

Morris Hills Guidance News



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Fall 2011

Sophomores to Begin Career Planning

Counselors will be working with sophomores in English classes in December to begin the career exploration process. Students will use the Naviance program to take the "Do What You Are" career interest inventory that will identify student interests and provide links to related college majors, jobs, and career paths. Students will be able to save and/or print all information, which will also be used in an interdisciplinary project through the English classes.

PSAT Results Available in December

All sophomores and juniors took the PSAT in October. Test scores will be distributed in mid-December. Students will review PSAT questions and answers in English and math classes as part of the Morris Hills SAT Enhancement Program. Test booklets will be returned after this review is completed. We will also be hosting a PSAT Interpretation Night for students and parents on Thursday, January 12th in the library: sophomores at 7 PM and juniors at 8 PM.

SAT Preparation Materials Available to All Students

The Morris Hills Regional District has partnered with *Peterson's Total Online Prep Solution (TOPS)* to bring all students free online test preparation for the SAT I and II, PSAT, ACT, and AP Exams. This resource also includes useful information on career planning and the college search process. To access TOPS website, go to <http://www.mystudentedge.com> and enter the access code QFSHXSFK. We also offer Kaplan and Princeton Review SAT prep courses at a discounted rate. Information is posted through Naviance and is also available in the Guidance Office.

Naviance Update

All students have been registered for Naviance, a interactive guidance career and college planning program made available to all students in the district. Naviance allows students to research careers and colleges, write resumes, take interest and study skills inventories, apply for scholarships, and track college applications. Also, Naviance allows the school to communicate students and parents informed about upcoming events and opportunities via email.

If you are a parent and would like to receive email correspondences from Naviance as well as have full access to your student's individual Naviance account. You may:

- 1) Have your child log in to his/her Naviance account. They can add your name and email address to their profile

or

- 2) Contact guidance at (973) 664-2329 or email Ms. Rivera at rivera@mhrd.k12.nj.us.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec 6-7 CCM Instant Decision Days
- Dec 8 Grade 12 Financial Aid Night, 7PM in the Chorus Room.
- Dec 9 Last Day to Submit Transcript Requests for Colleges with a January 1 deadline
- Dec 15 Mid-Point, 2nd Marking Period. Go to: <http://www.edline.net> to review the grades.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's progress, please don't hesitate to reach out to us!

Contact	Telephone Number	Email
Guidance Office (General)	973-664-2329	N/A
Ms. Yesenia Rivera	973-664-2313	yrivera@mhrd.k12.nj.us
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Mrs. Susan Young	973-664-2317	syoung@mhrd.k12.nj.us
Ms. Nicole Mitarotonda	973-664-2319	nmitarotonda@mhrd.k12.nj.us

Senior Checklist

Seniors should be working on college applications. The following items should be completed as soon as possible:

- ☑ **Activities Sheet/Resume:** Include all extra-curricular activities, work experience, community service, and awards/honors.
- ☑ **Teacher Recommendation Requests:** Letters should be requested at least 2 weeks in advance of the deadline.
- ☑ **Financial Aid**—don't forget to attend our Financial Aid Night on Dec. 16th to learn all about the FAFSA!
- ☑ **Transcript Request Forms:** Fill out one form for each college or scholarship and return to your Guidance Counselor at least 2 weeks before the due date.
- ☑ **Scholarships:** All local scholarships are posted on Naviance. Log in to your Naviance account and click on "Scholarship List" to download applications.
- ☑ **Test Scores:** All scores should be sent to your colleges directly from the testing agency (College Board or ACT). Many schools no longer accept scores listed on the high school transcript.

For Freshmen Parents

Now that you've received your child's first marking period report card, you may want to touch base with teachers and counselors regarding any questions or concerns you may have.

If your child is struggling in a course, we recommend your child do one or more of the following:

- 1) Make an appointment to see the teacher for feedback or extra help.
- 2) Talk to your counselor about study skills, time management, or arranging a peer tutor.
- 3) Find a study buddy—someone in your class who's doing well and can help you prepare for the next big assignment or test.

Junior College Planning

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- Make every effort to do your best academically—colleges often look closely at junior year to see if you've kept up your grades as the coursework gets more difficult.
- Explore colleges through Naviance and at college fairs. Sign up for the mailing lists of colleges you're interested in.
- Meet with your counselor to discuss PSAT results and information regarding SAT I prep courses.
- Determine how you will prepare for the SAT I. You can choose from a self-study program, review courses, online prep programs, and individual tutoring. Take into consideration things like time available, how much you want to spend, and your learning style.
- Talk to your teachers during pre-scheduling in January to discuss what courses you should take during your senior year.

Financial Aid Forms

When applying to college, there are 3 different financial aid forms you may have to fill out:

- 1) **FAFSA**—The Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This form is the basis for all federal financial aid and is required by almost every college in the country. You can file the FAFSA after January 1st of the senior year by applying online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Want to get an early start? Download the FAFSA worksheet (at the same website) and gather the necessary information. Morris Hills will have a financial aid expert available on December 18th at our annual Financial Aid Night to walk you through the process and answer any questions.
- 2) **CSS Profile**—This financial aid form is required by some private colleges in addition to the FAFSA. To fill out the CSS profile, or to find out whether you need to fill this form out, visit their website at www.profileonline.collegeboard.com. There is a cost for filling out the Profile and for sending reports to your colleges.
- 3) **Institutional Financial Aid Forms**—Some colleges will ask you to fill out a financial aid form of their own, in addition to the FAFSA and/or CSS profile. Check with each college's admissions or financial aid office to make sure you've filled out all of the necessary paperwork.

MORRIS HILLS TO OFFER PRACTICE SAT/ACT

On Saturday, March 10th, we will be offering a practice SAT/ACT exam to interested juniors. This diagnostic exam will come with an interpretative score report that will allow students and parents to assess whether they should opt for the SAT or ACT. Registration forms will be sent home in February.

NCAA Eligibility

Seniors who intend to play Division I or Division II athletics in college are reminded that they must register immediately with the NCAA Eligibility center at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

COLLEGE VISITS

Visiting campus is an important part of the college search process. While it may not be possible to visit every school you are thinking about, it is important to conduct an official visit to any schools you consider your top choices. As the admissions process becomes more competitive, some colleges, like Lehigh University and Washington University in St. Louis, will deny students who have not demonstrated their interest with an official campus visit. If it is not possible for you to visit, notify your counselor.

What is an official campus visit? An official visit is one where you call ahead to make arrangements with the admissions office for an information session and/or a campus tour. Most colleges keep track of who has shown interest by scheduling a visit and who has not.

You can arrange a college visit by calling the admissions office at least two weeks in advance. It may even be possible for you to sit in on a class, eat in the dining hall, and participate in other activities that will give you a real feel for school life. It is important that you see for yourself whether or not the colleges you are considering are a good match for your interests, abilities, talents, and personality—and the best way to do that is by visiting!

SHOULD YOU TAKE THE ACT?

Everyone has heard of the SAT, but more and more students are opting instead to take the ACT an alternative to the SAT that is accepted by all major colleges and universities in the United States.

The ACT differs from the SAT in that test questions are based on a students' knowledge of topics covered in a traditional high school curriculum rather than the SAT's focus on reasoning skills. The ACT tests students in the areas of reading, English, mathematics, and science. There is also an optional writing section. The ACT is scored on a scale of 36 (the highest score)—students receive a score for each individual section as well as a composite score.

Students choose to take the ACT for a variety of reasons—perhaps they have not performed well on the SAT or they are more comfortable with the format of the questions on the ACT. Since most colleges will take either your highest SAT or highest ACT, some students take both and compare their scores.

You can learn more about the ACT by contacting your counselor or visiting the website at www.actstudent.org.