

Junior Year Recommendations for Success

Grades

Grades this year are a priority and I check your junior's grades often. The overall grade point average is important, but the core gpa (English, math, science, social studies, foreign language) is the most important. These core grades count for college admissions as well as for the Louisiana TOPS Scholarship. While all grades earned in high school count, **grades made during the junior year are the last grades used for university scholarship consideration.**

ACT/SAT

Students planning to attend a four- year college will need to take the ACT or SAT, although the ACT is more prevalent in this area. Registering on-line is easy at www.act.org for ACT; www.collegboard.org for SAT. College-bound students should begin taking the ACT during the junior year and can continue taking the test throughout the senior year if needed. When registering for ACT, have score sent to TOPS (code #1595). Not all schools require writing component of ACT, so check that info on ACT website. **All juniors will take an ACT test at Ruston High School on Tuesday, March 17, 2015.**

Louisiana TOPS Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to Louisiana high school graduates who earn at least a 2.5 core gpa on 19 certain core classes and score a 20 composite ACT score. This scholarship pays **partial** tuition at any Louisiana university and may be combined with other scholarships. There are three levels of scholarship awards, and each is based on core gpa and ACT. For more information about the different levels of TOPS, see the enclosed flyer for more information.

Career Exploration

Juniors will take a career test this semester through the RHS Career Center. Students will be shown how to interpret the results and match their interests to post-secondary schools. Another good resource to browse for career information is The Occupational Outlook Handbook online: www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm.

Post-Secondary Schools

The easiest way to explore colleges, universities, vocational schools, and community colleges is by first visiting the schools' websites. Information on programs of study, admission requirements, scholarships and cost is readily available on-line. While juniors cannot apply to schools until senior year, they can begin looking at information. I will be assisting them through this process and will be encouraging them to take a campus visit after narrowing the search. Spring break and summer before senior year are excellent times to visit colleges and universities.

Military Academies

Students interested in applying to a United States Military Academy must begin the application process during the junior year. Opportunities in all branches of the military can be found at www.military.com.

College Sports

Students who plan to play sports in college at a Division I/II school need to register on-line with the NCAA EligibilityCenter at www.eligibilitycenter.org. Registering with the NCAA EligibilityCenter is the first step in establishing gpa/ACT requirements for prospective athletes. Remember to have ACT scores sent to NCAA (code #9999) upon each ACT registration.

Voter Registration and Selective Service Registration

The RHS guidance counselors are certified voter registrars, and any 18 year-old student who is a citizen may register to vote through the guidance office. Students must have either a driver's license or an ID obtained through the DMV in order to vote. In addition, 18 year-old males must register with the Selective Service and can do so on-line at www.sss.gov.

Junior year should be used to improve grades, take the ACT/SAT and explore career and school options.