



SENIOR NEWSLETTER



Bellevue Public Schools

Bellevue East High School

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www.BellevuePublicSchools.org/East

Issue #1

WELCOME TO YOUR SENIOR YEAR!

WELCOME TO YOUR SENIOR YEAR! The purpose of the weekly senior newsletter is to provide you with information that may be helpful in your preparation for life after high school. The newsletter will be distributed to you every Tuesday in your English class. Extra copies may be picked up in the Counseling Office or you can view it on the Internet. Go to www.BellevuePublicSchools.org/East and hover over “Newsletters” under the “Students” tab. The current newsletter will be posted under “Seniors” and previous editions will be put in the “Archive.” Be sure to take this newsletter home and share it with your parents and encourage them to help you with forms, reminders, etc. This newsletter is prepared by your scholarship advisor with input from your guidance counselors.

SCHOLARSHIP ADVISOR

I can hear you all thinking, “Scholarship advisor? What’s that?” Well, let me introduce myself. My name is Jim Sheridan and I will be in the counseling office every day to help you with your quest for the scholarships and other financial aid that may help you and your family pay for college, community college, or even trade school. Note the word HELP in that last sentence...many of you can qualify for scholarship money or financial aid, but only if you put some effort into the process and find the right applications for your situation. Every little bit helps, and if you are selected for several small scholarships, it could make enough of a difference for you to attend the college of your choice instead of the only school you can afford. I would be glad to talk with any of you during your study halls or before or after school...stop by and we can make an appointment if you need more time than I can give you at that moment.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

Most four-year colleges require the ACT or SAT-I; a select few also require SAT-II subject tests. To find out which tests you need, consult the web sites of your favorite schools, books like Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges (in the counseling office), or your counselor. The first ACT at BEHS is October 24th; the deadline for applying is September 18th. The only SAT at BEHS is November 7th; the deadline for registering is October 1st. If you are not sure where, but you want to start at a four-year college or university, you should probably take the ACT as a minimum. Your scores on these tests are often requested on scholarship applications as well. It is best to register online at www.actstudent.org for ACT or www.collegeboard.com for SAT. However, registration packets for both tests are available in the counseling office. **Please apply online...**you don’t need to take a paper registration package unless the Internet is not possible for you. Practice materials are also available in the counseling office for both tests. Two-year colleges and vocational schools generally do not require either of these tests, but may require the COMPASS or ASSET test in the spring.

By the way, you may have questions about the writing section. The ACT offers that portion as optional. The reason is that most schools still do not require the writing portion for admission. You can check your school’s requirements at www.actstudent.org/writing and avoid the extra cost if you don’t need this section. Many highly selective schools do require it, but only a very few are located in our region, such as Carleton College, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and Evangel University. The SAT-I test now includes the writing section as a normal part of the test and the cost is higher accordingly. Also, most students who take an admissions test a second time achieve either the same score or, more often, a higher score! Therefore, you should strongly consider retaking these tests. If you do the practice test in the preparation booklet, have it scored in the career center, and do the remediation for questions that you miss, you can probably raise your score. There are also some test preparation classes offered in the Omaha area (info in Counseling). These will cost you, so you may want to see how well you can do on your own before you sign up. Something new we are trying this year is an ACT Prep module during the GPS period. If you didn’t already choose this GPS option on your survey last year, you can mention your interest to your counselor in early September.

APPLYING FOR COLLEGES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The recommended procedure to follow in applying for colleges and scholarships is to complete the application first, then bring it to me or to your counselor. We will then review the application, attach a transcript, and mail it for you. If you apply online, come in and ask us to send transcripts for you. In order to send a transcript, we will need a release form signed by your parents (or you, if you are 18). Only one release is necessary, even if you apply to several colleges. Release forms were passed out during schedule pick-up. Please get yours signed and turned in as soon as possible...most students eventually need a transcript for something. When scholarships are listed in the senior newsletter, applications will be posted in our scholarship rack. Free scholarship searches can be done at the EducationQuest Foundation at Rockbrook Village (108th and Center Streets) or through their web page at www.EducationQuest.org. We can also help you in counseling or in the career center.

CAMPUS VISITS

Many colleges, both two-year and four-year, have special days for high school students to visit their campus. A campus visit provides an excellent opportunity for you to see if a particular college is the right one for you! For example, **Creighton University** will be holding an open house called CU Sundays on September 20th and October 4th this year. The **University of Nebraska at Omaha** usually offers tours each weekday at either 9:15 am or 12:15 pm to interested students. Some schools have events for specific majors, like the **K-State Engineering Scholarship Day** scheduled for October 12th for students with ACT scores of 29 or above who are interested in majoring in engineering. So, contact colleges that you are strongly interested in to find out when their special visit days will be held. Remember, if any visit will cause you to miss school, you will need a permission note from your parents in advance and you should ask your teachers for assignments to cover any missed work.

VISITS BY COLLEGE ADMISSIONS REPS & MILITARY RECRUITERS

These visits are an excellent opportunity to collect information about different colleges or career choices. Military reps will be in the Café during lunch, so you don't require a pass to see them. Representatives from colleges, community colleges, and vocational schools will also come to visit with seniors in the counseling office. If you want to attend a session announced in Senior Newsletter or mentioned in daily announcements, follow these instructions:

1. At least one day in advance of a college visit, get a blue pass from Mrs. Novotny in the counseling office.
2. Get permission to attend from your teacher for that hour. Ask them to sign the pass so you can attend.
3. Ask your teacher for instructions to make up your work or work ahead to cover the class you miss.
4. Try to attend several meetings so you can compare schools that interest you.

SENIOR PICTURES AND PARENT ADS FOR THE YEARBOOK

Seniors, don't forget that the deadline for the yearbook staff to have your senior picture in their hands is **DECEMBER 18th**. Any photos received after that time will not appear in the yearbook – **no exceptions**. Keep in mind that a photographer needs at least a month to process your senior photos and some will not send us a copy of your photo until your account has been paid in full, so budget time and money carefully. If you have your photo taken locally, most photographers will send us the photo, but you should always check with the photographer to be sure. Also, start working on Mom and Dad now to get busy putting that parent ad together for you. The deadline for submission of all materials and the reservation of ad space in the yearbook is **JANUARY 30th** and again **no exceptions** will be made. By the way, don't wait until the last minute to buy your yearbook. Senior expenses pile up quickly, so you want to get this one out of the way as soon as possible while you still have a few dollars left over from your summer job. The yearbook price will be \$50 this year, so put that in your budget. And buy your yearbook before the end of the first semester or it will cost you \$65 for the same book!

A BIT OF ADVICE

GET INVOLVED NOW!!!! It's not too late to boost your community involvement or take on some leadership roles. These are not only useful for college and scholarship applications, but also important for your personal growth. As an example, join the **Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)** and make a difference in your school community. Visit the Principal's office for an application. Get your parents involved as well.