



Spring, 2011

Counselors

Susan Schweir (A—G)
Tracy Wagner (H—P)
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Allison Koch, Guidance Secretary

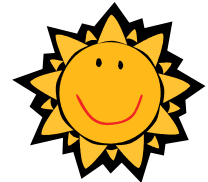
ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR COMING TO A CLOSE

Another school year is quickly coming to a close, and we would like to thank you for your part in the success of the 2010-2011 school year. It has been a productive, rewarding year, and we appreciate the support of our wonderful students and parents. We look forward to a strong finish to this year and a new 2011-2012 school year.

SUMMER GUIDANCE HOURS

The Guidance Office is closing after June 10 for the summer months. However, the Guidance Secretary will be in the office through June 17 and will re-open the Guidance Office for the 2011--2012 school year in early August.

LET'S FINISH THE SCHOOL YEAR STRONG AND HAVE A GREAT



SJHS OFFERS CREDIT RECOVERY SUMMER SCHOOL

St. Joseph High School will again offer a summer school program beginning Thursday, June 9, and ending July 1.

Students enroll in summer school for a variety of reasons: credit recovery, remediation, and enrichment.

Registration forms are now available in the Guidance Office and also on the high school guidance

department website.

The registration deadline is June 7. Late applications will be considered, depending on space availability.

All classes are self-paced computer courses, and students receive .50 credit for each course completed. Credit is awarded on a "credit/no credit" basis. Passing is 80% or better. No letter grade will be

awarded on the transcript.

High School courses offered are: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Careers. Middle School courses offered are: English, Math, Science and Social Studies.

The fee for each class is \$150.00. A limited number of scholarships are available with funding through the SJPS Foundation.

2011-2012 TESTING INFORMATION

SAT

- *October 1, 2011
- November 5, 2011
- December 3, 2011
- *January 28, 2012
- May 5, 2012
- *June 2, 2012

ACT

- September 10, 2011
- *October 22, 2011
- December 10, 2011
- *February 11, 2012
- April 14, 2012
- *June 9, 2012

* Administered at SJHS

PSAT

- October 15, 2011

SUMMER SCHOOL P.E./HEALTH

Summer school is being considered by the Board of Education for the upcoming summer.

SUMMER ENRICHMENT

If your student is interested in a summer enrichment program, we have information available in

the Guidance Office from many colleges, universities, camps, etc., in several different states.

Please stop by our office for more information if you are interested.

SCHEDULES

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ance about a week before school resumes.

Final schedules will be available in homeroom on the first day of school.

Please instruct your student to go to homeroom to pick up the final schedule as schedule changes will occur until the start of school.

Scheduling for the fall begins in October and ends with the start of a new school year. It is a long and involved process that requires patience and constant revising. Although we do our very best to give students all their selected classes, some students schedules may differ slightly from the course selection form completed in February. When a schedule conflict occurs, all efforts are made to substi-

tute a class from the alternate list, but in some cases this is not possible.

Because the master schedule is built based upon course selection materials sent home in February, and because some classes may be at capacity, it may be very difficult or even impossible for students to make schedule adjustments for classes not previously requested.

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

The Guidance Office will begin accepting college applications Tuesday, September 13, one week after we return to school in the fall. However, students may submit their

applications and own materials online directly to the college prior to that, depending upon when each college or university posts the new applications on their websites.

Once the transcript is sent, the application is considered complete and is ready for review by the college.



SENIOR MENTORS

Rising Seniors Selected as Senior Mentors

Later in the spring, applications will be made available to juniors for our Senior Mentor Program for the 2011-2012 school year. Please remind your junior to listen for this announcement.

The Senior Mentor Program began

seven years ago, in an effort to make the transition to high school less stressful for incoming freshmen and other students new to the district. Senior Mentors provide services throughout the year, the most prominent being the role of helpers during the first few days of school. These Mentors will sport bright green shirts with the words ASK ME and a large question mark on the

back. They are prepared to answer questions, or give directions to students who may be confused or need help, and they will do it with a smile! Mentors pride themselves on being approachable and friendly, so be on the lookout for them this September!

ASK ME?

Guidance Secretary Leaves to take Superintendent Office Position

Sue Patzer, long time friendly face in the Guidance Office and SJHS graduate, has said goodbye to her high school colleagues, and hello to her new co-workers at Central Administration in the Superintendent's Office.

Although Mrs. Patzer enjoyed her work at the high school, and will miss the students and staff, she is "excited about the opportunity to learn new skills and a different side of St. Joseph Public Schools."

Before that, Mrs. Patzer held many positions in the community and at SJPS. She began her career as the executive secretary to the President of Heath Corporation. After Heath closed its doors, Mrs. Patzer stayed home with her two young daughters for several years. Later, she began working part time as a cook in our cafeteria, then as secretary for Community Education, followed by a few years assisting in the Media Center. It was only a short trip to the Guidance Department where she has spent the past seven years

updating procedures and generally holding things together for the rest of the staff.

When the superintendent's position became available, she thought long and hard, and finally, with the encouragement of friends, husband Brian, and her children, she decided to apply. Mrs. Patzer was very excited to get the position, and trained with the current secretary for the past several months. March of this school year, Mrs. Patzer fully transitioned to the Superintendent's Office.

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The goal of Student Ambassadors is to help alleviate some of this stress and help new students successfully adjust to St. Joseph High School.

Twelve students will serve as Ambassadors, half being new to St. Joe themselves in the past few years. These students understand what it's like to be the "new kid" and how to make the most out of the high school experience.

Students consistently agree that

the main fears of a new student include: making new friends, finding their way around the building, understanding how to get involved in sports and clubs, where to go for fun outside of school and what resources are available if they have academic or social questions.

In the fall, Student Ambassadors will personally invite each new student for a walking tour of downtown St. Joseph and then for a tour of the high school building, enjoying refreshments together and planning for additional get-togethers.

The first day of school will include an early morning gathering and plans for meeting at lunch to help navigate the lunchroom and to ensure that everyone has someone to sit with throughout the week. Other events planned will include organized student activities such as attending athletic events together.

Research suggests that the first month of attending a new school is the most difficult. We will be working hard to make sure that all students feel welcome to the Bear family and are made aware of the many great activities they can be a part of at our school!

Plan Test Results

PLAN test results were distributed to 10th grade students at the beginning of 2nd semester. Please review this information with your

student. This is a "pre-ACT" test and an excellent tool to help students recognize academic strengths and areas where they can use more

work. The PLAN is also an excellent tool for use in career exploration.

MME

MICHIGAN MERIT EXAM (MME) FOR JUNIORS

All juniors sat for the Michigan Merit Exam on March 1 (ACT), 2 (Work Keys), and 3 (Michigan Supplemental). The MME is the high school assessment tool for

students in the State of Michigan. Students must take the MME as a requirement for graduation from St. Joseph High School. The ACT portion of the MME is a reportable score that can be used for college admissions purposes.

ACT scores are mailed directly to students by the testing company 5-8 weeks after the test administration, and MME results are usually available from the State Department of Education in June.

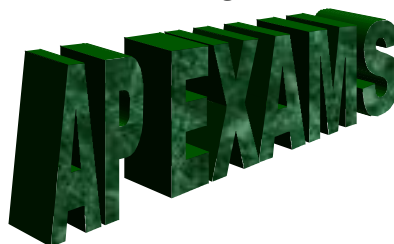
AP Testing is Just AROUND the Corner

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams are just around the corner and students and teachers are working hard to prepare for these very rigorous exams. National exam dates are determined by the College Board, and are scheduled for May 2 - 13. Students have already ordered their tests and are busily preparing for test days.

Students who earn a passing score on the AP test may earn as

many as 3—5 college credits per test, and therefore have opportunity to start their college careers with credits already recorded on their undergraduate transcripts.

AP credits earned while still in high school can result in a significant time and cost savings.



Spring Calendar

May 9 , Honor Grad Reception
May 23, Senior Award Night
June 1, 2, and 3 Semester Exams
June 3, Senior Dinner Dance
And Rehearsals for
Graduation and Baccalaureate
June 5, Baccalaureate 2:30 p.m.
and
Graduation Ceremonies 6:00 p.m.

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stress can be different for each of us. A good illustration of the important effects of stress can be seen from surveys showing that 75 to 90 percent of visits to primary care physicians are for stress-related complaints.

Thanks to the support of the St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation, the counseling and social work staff are providing a much needed

for a total of eight weeks during the school day.

Participation in the small group encourages students to improve and develop skills helpful to learning, success in school and success in life. Students are taught a variety of coping skills to deal with anger, stress and anxiety. Hands-on projects accompany each skill, ranging from stress balls, journals, relaxation CD's and meta-

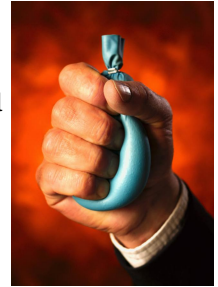
rt Group

for our high school students learning ways to manage groups meet once a week

phor bracelets.

An added benefit for students is the opportunity to create relationships with peers and the counseling staff, providing further support and resources.

If you are interested in having your student participate in a future group, please contact your student's guidance counselor.



IMPORTANT SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

If your senior has received a scholarship from his or her college of choice, or from any other scholarship organization, **please submit a copy of the award letter to the guidance department on or before May 9!** Your student will then have the opportunity to be honored at our May 23rd Academic Awards Night. It is our desire that all students receiving awards be recognized, but unless students or parents inform us, we may not know about your award. Generally, colleges and other scholarship organizations do not send us this information. We want to make sure your student is properly honored, so please make sure we have the correct information. Please mark your calendars for 7:30 on May 23rd in the SJHS auditorium.

Welcome, Mrs. Koch!

We are very happy to announce Mrs. Allison Koch as the new guidance secretary. Mrs. Koch is a 1990 SJHS graduate and then graduated from WMU in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in Business and Marketing. After six years at Perry Ballard Inc., Mrs. Koch chose to stay home with her daughters. The past couple of years, Mrs. Koch began substitute teaching in the district and soon became a favorite of both teachers and students. She started working in

the high school guidance office in November 2010 to replace Mrs. Patzer.

When not working at SJHS, Mrs. Koch is busy in the community. She is a current member of Women's Service League, PTO Vice-President at Lincoln School, and a Girls On The Run coach. Mrs. Koch also enjoys playing tennis and was a member of the 1989 SJHS state runner-up basketball team. She enjoys collecting beach

glass, fishing and boating in the summer months, but mostly enjoys being a mom to her girls.

Mrs. Koch has been married almost 15 years to Gary Koch (1988 SJHS graduate), and together they have two children, Katie (10) and Courtney (8), at Lincoln Elementary School. Mrs. Koch's family also adopted a very cute golden retriever named Maggie about a year ago. Welcome Mrs. Koch! We are so glad you are here!

Happening Now — Spring Junior Conferences!

Counselors are meeting in small groups with all juniors to discuss post high school plans. Whether a student is planning to attend a four year college or university, a two year community college, a technical or training/certificate program, or join the military, it's important to understand the steps necessary to make the plan into reality. The idea of these small groups is to provide students with important information but also allow them to ask questions and realize the need to start putting a plan into place. **Important information is sent home with each junior, so please ask your student to share this with you.** As always, students and parents are invited to meet individually with a counselor as a follow-up to these group meetings. Appointments can be made by calling the guidance office at 926-3210.

Speech Tryouts

Students are asked to deliver a speech to their graduation class during the senior year. If a senior is interested in trying out for one of those places, he or she needs to submit a (5 minute or less) written speech to the Guidance Office by Tuesday, April 19, at 3:15 p.m. Actual tryouts are held the following Tuesday, April 26, in Mrs. Hunter's room. Speeches are judged by the senior class officers. See Mrs. Hunter, or the guidance counselors for further detail.

Parent Forum on Cyber-bullying

On Tuesday, March 8, 2011, Deputy Kelly Laesch, Crime Prevention Coordinator for the Berrien County Sheriff's Department, presented at a SJPS Parent Forum. The event took place at the Upton Middle School Auditorium and all in attendance learned some interesting information and guidelines for parents on the ever important topic of cyber-bullying. The technological age is here to stay, and parents and educators must learn how these technologies function so we can remain aware of how our children and teens are using the various technologies available to them.



Deputy Laesch educated parents on the dangers and pitfalls of unsupervised Internet use and provided tips for monitoring children and teens to protect their safety and social and emotional well-being. Laws regarding Internet use and the extent to which children may be harmed were also discussed.

According to experts, cyber-bullying occurs when an individual is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another individual or group of individuals using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile devices.

It has been reported that 42% of kids have been bullied online, 58% of kids admit someone has said mean or hurtful things to them online, often on more than one occasion. However, 58% have not told their parent or other trusted adult about this negative cyber interaction.

The social and emotional damage caused by cyber-bullies is no less real than the physical damage caused by schoolyard bullies of previous eras, and it can be even more painful. Unfortunately, cyber-bullying occurs behind the guise of protection of a technological device. There is a level of disinhibition that accompanies the idea of anonymity and invisibility that undermines the empathetic response. The cyber-bully is able to reach a very large audience and invoke a tremendous response that can be very harmful to the victim. If you have indicators that your student has been a victim of or participant in any kind of bullying, we encourage you to talk to your student about the situation and seek help if necessary.



Test Yourself on Text Shortcuts:

1. 420
2. 18U
3. P911
4. ASL
5. KPC

(answers found on next page)

Teens; Why Giving May Mean Receiving

In the past decade, volunteering among teens (ages 16-19) has more than doubled.

Why do they give their time? There are three main reasons: compassion for others, doing something for a cause that was important to them, and believing if they helped others, others would help them.

While helping others is what volunteerism is all about, teens also find out while they are giving, they are also receiving. Some of their benefits include:

Educational benefits – by doing things that interest them, teens often gain new skills and find new career opportunities that they hadn't thought of before. In addition, the experiences gained in volunteer settings can provide teens with skills in leadership and decision-making, and also look attractive on college and scholarship applications.

Personal benefits – teens are exposed to people and circumstances they have not encountered in their life. Teens develop better appreciation for the little things in life and also receive a personal satisfaction of knowing they have made a difference in someone's life.

Employment benefits – besides finding new career opportunities, volunteering provides teens with skills necessary in the job market. Teens have a chance to learn important communication and interpersonal skills.

To find out how you can become involved in local community service projects, visit the Volunteer Center of Southwest Michigan; www.volunteerswmi.org or call 269-983-0912.

Answers to texting test:

1. 420 = marijuana
2. 18U = I hate you
3. P911 = Parent alert
4. ASL = Age/Sex/Location?
5. KPC = Keep parents clueless