

# The Counseling Connection

APRIL/MAY, 2017

*A Publication of the Counseling Department at Monson High School*



## Got Organization and Time Management? Some Tips For Success

Your high school experience can greatly be improved by being organized and using your time wisely. Staying organized can help ease the burden of a busy schedule. While you do not have a lot of control over which semester or what time your classes are scheduled, you do have control of the rest of your time. Here are some important tips to remember:

- 1. Use a planner, calendar or your phone to stay organized.** There are dozens of free apps that you can download to your smart phone. Fill in things you must do (classes, work, practice, etc. that you can't change). Write down appointments and class assignments. Utilize a daily checklist.
- 2. Set priorities and do the most important tasks first.** While it is best to do all assignments/tasks, when you only have limited time then do the most important ones first.
- 3. Set achievable goals when you set your goal(s).** Unrealistic goals often do no good and simply set you up for failure. You want to aim to set goals that are challenging, yet are achievable.
- 4. Start easy.** Complete the easiest items on your checklist first and then go back and work on the harder or more complicated tasks. When you complete items and cross them off your list, you achieve a sense of satisfaction and hopefully gather additional energy to continue. If you are not accomplishing tasks quickly, then often you get discouraged and give up.
- 5. Get organized.** By organizing some key areas in your life, like your bedroom, study area, car and locker, it will improve your ability to stay on schedule and stay focused during your hectic schedule. You will avoid a frustrating situation like looking for an assignment that is due and you have no idea if it is in your locker piled high with papers, the car that hasn't been cleaned for who knows how long, or your bedroom that looks like an atomic bomb hit it! Being unorganized will cause problems in nearly every area of your life and developing the skill of organization will immensely improve your ability to become successful at whatever you pursue.

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## More MCAS Scheduled

Parents and students are reminded of the upcoming MCAS testing schedule.

All sophomores will take the mathematics MCAS session 1 on Tuesday, May 16 followed by mathematics session 2 on Wednesday, May 17. The biology MCAS will be given on Monday, June 5 and Tuesday, June 6 to all grade 10 students who did not take the test in February.

Again this year sophomores will take part in math boot camp during the school day on May 9, 10, 11, 12 & 15 in an effort to be better prepared for the test. The support sessions will take place during an extended SAP schedule and will be taught by the math teachers. Students will be assigned to one of five groups and over the course of the five days will receive review materials in number sense, algebra, statistics, geometry and measurement.

A reminder that starting with the class of 2010, all students who earn a needs improvement score (220-238) in ELA or math must have an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP). The plan requires students to continue taking courses in the area of weakness and must meet additional criteria set forth by the Principal.



# College

## **O PLUS Loans Available**

**r** Are you a parent of a senior looking for additional ways to help finance the cost of a college education? Parents might consider a **e** Parent Loan for **r** Undergraduate Students (PLUS), a low interest educational loan that allows a parent to borrow up to the full cost of education (tuition, room & board). PLUS loans are not based on income or assets and offer a competitive, variable interest rate (not to exceed 9 percent) that is adjusted each July. PLUS borrowers do not need collateral and can take up to ten years to repay the loan. There is no pre-payment penalty and the loan interest may be tax deductible.

For more information contact the college financial aid office to which your child has applied.

## **Federal Financial Aid Resources Available**

Net Price calculators are the latest tool to help families understand paying for higher education. Net price calculators are available on a college's financial aid website and allows prospective students to enter financial information about themselves to find out what the expected cost would be at the particular institution.

This calculation gives families an estimate of the amount that a student pays to attend that institution in a single academic year AFTER subtracting financial aid. Exact awards are not made typically until March or April.

## **Service Academy Program Set**

Students interested in attending a United States military service academy or ROTC program are invited to a meeting on Saturday, April 29 at 12:30 pm at the Westover Air Reserve Base Conference Center in Chicopee. Sponsored by Rep. Richard E. Neal, the purpose of this program is to educate students about the service academy nomination and application process.

Applicants to the service academies (Naval, West Point or Air Force) must secure a congressional nomination as part of the application process.

Because of security to gain access to the base, a registration form to attend the event must be returned to the Representative's office by April 3.

For more information contact [jeanne.ahern@mail.house.gov](mailto:jeanne.ahern@mail.house.gov) or 413.785.0325.

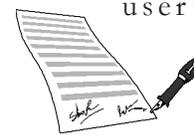
## **Seniors College Transition Program Set for May 15**

The counseling staff is pleased to again offer a program for seniors - **So You've Decided Which College to Attend, Now What?** The program will take place on Monday, May 15 during the special extended SAP schedule.

The program will feature Elizabeth Cleary, a member of the Residence Life staff at UMASS Amherst, and recent MHS graduates talking about the transition to college - what went well and what didn't go so well. They will offer advice about pitfalls to avoid, how to get along with roommates, living in a dorm, managing one's time and much more.

## **My College Quick Start Available to PSAT Test Takers**

Juniors who took the October PSAT are reminded that they have free access to My College Quick Start, the College Board's web-based career, majors, and college exploration tool. Students received information on how to access their accounts on their 2016 PSAT/NMSQT Score Reports, which were given to students in December. Students must go to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org), create a



user account and enter their access code. This same account can be used in the future to register for the SAT.

The web portal includes an online personality assessment as well as profiles of academic fields for over 450 occupations.

## **Local Scholarship Application Available**

Twenty-one local scholarships are now available through the Common Scholarship Application.

Seniors were given copies at a class meeting on March 16. The benefit of the Common



Application is that a student only needs to complete one application and then makes copies for each scholarship for which they are applying. A copy of the application can also be found at [www.monsonschools.com](http://www.monsonschools.com) under the documents/publications link on the high school counseling department page. Applications must be postmarked or delivered by Tuesday, April 25.

For more information contact the Counseling Office.

## Organizational Skills, *continued from page 1*

6. **Schedule the most difficult tasks for times when you are more alert.** Geometry, for example may be hard enough when you're fresh. When you're tired, it will be impossible!
7. **Give yourself a break right after school when you get home (or after sports).** While it may be tempting to just plow through the work and get it all done sooner, you may not produce your best work. The challenge is not to let this initial break turn into all afternoon/night long which then may hinder getting any of the work done especially if you never go back to it.
8. **No cramming.** Do not schedule a test cram session the night before. Several short 50 minutes sessions are more effective than one long session. The more times you see the material the easier it is to remember and more likely you will understand the information.
9. **Establish a regular time and place for study at home.** Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed and try to do studying at the same time each day as the routine will help you stay on track.
10. **If you have time during class to complete classwork/homework then utilize it.** Focus on your assignments and your to-do list in your planner. Remember every minute counts and can add up if you use your free time wisely.
11. **Use daylight hours to study whenever possible.** For most students for every hour of study done in daylight hours, it will take them one and a half hours to do the same task at night. Study during the day especially during lunch, breaks during class, while you're waiting in between classes or for a friend to pick you up
12. **Create study strategies.** Make flash cards or study guides to help you study. Research shows that the mere fact of writing something down helps aid in the memorization and remembering of information.
13. **Review your notes every day.** You'll reinforce what you've learned, so you need less time to study. You'll also be ready if your teacher calls on you or gives a pop quiz.
14. **Prepare and organize whatever is possible the night before.** You can easily pack your book bag and lay out what you intend to wear the next day. Breakfast and lunch meals can also be made and ready to go.
15. **Get a good night's sleep.** Running on empty makes your days seem longer and your tasks seem more difficult. You also will not have the energy level you should have to do well with what you have to do.
16. **Eat a healthy breakfast.** Most teenagers barely eat breakfast and if they do, it is often not a healthy way to start the day. Nutritious breakfasts require time and planning which may be in short supply. It also requires coordination with whomever shops for food to ensure that fresh fruits and healthy grains are available.

*Adapted from <http://www.fennimore.k12.wi.us/hspages/tech-ed/documents/OrganizationalandTimeManagementtipsband-out.pdf>*

## Senior Signing Day Will Be May

### 19

MHS will present its third annual Senior Signing Day on Friday, May 19. Similar to the NCAA model where high school student athletes are celebrated when they sign their National Letter of Intent, our program will recognize and celebrate all 82 seniors by highlighting their pursuits after graduation.

The program will begin with a breakfast for all seniors, their families and invited guests at 8:00 AM followed by a school wide assembly at 8:45 AM where all grade 9-11 students will participate. All grade 8 students will also attend in order to be part of the program. The event should conclude around 9:45.

Each senior will receive a Signing Day t-shirt, have their future plans highlighted when their name is announced and receive a certificate from their sponsor, and an admission representative from their respective school, military recruiter or local business community representative. A high school staff member will also sponsor each student as part of the ceremony. They will then sign the official banner highlighting that plan which will then be displayed in the foyer afterwards. Music will be provided by the MHS Band.

This is truly a community celebration and therefore all are welcome to attend. The event is being coordinated by the high school counseling staff. Special thanks to the Monson PTSA, Herff Jones and Soccer City for providing financial support for the breakfast, banner and t-shirts.



## IMPORTANT DATES

April 8 .....	ACT Administration
April 14 .....	No School - Good Friday
April 17-21 .....	Spring vacation
April 25 .....	Local Scholarships Due
May 3 .....	AP English Lit. Test
May 4 .....	AP Government Test
May 5 .....	AP US History Test
May 5 ...	June ACT Registration Deadline
May 6 .....	SAT Administration
May 9 .....	AP Calculus Test
May 9 ....	June SAT Registration Deadline
May 10 .....	AP English Language Test
May 16-17 ..	MCAS Math Administration
May 19 .....	Senior Signing Day
May 25 .....	Seniors Last Day
May 31 .....	Senior Awards Night
June 2 .....	Graduation
June 3 .....	SAT Administration
June 5-6 ...	MCAS Science Administration
June 10 .....	ACT Administration
June 21 .....	Last Day of School (9-11)

## Scheduling Update

The initial course selections for students in grades 8-11 for the 2017-18 academic year have been made.

Counselors have met with juniors and their parents and are in the midst of meeting with sophomores and freshmen individually to review their course requests. Parents should have already signed their child's course selection sheet indicating their approval.

It is unknown when schedules for next year will be available, but most likely not until late June or early summer.

Please contact the Counseling Office with questions or concerns.

### Staff Directory

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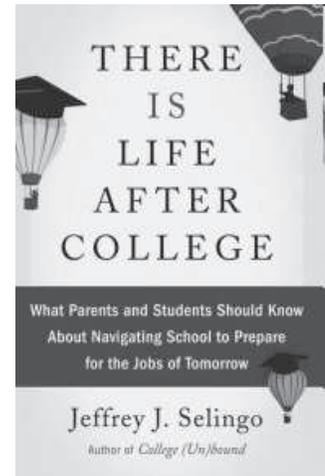
## Book Review

### "There Is Life After College

by Jeff Selingo

From the bestselling author of College Unbound comes a hopeful, inspiring blueprint to help alleviate parents' anxiety and prepare their college-educated child to successfully land a good job after graduation.

Saddled with thousands of dollars of debt, today's college students are graduating into an uncertain job market that is leaving them financially dependent on their parents for



years to come—a reality that has left moms and dads wondering: What did I pay all that money for?

There Is Life After College offers students, parents, and even recent graduates the practical advice and insight they need to jumpstart their careers. Education expert Jeffrey Selingo answers key questions—Why is the transition to post-college life so difficult for many recent graduates? How can graduates market themselves to employers that are reluctant to provide on-the-job training? What can institutions and individuals do to end the current educational and economic stalemate?—and offers a practical step-by-step plan every young professional can follow. From the end of high school through college graduation, he lays out exactly what students need to do to acquire the skills companies want.

Full of tips, advice, and insight, this wise, practical guide will help every student, no matter their major or degree, find real employment—and give their parents some peace of mind.

*Accessed from [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com), 3/30/17. This book is available for loan.*

## AP Exam Balances Due

Students who have signed up to take an AP Exam in May are reminded that the balance is due no later than April 28. The cost for one exam is \$93 and a \$25 deposit per exam fee was due in March. Students on free/reduced lunch are expected to only pay \$25 per exam. AP Exams are scheduled during the first two weeks of May and will be held in Room 102.



## Attendance Policy Reminder

As we near the end of the school year, students and parents are reminded of the school's attendance policy. A student who is absent more than 6 times in a semester course (or 4 days in an alternate day course) will lose credit for the course regardless of his/her grade, unless days are waived through the Main Office or through the attendance appeal process. If there is a question about the number of absences a student has in a specific class, the teacher should be contacted via email for clarification.

