

Just for Juniors

August 2011

Testing 1.2.3.

This newsletter is designed to give you information on the important tests that are offered to high school juniors. The first test administered in the fall is the PSAT. The second major test required for all juniors is the Prairie State Exam that is taken in the spring.

The Prairie State Assessment Exam

On **April 24 and April 25, 2012** every junior will take the PSAE. **This exam is required by the State of Illinois to graduate high school.** Day one of the test is the ACT exam that measures skills necessary for success in post-secondary educational settings. There are five components to this exam: English, math, reading, science and a writing component. Students will complete the registration in one of their classes in the spring. The ACT used for the Prairie State exam can be used for college admissions.

Day 2 includes two standardized sub-tests of Work Keys and three Illinois State Board of Education developed tests.

These two days of testing are at no charge to the student. The school will assist in registering the students for these tests.

ACT – National Testing

The ACT assessment is a national college admissions exam that includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 3 and 1/2 hours. Basic registration fee is \$33.00 that includes score reports for up to four college choices.

There is no penalty for wrong answers; so answer each question, even if you are not sure of the correct answer.

Most juniors wait until the spring semester to take a national ACT in order to have the most education when taking the test. Most students register for the April or June test date.

The ACT can be taken as often as you wish, as there are no limits. You should retest if you had any problems during the test, such as misunderstanding the directions

or not feeling physically well. You may also want to retest if you are not satisfied that your scores accurately represent your abilities in the areas tested. If you see a discrepancy between your scores and your high school grades or you prepared and reviewed the ACT subject areas, retesting may be beneficial.

You may pick register to take the ACT online at www.actstudent.org This website has more information on registering and practice tests. There is an additional fee for registering during the late deadline.

ACT Test date	Deadline	Late deadline
Dec. 10, 2011	Nov. 4, 2011	Nov. 18, 2011
Feb. 11, 2012	Jan. 14, 2012	Jan. 20, 2012
April 14, 2012	March 9, 2012	March 23, 2012
June 9, 2012	May 4, 2012	May 18, 2012

MCHS ACT CODE
142-990

What is the ACT Writing Test?

ACT has added an optional Writing test for students. This test will be composed of a writing sample and the score will not be included in the composite score. The cost for taking the ACT plus Writing is \$48. See your counselor for details or www.actstudent.org

How can I Practice for the ACT?

On March 5, 2012, MCHS will host an ACT Review called Zapping the ACT at the high school. More information will be distributed to the juniors at a later date. JJC also has review classes on their campus in the spring. These courses are at an additional charge. The ACT website has review questions at www.actstudent.org. There are also review books at bookstores that can also be very useful.

PSAT

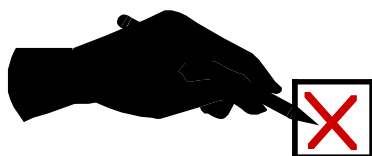
Some Juniors will take the PSAT on October 12, 2012. The PSAT is a practice test for the SAT. The PSAT measures verbal, writing and mathematical reasoning skills and is one indicator for college admissions. Most students in Illinois do not take the SAT; we tend to take the ACT. So why would you want to take the PSAT...?

- To receive feedback on your strengths and weaknesses on the skills necessary for college study. You can focus on your preparation on those areas that could most benefit from additional study or practice.
- To see how your performance on an admissions test might compare with that of others applying to colleges.
- To enter the competition for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Students with an extremely high selection index may be qualified as a National Merit Scholar.
- To receive information from colleges when you check "yes" to the Student Search Service.

You are penalized for incorrect answers, so leave questions blank if you do not know the definite answer.

For more information about the test or to practice, go to: www.collegeboard.com

The PSAT is given Wed. Oct. 12 from 8 –11am at Morris High School. The cost is around \$14.00 with a check payable to MCHS. Listen to the announcements for when to sign up in the guidance office. Space is limited. Payment must be made when signing up.



Study Tips

To maximize your performance on standardized tests:

- Get a good night of sleep the evening before the test.
- Eat a healthy breakfast. Most testing centers forbid any food or drink in the room and only provide a short break.
- Relax. Remember the ACT/SAT can always be retaken. Colleges understand that students may take these exams more than once.
- Read all instructions carefully before the test begins. Don't waste time reading them at a later time.
- Pace yourself. Most people have enough time to answer all the questions. Answer the "easy" ones first and then go back and answer the more difficult ones.
- There is a difference between guessing on the ACT and SAT/PSAT. For the ACT, your scores are based on the number of correct questions you have, so it is to your advantage to answer every question – even if it may be a guess. For the SAT/PSAT, you are penalized for incorrect answers. If you have no idea of an answer, perhaps you should not answer the question and move on. On the other hand, if you can eliminate an answer or two, your chances of being correct just increased and you may wish to answer the question.
- If you make a mistake, erase completely. Extra marks on your answer sheet will most likely effect your scores.
- Review your work if you finish early to see if you missed any questions or double-marked an answer.
- The SAT and ACT tests have penalties if you work on a different section, either a past section or future section – so don't do it. Your scores will be voided and you won't get your money back.

I WANT TO BE A COLLEGE ATHLETE

If you are pursuing the desire to play sports at the college level, you may already be working with your coach during this process. There are certain rules that apply if a Division school is recruiting you. Your coach should help you through this process. At the end of your junior year, you will need to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. This organization will look at your grades in core classes as well as your sub-tests on the ACT. There are specific standards that must be met and the NCAA Clearinghouse website will give you the specifics. See your counselor if you have additional questions.

www.eligibilitycenter.org

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Each four-year university has their own requirements for admissions. Most colleges will look at the courses the student has taken as well as class rank and the ACT score. You will use the grade point average and class rank at the end of your junior year when you apply to colleges the fall of your senior year. Generally, most colleges require:

4 years English

3 years math

3 years science

3 years social studies

2 years of foreign language (fine arts or music may work for some universities)

It is in your best interest to look at each college to determine what their admission requirements are. You should view the college websites or contact their admissions office for more information.

Websites for college searches:

www.collegeview.com

www.petersons.com

www.collegeboard.com

www.fastweb.com

You will apply to colleges the fall of your senior year. Many colleges have priority deadlines in Nov. You will have to have some idea to what schools you want to apply to. Junior year is a great time to explore your options.

College Fairs and Visits

JJC has an annual college fair on their campus in the evening on **October 11 from 5:30-8 p.m.** About 100 universities are present. There is also a national college fair at McCormick Place on October 10 from 11-3. These fairs are a great opportunity to get information on a variety of colleges.

The summer between your junior and senior year is a great opportunity to spend time visiting colleges. During the school year, you may also be allowed to take two college visits during your junior year. You need to contact the admissions office to set a date and contact your counselor for the form at least a few days in advance. You must meet admission criteria for that college or your counselor may deny your visit. You are also allow 2 college visits during school your junior year. See your counselor for details.

NOT GOING TO COLLEGE

It may not be your goal to attend a four-year university. There are plenty of options after high school.

You may consider taking courses at JJC. They have courses in technical areas in which you can gain some skills. Students can also take the general courses in order to transfer to a university. You will need to take the COMPASS entrance exam that is required by JJC. It is a reading, writing and math assessment. The test is free and information is available in the Guidance Office or online at **www.jjc.edu**.

Apprentice Programs

You can explore apprenticeship programs. The Three Rivers Construction Alliance website has information on the requirements at **www.threerca.com**

Military

The military representatives will visit the high school on a regular basis. You can visit during lunch. The military administers the ASVAB entrance test for the branches of service. The test measures academic ability including verbal and math reasoning along with ability in career areas.

Army-**www.goarmy.com** Marines -**www.marines.com**

Navy-**www.navy.com** Airforce-**www.airforce.com**

Try to develop a plan of what you will be doing after high school. If you want to work full-time, talk to people in the field you want to work. You may be able to find a part-time summer job.

USEFUL WEBSITES

TESTING

WWW.ACTSTUDENT.ORG

WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.COM

COLLEGE INFORMATION

WWW.COLLEGEVIEW.COM

WWW.PETERSONS.COM

WWW.MAPPING-YOUR-FUTURE.ORG

COLLEGE ATHLETICS

WWW.ELIGIBILITYCENTER.ORG

CAREER

HTTP://STATS.BLS.GOV/OCO

WWW.COLLEGEVIEW.COM

WWW.WORKFORCEINFO.STATE.IL.US

WWW.CAREERCRUISING.COM

USERNAME: MORRIS PASSWORD: CAREERS

SCHOLARSHIPS/FINANCIAL AID

WWW.FASTWEB.COM

WWW.COLLEGEZONE.COM

WWW.FINAID.COM

WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

WWW.THREERCA.COM

ARMED FORCES

WWW.GOARMY.COM

WWW.NAVY.COM

WWW.MARINES.COM

WWW.AIRFORCE.COM

MCHS:

WWW.MORRISHS.ORG

[HTTP://MORRISHS.POWERSCHOOL.COM](http://MORRISHS.POWERSCHOOL.COM)



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**Graduation Requirements for the
Class of 2013**

25 credits including:

4 English	.5 speech
3 math	2 science
.5 global studies	1 US History
.5 consumer education	.5 keyboarding
.5 drivers education	.5 health
3.5 physical education	.5 social studies

Passing the constitution test
Taking the PSAE
5 hours of community service

Morris High School
ACT Code:
142-990

