

Guidance Notes for Juniors and Junior Parents

By Debra J. Anderson, H.S. Guidance Counselor

January 9, 2012

*Please note: In an effort to be more efficient, I will place future Guidance Notes on the school webpage at <http://www.centralcityschoolsne.org>. Simply go to the **High School** tab, to **Guidance** (along the left hand side of the screen), and then to **Guidance Notes**. As always, I would like to visit with you if you have any questions. The best way to contact me is at 308-946-3086 or by email at djanders@esu7.org.*

General College Information

College representatives and military recruiters have been visiting our school periodically. This gives our students an excellent opportunity to receive information regarding the specific college or military branch that is represented. College bound students may also check out colleges online. Website addresses may be found in the booklet called the College Prep Handbook or through the Nebraska Career Information System.

Juniors and seniors need to visit the colleges that they are interested in during the school year. A college visit while CCHS is in session is considered an excused absence or a "white slip" activity, however, these still count against a student's attendance for the semester. College visits do not count for early out purposes in May when documented with the office though. Simply call the Admissions Office of the college that you wish to visit a few weeks ahead of time to schedule a tour.

Juniors and seniors find it extremely helpful to visit colleges in person. Some colleges ask that students come to open houses. Others just ask that you call two to three weeks ahead of time and schedule an appointment for a tour. While visiting, students usually get to meet staff members, see the dorms, take a closer look at academic programs, and attend extracurricular activities. Oftentimes appointments may be made with advisors, fine arts directors, or coaches. Inquire about scholarships and financial aid specific to the schools when you visit.

Juniors and seniors can apply to community colleges and trade schools. Students must be seniors to apply for admission at 4 year colleges.

Specific Community College Information

I have received information about some of the programs of study that are popular to take and that fill up quickly at some of the Community Colleges around the state. At Southeast Community College in Lincoln the programs that fill quickly and require special admission standards are: Microcomputers; Graphic Design, Practical Nursing; and Associates Degree of Nursing. At Southeast Community College in Milford these programs include: Building Construction; Architecture; Auto Collision; Computer Programming; and Automotive Technology. At Northeast Community College in Norfolk, admission to the Utility Lineman, Ag Diesel Mechanics, Auto Body, Electromechanical, and Automotive courses are often limited. Their Nursing and Vet Tech programs are selective and limited also.

Central Community College prides itself in not having waiting lists, however, please be advised that some of the health related programs are competitive and require special admissions standards (for more information, please contact the Admissions Office soon). These programs include Associates Degree of Nursing and Practical Nursing at the Grand Island and Columbus campuses. They also include the competitive programs of Medical Laboratory Technician, Health Information Management (Medical Records), Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, and Medical Assisting located on the Hastings campus.

If it is a community college that the student is interested in, it would be best to schedule a tour and also a time for COMPASS or ASSET Testing. Monday through Thursday visits are generally the best days of the week to visit community colleges. Juniors who are interested in any of the programs of study that fill up quickly should apply right away and not wait until their senior year to do so.

EducationQuest

Perhaps you would like to visit the EducationQuest Foundation Office with your son or daughter. You may call and make an appointment at 800-666-3721 (for the Kearney office), 800-303-3745 (for the Lincoln office), or 888-357-6300 (for the Omaha office). If you have e-mail available, sign up through the EducationQuest Foundation for the free **Countdown to College** e-mail service for monthly planning tips (for students grades 9 -12 and parents). The EducationQuest Foundation webpage also offers an on-line activities resume for students to keep their achievements current, a college-search, and scholarship matches. All of this and more can be accessed online at www.educatioquest.org.

The Nebraska Career Information System

The **Nebraska Career Information System** is full of interest inventories, occupational information, and links to colleges across the nation. Please take time to check NCIS out. If you do not have the Internet, you are welcome to use a computer in the public library, school library, or in my office. Here is the information that you will need for Internet NCIS:

URL: <http://necis.intocareers.org>
NEW USERNAME: 09centralhs
NEW PASSWORD: H005709

Most of our students already have a Personal Learning Plan established and can log in at:

URL: <http://necis.intocareers.org>
USERNAME: (first four letters of their first name, first six letters of their last name)
PASSWORD: (first initial, last initial, student ID number)

Besides the Nebraska Career Information System, Education Quest has listings of scholarships through Scholarship Quest at www.educationquest.org. Fast Web allows students to search for over 600,000 scholarships at www.fastweb.com.

Testing

ASSET and **COMPASS Tests** (ASSET on the computer) are given by the community colleges and technical schools. Call the admissions and testing office to set up the test with the community college a few weeks ahead of time. The test itself will take approximately 1.5 to 2 hours. It is often good to combine the testing with a scheduled tour of the community college and its programs.

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors possibly interested in entering the military should take the **ASVAB** or **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery**. This test is required for students interested in any branch of the Armed Services. The ASVAB also includes a great career assessment, to help students have a better idea of what their interests are. Contact me if you would like to take the ASVAB at school. The ASVAB will be given at CCHS on Thursday February 2nd at 8 am. This is a day when students will not be in school, but teachers will be here for In-Service.

Many seniors who are college bound have already taken the **ACT**. The December test date is the last date that will typically meet scholarship guidelines (October test date for Wayne State). It is very important to know if a certain ACT score is needed for acceptance into a specific college or program of study that a student may be wishing to pursue. College bound juniors (and some gifted sophomores) will choose to take the ACT a number of times this school year. College bound students should take the ACT three or more times, to have the best composite score.

ACT has an optional Writing Test. Students should plan to take the Writing Assessment also if they have excellent writing skills and wish to demonstrate these to prospective colleges or if the college the student is interested in attending recommends it. At this point most colleges in Nebraska do not require the optional writing test, but to be sure, a student may log onto www.actstudent.org to check the recommendations for specific colleges.

Some of our seniors are also planning to take the **SAT** Reasoning Test. (Few schools in this area require the SAT Subject Tests.) Some students score even better on the SAT than on the ACT, depending on their particular strengths. Some out-of-state schools require the SAT instead of the ACT. Most Nebraska colleges will use either an ACT or SAT score. Scholarship committees and colleges always ask for the best scores that a student has achieved, even if a student has taken the ACT or SAT a number of times.

With both the ACT and SAT deadlines are very important. If a student chooses to register after a registration deadline, there are additional costs. I have registration materials available in my office. Students may also register for the ACT online at www.actstudent.org or the SAT at www.collegeboard.com, but they **must** remember to put in our high school code which is **280-440**.

Test	Test Date	Registration Deadline
ACT	February 11	January 13
ACT	April 14	March 9
ACT	June 9	May 4
SAT	January 28	December 30
SAT	March 10	February 10
SAT	May 5	April 6
SAT	June 2	May 8

All students who plan to take the ACT or SAT should complete at least one practice test prior to testing. These are free to students and are available in my office, including a number of them from different years. Also, if a student goes to their Personal Learning Plan in the Nebraska Career Information System, there are excellent materials available to study from Peterson's online, free of charge.

John Baylor (who is also the radio voice of Husker Volleyball, and a Nebraska celebrity) has a test prep website that can be very helpful. A few years back he came to CCHS and presented his ACT Prep course to some of our students. Now his course is online, available at your convenience. Go to www.johnbaylortestprep.com to check this out. There is a cost for his course.