

Hello Seniors & Senior Parents,

Yesterday I visited all of the AICE English Lit. 2 classes and talked to our seniors about LOTS of important “stuff”! This will be a bit long...so have a seat 😊

Here are the topics we discussed:

1. **Statements of Entry** – each senior is scheduled to take the General Paper &/or Thinking Skills exams this Fall unless they are currently taking those courses, or took either one last year. Their Statement of Entry lists what they have been scheduled to take with the dates for each.
2. **Fall 2014 Exam Letter** – **THIS NEEDS TO BE SIGNED BY A PARENT** and returned to Mr. Benyacko (or me) **by Friday, Sept. 5th**. At the bottom of the letter is the **Re-take order form**. Students have the opportunity to re-take any AICE level exam they did not pass last Spring (at your expense). If they did not pass their AICE English Lit. 1 exam, they **MUST** re-take it this Fall if they are going to re-take it at all. The syllabus will cover different material for the Spring 2015 exam series, so they will not be prepared to re-take that one if they wait.
3. **Preliminary Fall Exam Schedule** – lists the Thinking Skills & General Paper exams, plus all Re-take exam options with dates/times.
4. **Transcript Request Form** – available in the Guidance office as well. First transcript is free, each one after that is \$2.00 and completed requests should be given to Ms. Ard (not me) with any payment due.
5. **SAT/ACT Schedule** – If students need to re-take the SAT or ACT, please do it soon!!! SAT & ACT scores can be sent to colleges even after the admissions application deadlines. Colleges will consider new scores as they are received if their admissions decisions have not been announced. ***SAT & ACT score reports MUST BE SENT DIRECTLY FROM THE SAT & ACT WEBSITES, not from SAHS.***
6. **Community Service Hours Form** – My advice to the seniors – GET YOUR HOURS TURNED IN BY DECEMBER!!! You can always turn in more after that, but Bright Futures will do an initial eligibility in January when they receive the first semester report card, so it’s best to have the hours show up by that time. Final eligibility will be determined from their final transcript – so more hours can be added, but why stress???
7. **Bright Futures Application** – I will go into Mr. Benyacko’s classrooms in December with laptops, etc. and we will complete the Bright Futures application together. The application is not available to the seniors until after December 1st so don’t worry about it just yet.
8. **College Applications** – GET GOING ON THEM NOW!! FSU’s deadline is OCTOBER 1ST!! And the others are right behind that! For FSU & UF, students will self-report their high school courses & grades (no transcript sent), which they can get from their transcript on Home Access. If they are accepted into those universities, that’s when they want a transcript, but not now. For all others (as far as I know) a transcript must be sent as part of the application.
9. **Fee Waivers** – are available for the SAT & ACT for students who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch – even if you don’t use that program (up to 2 per test, fyi, in case you used them last year). If you have ever used a waiver for the SAT or ACT, you are also eligible for a ***college admissions application fee waiver***. Please let me know if you qualify (or even if you qualify but didn’t use the SAT/ACT waivers) and need the waiver.
10. **Graduation Recognition (Val, Sal, Magna, Suma, etc.)** is all determined at the time first semester grades are posted. There is not enough time to figure all of that out at the end of the year with final transcript info. before the actual graduation ceremony! So their class rank/GPA at the end of first semester will determine those honors. It may change on paper by the end of

the year – but will not change what happens at the graduation ceremony, so watch those grades!!!

11. **Scholarships** – after college applications are done – start looking into these. Fastweb.com, Zinch.com, Scholarshipexperts.com and many other websites are excellent ways to find scholarships. Also, check the college websites for whatever college you are applying to and find any scholarship opportunities for incoming freshmen. Most deadlines for these scholarships happen BEFORE you know if you're accepted to that college – but they will sort that out in the end. Look at the college in general, as well as the specific college for your major (college of engineering, education, etc.). The SAHS Guidance website will have a Scholarship bulletin which will be updated weekly – starting usually in October sometime. This will provide information about local scholarship opportunities and provide the link to the applications. Those that require paper applications will be included in the Scholarship Information Bin in the Guidance office.
12. **FAFSA** – this is the Federal form for Financial Aid that must be completed by each student/parent (www.fafsa.gov). This one is not available until after January 1st 2015 for the **Fall 2015/Spring 2016** school year. Income tax information for the 2014 tax year will be required for completing this. If your student is offered admission for the **Summer 2015** semester, the FAFSA should be completed with 2013 tax information in order to see if they qualify for any federal aid for that. Watch for an information session here at SAHS in Sept. sometime for help with this form.
13. **NO SENIOR-ITIS** – I reminded everyone that college admissions decisions are CONDITIONAL and can always be RESCINDED if they don't like what they see on a final transcript. I've seen it happen and it's NOT fun!! So please encourage your senior to stay focused & keep their grades up!!

I'm sure there was more we discussed – but that should cover most of it!!

Please make sure all senior students/parents are getting these emails, and if not, have them email me so I can add them to the list. And, as always, let me know if there are any questions.

Thanks!

Dena K. Bechtle

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