

TO: Students and Parents of the CLASS of 2011!

As you start your junior year, it's time to begin planning for your future. You have many choices: apprenticeship programs, technical or community college, a four year college or university, military service or on-the-job training – or a combination of all these.

Remember to CHECK YOUR CREDITS and your progress towards meeting graduation requirements. During first and second semesters, your counselors will give you a current transcript to help you assess your progress. Juniors are our priority in March, April and May so make an appointment then with your counselor or me if you need help formulating a plan for after high school.

TAKE TIME OUT – begin to think about yourself, your interests and abilities. COLLECT INFORMATION about life after high school – what are your choices and opportunities?

- Attend the National College Fair on Sunday, October 18 at the Washington State Convention & Trade Center. Representatives from over one-hundred fifty colleges throughout the United States, Canada and abroad will be present to talk to you. This is an excellent opportunity to do some college research and is free and open to the public. Go to www.nationalcollegefairs.org for more information.
- Attend College Planning Night on Tuesday, January 12 at 6:30 PM in the Liberty auditorium.
- If you are interested in the military academies, applications are accepted between April 1 of the junior year and November 1 of the senior year. It's a long application process so start now if you have not already done so. Contact me for the names of the liaison representatives available to assist you through the process.

If you plan to enroll directly in a four year college or university after graduation, you must take the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT. Juniors should take at least one of these tests in the spring. Students may register online at www.actstudent.org for the ACT or at www.collegeboard.com for the SAT. Register early to get your best choice of test location.

One of the best preparations for the SAT is the Preliminary SAT National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMNQT). The PSAT is a national test offered once a year in October and top scorers may qualify for national merit scholarship consideration. This year the PSAT will be administered to Liberty sophomores and juniors on Wednesday, October 14 starting at 9:40 AM.

If you are considering an out of state school or a private college, be sure to check specific entrance requirements and application deadlines in our college guides in the Career Center or with college admissions offices. Some colleges may have out of state deadlines as early as October 31 and may require certain SAT subject tests. It is your responsibility to find out what your schools require!

COMMUNITY COLLEGES have two basic tracks: an associate degree to transfer to a four-year institution or occupational certificates and associate degrees. Some community college programs require advance registration or completion of prerequisite courses so be sure to check with the college for special admission requirements.

TECHNICAL COLLEGES offer certificate and associate degrees in occupational areas. They may have waiting lists in many programs, so start looking at college websites now to find out when to apply. Register early to get on waiting lists before you graduate!

USE THE INTERNET! Most schools have websites and there is extensive career and financial aid information on the internet. We have compiled several lists of the best websites for college planning. Pick one up the next time you're in the Career Center!

USE THE BREAKS AND SUMMER VACATION WISELY! In the spring, start visiting local colleges – large, small, public and private. Maintain your momentum during the summer. Contact admissions offices two weeks before your arrival and they can arrange for you to visit classrooms, talk to faculty or even stay on campus. Get a feel for what works for you. A little planning goes a long way toward making your senior year less stressful and your college selection process more successful!

CONTINUE TO CHALLENGE YOURSELF when you register for courses for senior year. The entire senior year is key to many college admissions officers and you want to prepare yourself for the rigors of college. Final transcripts are sent to your selected college after you graduate. Colleges can withdraw their offers of admissions if you have a poor year so keep your focus through your senior year. Finish strong!

CONSIDER A NEVAC (Northeast Vocational Area Cooperative) class. NEVAC is a group of nine school districts that share students and programs. There are over thirty different career and technical education programs to choose from at the high schools within the cooperative. Check out the NEVAC website www.nevac.org or come to the Career Center to get more information.

ASK YOURSELF...where do I want to be in ten years? Can I get there based on what I'm planning now?

INVESTIGATE ... schools, college, military careers

RESEARCH...visit the Career Center, use the internet

Good information leads to good decisions.

TALK...to your friends, your teachers, your family. Who knows you best?

KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN...take courses that match your interests and teach you skills. Remember that all careers require communication skills, math skills and computer skills.

For more information or to answer any questions, please feel free to talk to your counselor or to me anytime.

Sincerely,

Susan Fesser
Career Specialist
Liberty High School