



RIVER DELL

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

GUIDE LINES

RDHS Counseling Dept. Newsletter

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023



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****Seniors,** On February 9th, local scholarship applications will be available to you. To access a list of these local scholarships, please check the guidance website. You may apply for as many scholarships as you would like; there is no limit. Please make sure you meet the requirements before applying. All applications can be downloaded from the RDHS website, www.riverdell.org under "Guidance". All applications must be submitted to Ms. Obeso in the guidance office by 3 pm Thursday, March 16th. Winners will be notified by mail.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Senior Mid-Year Grades

Many colleges & universities require high school seniors to submit their mid-year grades. The mid-year grades are calculated averaging the first & second marking period grades. The cumulative GPA is also updated on the transcript.

By early February, the Guidance Dept. will be sending mid-year grades to all colleges. It is important that seniors update their college lists in Naviance, by February 3rd.

In most cases, River Dell will send the mid-year grades/transcripts electronically. For those colleges that don't accept them electronically, the counseling office will mail the mid-year grades through standard mail.

Highlights

- ◆ On Thursday, January 5th, the counselors hosted our annual College Planning Night for juniors and their parents. Please visit the school's website to view pertinent information from that evening.
- ◆ Throughout the fall, the counselors were available to meet with juniors about SAT/ACT's and using Naviance to research colleges.
- ◆ The counselors began individual post-secondary meetings for juniors on January 9th.
- ◆ In early December, the counselors met with Sophomores to complete a career assessment in Naviance.
- ◆ Counselors will begin individual scheduling meetings for all students in early March.
- ◆ Once again, students will be able to choose their elective courses on-line through the parent portal in Genesis. More information to follow.

FAFSA Reminder

Seniors: if you have not done so already, you need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to receive state, federal and/or institutional financial aid from colleges. The application can be found at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Colleges have financial aid deadlines so complete this form with your parents/guardians ASAP!

DATES TO REMEMBER

Early February
Senior mid-yr. transcripts sent

Thurs., Feb. 9th
Local Scholarship applications available

Fri., Feb. 10th
Rockland BOCES tour

Sat., Feb 11th., 7:30 AM
ACT Test
(not offered at RDHS)

Feb. 17th thru the 21st
Winter Recess, School closed

Early March
Individual meetings for scheduling begins

Sat., Mar. 11th, 7:30 AM
SAT Test
(offered at RDHS)

March 14th thru the 18th
NJGPA Testing, 11th grade

Sat., Mar. 18th, 7:15 AM
PSAT for Sophomores

Tues., Mar. 28th, 7:00 PM
Transition to HS Presentation

NJGPA Testing

Per New Jersey Statute, The New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) will be administered to all 11th grade students beginning on March 14th. This new test will measure students' proficiency in ELA and a mix of Algebra and Geometry skills. Further details will be forthcoming.



What Should I Do If I Get Deferred?

This is a question often asked by seniors who have submitted early decision/early action applications and receive this reply from a college.

- ◆ Most importantly, understand that excellent first semester grades will do more than anything else to enhance your chances.
- ◆ Tell your counselor about the decision. They are typically not informed of decisions by the colleges until well after you are.
- ◆ Thoroughly read the letter from the college. Often they will make suggestions about what you should or should not do to enhance your chances. You may also find suggestions on their website. Follow their instructions carefully. If they say, for example, not to submit additional recommendations, don't do it.
- ◆ If the college encourages you to submit additional information, you should write a letter reaffirming your strong interest. In this letter, you might also update the admission committee on any new information that is relevant in your academic, extra-curricular or personal world, but don't feel you have to do this if there is really nothing new.
- ◆ Additional letters of recommendation are usually not necessary or helpful. Admission counselors consistently tell us that supplemental letters are only helpful if they provide new information that other writers have not brought forth. Too often supplemental letters simply repeat the same themes that previous writers have provided.
- ◆ Meet with your counselor to review all other options. Remember that there are several good schools for you.

A word to parents: Resist the temptation to contact the admission staff directly which can reflect negatively on the students. Any communication should be between the student and the college!!!

What Makes A College "Good"?

Everyone wants to attend a "good" school, but what does that really mean? What truly determines the quality of a school is not how hard it is to get into but what the college does for students once they are on campus.

One factor to look at is the retention rate. Are students returning after freshman year and do they finish their degrees? Students are more likely to stay at a college where they are actively engaged in learning and part of a community that supports their intellectual, social and emotional development.

A college that emphasizes teaching rather than research attracts professors who enjoy mentoring undergraduates. If a school's mission statement emphasizes a student-centered approach, that's a good sign. Current students are a great source of information about professors and you can ask them about their experiences when you visit a campus.

Advising is another important area where some colleges excel. Students who receive ongoing support as they explore majors & careers make better decisions. Advising doesn't get much attention in the college search process, but it becomes very important once you're in college. Good advising helps students make smart curriculum choices and enables them to graduate in four years.

Starting college is a major life transition, and a strong first year experience is another indicator of quality in a college. While most colleges have a formal orientation program, a comprehensive first year experience continues beyond the first weeks of school and often includes peer mentors as well as seminars with professors who serve as academic advisors during freshman year.

Academic learning has more impact when paired with experiential learning. Colleges that have internships and service learning built into the curriculum provide a rich education that connects what you learn in class to the world. Students develop marketable skills that look great on resumes and these experiences also enhance graduate and professional school applications.

Some colleges require students to complete a senior capstone project before graduating. A capstone project is an excellent way to synthesize what you've learned in your major, get research experience that prepares you for graduate school and connect your major with potential careers.

Tour guides rarely take families inside a college's career center. But knowing that a school has a strong career services office that provides career exploration, resume and interview preparation, alumni mentor programs and on-campus recruiting, is just as important as seeing a well-equipped campus fitness facility.