



# RIVER DELL

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## GUIDE LINES

RDHS Counseling Dept. Newsletter

October/November 2022



### COUNSELING DEPARTMENT (201) 599-7200

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### NCAA Eligibility

Students interested in participating in sports at a Div. I or II college must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at the end of their junior year. Students should sign the NCAA transcript release form & give it to your counselor in the Guidance Office. SAT or ACT scores should also be forwarded directly to the center by using code "9999". For more information, refer to the NCAA website at [www.ncaa.org/](http://www.ncaa.org/).

### Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Program (HOBY)

During the week of October 24th, the counselors will be meeting with 10th grade students during lunchtime to talk about HOBY. Each year, two students are chosen to represent RD at the HOBY Leadership conference. These students will have the opportunity to interact with distinguished leaders in business, government, education and other professions to discuss present and future issues.

### Freshmen Small Group Meetings

The counselors will begin meeting with the 9th grade students the week of October 3rd to share information about the high school and have them complete a personality assessment in Naviance that measures career interests.

### New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA)

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is requiring all school districts to administer the Start Strong Assessment in English language arts (ELA) to grades 9 & 10; all students taking Algebra I & II, Geometry and Science to grades 9 & 12. These assessments measure student proficiency with grade level skills, knowledge, and concepts that are critical to college and career readiness. River Dell will be administering these assessments on September 29th, 30th, October 3rd and 4th. All tests will be administered online and in class.

**Attention seniors:** Just a reminder: If you choose to submit your SAT or ACT scores as part of your application, most colleges and universities require an official score report be sent to them directly from the testing agency. Failure to do so will cause your application to be incomplete and could cause a delay in the reading of your application. To send your SAT scores go to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) and log in to your account; to send your ACT scores go to [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) and do the same. If you have any questions, please see your counselor.

RDHS Guidance is now on **Twitter!** Follow us @rdguidance.

### PSAT Reminder

The PSAT exam will be offered to Juniors on **Saturday, October 15th**. Registration for this exam, unlike all other tests sponsored by the College Board, is done through our high school. Students will be required to register online at [PSAT registration](#). The cost is \$30 payable by cash or check made out to "RDHS". Registration deadline is Oct. 5th. Upon registering, each student will receive an information bulletin about the PSAT, which includes a sample test. If you have any questions, please contact either Mrs. Luberto or Mrs. Obeso via email.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

**Sat., Oct. 1st, 7:15 AM**  
SAT

(offered at RDHS)

**Mon. & Tues., Oct. 3rd & 4th**  
NJSLA Assessment given

**Weds., Oct. 5th**  
No School (Yom Kippur)

**Mon., Oct. 10th**  
No School (Professional Day)

**Sat., Oct. 15th, 7:15 AM**  
PSAT Administered at RDHS

**Sat., Oct. 22nd, 7:15 AM**  
ACT Test  
(not offered at RDHS)

**Sat., Nov. 5th, 7:15 AM**  
SAT  
(not offered at RDHS)

**Tues., Nov. 8th**  
One Session Day (Professional Day)

**Thurs. & Fri., Nov. 10th & 11th**  
No School (NJEA Convention)

**Weds., Nov. 23rd**  
One Session Day

**Thurs. & Fri., Nov. 24th & 25th**  
No School (Thanksgiving)



The 2023-24 FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) will be available on October 1st. When completing FAFSA, you will use income information from 2021 using the IRS Data Retrieval tool to transfer financial information. Remember to submit the FAFSA early and complete the NJ State Specific Questions. You may also use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to populate income and tax information. For further information, please go to <https://fsapartners.ed.gov>.

### Colleges Visiting RDHS

Each year, representatives from over 100 colleges and universities visit River Dell to meet with juniors, seniors and school counselors. These visits are a wonderful opportunity to learn about specific programs of study, admissions procedures, financial aid, social life, etc. Please check the Naviance Family Connection college visit schedule and the Guidance tab on River Dell's website for upcoming college visits. Students must log in to their Naviance account and register in order to meet with a college representative. All meetings will take place in the Media Center. Attendance will be taken.

### College Open House/Fair Guides

#### NACAC National College Fairs

Giving college-bound students the opportunity to interact with Admissions representatives.

\*register free at [www.nacacfairs.org/ncf](http://www.nacacfairs.org/ncf)

#### NJACAC Virtual College Exploration

A virtual college exploration for all New Jersey students. Virtual presentations from admissions officers for students to explore college opportunities at [www.njacac.org](http://www.njacac.org).

#### College Fair Guide

An informational guide on upcoming Regional and National College Fairs

[www.collegefairguide.com](http://www.collegefairguide.com)

### School Counselors: Our Role at River Dell

Although school counselors (also known as guidance counselors) may appear to fill many different roles, your counselors at RDHS have defined positions that can be divided into three areas: **academic concerns**, **post-secondary options** such as college and career selection, and **personal or social issues**.

At RDHS, students have the same counselor for all four years, so it is important to get to know him or her. If you're curious about college and the work world, need assistance with choosing courses for the coming school year, feel disorganized or stressed and need someone to talk to, please come see your counselor today. Their doors are always open and they are here to help and support you!

To date, the counselors have met or will be meeting with:

- ◆ Seniors to review the college application process and post secondary plans (early September)
- ◆ Juniors/Sophomores regarding PSAT's (information sent out through email blast)
- ◆ Interested Sophomores to give them information about HOBY (October 26th)
- ◆ Freshmen in small groups to review high school policies & procedures, update their resumes and complete the "Do What You Are" assessment in Naviance (late September)
- ◆ Students having academic difficulty or any other issues (on-going throughout the year)

### **The Best Information The River Dell School District Website The RDHS Counseling Department**

An excellent way for parents and students to obtain the most up-to-date guidance information including test dates, college events happening outside of RDHS and available scholarship information is to access the River Dell School District website ([rdhs.riverdell.org](http://rdhs.riverdell.org)): Click on River Dell High School then Guidance tabs. The website contains useful links and information both you and your child can use during the four years of high school. You can also find a link for Naviance, a program used by parents and students for career and college research.

### Top 15 Mistakes to Avoid When Choosing a College

Choosing a college is stressful and making sure you make the right decision can often feel like a daunting task. To help out with the process, here are some common mistakes to avoid along the way:

1. **Rushing the process.** Finding the right college takes time and effort, not to mention research and an often lengthy application process. Waiting until the last minute or just “falling into a college” is never a good idea. It takes the most important factor out of the equation—you.
2. **Being a follower.** Following a boyfriend, girlfriend, best friend to the college of their choice may seem like a good idea at the time because you want to be near them, but this is one of the most pivotal points in your life, too. You need to remember to make the best decisions for yourself and, if your relationships are strong, they will outlast time and distance anyway.
3. **The legacy lure.** We’re aware the commandment states “Honor thy father and mother.” However, only considering colleges your parents, siblings or other family members went to in order to follow in their footsteps may not be in your best interest. It’s always better to explore your options and find the right fit for your personality.
4. **Rebellion.** In contrast, only considering colleges your parents DON’T want you to go isn’t beneficial either. Sometimes, they have some good insight that may help you decide on what may be best for you. Don’t choose—or not choose—a college out of spite. This is sure to lead you down a path of regret. Choose a [college](#) based on what you want, not based on what someone else doesn’t.
5. **You’re a die-hard fan.** We’ve all got our favorite teams, but let’s remember that just because they have a great sports team does not mean it’s the right educational fit for you. After all, you’re there to learn, not cheer them on. You can be a fan anywhere, but you can’t learn everywhere.
6. **The temptation to party.** So, it’s a great party school but is it a great learning environment? While you may be itching to get out on your own and party like a rock star, that’s really not what college is about. Remember, when choosing a college that you want to choose somewhere what you can have a healthy social atmosphere but a setting that’s conducive to the real goal at hand—learning.
7. **How a student body looks.** You’ve heard the student body is attractive. So what? Maybe you like this, maybe you’re worried you won’t fit in, either way, you should ignore these stereotypes because they probably are just that. Also, the attractiveness of a student body shouldn’t really make a difference in your decision on where to get an education.
8. **Assuming the worst.** Not applying to certain schools because you assume you won’t be accepted underrates your potential and potentially limits your future. Come on, you guys, we have reach schools for a reason. You never know what you can achieve if you don’t try, so at least make an attempt.
9. **Location, location, location.** Whether you’re a homebody who wants to stay close or an escape artist who wants to get as far from home as possible, the location should be a factor in choosing a college, not the sole decision maker.
10. **Cost obsessions or carelessness.** Forgetting to consider the cost or only considering the cost as a factor are two major issues to avoid. While cost is a huge hurdle, there are many other factors to consider as well and students should not be blinded by this one aspect. Reversely, students who are applying for [financial aid](#) or whose parents are paying for college should not neglect to think about cost completely, as costs can add up quite quickly.
11. **Not visiting.** Experiences are relative and one person’s dream college could be another’s nightmare. This is why going by what you’ve been told is never a good idea. A person very different from you could have had a positive or negative experience that you likely would not have had. Also, only looking at the website or relying on a college’s advertising is a mistake because they tend to idealize college life and students get unrealistic expectations of what campus is like. It’s always better to visit and experience the college—or one very similar to it—for yourself.
12. **Relying on reputation.** Just because it’s a “highly-ranked”, “prestigious” or a “designer” school doesn’t mean it’s the right school for you. Don’t always assume that the difficulty of getting into the school equates to the quality of education you’ll receive. Some students need smaller classes and more one-on-one interaction to thrive in a learning environment.
13. **Pushy parents.** Letting your parents decide which college is right for you, or being forced by your parents to attend a certain school is not healthy. You need to think about what *you* want out of a college. After all, you’re the one attending the school.
14. **Having a one-track mind.** Maybe you’ve wanted to go there since you were little and you’ve already decided there is only one right school for you. But not investigating all your options is a huge mistake. You can still attend you’re number one, we’re just asking you to check out the others, too. Just because you think it’s what you want doesn’t mean you can’t ask questions and, believe us, you can never ask too many!
15. **The college specializes in your current major.** That’s right, we said current. Choosing a college solely because of a specific major or career path is a major (pun intended) issue because, odds are, your major will change several times. There’s nothing wrong with that, we just want you to be prepared with a school ready to accommodate all your dreams, whatever they may be.

(author: Elizabeth Hoyt, a writer for the website [faswtweb.com](#))