

The Junior Bulletin

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2008

South Houston High School <http://www.pasadenaisd.org/sohohs/default.htm>

PSAT: Why Take it Again?

Although some students took the PSAT as sophomores last year, it is the score on the PSAT taken in the junior year that can enter the student into the National Merit Scholarship competition. The PSAT is actually a junior level test, so students might do even better on this year's test than on last year's because they should be even more prepared. By taking the PSAT as a junior, students can not only get good practice for taking the SAT in the spring but also enter scholarship competitions, receive information from colleges, qualify for National Merit Scholar, and discover any "skill gaps" that may need attention before starting college.

The PSAT will be given on Wednesday, October 15th during periods 1 through 4. **Juniors may register for the PSAT beginning October 1st through October 10th by paying \$13 cash to Mrs. Brogan in the counseling office before school, after school, or during lunch.** Upon registering for the test, students will receive a publication which separates into three sections: one has hints and tips, one has a practice test, and one has a list of scholarship sponsors. There are limited spaces available, so register as early as possible!



Students may register for a PSAT prep class as well. The class will be held at Tegeler on the two Saturdays prior to the October 15th test (Sept. 27th and Oct. 4th) and will cost \$35 cash. Interested students must pre-register for the class in the counseling office before October

Class Rank and College Admission

Although true juniors will not be applying for admission to colleges or universities until the fall of 2009, now is a good time to understand some of the admissions policies. Each university has very specific admissions requirements, so students interested in going to college need to start exploring the college websites and visiting college campuses. In addition, class rank can also effect how easily a student is accepted into the college of his/her choice.

The state of Texas has required that state universities, such as University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Texas State University, University of Houston, Texas Tech University, etc., automatically admit high school graduates who are in the top 10% of their graduating class. The University of Houston has expanded their automatic admissions to the top 20% of the graduating class. Eligible students need to be aware that they must complete ALL admissions requirements, including applications, fees, SAT/ACT scores, essays, etc., before they will be considered under the "automatic" admissions policy. Eligible students must still meet all deadlines. Private universities, such as Baylor University, Southern Methodist University, Houston Baptist University, etc., are not state supported universities and therefore are not required to honor the top 10% admission policy established by the state of Texas.

Class ranks are refigured in the fall of each school year to reflect the previous school year's grades as well as summer school and night school grades.

There are currently 597 students in this year's junior class. Therefore, numbers 1-59 are considered the top 10% of the class at this time. This year's class ranks have not been refigured at this point. Students will receive that information once it is available.



This publication, *The Junior Bulletin*, will be published periodically during the 2008-2009 school year. All Juniors are encouraged to read the bulletin and to share them with your parents. If at any time you have questions about information in the bulletin, please see the appropriate counselor.

11th grade: Mr. Benjamin
lbenjamin@pasadenaisd.org
Special Pop.: Mrs. Hogan

Dates to Remember:

Sept. 30—College Night @ Sam Rayburn 7:00 pm

Oct. 1-Oct. 10 —Registration for PSAT for \$13 cash

Oct. 3—End of 1st 6 weeks (Early dismissal)

Oct. 15—PSAT test

Nov. 14—End of 2nd 6 weeks

Nov. 17-20, Dec. 1-4—Registration for Night School

Nov. 8—Spanish Credit by TBA—Academic Excellence Ceremony

Nov. 24-28—Thanksgiving holidays

Jan. 15—End of 1st sem.

Dec. 22-Jan. 2—Christmas holidays

Jan. 20 - Begin 2nd sem.

Class of 2010 New Counselor!

It is indeed a great pleasure to finally introduce myself to you. My name is Mr. Benjamin, your brand new SOHO 11th grade counselor! I previously worked as a high school counselor at Elsie High School in southwest Houston. Before becoming a counselor, I was a teacher and taught speech communications and teen leadership. I received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications Radio and Television with a minor in Integrated Social and Political Sciences and I also have a Master of Arts degree in Counseling from Prairie View A&M University. I am truly excited to be here and I look forward to meeting all of you. I will start to visit all junior homerooms in November, to discuss what you specifically need to be doing in your junior year in order to have a successful senior year. I have had the pleasure of meeting some of you and some of your parents. I know that the class of 2010 is excited about the idea of college and other after high school educational and vocational opportunities that will help aide you in becoming a wonderful contributing citizen of our great country. I along with the other outstanding SOHO staff members are more than eager to assist you in conquering those endeavors!

New AP!

The class of 2010 not only has a new counselor, you also have a new fabulous assistant principal! Hello juniors! I am Ms. Garcia, your new assistant principal, and like

Mr. Benjamin I am excited to be here! While I may be new to SOHO, I am not new to the district. I have been in education for over 20 years. I have a Bachelor of Science in Special Education from Texas State University, and a Master of Education with a certification in Mid-Management. I must say, I am very impressed with the class of 2010, you're awesome! Make sure you are aware of your make up hours and you follow through on your detention times. Lastly, but not least, continue to wear your ID's and adhere to the district dress code daily. Let's also continue to serve as great role models for not only SOHO, but for the district.

How Do I Learn About Different Colleges?

One: Attend the Pasadena ISD College Night on September 30th. This event will be held at Sam Rayburn High School from 7-9 pm. Representatives from over 50 different colleges and universities, as well as the armed forces, military academies, and technical schools will be available to meet with prospective students and their families. This is a good chance to pick up college catalogs, and ask questions about admissions, scholarships, financial aid, housing, etc.

Two: Visit the websites of all the universities and spend some time exploring what they have to offer. For example, visit the University of Texas at www.bealonghorn.utexas.edu, or Texas A&M at www.tamu.edu, or University of Houston at www.uh.edu, or Texas Tech university at www.gototexastech.com, or Sam Houston State University at www.shsu.edu, or Stephen F. Austin State University at www.sfasu.edu, etc., or just do a search for the college of your choice to find the specific website.

Three: Arrange a campus visit and see for yourself. Many universities host campus visits for "rising juniors" in the spring of the junior year, but you can make arrangements with the university for a campus visit when it is convenient for you and your family. Information from colleges about campus visit opportunities will be passed along through these Bulletins.



What Are My Choices After High School?

It is time to begin investigating and researching what your steps will be after high school. Basically, there are four possible plans for your future: enter the work force, join the military, join a technical or vocational program, go to college.

Entering the work force— spend time creating a good resume that features your strengths as well as any skills you may have that set you apart from the other applicants. In the interview, dress nicely, make eye contact, shake hands, answer questions with honesty and respect. Remember, there may be several other people being considered for the same position. You want them to remember you. Visit some of these websites for more information about career choices: www.careervoyages.gov, www.myfuture.com, and www.careerkey.org



Joining the military— Anyone joining the military must have completed all high school graduation requirements. Each military branch will have its own specific policies and procedures. If you are interested, you would need to contact a local recruiter for more information.

Joining a technical or vocational program—There are an abundance of technical and vocational schools and programs that will make many promises, as long as you have the money to pay for them. Do your research before signing on the dotted line. Know how much the entire program will cost through completion; know what your obligations will be upon signing. Remember that many junior colleges such as San Jacinto College offer the same technical programs at less cost. Ask the junior colleges about their **certification only programs**.



Going to College—This category can be divided into junior colleges and universities.



Junior College: Students who apply to junior colleges are automatically accepted, at most junior colleges, upon successful completion of all high school graduation requirements. These schools do not require you to take an SAT for admission; however, students must take the THEA, which the college uses to determine course readiness and placement. You may, however, still choose to take an SAT or ACT because certain scholarships require an SAT or ACT score in order to apply for that scholarship. Students who are not US citizens can also apply to college, but these students must meet certain obligations.

Universities: You will not actually apply to a university until the beginning of your senior year, but there are things you can do to get ready for that day. Each university has its own specific requirements and prospective students need to visit university websites and research their school's requirements. When investigating colleges, consider academics, entrance requirements, location, and cost. Take notes and make a folder for each college possibility. Feel free to explore the following websites for more information about colleges: www.collegeboard.com, www.campustours.com, www.act.org, www.students.gov, and www.collegeanswer.com.



If you are in the top 10% of your graduating class, you can be automatically admitted to a Texas state university upon successful completion of all graduation requirements and completion of all application procedures required by the university. You would still have to meet all deadlines in order to be considered. This top 10% admission policy might be some incentive to make the best grades possible between now and your senior year. Currently, students ranked # 1—50 are in the top 10% of the class. However, this can change each year. Use the timeline on the following page as a guide for the road to college.



Fall of the Junior Year

October of the Junior Year

Spring of the Junior Year

Fall of the Senior Year

Spring of the Senior Year

Begin creating a resume to give to teachers, counselor, etc. whom you will ask to write letters of recommendation in your senior year.

Take the PSAT, even if you already took it in the 10th grade. The junior PSAT is the score that colleges look at when considering sending information to potential students.

Take an actual SAT or ACT in the spring so that you can have a score when you start filling out applications next fall. Also, if you are unhappy with the score, you will still have time to retake the test or take a different test either in the summer or at the very beginning of your senior year. If you receive free or reduced lunch services, you are probably eligible for a fee waiver for the SAT. You must use the fee waiver for the SAT in order to receive a fee waiver for college applications when applying next fall. Also, narrow down your college choices to your top three to five choices. Application fees for universities run about \$50 each, so be selective.

Apply, apply, apply! You will be receiving bulletins that offer a variety of scholarship opportunities for you. You will also need to fill out college applications. If you used a fee waiver for the SAT, you are eligible for a fee waiver for your college application. It is very important to meet all deadlines. Some admissions deadlines are as early as February 1st and some college financial aid deadlines are just as early.

You will need to apply for financial aid by filling out the FAFSA. This form is not available until January of your senior year. This is important for acquiring grants, etc. You must also take a THEA test for placement before you can start your college courses. Avoid senioritis! You still have to graduate and receive a diploma to start college in the fall even if you have already been accepted to a college or university! Stay focused all the way to your dream!

