



Ram o Gram

November 2009

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Rend Lake College Upward Bound Program

The Rend Lake College Upward Bound Program is a federally funded college preparatory program designed to provide academic support, personal/career counseling, and cultural enrichment to participants who have the academic ability to be successful in college.

Upward Bound (UB) offers weekly tutoring sessions for 90 minutes at each target high school, monthly Saturday sessions on the RLC campus and a 6 week summer program, along with field trips to educational and cultural destinations. Our overall goal is to have all Upward Bound students enter and graduate from college. Mount Vernon UB tutoring sessions meet each Thursday immediately after school.

Any high school student who has completed eighth grade, but not yet entered eleventh grade and is enrolled at Mt. Vernon High School is eligible. Students qualify for UB enrollment by: demonstrating the academic potential and desire to complete a college degree, exhibit enthusiasm through toward learning, meet income guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Education, and are a potential first-generation college student (neither parent has a bachelor's degree).

To apply, pick up a pre-application from the Guidance Office (Ms. Lovin) and fill it out completely. Return the completed pre-application along with your most recent grades, and if you are a ninth grader, include your ISAT scores.

If you have any questions regarding the RLC Upward Bound Program, stop by the library after school on any Thursday, and speak with the Upward Bound Student Advisor.



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Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday, November 5th from 3:45–7:00 p.m. and Friday, November 6th from 8:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.. The purpose for the meetings is to focus on student's work and deficiencies. Parents/Guardians are all encouraged to schedule a conference, and especially those whose student received a "D" or "E" for their 1st quarter grade. To schedule a conference, call the switchboard at 244-3700.

First Quarter Grade Cards Mailed

It does not seem possible but the 2009-2010 school year is one-fourth gone. The first quarter ended on October 14. First quarter grade cards were mailed home to parents October 22. The grade report will reflect a letter grade, an absence report, and a citizenship grade for each class in which your student is enrolled. If you have questions about any aspect of the grade report or if you want to meet with teachers about how your child can improve, please call your student's guidance counselor at 244-3700.

The beginning of each new quarter is a great "start over" time for students. Encourage your student to "start over" on attaining perfect attendance and having no tardies for the next nine weeks. Make sure that your student understands that a low grade or undesirable citizenship mark for the first nine weeks does not mean that he/she cannot do better the second and succeeding grading periods.



Junior/Senior Meetings Senior Cap and Gown Orders

On **Thursday, November 5, 2009**, there will be **required** junior and senior meetings with Payton Blewitt, the Balfour Company representative.

Juniors will be dismissed from their class at 10:35 a.m., to go to the auditorium for the meeting to receive class ring and other information. They will return to class at 11:00.

Seniors will be dismissed at 11:25 to go directly to the auditorium for their portion of the Balfour meeting. Mr. Blewitt will present information on graduation announcements and other senior items. He will also distribute order forms for the graduation cap and gown sets, which can be ordered at that time. Mr. Blewitt will be on campus again on November 12 & 13 in the lobby of Building "H" during lunch hours and ELO on Thursday to collect orders from those wishing to make purchases. **Seniors who did not place their order on November 5 should return their completed cap and gown forms on either November 12 or 13.**

The cost of the cap and gown set is \$25.00 and should be paid at that time. If you wish to send a check with your student, please make it payable to **BALFOUR**. Cap and gown sets purchased after November 13 will be assessed an additional \$10.00 fee.

Please remind your student of the meeting and stress the importance of attending.





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NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents or legal guardian(s) who must provide transportation to and from **school because free transportation is not available for their children** may be eligible to receive money from the state to help offset some of the cost for example, bus fares or mileage reimbursement for private automobiles at \$0.505 per mile.

If you can answer **yes** to the following questions for the 2009-10 school year, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for providing such transportation.

- 1) Will the pupil be under the age of 21 at the close of the school year?
- 2) Is the pupil a full-time student in grades kindergarten through 12?
- 3) Does the pupil either live 1 1/2 miles or more from school or live less than 1 1/2 miles from school but **must be transported** due to a serious safety hazard approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation? (See following paragraphs.)
- 4) Does the pupil attend a school within Illinois which meets Illinois compulsory attendance laws?
- 5) Did the parent/guardian incur transportation expenses resulting from transporting the pupil to and from school?
- 6) Did the pupil not have access to transportation to and from school provided entirely at public expense?
- 7) Did the parent/guardian reside within Illinois during the time period expenses were incurred?

If you answered yes to the above questions, lived in Illinois and wish to file a claim, you must go to the school where each of your children is enrolled by June 30, 2010, to submit claim information. You may provide claim information to appropriate school personnel at your child's attendance center until June 30, 2010.

In addition, parent(s)/guardian(s) who have pupils living **less than 1 1/2 miles** from the school attended must verify that a safety hazard due to vehicular traffic exists by completing an Application for Determination of Serious Safety Hazards. Parents can obtain a copy of the Application for Determination of Serious Safety Hazards from the Office of the Regional Superintendent of Schools for the county in which they reside **except** parents residing within the City of Chicago. All applications for Determination of Serious Safety Hazards must be received no later than February 1, 2010, at the office from which the application was requested. The Regional Superintendent of Schools is required to send the Application to the Illinois Department of Transportation within 15 days. The Illinois Department of Transportation reviews and approves or denies the application and returns it to the Regional Superintendent of Schools within 30 days. Upon receipt of the reviewed application, the Regional Superintendent of the Schools will mail it to the parent/guardian who requested the safety hazard to be verified. **If the safety hazard is approved, the parent/guardian must go to the school the pupil attends to submit claim information.** Parents who received verification of a safety hazard during and after the 2005-2006 school year, whose children attend the same school and live at the same address do not have to reapply for safety hazard verification.

Once all claim information is submitted at the school, it will be transmitted electronically to the Illinois State Board of Education. If your claim information is approved, you should receive a check directly from the state for the lesser of the cost of transporting your child/children or the average per pupil reimbursed paid to public schools for transporting regular education pupils. If insufficient funds are appropriated by the General Assembly, all claims will be prorated.

If you have any questions, please call or come to the school as soon as possible.

FFA to Attend Convention

The Mt. Vernon FFA Chapter will be attending the 82nd National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 21-23. This is the 4th time the convention will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana. The chapter will have the opportunity to meet 55,000 other FFA members from all 50 states and Puerto Rico and The Virgin Islands.

The Mt. Vernon FFA will have the privilege to hear several motivational speakers, including Mike Rowe from Dirty Jobs and Hugh Grant, CEO of Monsanto. They will receive two stars, Gold FFA chapter which is awarded to the 2% of agriculture programs and FFA chapters in the United States.

The chapter will also attend several tours, and places of attraction in Indianapolis, including the National FFA Center, the Speedway, a Toby Keith concert, and a rodeo.

Mt. Vernon High School is working hard to provide your children the best education possible to enter over 300 agriculture careers. More students are needed to pursue a college degree in agriculture to fill the demand for jobs in Illinois. We will have 38,000 students graduating from a 4 year agriculture university in 2008, and we will need 60,000 college students to fill those jobs in the United States.

REMEMBER TO INFORM THE SCHOOL OF ANY CHANGE IN INFORMATION AT 618-244-3700.



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