



Patrick Walsh, Ed.D
Principal

Rockville Centre Union Free School District SOUTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOL



Kelly Ramsey
Director of School Counseling K-12

Counselors: Greg Brennan, Kevin Downey, Alexandra Foukalas, Marcy Pedone, Joanna Zweben

Dear 11th Grade Parent,

November, 2023

The junior year in high school is a very important year that will lead to conversations about your child's post-secondary plans. College Admissions look at course selection, grades, standardized test scores (SAT and ACT), and extra-curricular activities, including athletics and community services. It is critical that students remain focused on their goals and work toward successful completion of the school year. On Tuesday, **November 14, 2023**, counselors will be visiting 11th-grade English classes to distribute and explain two important forms to students.

The first will be the *Junior Awards Application*. The questions will be answered and completed in Google Classroom titled Junior Awards (class of 2025) using code 6lgy42m. A committee will use this information to nominate candidates for approximately thirty certificates which will be presented during a morning ceremony in June. In order to be considered for one of these prestigious awards, the application must be completed by **December 19, 2023**. Late applications will not be accepted!

The second will be the *Junior Packet Checklist*. The contents of the checklist will be completed online on the student's Naviance account. Once all forms are submitted, students will then set up a 15-minute pre-meeting to review the information. Your child's counselor will then contact you to schedule the Junior Conference. You will be provided with a comprehensive overview of the college application process along with a list of suitable post-secondary institutions to consider. Junior Conferences will begin as early as **January 2024**, and the deadline to submit the packet is **December 19, 2023**. Please encourage your child to complete the forms early, so that they have a pro-active plan in place for the remainder of the year.

Naviance is our computer program that you and your child can use to help in making decisions about colleges and careers. Naviance is linked with College Planner, a service that we use in our office to track and analyze data about college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information that is specific to our school. Naviance will also enable us to share information with you and your child about upcoming meetings and events, scholarship opportunities, college representative visits to the Counseling Center, and other Web resources. Students can log into their account by clicking on the "waffle" in their Google account.

The Counseling Center is currently engaged in processing college applications for seniors. While immersed in this process, our thoughts wander to the next class and the advice that we might share regarding the following issues and the decisions associated with them:

Early Decision: This option requires the student to apply as early as October and becomes a commitment to attend that college if accepted. It is an advantage to the institution because it is one less spot in their freshman class that must be filled. It is an advantage to the student because all the stress of applying and waiting for responses is removed. Obviously, the student can only make a commitment to one such school so the process of finding the ideal school must begin earlier.

Early Decision might be the right choice for those who are qualified and have done enough research to know that their heart is set on one particular school. However, it is not for everyone. There are disadvantages to the process as well. Is the student ready to commit him/herself? Is the parent also ready to commit? Can you deal with rejection if the student is not accepted? Are finances a consideration? If so, are you ready to accept an offer from only one school?

Not all institutions follow the same Early Decision notification process. Some applicants are rejected outright, but most are deferred, which means the application will be considered again with everyone else in the regular applicant pool. Once deferred, the student is no longer obligated to attend that college. Each college maintains its own statistics. At an information session given by a college representative, the student can learn whether or not it might be an advantage at that particular school.

Early Action: Like Early Decision, the deadline to apply is often by November 1st, but could be as early as October 15th. However, it is not a binding commitment. Many students choose this option as it affords the opportunity to receive an answer early in their senior year. However, the student could be accepted, rejected or deferred into the regular applicant pool to be reviewed again.

Single Choice or Restricted Early Action: This is a relatively new option. Even though it is not a binding agreement, some institutions offer an early action application that restricts students from applying early action and/or early decision to any other institution. This option makes it even more important for students to carefully read the fine print on each college website in order to understand the particular policy that applies to that school.

Rolling: Apply at any time.

Regular Decision: Deadlines vary.

College visits: Should begin during the junior year, perhaps during February or spring recess. Please notify the Attendance Office in advance with a note. Obtain documentation from the admissions office to provide proof that you were there. The absence will become a legal absence and will not count towards jeopardy.

NCAA: Athletes who hope to compete on a Division I or II sports team in college should file an eligibility form in the spring. Applications are submitted online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. Please remember to also tell the Counseling Center so that we may send a transcript as well.

College Credit Opportunities: Students may earn transferable college credits from Molloy University in IB Biology, IB Chemistry, IB Physics, IB Environmental Systems, IB Art, Creative Writing, College Marketing, College Accounting and College Business Law. Students may earn transferable college credits from Stony Brook University in IB Spanish and IB French. See your teacher for details.

Scheduling for Next Year: will take place in February as students meet with school counselors. The **2024/25** Program Planning Guide listing of all courses offered will be available on the district website, www.rvcschools.org in January. Please use this when discussing course selections with your children. It is crucial that all requirements for graduation be met.

PSAT: Information for accessing scores was emailed to you on October 17th. Use this opportunity to assess strengths and weaknesses and begin to review for the SAT or ACT exams.

SAT and/or ACT: exams should be taken in February, March, April, May and June. Do not wait to register until the last minute to avoid late fees and the possibility of not getting the testing location of your choice. Register at collegeboard.org and ACT.org. School code # 334885. SSHS testing #33822.

Letters of Recommendation: Submit request forms to teachers for college recommendations by June 1st.

Be sure to attend our College Symposium at SSHS on January 31st and HOLLER College Consortium at Molloy University on May 23rd

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's counselor.

Yours sincerely,

Kelly Ramsey

Kelly Ramsey
Director of School Counseling