

# COUNSELOR CORNER—FOR SENIORS



## NEMAHA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2009

**Items Needed:** attendance sheet, newsletter, transcript, credit check, college visit sheet, senior plan sheet, senior pass, scholarship list, any additional resources (i.e. ACT, March2Success, etc.)



### A Note from Mrs. Evans...

Planning and preparing for post-secondary life is a very exciting time. Some of you are probably nervous, asking, “Can I do this?” “What if I fail?” and “Is this the right thing for me?” Others of you are probably thinking, “I’m ready to get out of this place!” Regardless of your stance, many of you are most likely realizing that this planning and preparing phase is a rather time-consuming, sometimes exhausting task. After all, you are making decisions that will impact you for years to come. Don’t despair, though. I want to assist you in transitioning successfully into post-secondary life. Being a part of this is one of my favorite student activities, so I encourage you to visit with me and ask me questions. While YOU are ultimately in charge of YOUR future, I want to play an active role in making it become reality. At this time I want you to be aware of the following resources:

- **SOCS website** [www.usd442.org](http://www.usd442.org). Mrs. Baker’s Web-Publishing class (a special thanks to Tara Grauer!) has been diligently working to keep the Counselor Corner current. Please visit the site or stop by my office for information related to post-secondary schools, scholarships, etc.
- **Mark your calendars now...December 7, 2009 (Monday)**, Kelly Twombly from Highland Community College will be presenting on Financial Aid starting at **6:00 PM**

If you know of providers who would like to speak or that would like me to speak on their behalf, please contact me at 785.336.3557 or [bevans@nvschools.org](mailto:bevans@nvschools.org).

- wall bulletin board daily bulletin
- YOU

## POST-SECONDARY APPLICATIONS

- Colleges—Make sure you apply early enough to be considered for all the school’s scholarship programs. For most schools, the present through February is early enough, but check with each school to be sure.
- Some technical school programs fill early—so APPLY NOW! (i.e. Beloit, cosmetology, wind energy, etc.)
- MOST schools you apply to should have the following as part of the application process:
  - ✓ application and fee
  - ✓ transcript (request a transcript from Mrs. Evans)→DO THIS!
  - ✓ list of courses in progress (if you are a QA student)
  - ✓ ACT/SAT scores (or ASSET or COMPASS)→REMEMBER, the ACT/SAT is not for everyone!
  - ✓ scholarship application and/or essay (watch for any special deadlines)
  - ✓ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)→available in late November/early December but can’t be filed until after January 1; NOT all schools have FAFSA; rather they have Sallie Mae or other assistance programs
- Some admission and scholarship applications are available in the NV counselor’s office; however, your best source is the Internet.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

While a few high-level scholarships may have deadlines as early as October, November through March is the main scholarship application timeframe. Each scholarship (and each college) has a different deadline, so check each one for details.

- Scholarship programs use a variety of criteria in the selection process, including but not limited to:
  - Need—including family and student income and assets.
  - Academics—which may include GPA, ACT/SAT scores, and/or class rank.

- Competition—based on essays, speeches, or special tests.
  - Athletics/Activities—based on a specific ability you may have or an activity you will be involved in at college.
  - Volunteerism—what service projects you have undertaken.
- selection criteria

### INCLUDE EVERYTHING

### TAKE YOUR TIME ON THIS! HAVE ANOTHER PERSON

### CRITIQUE YOUR WORK!

Look many places for scholarships. Civic organizations, local businesses, national corporations, and churches are just a few of the scholarship sources.

- F. Information and applications for all scholarships received by the counselor will be available in the counselor's office. A computer printout will be generated every few weeks listing the scholarship information received by the counselor. Feel free to inquire at any time about scholarships.
- G. The schools you apply to may be the best source of scholarship money. An estimated 80% of the scholarships earned by Kansas students come from the schools they attend. Every college has numerous scholarships available only to its students. Often, all you have to do is complete the college's scholarship application (and apply for admission), and you will be considered for all of the scholarships administered by that college (or the ones you check that are of interest to you). **Make sure you meet their admission and scholarship application deadlines.**

You are advised against paying for these services since there are several scholarship search services available on the Internet that do the same thing for free.

- I. Some better-known Internet scholarship and financial aid search sites include:
- FastWeb—[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) (database of scholarships)
  - College Answer—[www.collegeanswer.com/index.jsp](http://www.collegeanswer.com/index.jsp) (database of scholarships)
  - Go College—[www.gocollege.com](http://www.gocollege.com) (information on finding a college and financial aid)
  - Federal Student Financial Aid—[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) (financial aid information and scholarships)
  - Federal Student Aid—<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp> (through the Department of Education)
  - FAFSA4caster—[www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov](http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov) (click on top right link)

To search for scholarships, you enter information about yourself (college major, grade point average, ACT/SAT scores, activities and organizations you belong to, etc.) and the computer selects scholarships that best match your traits. You are then given information about how to obtain applications and apply for scholarships.

**important items to remember: 1. DON'T GET DISCOURAGED in the application process! 2. there are scholarships available to you after you have entered post-secondary education!**

**December 7!**

- K. **NOTIFY ME OF SCHOLARSHIPS RECEIVED ASAP! THIS IS IMPORTANT FOR SENIOR BANQUET MATERIALS!**

## FINANCIAL AID

- A. Most students get their financial aid for post-secondary institutions from the federal aid programs that provide grants and loans. How much you qualify for will be based on the income and assets of you and your family.
- B. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the form you must fill out to determine how much federal financial aid you will receive.
- C. The FAFSA will be available in December (?). It cannot be completed until your family's 2009 income tax forms have been completed, and it cannot be filed until after January 1, 2010.
- D. Many colleges have a "priority date" for financial aid. Students who have an application for admission, scholarship application, and the FAFSA on file at the school by the priority date are given first consideration for financial aid. Since schools have a limited amount of money available for certain types of aid, you could find money no longer available if you miss the priority date. This date is around \_\_\_\_\_

15-March 1 for many schools, but aid is often awarded on a “first come, first served” basis, so apply as early as possible after January 1.

E. REMEMBER, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO FINANCIAL AID!

F. You will be given more financial aid details later this semester. Again, financial aid/scholarship night will be held **7, 2009**, starting at 6:00 PM. This presentation will provide information to you and your parents concerning the FAFSA and other financial aid issues.

---

## POST-SECONDARY VISITS

A. Plan to USE (not ABUSE) your school visits. Each senior will be allowed to take two school visits.

Additional visits may be approved for legitimate reasons. Please do not abuse your visitation privileges by taking more than one visit to the same school, visiting schools in which you have no interest, visiting other schools after you have made your school selection, or going along when a friend makes a campus visit. “Apartment hunting” and other activities that could be completed on weekends are not considered valid reasons for college visits. **APRIL 20, 2010, IS THE DEADLINE FOR COLLEGE VISITS!**

B. A complete campus visit should include the following:

- ★ Office of admissions
- ★ Visits to areas of academic interest (major)
- ★ Tour of housing facilities
- ★ Office of financial aid/scholarships
- ★ Campus tour
- ★ MORE! ASK for it! This is a HUGE investment!

C. Procedure for arranging a campus visit:

- ① Arrange a visitation date on your own time. Once arranged, tell the counselor the details of the visit and a form will be provided to you.
- ② Complete the middle section of the form (ALL PARTS, including parent signature).
- ③ Take the form to the NVHS office to obtain a pre-absence form, which must then be signed by your teachers at least one day before the school visit.
- ④ Have a representative from the office of admissions complete the lower portion of the form on the day of the visit.
- ⑤ Return the form to the NVHS counselor THE NEXT SCHOOL DAY (after your visit) for the final date and signature (bottom).

Please notify me as much as possible in advance about your visits.

---

## JOB SHADOWING

Seniors are encouraged to make visits to work sites in career areas of interest to them. These Job Shadowing experiences can be helpful in career decision-making. Whenever possible, the student should use their contacts to locate someone who works in the desired career field so a Job Shadowing experience can be arranged. If the student cannot find any connections for the desired field, the counselor can help in this process. Students who Job Shadow will be required to complete a short report on the experience.

---

## INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Each senior will have an individual conference with the counselor. The timeframe for visits is indicated on your “Senior Pass” (September 1-September 30, 2009). This visit will be used to discuss graduation requirements, career interests, educational and career plans, and anything else of concern. The visit will last approximately five minutes. While this is a prearranged visit, please stop by Mrs. Evans’s office at any time with individual questions or concerns. Every effort will be made to provide seniors with the information, materials, and advice they need—but students need to make their needs known so that assistance can be provided.

---

## ACT AND SAT

A. If you plan to use ACT or SAT scores for scholarship consideration, take the test EARLY your senior year.

B. The ACT is being used increasingly for the awarding of scholarships. Generally, scores of 26 or above start to make a student competitive, but scores as low as 21 may qualify you for some scholarships. There are some highly selective scholarships that may require ACT scores of 30+ for students to be competitive.

C. You may want to retake the test IF you were not prepared, did not feel well, or are willing to prepare for a second taking of the test. Schools and scholarship programs typically

---

---

---

---

## 2009-2010 ACT TEST DATES

### Registration Deadline

September 12, 2009	August 7, 2009 (*this is a new test date—don't know if local testing centers will have it available)
October 24, 2009	September 18, 2009
December 12, 2009	November 6, 2009
February 6, 2010	January 5, 2010
April 10, 2010	March 5, 2010
June 12, 2010	May 7, 2010

When you take the ACT or SAT, you will need to enter NV's name and school code (**172-747**)

### **DO THIS!**

for the ACT test is \$32 or \$47 if you take the Writing test. There will be a \$21 late fee if you miss the regular registration deadline but apply by the late registration deadline, which extends for about two weeks beyond the regular deadline.

**Check with your institution**

---

## INFORMATION IN COUNSELOR'S OFFICE

(\*PLEASE NOTE—Many schools are moving to online communication exclusively.) Additionally, the school library has career-related materials available. Another option is the Kansas Career Pipeline, which allows students to piece together a career plan that works for them.

---

### **DON'T FORGET...**

The most important thing at this point in your senior year is to \_\_\_\_\_ You're going to have to make choices and decisions about your future very soon, so now is the time to gather information and check out your options. If you wait until the last minute, you'll still have to make the same decisions, but you'll have less time and information on which to make them, so start the process NOW. Reviewing the resources listed at the beginning of this newsletter is a start. Best of luck...and involve me in the process when you can!