

# Guidance News

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year! The following newsletter provides answers to commonly asked questions from North's Guidance Department. If you have additional questions and/or concerns you can schedule an appointment with your student's guidance counselor by calling 815-547-3860. Students are assigned school counselors based on the first letter of their last name:

A – C            Mrs. Cusimano

D – J            Ms. Vitrano

K – Q            Ms. Galan

R – Z            Ms. Volkman

## **TESTING:**

On Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>, *BNHS Juniors will be taking the PSAT-NMSQT – Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test*. While the exam is NOT used for college admission, it is the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarships. It is also excellent preparation for the SAT exam. Prep materials can be found at:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/prep.html>

On the same day, *BNHS Sophomores will be taking the PLAN test*. While it is NOT used for college admission, the PLAN test serves as an excellent predictor of ACT performance. The ACT is taken during students' junior year and used for college admission. PLAN also assists with academic/career planning. Prep materials are found at <http://www.actstudent.org/plan/>

## **SENIORS:**

Seniors should be starting the college application process. Most colleges now prefer on-line applications which can be found on their websites. Many colleges have priority deadlines; for example, applications (application fee, transcripts, and test scores) to the University of Illinois must be postmarked by Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> to meet the priority deadline. Completing the application during the Priority Filing Period may give students an advantage when space is limited. Guidance counselors will be meeting with each senior student during the month of October to provide assistance with career and college information. Seniors are encouraged to make appointments with their counselor as needed.

## **COLLEGE FAIRS:**

North's Guidance Department will be hosting a College Admissions and Financial Aid/Scholarship seminar on Wednesday, September 30 at 6 pm in North's Cafeteria. The topics covered will be 09-10 FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid; types of scholarships; and the college application process. Easy to read handouts will be provided as well as a list of helpful websites. This 1-hour seminar is designed for junior and senior students *and* their parents.

Rock Valley College will be hosting their annual college fair on Wednesday, October 7 from 6 pm to 8 pm in the Rock Valley College Physical Education Center. This is your chance to meet with representatives *from over 100 colleges from around the country*. RVC staff will also host presentations on financial aid and college searches. Students from all grades and their parents are welcome.

The National Hispanic College Fair will be the morning of Tuesday, October 6 from 9:30-12:30 pm at Cliffbreakers Conference Center. BNHS will transport interested students. Seniors can sign-up in the Guidance Office.

**COLLEGE VISITS:**

You wouldn't buy a car without a test drive. Do you really want to choose a college without visiting? Many colleges offer Open House programs on Columbus Day and Veterans Day. Information can be found on each college's website. If you can't make arrangements to visit your first choice of college, you should still consider visiting a nearby college. The information you receive on this visit can help you identify characteristics that you are looking for in a college. Also, students in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade are allowed one college visit day per year. Students in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade are allowed two college visit days per year; documentation must be submitted.

In addition to going out and visiting colleges, North's Guidance Department schedules representatives from many area colleges and universities to come to North to meet with students. The following schedule highlights dates and times of upcoming college visits. Please note that colleges and universities are being scheduled daily so students need to listen to the school announcements for these upcoming meetings. They can pick up a pass for a visit in the Guidance Office:

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Marquette University	Mon, Sept 21	4th
Cornell College	Mon, Sept 21	7 <sup>th</sup>
Illinois Wesleyan University	Tues, Sept 29	4 <sup>th</sup>
UW – LaCrosse	Wed., Sept. 30	6th
Monmouth College	Tues, Oct 6	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Northern Illinois University	Tues., Oct. 6	6th
Drake University	Wed, Oct 7	4 <sup>th</sup>
University of Missouri	Wed, Oct 7	6th
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Thurs, Oct 8	2 <sup>nd</sup>
University of Dubuque	Tues., Oct. 13	3rd
Bradley University	Wed, Oct 14	6th
University of WI Parkside	Thurs, Oct 22	2nd
Loras College-Dubuque	Tues, Oct 27	3rd
Augustana College	Wed, Oct 28	3rd
Loyola University-Chicago	Wed, Nov 4	3rd
Northern Michigan University	Tues, Nov 10	6 <sup>th</sup>

**CAREER CENTER:**

Looking for career and college information? Check out the BNHS Career Center located in the Guidance Office. The Career Center has an excellent collection of career resources as well as college information from colleges across the country. Student and parents are also encouraged to visit What's Next Illinois – A website designed by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission to find everything you need to plan, apply, and go to the college and university of your choice: <https://secure.whatsnextillinois.org/Home/default.aspx>

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS & MINIMUM COLLEGE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Now that you have your 09-10 schedules it would be a good time to review your graduation requirements and Minimum College Admission Requirements. Please refer to these charts to see that your schedule reflects required courses necessary for high school graduation and college admission.

CLASS OF 2013 and 2012 Students entering as 9 <sup>th</sup> Graders in school year 2008-2009 Students entering as 9 <sup>th</sup> Graders in school year 2009-2010		CLASS OF 2011 Students entering as 9 <sup>th</sup> Graders in school year 2007-08	
*Fr English, English10, 11, 12 or Elective	4	*Fr English, English10, 11, 12 or Elective	4
Social Studies *US History (1) Government (0.5)	2	Social Studies *US History (1) Government (0.5)	2
Science *Fr Biology or *Fr Biology Ac (1)	2	Science *Fr Biology or *Fr Biology Ac (1)	2
Mathematics Fr Algebra or Fr Geometry Ac (1) Geometry or Algebra 2 Ac (1)	3	Mathematics Fr Algebra or Fr Geometry Ac (1) Geometry or Algebra 2 Ac (1)	3
Physical Education Health Driver Education Classroom	3 0.5 0.5	Physical Education Health Driver Education Classroom	3 0.5 0.5
**Consumer Education	0.5	**Consumer Education	0.5
Art, Music, World Language, Career & Technical Education	1	Art, Music, World Language, Career & Technical Education	1
Electives: ***Fr World Studies (1)	7.5	Electives	7.5
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24</b>

CLASS OF 2010 Students entering as 9 <sup>th</sup> Graders in school year 2006-2007	
English *9, 10, 11	3
Social Studies *US History (1) Government (0.5)	2
Science *Integrated Science or *Honors Biology (1)	2
Mathematics Algebra 1 (1) Geometry (1)	3
Physical Education Health Driver Education Classroom	3 0.5 0.5
**Consumer Education	0.5
Art, Music, World Language, Career & Technical Education	1
Electives	8.5
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>24</b>

### Minimum College Admission Requirements

#### Credits Subject

- 4 **English** (emphasis on written and oral communications and literature)
- 3 **Mathematics** (introductory through advanced algebra, geometry, & advanced math)
- 3 **Science** (laboratory sciences)
- 3 **Social Studies** (emphasis on history and government)
- 2 **World Languages, Music, Art, or Technical Education** (some schools may require 2 years of world language)

### ACT PREPARATION (JUNIORS):

In April, Juniors will be participating in the 2-day Prairie State Achievement Exams (PSAE). The PSAE is a graduation requirement in the state of Illinois. The PSAE includes the ACT test which is used for college admissions. Juniors who would like to maximize their score should consider:

- 1) Taking an ACT prep course. District #100 will host a prep course taught by high school instructors using Cambridge Educational Services materials. The class will meet Saturday mornings in February and March. Registration material will be available soon.
- 2) Taking advantage of free ACT preparation materials. The Guidance Office and library have books that can be checked out. There are numerous online resources including:

<http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/index.html>

An internet search for "Free ACT Test Prep" will generate many additional opportunities.

- 3) Taking the ACT test on national test dates. Many students have found that taking the ACT test more than once can help them identify weak areas and improve their score. Colleges will use a student's "best" score so there is no disadvantage to multiple testing. The ACT test dates are September 12, 2009; October 24, 2009; December 12, 2009; February 6, 2010; April 10, 2010; and June 12, 2010. Students can register online at <http://www.actstudent.org/>

*In the admission process, many colleges weight the ACT score as high (or higher) than the GPA that a student achieves over three years. Given this fact, it makes sense that students may want to devote additional time and effort to maximizing their ACT score.*

## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

<b>Wednesday, September 30</b>	College Admission/Financial Aid BNHS 6pm Café
<b>Wednesday, October 7</b>	RVC College Fair 6 – 8 pm RVC Phys Ed Center
<b>Wednesday, October 14</b>	Sophomore PLAN and Junior PSAT Testing
<b>Tuesday, November 10</b>	Parent-Teacher Conferences 4:30-8:30 pm
<b>Thursday, December 17</b>	Final Exams DAY 1
<b>Friday, December 18</b>	Final Exams DAY 2
<b>Tuesday, January 5, 2010</b>	Current Jr. course selection for 10-11 school year
<b>Wednesday, January 6, 2010</b>	Current So. course selection for 10-11 school year
<b>Thursday, January 7, 2010</b>	Current Fr. course selection for 10-11 school year
<b>Thursday, March 25, 2010</b>	Parent-Teacher Conferences 4:30-8:30 pm
<b>April 28 &amp; 29, 2010</b>	PSAE Testing Day 1 and Day 2
<b>*Monday, May 17, 2010</b>	Seniors Final Exams DAY 1
<b>*Tuesday, May 18, 2010</b>	Seniors Final Exams DAY 2
<b>Thursday, May 20, 2010</b>	District #100 Scholarship Night 7pm PAC at BHS
<b>Sunday, May 23, 2010</b>	Graduation 2 pm at Metro Center
<b>Monday, May 24, 2010</b>	Grades 9, 10 & 11 Final Exams DAY 1
<b>Tuesday, May 25, 2010</b>	Grades 9, 10 & 11 Final Exams DAY 2

\*Senior students who met and/or exceeded standards in math, reading and science areas of the PSAE testing during their junior year are exempt from taking semester examinations. Students received these scores on Wednesday, September 2, 2009.