

# GUIDANCE GAZETTE

Mt. Vernon Township  
High School

mvths.org

October, 2009

**P**arent-Teacher Meetings: On November 5 from 3:30-7:00 p.m., and November 6 from 8:00 a.m. – noon, you will have an opportunity to make an appointment with your child’s teacher(s). The main purpose for the meetings is to focus on the student’s work and any deficiencies.



## Free Parenting Education

Free parenting education classes are offered several times throughout the year. The classes run for seven weeks at a time and are held in the evenings. Classes are held at Catholic Social Services, 219 Withers Drive in Mt. Vernon. Snacks are provided. For information and/or registration please call Diane Kroetz at 244-0344, ext. 221.

## News for Seniors

1. **College Information**—Need information about colleges or universities? Start with:

⇒ **College Representatives Visit:** Throughout the school year, college representatives from a variety of public and private colleges and universities schedule time to visit MVTHS to speak to interested students. Upcoming visits are posted on a bulletin board in the Guidance Office in A Building and outside of the Career Center (206B); they are listed on daily announcements and will be a regular feature of *Guidance Gazette*. The representatives are on campus in the Career Center *after school*, and students may stop by to speak with them. The following schools are scheduled to visit in October:

Oct. 21—**Quincy University & University of Evansville**

2. **College Applications:** Many schools now encourage students to apply on-line. It is important for students to tell their counselor about those on-line applications so that a transcript can be sent. Applications without transcripts will NOT be processed, delaying the admission process. It is also important to see that applications reach the college admissions office by their required deadline. Come to the Guidance Office and fill out a form for your counselor to send your official transcript and ACT scores. Please bring the mailing address of the school.

3. **Testing**—Dates to know include:

- The next ACT test date is *October 24*. The test will be given on campus.

News for Seniors continued on next page

## News for Seniors—Continued

- The **Rend Lake College ASSET** placement test will be given at MVTHS on *December 2* at 8:20 a.m. Seniors who plan to attend RLC should see their counselor about the need to take this test. There is no fee, but students must come to the Guidance Office to register by November 25.
- 4. **Attention College-Bound Student Athletes:** The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulates many college athletic programs, which means establishing eligibility requirements for incoming freshmen athletes. The NCAA Clearinghouse certifies eligibility for any athlete who wishes to participate in Division I or II sports in college. Application forms are online at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).
- 5. **Selective Service:** It is now possible for 18-year-old male students to sign up with the Selective Service online. Login at the web site, [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) or click the link on the MVTHS website, and it will take you to the online form. Complete this form, entering gender, full name, address, Social Security number, and date of birth. Click *submit* and you should receive your Selective Service number immediately; a confirmation will come in the mail.

## Scholarship Information

Ready to start a scholarship search? The website, [www.collegezone.com](http://www.collegezone.com) is a highly informative source, powered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. It can help families in a wider scholarship search, estimate financial aid, or learn about filing FAFSA. Most important of all, stop by the Guidance Office often to check on “What’s New” and “What’s Due.” And watch *Guidance Gazette* each month for scholarship updates.

- ◆ **Elks National Foundation “Most Valuable Student” Scholarship Award:** Based on financial need, leadership, and scholarship. Generally, students ranking in the top 5% of their class and exhibiting strong leadership abilities are given final consideration. Due: October 26. A representative from the local Elks Lodge will be in the Career Center, 206B, on Thursday, October 8, at 3:15 to give guidance on completing this application. This scholarship competition is highly competitive and this information will be extremely helpful in completing applications. Applicants are encouraged to attend this workshop. Parents may also attend.
- ◆ **Coca-Cola Scholarship:** Seniors in schools throughout the country can compete each year for scholarships for study at any accredited U.S. college or university. Selection is based on leadership, character, and achievement. Students must apply on-line at [www.coca-colascholars.org](http://www.coca-colascholars.org). Deadline to submit applications is October 31. Information is available in the Guidance Office.
- ◆ **Lincolnland Legends Essay Contest:** Illinois Dollars for Scholars, sponsored by Nicor Gas, will award a \$4,000 scholarship to one winner in each of the 19 Illinois Congressional Districts. This contest is open to juniors and seniors. Complete rules and information are available in the Guidance Office. Due: November 20.
- ◆ **Baptist Foundation of Illinois Scholarship:** Applicants must be a member in good standing of an IBSA affiliated church and plan to attend an accredited college or university. Scholarship packets can be downloaded after November 1 at [www.ibsa.org/ministries/baptistfoundation/](http://www.ibsa.org/ministries/baptistfoundation/). Locally you may call Mr. Henry Hall at 242-7862 for further information.

The following scholarship applications are expected to be available within the next few weeks. Seniors should listen to the announcements and check in the Guidance Office for availability:

- ◆ **Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship**
- ◆ **Frederick Oehm, Sr. Educational Foundation Fund Award**
- ◆ **Lincoln Legacy Scholarship Contest**
- ◆ **AXA Achievement Scholarship**

◆ **Study Hard:** The junior year (fifth and sixth semesters) is an especially important time for students to do well in school. The sixth semester grade point average and class rank is reported on college applications during the senior year.

◆ **Prepare for Tests:**

1. Juniors can elect to take the **PSAT/NMSQT** (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Test) on *October 14, 2009*. This test measures the reading and writing skills needed for college (and for success in most jobs and careers in today's world). Score results tell students how their skills measure up; plans can then be made to fill "skill gaps" that have been identified.

The Student Search Service® gives PSAT/NMSQT test takers the option to voluntarily place their names and addresses in a pool of college-bound students interested in receiving admission and financial aid information from certified colleges, universities, and scholarship agencies.

More Reasons to take PSAT:

- gives students a chance to see how their skills compare with those of other students who will apply to college.
- is the first step, for juniors, in entering the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, National Achievement Scholarship for Outstanding Negro Students, and National Hispanic Scholar Recognition competitions for scholarships and recognition.
- provides practice for the upcoming SAT exam.
- allows students to predict their SAT scores in time to work on specific skills, and that work may raise their scores.

Please encourage your son or daughter to take part in the PSAT/NMSQT Program. Even if your child is not considering college, he or she should take this test. Just taking it can encourage a student to start thinking seriously about life after high school, about goals, and about the education needed to reach those goals. Students may register for this test in the Guidance Office. A fee of **\$15.00** is payable at the time of registration. Deadline to register is **October 9, 2009**.

2. Juniors are required to take the **ACT** test as part of the PSAE (Prairie State Achievement Exam) in April 2010. This test result is used by colleges as part of the admission process during the senior year. This result also helps to determine the Illinois State Scholars, a prestigious non-monetary award.
  - ◆ **Start the College Search:** The college search this year begins by asking basic questions: What type of school do I want to attend after high school? How far from home do I want to go? What career am I interested in preparing for? What could be my major? Which schools offer me what I need? What is the cost of an education at any of the schools I wish to consider?
    1. Check out the Career Center in 206B. This is a great place to begin that search.
    2. Also, stop in the Career Center for announced visits with college representatives. (See *News for Seniors* for October visits)

### Scholarship Opportunity for Juniors!

Juniors and seniors can compete for scholarship money in the Linconland Legends Essay Contest. See "Scholarship Information" under *News for Seniors* for more information or come to the Guidance Office for an application packet.

Freshman and Sophomore students will be given information in their English classes soon about the upcoming **EXPLORE** test for freshmen, and **PLAN** test for sophomores. Both tests will be given in November. Parents and students may wonder: "What is all of this testing for?"

- 1) Test preparation during these two years enhances a student's performance on the PSAT during the junior year.
- 2) Test results help the school district identify areas of weakness in curricular areas, allowing teachers an opportunity to strengthen material that is taught.
- 3) Career options are better explored based on factual information about a student's interests, abilities and values. Career pathways will be identified, and compared from year to year.

**EXPLORE** and **PLAN** assessments are curriculum-based, achievement tests designed to measure the knowledge and skills taught in rigorous high school coursework. Both assessments measure achievement in the same core content areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. These scores are reported on a common scale, enabling educators to make seamless comparisons of student performance across both assessments.

**EXPLORE** provides baseline information on the academic abilities of ninth-grade students that can be used to help plan high school coursework. **EXPLORE** is a reliable predictor of performance on **PLAN**.

**PLAN** provides a midpoint review of tenth-graders' progress toward their education and career goals while there is still time to make necessary interventions. **PLAN** is a reliable predictor of performance on the ACT Assessment.

Parents can assist us in this process by encouraging their students to come to school well-rested and ready to do their best on these tests. Just a reminder: there is no fee for either of these tests.

### CAREER OPTIONS: SO MANY CHOICES

Freshmen begin the career discovery process in the required class, Civics. Through this class, students are introduced to the resources available in the Career Center, located in 206B. Their teachers work closely with the counselors teaching students how to interpret **EXPLORE** test results and identifying possible career pathways. The students become familiar with the "Career Cruising" computer program which allows them to search and research career options, college options, and even job market analysis.

Another important component of this class is emphasis on course selection in high school. Counselors work with the students to develop a "four-year-plan." This plan of action can assist students with future academic and extracurricular planning.

Sophomores continue the career discovery process by taking the **PLAN** test. This test is specifically designed for tenth graders. It offers an excellent career planning assessment (to compare with freshmen results) and it helps students gain a realistic view of their college opportunities. Sophomores also have the "Career Cruising" computer program to use to research careers and colleges, etc.

Career planning is a life-long process. Our mission is for all students to learn and practice good decision-making that can result in making informed vocational choices.

