

Counseling Office News

Counselors

TEAM 10/12

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L-Z Jocelyn Paolozzi

TEAM 9/11

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Secretaries

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Mrs. Snyder

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Attention Sophomores:

PSAT/NMSQT Registration for Fall 2019

The PSAT/NMSQT—The Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The PSAT is a practice version of the SAT, a college entrance exam, and a test that is used to determine scholarship winners from a variety of sources. This is an optional test that is NOT used for college admissions. **We strongly encourage all upcoming juniors (this year's sophomores) to take this**

for both practice and to qualify for National Merit Scholarships. Current sophomores who have already taken the PSAT can take it again. *Only the 11th grade score counts for merit scholarship consideration.* For the 2019-2020 school year, the PSAT will be on Saturday, **October 19th from 7:30—11:30** at the high school. Registration is through the Community Education Office: www.spencerportschools.org;

click on the “Parents & Community” tab, then on the [Class Registration Page](#) link.

Registration must be completed no later than June 28, 2019. Sophomores, please be on the lookout for the PSAT flyer that is being mailed home by the Community Education Office.

Please contact the Community Education Office at 349-5681 with registration questions.

Seniors—In The Home Stretch

Graduating seniors are nearing the finish line of college planning! Though it may seem like the hard work is finished, it's no time to give in to “senioritis.”

More and more colleges and universities are carefully monitoring grades and extracurricular involvement right up until graduation. The performance in the final semester can mean the difference between being taken off a wait list or making alternative plans. Keep up on school-

work and extracurricular leadership roles.

Decisions still need to be made. Financial aid offers will arrive soon, if they haven't already, and this may impact attendance decisions. Review offers—and all of the other decision-making factors—when choosing a school. It is possible to appeal the financial aid package, but often the first offer will be the best one.

And then there's summer. Start thinking

about how to spend these months. Would a job provide more perspective on a future career? Is volunteering a wise use of time? Is it appropriate to get a head start on the freshman literature reading list? Now is a good time to decide how you'll spend your time between graduation and the fall term.

ACT's News You Can Use

Reminder Regarding College and Scholarship Applications

College and scholarship applications are due to the Counseling Office **at least 5 school days** before the deadline to guarantee on-time delivery. You must submit an application cover sheet for all requests. Forms can be found on the High School website or in the Counseling Office. Please do not wait for the last minute!

DATES TO REMEMBER

REPORT CARDS & FINAL EXAMS

4th Quarter Progress Reports available on Infinite Campus May 23rd

Local In-class Finals May 28th—June 17th

Regents Exam in Global History—June 3rd; all other Regents Exams June 18th—June 25th

Final Report Card mailed July 1st

ATTENTION FRESHMEN & SOPHOMORES WITH

APPROVED TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS:

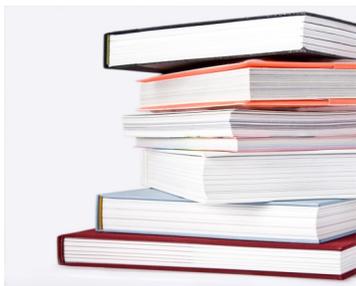
A student with a documented disability *may* be eligible to take AP, PSAT, SAT, and ACT college entrance tests with testing accommodations. To be eligible, the student must:

- Have documented learning disability on file at school (IEP, 504 Plan, Declass Plan) that supports the need for accommodations.
- Complete a testing accommodation eligibility form for each college entrance test.

Consent Forms to request accommodations for the PSAT/SAT/AP programs will be mailed home during the week of April 22nd. This form allows us to submit student records that document the existence of a disability to the College Board. Please sign and return the forms to the Counseling Office by May 3rd, 2019.

Students who are interested in accommodations for the ACT must meet with their counselor. ACT's accommodation request process must be completed at the time of test registration.

Please Note: There are NO GUARANTEES. The school district has no control over accommodation decisions related to the SAT or the ACT. We provide the required student information, including the nature of the disability and the classroom accommodations the student receives, to the Educational Testing Service for the SAT or to ACT Special Testing Office. The College Board or ACT makes the final decision on all accommodations.



Tips for Success on the Spring SAT

The May 4th SAT is quickly approaching. Here are some tips that can help you do your best on test day:

- An Admission Ticket and an acceptable photo ID are **REQUIRED** for entry—**No Exceptions per College Board.**
- Make sure you have #2 pencils and a soft eraser. **No mechanical pencils or pens are allowed!**
- Bring your calculator and extra batteries. (Check the College Board website to make sure your calculator is an acceptable one).
- Prepare snacks to bring with you - although you can't open them during the test, they can be consumed during breaks and you will need them to stay alert.
- Get a good night's sleep

Financial Aid

Know your financial aid offers

When you receive offers from colleges, be aware of the terms of any financial aid offers. In the case of federal, state and many institutional aid programs, you are required to reapply every year. Nearly every scholarship also carries with it an obligation to carry a minimum course load and to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA).

It's important to read all financial aid documents carefully and understand their terms and conditions. The same goes for loans. You need to consider the terms of any loan — both the interest rate and when repayment is to begin. Make sure you understand everything before you sign any documents. If you have questions, ask a financial aid advisor at the college for help.

ACT News You Can Use

To Compare Your Aid Awards visit: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid-awards/compare-aid-calculator>

Final Exam Review Sessions

Final exam review sessions will be held during activity period. The schedule is as follows:

Mondays—Science

Wednesdays—Math

Thursdays—World Languages

Fridays—Social Studies

Students need to check with their teachers regarding start dates for review.

On-Line Review

Past Regents Exams are available on-line for review at:

<http://www.nysedregents.org/>

Students are also encouraged to utilize review on Schoology and to see their teachers for other recommended resources based on curricular area.

Regents Retakes

Students who must retake an exam due to a failing grade should have already met with their counselor. Students wishing to retake a Regents Exam for a higher grade must let their counselor know by May 3rd. Please see your counselor if you have any questions.

Juniors—Remember it's Time to Visit Colleges

You Can't Judge a College by Its Brochure- A campus visit is your opportunity to get a firsthand view of a college. A college catalog, viewbook, or website can only show you so much. To really get a feel for the school, you need to walk around the quad, sit in on a class, and visit the dorms.

Get Answers to Your Questions- A visit also gives you the chance to talk to students, faculty, and financial aid and admissions folks. You can get answers to questions, such as:

- What is the average class size, and the student to faculty ratio? Are most classes taught by professors or by teaching assistants?
- What is the campus meal plan like? How is the food?
- What is the make-up of the current freshman class? Is the campus fairly diverse?
- What's the social scene like? What kinds of activities are planned by the college's Residential Affairs?
- Is there ample space in dorms or does there seem to be a housing crunch?
- How many students are commuters/residents?
- Do I feel at home here? Is this what I pictured college to be?

Get Valuable Information- Pick up any official school material you see, such as brochures and financial aid forms. Don't forget to get business cards, too, so you'll have a real, live contact if you have a question about admission or financial aid.

Student-produced material will give you a sense of what campus life is really like. Look around for newspapers and activity calendars. Check out bulletin boards, too, to see what bands are coming to the campus, parties and events are advertised, internships are posted, and generally what the day-to-day energy of the place is.

Is This College Right for You? - Ultimately, it's your decision. Listen to your gut. Do you feel comfortable walking around campus? Do you click with the students and faculty? Spending time on a campus allows you to determine if a school is a good match.

CollegeBoard.com

Naviance to Help you with your College Exploration Journey:

Reminder: Students are encouraged to use the SuperMatch college search feature found in their Naviance account. This tool allows students to compare and explore colleges based on interests and preferences to help with finding the best match.

Log into your Naviance account at:
<https://id.naviance.com/>

Juniors—College Search/College Application Process Seminars will be held during Junior Advisements May 20th—May 30th.

Plan Now to Make Your Summer Count

Are you worried that the lazy days of summer might become a little too lazy? The College Board suggests five ways for high school students to stay on track and make summer worthwhile.

1. Get hands-on experience. Explore the real world, whether through a paid job, volunteer work, or an internship.

2. Take a class. Try something you don't have time for during the school

year, maybe a new language or a twist on a favorite subject. (Check out the Summer Opportunities Newsletter on our website & watch Naviance for new postings).

3. Join or form a book club. Not only will you keep reading, forming a book club will hone your organizational skills.

4. Keep a journal. Whether a diary or a blog, it will boost your writing

skills and may provide material for that college application essay.

5. Read the news. Whether in print or online, news reports can help expand your vocabulary, as well as your knowledge of national and world events.

SOURCE: bigfuture.collegeboard.org

Naviance & Schoology E-mail Messages— All students have an established account

on Naviance and Schoology. Please check both accounts regularly, as there may be email waiting for you! Counselors use these on-line programs to communicate college & career information. Also, when counselors need to get a message to you or your class, it will come through Naviance and Schoology. Simply log-in; if you have mail waiting, there will be a link to your personal mailbox. If you entered your home email address into Naviance, you will also receive the same message there.

It's important to check your email regularly, especially for information that has deadlines, such as scholarship messages. If you are having trouble with this feature, please stop into the Counseling office for a quick check with your counselor.

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website:

www.spencerportschools.org

SAVE THE DATE

Our Annual Academic Awards Ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 30th at 6:30 pm in our Performing Arts Center. Invitation letters will be mailed home in early May if your student will be receiving an award.

Attention Parents and Senior Students:

Our school counselor intern, Ms. Nicole Bindler, will be conducting a needs assessment to explore life skill levels among high school seniors. Exploring high school seniors' levels of life skills can assist with identifying student needs and supporting students in developing the skills they need to be successful in achieving their college, career, and life goals.

Tips for Terrific Test Taking

When you take a test, you are demonstrating your ability to understand course material or perform certain tasks. Successful test taking avoids carelessness.

These suggestions may help you avoid careless errors!

Prepare:

- Analyze how you did on a similar test in the past
Review your previous tests, and sample tests, especially when studying for the final exam. Each test prepares you for the next: the more tests you take, the better you will develop your test taking strategies.
- Arrive early for tests
Before a test, list everything you will need that is allowed (pens/pencils, calculator, extra batteries, watch, etc.).
- Stay relaxed and confident
Keep a good attitude. Remind yourself that you are well-prepared and are going to do well. If you find yourself anxious, take several slow, deep breaths to relax. Don't talk about the test to other students just before entering the room: their anxiety can be contagious.
Try some **deep breathing** techniques to help you feel calm:
 - 1) "Quieting Reflex" breathing technique — Take an easy, deep breath, and as you exhale let your jaw go loose, unclench your teeth and allow your shoulders to relax. Complete this exercise two times (source: stresshack.com).
 - 2) Two-minute stress release — Place one hand on your chest and the other on your forehead. As you inhale, feel the pressure of your hands on your skin, and then exhale a worry or concern that has recently taken up space in your brain (source: 6 strategies for finding your calm by Lori Desautels, 2019).

Test Taking:

- Read the directions carefully—this may be obvious, but it will help you avoid careless errors.
- If there is time, quickly look through the test for an overview
Note key terms, jot down brief notes. If you can, mark the test or answer sheet with comments that come to mind. Ask if this is permitted!
- Answer questions in a strategic order:
Answer easy questions first to build confidence, score points, and mentally orient yourself to vocabulary, concepts, and your studies. It may also help you make associations with more difficult questions.
Then answer difficult questions or those with the most point value.
With multiple choice tests, first eliminate those answers you know to be wrong, or are likely to be wrong, don't seem to fit, or where two options are so similar as to be both incorrect.
With essay questions, broadly outline your answer and sequence the order of your points.

Review:

- Resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items. Review your test to make sure that you have answered all questions, did not mis-mark answers, and did not make simple mistakes. Proofread spelling, grammar, punctuation, decimal points, etc.
- Change answers to questions if you made a mistake or misread a question or if you find information elsewhere in the test that indicates that your first choice is incorrect.
(source: <http://www.studygs.net/tsttak1.htm>)

