



Fall 2010

Hello to Parents of Juniors!

While your sons and daughters are busily preparing for their departure to Israel, thoughts about their college application process are already on my mind, as I am sure they are on yours. The junior year is a busy and VERY important year in terms of college preparation. To give you a good sense of the timeline that is involved, I have created a TIMLINE for the COLLEGE SEARCH AND APPLICATION PROCESS for the JUNIOR/SENIOR YEAR that you may find useful. This can be found on the Academy's website under College Planning.

Even though the timeline on this document begins in December/January, there are some very important things taking place this fall.

The October 13, 2010 PSAT (which your student will be taking in Israel) determines entry into the National Merit competition, and is a good indicator of SAT scores. We have asked that the staff at AMHSI have an easy day of activities the day before the PSATs so that your students are well rested. The PSAT score reports will arrive from the College Board in December, and I will be writing more about those in early December.

To get ready for those SATs, the Academy offers two different SAT options here on campus. The first is an SAT Prep elective class during winter trimester. Students sign up for this class just as they do any other elective. The second is a Princeton Review Class, which the Academy will arrange to have here on the campus, assuming there is interest from the juniors and their families. In the past, it has met on Sunday afternoons during winter term. I will be writing to parents of juniors during fall term, to determine who is interested in signing up for the Princeton Review class. Princeton Review has offered this class at a price substantially lower than their normal fee. In January, I will convene the entire class of juniors to do their first SAT registration which is done on paper. Because we request Sunday testing, the College Board requires that the first registration be done via mail, and it is accompanied by a letter from Rabbi Gisser requesting Sunday testing. Students can choose whether to take their first SAT in March (the 13th) or in May (the 8th). Many students will want to reserve the June testing date (June 6th) for SAT IIs - the subject tests that SOME colleges require. Registration deadlines for the 2010-11 academic year can be found on the College Board web site (<http://www.collegeboard.com/testing/>) or in Naviance - in the Document Library - Information. Most students will want to take the SATs at least once in the spring and again in October of the senior year.

Parents wanting more information about the SATs and about other things they can be doing to get their children ready for college may want to sign up for the Parent Newsletter offered on the College Board's web site:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/parents/>

These newsletters are focused on what students can be doing at each grade level (9-12) to get ready for college.

Naviance is the college search and application software that the Academy uses to organize the entire college process. Juniors already have Naviance accounts, although in January, we will make sure they get reminders about

how to access them, and use them in their search for appropriate colleges for them. Parents also have access to their child's Naviance account. If you would like to have information sent about how to access Naviance, please contact Dr. Tarbox at: starbox@aha-net.org or at 336-217-7045.

While students are in Israel, they will be keeping journals of their experiences. These journals can be priceless when it comes time to writing college essays. Please encourage your son or daughter to keep detailed notes of things that happened. Those experiences can make college essays come alive.

Grades remain important, and in fact, grades during the junior year may be the most important. The first transcripts a college will see are the student's grades from 9th to 11th grade. At the Academy, we also send a separate transcript from the Alexander Muss High School in Israel. Please encourage your child to stay focused on academics this critical year. Getting their GPA up as high as they can by the end of this academic year is important. A strong upward trend in grades, even if a student struggled initially, also looks good to colleges.

Another important aspect of the college application process that students and parents should be thinking about now are what awards, honors, activities, internships and community service projects do students want to be sharing with colleges. Students often have difficulty remembering everything they have done here at the Academy, and organizing these now will help the college application process in fall of the senior year. All college applications will ask students about these, and will help colleges get a fuller picture of a student – beyond what grades and test scores convey. Thinking about summer plans now (for that critical summer between junior and senior year) is also a productive activity. The College Counseling office uses Naviance to list information on various summer enrichment programs that we hear about. This can be accessed in Naviance, under Enrichment Programs.

I will be writing again in December when results of PSATs come back, with more information about the next steps for college. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, or just news you want to share about your son or daughter, please do not hesitate to call me at 336-217-7045 or email me at: starbox@aha-net.org.

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