

FALL NEWSLETTER

September 2016

Dear Senior Parent/Guardian:

As the parent or guardian of a Ruston High School senior, you are keenly aware of what a busy time this is in your child's life. In an effort to keep you informed about upcoming events and important dates, I will periodically contact you through newsletters. While I hope these letters will be helpful, please feel free to contact me at 255-0807 or kwhite2@lincolnschools.org if you need additional information or have questions. **Graduation is scheduled for May 16, 2017 at the Louisiana Tech Thomas Assembly Center.** Please mark your calendars. It will be here before we know it!

College Applications and Scholarships

Now is the time to begin filling out applications for college admission and scholarships. Most postsecondary schools now prefer that you use online applications. **In most cases, the online application for admissions is also used for scholarship consideration.** Deadlines vary from school to school; however, **November 1st** is a good target date. If your child has a question about a deadline, please advise him/her to see me. We are all happy to help with the application process. Scholarship information is announced as it is received and is posted on the guidance bulletin board. Online scholarship searches are a great way to find information on additional scholarships. Mrs. Humphries sent out information to each student this summer regarding national scholarships. Those scholarships are very competitive and require much work. Students interested in those scholarships should have already begun working on them. A great tool for researching scholarships, financial aid, and student loans is www.fastweb.com. Encourage your child to apply for multiple scholarships. The competition is fierce!

Senior Graduation Information and Orders

On **Wednesday, October 5th**, Mr. Curt Joiner of Graduate Sales will be at RHS during Advisory to present information on ordering caps, gowns, diploma covers, and other graduation supplies. Students will receive order forms and brochures at that time. **To participate in graduation, a student must have a cap, gown, diploma cover, and tassel.** The other items (sweatshirts, t-shirts, mugs, etc.) are purely optional. On **Thursday, October 13th**, Mr. Joiner will return to take orders. He will be in the RHS auditorium all day. Senior English teachers will take their classes to the auditorium throughout the day. Parents/guardians are welcome to attend both dates. To submit an order, students must complete an order form and pay at least the required deposit. For your best value, it is best to order graduation supplies in November. If you choose to wait until later in the year, the price of the items will increase. **If your child plans to use a cap and gown from a prior year, he/she must bring the cap and gown to Mrs. Moss in room 203 for approval. The borrowed cap and gown must be the exact same color as the ones ordered this year or they will not be acceptable.** A diploma cover and tassel must still be purchased if a student borrows a cap and gown.

Staff Development Day & Columbus Day Holiday – October 10, 2016 – October 11, 2016

Financial Aid/TOPS

If your student hopes to be eligible for TOPS or to receive a scholarship, grant, work study or loan, you must complete a *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). **For the first time ever, the FAFSA for the 2017-2018 school year will be available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov beginning October 1, 2016.** Please see the attached flyer regarding FAFSA. Financial records from the 2015 tax year are needed to complete the FAFSA. **FILLING OUT AND SUBMITTING THE FAFSA ONLINE IS FREE!!!! IF YOU ARE ASKED TO PAY FOR THE SERVICE, YOU ARE NOT USING THE CORRECT WEBSITE.** Paper copies are no longer mailed to the school. (The government prefers the online application, and it is easier to use for reapplication each year.) There are separate sections on the form for parents and students to complete. **If your child hopes to be eligible for the Louisiana TOPS scholarship, then the FAFSA must be completed. With the future of TOPS in jeopardy, it would be best to complete the FAFSA early.** The FAFSA must also be renewed each year a student is in college. **To qualify for TOPS in previous years, a student had to meet BOTH the TOPS core GPA and ACT requirements. In other words, students had to have at least a 20 composite on the ACT AND at least a 2.5 core gpa. It is possible that the TOPS minimum requirements will change for this year's graduating class. Also, TOPS must receive official ACT scores.** When registering for the ACT, use code 1595 and the scores will automatically be sent to TOPS. A student who is trying to get the necessary ACT score for TOPS may take the ACT each time it is given during the senior year. A student may also take the test in June after he/she graduates; however, there will be a penalty of one semester (or two quarters) if the student does not score the mandatory 20 until the June test date.

Senior Pictures/Yearbooks

Senior will need to submit two pictures for the yearbook and Chatterbox: ONE outdoor picture and ONE Cap and Gown (cap MUST be on head) picture. These pictures are due by February 15, 2017. Students may use the photographer of his/her choice for these pictures. Please ask the photographer to e-mail your picture choice to rustonhighyearbook@gmail.com. Senior recognition ads, layouts, and payments are due on January 27, 2017. The form may be downloaded from the school website. The Resume', Ruston High School's yearbook, is being pre-sold for \$55 until January 1, 2017 when the price will increase to \$60. The yearbooks will be distributed in August during Prep Week since they cover the entire 2016-2017 school year. If you have specific questions, please contact Mrs. Becky White at the yearbook's e-mail address rustonhighyearbook@gmail.com. **PLEASE SCHEDULE SENIOR PORTRAITS NOW! THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT SENIOR PORTRAITS WILL NOT BE ADJUSTED.**

End of First Nine-Weeks Grading Period – October 14, 2016

The first nine-weeks grading period ends on October 14, 2016. **Report cards will be issued on Friday, October 21, 2016.**

ACT/SAT

The next ACT test will be administered on October 22, 2016 to those who have registered. ACT test dates are included in this mailing, are in the RHS Student Handbook, were mailed to you this summer by Mrs. Humphries, and were distributed at Prep Day. If your senior plans to go to a four-year college or university next year but has not yet taken the ACT, he or she should plan to take the ACT by the December test date. The deadline to register for the December 10, 2016 test date is November 4, 2016. Registration for the ACT should be done online at www.act.org. When registering for the ACT, a student should use **192595** as **Ruston High School's code**. As Mrs. Humphries told you last year, ACT scores must be sent to **TOPS** by using **code 1595** when registering. If your child plans to play a collegiate sport, ACT scores must also be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center. To send ACT scores to the **NCAA**, use the **code 9999**. The cost of the test is \$42.50. The cost to test with the writing component is \$58.50. Information about which schools require the writing component can be obtained from a college/university website. **If a student plans to attend a two-year community or technical college, the ACT is not necessary.**

Staff Development Day & Election Day – November 7, 2016 – November 8, 2016

ASVAB

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) will be administered to interested students on **Tuesday, November 15, 2016**. The ASVAB is an aptitude/career test for any students interested in exploring different occupations. The scores are used for military recruitment purposes; however, one does not need to plan on a military career to take the test. Moreover, a student will not be enlisted in the military if he/she chooses to take the test. Encourage your child to take this test as a means of career exploration.

Ruston High School Career Center

The Ruston High School Career Center is located in the back of the library and is staffed by Mrs. Jessie Bryan. The focus of the Career Center is to assist RHS students and their parents in career exploration and planning. College and military recruiters schedule their visits through the Career Center. We are so fortunate to have this resource right here on the RHS campus and encourage both you and your child to take advantage of the services provided.

Thanksgiving Holidays –Monday, November 21, 2016 – Friday, November 25, 2016

End-Of-Course Test Retakes

In addition to successfully completing required Carnegie units, **all high school students must pass end-of-course tests in Algebra I or Geometry, English II or English III, and Biology I or U.S. History**. The end-of-course test retakes will be administered November 30th – December 14th. For those who are testing, attendance is **MANDATORY** on these test dates. The re-tests will be given again in April.

Christmas Holidays – Tuesday, December 20, 2016 (half-day) - Tuesday, January 3, 2017
School resumes on Wednesday, January 4, 2017

End of Second Nine-Weeks Grading Period and First Semester

The end of the second nine-weeks grading period and the first semester is January 13, 2017. **Report cards will be issued on Friday, January 20, 2017.**

This past summer, Mrs. Humphries mailed your child's transcript to you. That transcript included his/her overall grade point average and core grade point average. The overall gpa and core gpa will not change until the end of the first semester since only semester grades appear on the transcript. Mrs. Humphries also sent you some suggestions for preparing for your child's senior year and resources for applying for national scholarships. Mrs. Humphries does a great job of preparing students and their parents for a busy senior year. Hopefully, we are well on our way to a wonderful experience!

Again, please contact me at 255-0807 or kwhite2@lincolnschools.org if you have questions or concerns about your senior or the information included in this newsletter. This information covers the first semester of this year. In February, I will send a spring newsletter that will take us through the remainder of the year. The school website is updated on a regular basis, and additional events and information will be posted there. This is a busy time in your family's life. I truly believe we must keep the lines of communication open in order for us all to have a successful year.

Sincerely,

Kay White
12th Grade Counselor

