to pursue, your counselor can connect you with a wealth of resources to help you think about your future, including career counseling and computerized interest assessments.
- ❖ Remember, it’s your job to do the legwork. While your counselor can give you advice and point you to the right resources, it’s up to you to stay on top of opportunities and deadlines.



Taken from: Collegeboard.com

Summer Programs Should Enrich, Not Exhaust Students

While winter continues in the Northeast, high-school sophomores and juniors should start planning for the summer months. Summer is the perfect time for teenagers to secure their first job, attend a summer program or volunteer in their local community. By no means should these ventures consume the entire summer or all of the student's free time; teenagers need time to relax, reflect and refuel for the school year, yet they should strive to test themselves in a different way than they do during the school year.



Often parents and students ask about experiences that will be valuable in the eyes of college admissions counselors. This approach to summer planning is misdirected. College admissions counselors do not value certain activities more than they do others; they reward students who follow their passions. In other words, a summer academic program at Georgetown is not necessarily more “valuable” than a summer job. In fact, most counselors would place greater value on the summer job, because of the initiative and responsibility it demonstrates.

In addition, there is the myth that attending an academic program at a college of interest will “help” in the admissions process. The reality is that summer programs held at prestigious colleges are run by a separate office from the admissions office, are often very expensive and will not distinguish an applicant for that college. Despite my counsel, I have had many students who have attended summer programs at Brown, Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania in the hope it would give them an edge in gaining admission to that college, but it did not open the doors as desired. To them, attending these programs was a waste of time. If their goal, however, was to have an experience that was personally enriching, then they were satisfied.

Goals for the summer, then, should focus on the students' interests and how they would like to stretch themselves. Working may satisfy many students' needs and have the benefit of providing spending money, while summer camps and academic programs tend to deplete financial resources yet offer the chance for students to gain insight into a prospective major or career or simply have a very different experience from those within the school community.

Cost and scope of summer programs vary considerably. Some extend for five weeks and can cost as much as \$7,000, where others may be a weeklong and be free or relatively inexpensive. Here are a few examples: Penn State offers students interested in journalism, film, broadcast journalism or sports journalism five days of intensive study of one of these areas for approximately \$600 which includes meals and housing. Susquehanna University offers a seven-day Leadership Institute to Entrepreneurship that provides insight into the business world for \$595. Lycoming College hosts a free, one-week program that exposes students to business called Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week. Cornell University offers a weeklong program to expose female students to engineering for a total cost of \$550. Local universities also offer high-school students college classes or enrichment courses at discounted rates.

(The SHS School Counseling Department maintains a Summer Opportunities file in our office that interested students and parents are welcome to browse through at any time.)

Taken From: College Countdown
Author: Karen Mason

Applying for "Outside Credit"

Students wishing to enroll in educational programs in institutions other than Suffield High School, and receive elective "academic level" credit towards a Suffield High School diploma, **MUST** have prior approval to do so. It is the student's responsibility to complete the required application form **prior to** enrolling in any outside course. Students are also responsible for attaching a complete course description, including the total hours of instruction provided, before approval can be given. An official grade report or transcript, sent directly to SHS from the school or program you've attended, is required in order to receive credit on your SHS transcript. **Please note that school policy allows for no more than 2.0 elective credits from outside courses be counted toward the 24.0 graduation requirement.**

FOR SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS!



Capitol Region Interdistrict Leadership Academy

A Capitol Region Education Council Program

111 Charter Oak Avenue • Hartford, CT 06106
Contact: Julia Winer, Program Manager
Phone (860) 223-0726 • Fax (860) 509-3632
www.creccrila.com • crila@crec.org

Are you a student who has the following characteristics?

- The ability to lead;
- Strong academic standing;
- The ability to work successfully with others; and
- An interest in and a commitment to community service.

If so, the Capitol Region Interdistrict Leadership Academy invites you to apply for one of 30 positions in the 2017-2018 Academy which will include:

- A seven day Outward Bound experience in Colorado in June.
- The chance to develop community service projects throughout the Hartford area!
- The opportunity to earn high school credit!
- The opportunity to make many new friends!
- An experience that will help your leadership skills show and grow!

Successful applicants will meet several times during the spring of 2017 and will travel together to Leadville, Colorado for an Outward Bound experience in June. During the 2017-2018 school year, Academy members will meet regularly to work on a variety of community service projects and to study Leadership.

Students are selected based on their current academic standing and an essay which demonstrates their desire to be a participant in the CRILA program, provides examples of their leadership

experiences, and explains the challenges leaders of today face. If you believe you are a good candidate for the Capitol Region Interdistrict Leadership Academy, fill out the application and mail by **March 17, 2017**. Questions? Contact Karen Mooney, Program Manager at: (860) 223-0726 x7771 or crila@crec.org

PICK UP AN APPLICATION TODAY IN THE SHS COUNSELING OFFICE!

March Calendar of Events

- 1** Quarter 3 progress reports mailed home this week.
- 3** Deadline to register for April 8th ACT with Writing.
- 11** SAT Administration
- 17** All 9th graders will complete a Career Interest Profiler using Naviance with counselors during English I classes.
- 23** Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Test at SHS.
- 27** All 10th graders will complete a Resume draft with counselors using Naviance during English II classes.

