



HANOVER PARK HIGH SCHOOL

GUIDANCE NEWSLETTER

• Winter 2012

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Scheduling for the 2012-2013 School Year

Believe it or not, it's time to start planning for the next school year. Students will be meeting with their guidance counselors to discuss their current progress and future goals in order to select their best courses for 2012-2013.

All proposed course selections will be sent home for parental approval, and signed course selection sheets must be returned. Parents are encouraged to discuss their children's course selections with their guidance counselors by calling 973-887-8137.

Choosing High School Courses for Future Success

Students, as you ponder which courses you should take, keep in mind that the choices you make today will matter tomorrow. That's because what you study now forms the foundation of your education. Taking solid high school courses prepares you for college work and makes you more competitive in the college admissions process.

A Challenging Curriculum:

The best preparation for college work (and admission) is a challenging curriculum that's heavy on "core courses" such as math, science, English, social studies, and world language. While it may be tempting to slack off once you've taken the number of core courses required for graduation, your competition in the selective college admission game is taking that extra year or two of world language or that senior-year advanced science elective.

Electives:

Although core courses are the most important, choosing your electives wisely can also make a difference. Electives are your opportunity to follow your passions and round out your education.

Keeping a Balance:

Although the strongest college applicants have earned outstanding grades in the toughest core courses available at their high schools, you'll do yourself no favors if you sign up for a ridiculously difficult schedule that allows you no time for friends, family, activities, and sleep. So beware of overburdening yourself. Your counselor and your teachers can help you figure out what is challenging – but not too challenging.

[Source: *NACAC Steps to College Online Newsletter*]

Midterm Exams Ahead: Top Ten Tips for Taking Tests

1. Read the instructions carefully. Never assume you already know what they will say! Ask the teacher if you are unsure about anything.
2. Read the entire test through before starting. Notice the point value of each section. This will help you to pace yourself.
3. Answer the easiest questions first, then the ones with the highest point values. You don't want to spend 20 minutes trying to figure out a two-point problem!
4. Keep busy! If you get stuck on a question, come back to it later. The answer might come to you while you are working on another part of the test.
5. If you aren't sure how to answer a question fully, try to answer at least part of it. You might get partial credit.
6. Need to guess on a multiple-choice test? First, eliminate the answers that you know are wrong. Then take a guess. Because your first guess is most likely to be correct, you shouldn't go back and change an answer later unless you are certain you were wrong.
7. On an essay test, take a moment to plan your writing. First, jot down the important points you want to make. Then number these points in the order you will cover them.
8. Keep it neat! If your teacher can't read your writing, you might lose points.
9. Don't waste time doing things for which you will not receive credit, such as rewriting test questions.
10. Leave time at the end to look over your work. Did you answer every question? Did you proofread for errors? It is easy to make careless mistakes while taking a test.

Athletic Eligibility

The Hanover Park Regional High School District must adhere to the NJSIAA (New Jersey State Inter-scholastic Athletic Association) rules that state the following:

Any student (grades 9-11) who plans to be involved in 2011 spring sports (during the 3rd & 4th marking periods) must have passed 13.75 credits from the previous two marking periods (September-January, 2010-2011) in order to be eligible. (Seniors must be meeting the district's graduation requirements and be passing all courses in which they are enrolled.

Naviance Family Connection: College & Career Planning

The Hanover Park Guidance Department utilizes Naviance Family Connection to assist students in managing the college and career planning process. Family Connection is a comprehensive website that includes several online tools that can help students learn more about themselves and prepare for their future.

Naviance Career Planning Tools: The Personality Type Assessor, the Career Interest Profiler, and the Career Cluster Finder can help students analyze their preferences and strengths in order to identify potential college majors and/or career matches.

Naviance College Exploration Tools: The site features an extensive college search engine, a simple-to-use college list maker, and links to profiles and the official websites of the colleges. In addition, the site contains the outcomes of Hanover Park college applications for the past few years. Students and their parents can view graphs and charts depicting this information, analyze a college's acceptance statistics, and consider it (as one of many factors) when determining whether or not a college is a potential match for the student.

The features are available to all Hanover Park students at:

<http://connection.naviance.com/hanoverpark>

Most students registered when counselors held instructional sessions to introduce the tools. Any students who did not register must see their guidance counselor to obtain their personal registration code.

Financial Aid

Financial aid from federal, state, and institutional sources is available to students in the form of need-based grants, loans and work-study programs. Although most aid is in the form of loans that must be repaid, many grants that don't have to be repaid are available.

A form, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), is used to assess how much a family is expected to pay for college expenses. The income, expense and asset information you provide on the FAFSA helps federal processors determine your eligibility for aid. Copies of the FAFSA are available online at: www.fafsa.ed.gov. Although the FAFSA cannot be mailed before January 1, it should be mailed as soon after that date as possible since a great deal of financial aid is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

In addition to the FAFSA, some institutions use the PROFILE, a financial aid application service of the College Board, to award nonfederal student aid funds. Students looking at higher priced schools (private and out-of-state public schools) or applying for certain

scholarships may need to complete the College Board's PROFILE form (or a college's own supplemental aid application) as well as the FAFSA.

The best way to determine a specific institution's aid application requirements is to call their financial aid office directly. Additional financial aid information is available through the following resources:

www.studentaid.ed.gov This website provides info. on federal student aid.

www.hesaa.org The New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority website includes a Tuition Aid Grant Calculator that will estimate your Expected Family Contribution!

www.pin.ed.gov To electronically sign the FAFSA, you should apply for a PIN at this site (This can be done before January 1st!)

Tell your friends! The official FAFSA is at www.FAFSA.gov – **not** .com. If you go to a .com site, you will probably be asked to pay to submit the FAFSA. Remember, the first F in "FAFSA" stands for "free" – so use the official government site to submit your application.

Scholarships

Scholarship Bulletin 2011-2012

The Scholarship Bulletin is a running list of national, state, and county scholarships that is regularly updated and is available online and in the guidance office. Seniors are encouraged to apply for all scholarships for which they are qualified. In addition, a local scholarship application will be made available to all seniors in the spring.

It is also a good idea for students to conduct their own online searches for scholarships. A great resource to start with is: www.fastweb.com. See your counselor for additional resources.

Standardized Test Dates

<u>SAT Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
Jan. 28, 2012	Dec. 30, 2011
March 10, 2012	Feb. 10, 2012
May 5, 2012	April 6, 2012
June 2, 2011	May 8, 2012

NOTE: Register to take the SAT at www.collegeboard.com

AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT)
(Off Campus- For dates and locations, see your counselor or visit www.actstudent.org)

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT (HSPA)
March 6, 7, 8, 2012 (All juniors)