

Senior Stuff

August 2011

Senior Synopsis

Senior year brings excitement, challenges and planning for the future. We hope this newsletter will answer some questions that you or your parents may have. No matter what your plans are for life after high school, this newsletter covers a variety of useful topics.

Please use this information as a guide; please contact your counselor for specific questions.

Graduation Requirements – Class of 2012

27 credits including:

4 English	.5 speech
3 math –alg/geom	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
5 hours of community service	
Taking the PSAE	Passing the constitution test

Counselors will meet with each senior individually to discuss post-secondary options as well as credits to graduate. It is ultimately, the student's responsibility to make sure the courses they are taking senior year will work with their future plans. Counselors will work with each student to plan for the future.

College Information

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

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of math (4 is recommended)
- 3 years of science
- 3 years of social studies
- 2 years of foreign language (fine arts and art may work for some universities)

It is in your best interest to look at each college individually to determine if you will meet their requirements.

Many colleges have a sliding scale for ACT/class rank. If you are in the top half of your class you may need a specific ACT score. If you fall below the top half – you may need a higher ACT score.

You will want to view each schools website or call admissions directly. If you do not know how to contact the school, websites like www.collegeview.com can get you the information or see your counselor.

Retaking the ACT

Dates for upcoming ACT tests are the following:

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Deadline (additional fee required)
Sept. 10, 2011	Aug. 12, 2011	Aug. 13 - Aug. 26, 2011
Oct. 22, 2011	Sept. 16, 2011	Sept. 17- Sept. 20, 2011
Dec. 10, 2011	Nov. 4, 2011	Nov. 5- Nov. 18, 2011

The September test will be offered at Morris Community High School. The basic fee is \$33.00. There is an additional \$15 charge if you want to take the optional writing test. You can register online at WWW.ACTSTUDENT.ORG or pick up a registration packet in the guidance office.

ACT preparation is also available on the ACT website with test-taking tips and sample tests at www.actstudent.org. There is no limit on how many exams you take. Colleges will see the scores from each exam and they generally take the best score. Generally, colleges do not average the scores.

Visiting and Applying to Colleges

As you are exploring what college may meet your needs, the college visit will play an important part in your decision making process. You will be able to get a feel for the campus. The fall is a great time to view different colleges. You will need to contact the admissions office to schedule a time. The college will give you an itinerary of your visit. During the school year, many universities host campus view days. Many use fall holidays such as Columbus Day and Veteran's Day to hold programs for interested students. You are allowed **3 pre-arranged** college visits days during the school year to visit during the school day. You will need to contact the college's admissions office to arrange your visit. The Guidance Office has a form that needs to be completed and returned with all the necessary signatures. **JJC is hosting a college fair the evening of Oct. 11 from 5:30 – 8 p.m. A National College Fair is held at McCormick Place on Oct. 10 (Columbus Day) from 11 am – 3 pm.**

You will wait until early September to apply. Universities are still processing their freshmen and do not want the applications until September. Make sure you finish your year strong! Colleges will receive a final transcript after you graduate.

The College Application Process

* Most colleges and universities prefer **online** applications. This speeds up the application process and you are usually able to check the status of your application. You may either download a paper copy from their website or create an account and apply online. Many colleges have a deadline for applications for example University of Illinois has a priority deadline of Nov. 1.

* It is extremely important that **AFTER** you submit the application to **let the guidance office know where to send your transcript**. Your transcript includes all of your grades from freshman year to junior year, ACT scores, your senior schedule and a school profile.

* If you choose to submit a paper copy, turn your application in to the guidance office. **DO NOT MAIL THEM YOURSELF!** An official transcript with your ACT scores needs to accompany the application. It takes a minimum of one day's notice to process and mail the application. Do not wait until the last day of the deadline. Official transcripts may **NOT** be hand delivered – they must be mailed. **Don't forget to put your name and social security number on all the items you are sending.**

COMMON APPLICATION

* Many schools are using the common application process. You are able to submit one application to multiple universities. We will submit your transcript online through their website. **NOTE: We are unable to upload your ACT scores and send them electronically.** If the university requires ACT scores, have them sent from ACT at www.actstudent.org.

ACT SCORES

* Although we send a copy of your ACT scores with a transcript, many universities require that they be sent directly from ACT. You are able to do this through their website at www.actstudent.org.

* Complete the "Request for Recommendation" form located in the guidance office and on the MCHS website under the Guidance Office section. Many scholarships and colleges will require you to include recommendations from a teacher or a counselor.

* If you qualify for free/reduced lunch, see your counselor as you may qualify for an application fee waiver.

Joliet Junior College

JJC has an open admissions policy: You do not need a particular ACT score or class rank to be admitted.

If JJC is in your plans for after graduation, the timeline is as follows:

Fall: submit an application (online at www.jjc.edu)

Spring: take the Compass Placement test

April: view the online tour at www.jjc.edu/newstudent

Attend a group registration session to register for class

Don't forget to explore financial aid and scholarship options

JJC has many different departments that can help meet your needs: Counseling, Career Planning, Transfer Center, StAr (for students with disabilities), Project Achieve (for first-generation college students) and Financial Aid. Don't forget to take advantage of these offices.

The JJC website may hold the answer for many of your questions at www.jjc.edu. Your counselor can help you through this process. A JJC representative visits the guidance office on a regular basis.

The COMPASS test is a placement test with math, reading and writing sections. The score you receive will determine what course levels you may enroll in for math, English and Foreign Language courses. A grade of C or better in high school geometry is required for any transfer level math.

NCAA Requirements for Potential College Athletes

If you are interested in pursuing athletics while in college, you must be cleared through the NCAA Clearinghouse. There are specific requirements you must meet to be cleared. The clearinghouse will look at the number of core courses as well as your core grade point average and ACT/SAT sum of scores.

You may now use the ACT score from the Prairie State Exam. The code is 9999 to have them sent

It is recommended you register through the clearinghouse before you take the ACT on a National test date. You need to register online at www.eligibilitycenter.org. You will need to print two copies of the transcript request and turn them into the guidance office. See your counselor for questions.

Athletes playing sports through the NAIA division must register at www.playnaia.org

How to Choose a College Major or Career Choice

Your counselor can help you start the process of exploring options for careers or college majors. The process can be simplified in a few steps: self-exploration, searching for information, making decisions and career links.

Self-exploration

Throughout high school, students will take two standardized tests (PLAN in grade 10 & ACT in grade 11) that will have an interest inventory. Interest inventories ask if you like or dislike particular activities and offer you a profile of the results. The results are grouped by clusters of careers. Information about yourself can help you make practical decisions. These inventories suggest different occupations. It is never suggested that the results indicate you "have" to pursue a certain field.

Websites for self-assessment

The Career Key – www.careerkey.org

Career Search – www.collegeboard.com/apps/careers/index

Searching for information

Identify a few occupations or areas of interest that may be appealing to you. The next step is finding out more information about occupations. There are a variety of resources on the web.

Occupational Outlook Handbook – <http://stats.bls.gov/oco>

College/career view – www.collegeview.com

Occupational information – www.workforceinfo.state.il.us

This website is GREAT for looking at careers, college, taking an interest inventory and developing a portfolio.

www.careercruising.com

Username: Morris

Password: Careers

Apprenticeships

Not every student wants to attend college right after high school. Some students decide they want to work full-time. The following is information on apprenticeship programs in the fields of construction and the electrical industry.

Construction Industry

www.threerca.com

IDES Office

250 N. Chicago St.

Joliet, IL

740- 5101

or

IETC

1114 Plainfield Road

Joliet, IL

727-4444

Electrical Industry

www.njatc.org

Other websites:

www.ILWorkInfo.com

www.petersons.com

Five hours of Community Service is due by April 30, 2012. Please do not wait until the last minute to turn it in. You WILL NOT graduate if these hours are not completed and turned in. Forms are available at the high school and on the high school website.

Counselors

A – F Mr. Williamson
(jwilliamson@morrishs.org)

G – O Mrs. Burkhart
(sburkhart@morrishs.org)

P – Z Mrs. Voitik
(tvoitik@morrishs.org)

MCHS Website
www.morrishs.org

1000 Union Street
942-1294

Morris Community High School
CEEB (School) Code
142990

Scholarships

There are different types of scholarships and deadlines. Some scholarships are based on academics or athletics while others are community service based or a combination of all. There are websites which will do a scholarship search for nation-wide scholarships. Contact the financial aid office for the universities you are interested in to see if you qualify for any of their scholarships. **The guidance office has a notebook that will list scholarships offered locally and on the school website at www.morrishs.org.** See if your parent's employers or church may offer a scholarship. If a recommendation is needed, give the person writing it plenty of notice. There is a form in the guidance office you can complete about yourself to assist the person writing the recommendation. If a transcript is needed, do not wait until the deadline.

Websites:

Scholarship Search

www.fastweb.com

Scholarship Search

www.scholarships.com

Planning

www.wiredscholar.com

Scholarship Search

www.finaid.org

Financial Aid Info.

www.collegeillinois.org

Fin. Aid Application

www.fafsa.ed.gov

(NOT www.FAFSA.COM)

Financial Aid

The first step in seeing if you qualify for any financial aid is to complete the FAFSA. You will want to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) no earlier than January of your senior year. The paper applications will be available at the start of Term 3 or you can apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Most people complete their application in February once they have their information for their taxes. If you apply online, you will need to first get a pin number for the parent and the student at www.pin.ed.gov. The FAFSA is processed much quicker if you apply online.

The universities will receive the information from the federal processing agency and the universities may have you complete additional information for their school. Some schools have a priority deadline of March 15 to be able to be eligible for the most amount of aid.

You may want to apply even if you do not think you would qualify. Some scholarships may require this step

College Representatives

Many college representatives visit the guidance office during lunch. Listen to the announcements to who is visiting and when. You can sign up in the guidance office to meet with the representatives. This is a great opportunity to get more information as you make important decisions and show the university you are interested in their school.