

Saura Scoop

August 24, 2012

South Stokes

Counseling Department

Welcome to the 2012-2013 school year! We look forward to a spectacular school year and hope that you find it filled with academic accomplishments and extracurricular experiences. The Counseling Department at South Stokes is designed to help students achieve and succeed. We are here to assist students with academic, social, and emotional concerns throughout the school year. We ask that students who need to see a counselor stop by before or after school or during lunch to schedule an appointment whenever possible. All conversations with the counselors are held in confidence.

Throughout the school year, we meet with students individually as well as in classrooms to help educate them about the many opportunities available after graduation. We work closely with students individually to research areas of interest, qualifications and admissions criteria, and how to prepare to achieve those goals. During these meetings we also complete pre-registration activities for the next school year, ensuring that students are taking rigorous courses to be competitive in the college admissions process and obtaining the job skills necessary to be successful regardless of their post-secondary plans.

There is a wealth of information included on the Counseling Center website which can be accessed from the South Stokes homepage. Please feel free to contact the counselors throughout the school year any time you have questions or concerns. Have a super, successful year!

PSAT REGISTRATION

A CHEAP, EASY WAY TO PREPARE FOR COLLEGE!

Sophomores and juniors planning to apply to four-year colleges and universities are strongly encouraged to sign up for the PSAT that will be administered here at South Stokes in October. In addition to being a great, inexpensive way to practice for the SAT, it is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program for juniors. Juniors, if you took the test last year, you should sign up again to help boost your scores on the SAT and possibly qualify for scholarship monies.

The PSAT costs \$14 and students interested in taking the test should sign up in the Counseling Office by September 28. Fee waivers are available to juniors who meet eligibility requirements as well. Freshmen may also take the test if they are interested in getting a head start on preparing for college admissions tests. If you have any questions, please see the counselors.

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COLLEGE FAIR!

South Stokes will be hosting a College Fair on Wednesday, October 3, during the school day. Juniors and seniors will attend and should do some preliminary research on the colleges they are interested in to be able to ask questions of the representatives that are present. Parents are also invited to attend the event which will be held from 11:00 am – 12:00 Noon.



Students and their parents are strongly encouraged to begin using CFNC.ORG to plan for college and careers. Many useful tools are available to help plan, apply, and pay for college including information about college admissions and financial aid calculators. For more information about using CFNC, please see your counselor.





College Entrance Tests: An Important Piece in the College Admissions Puzzle

Juniors planning to attend four-year colleges will be encouraged to begin taking college entrance tests this year. Experience and research shows that the more test preparation a student participates in, the higher the chances a student's scores will accurately reflect the student's preparedness to succeed in college. Below are suggestions for students to do well on college entrance tests.

Four-Year College or University Bound Students

The PSAT is strongly encouraged for all four-year college bound juniors. Once scores for the PSAT arrive, students should use the information provided in the score report to study for the SAT. Additionally, all sophomores took the PLAN last year in preparation for the ACT. The results of the PLAN are another excellent way to determine exactly which areas you need to study in order to obtain competitive scores for college admissions.

Study materials are available in many forms. Books, CDs, and online resources all provide test-taking skills and sample questions to help students prepare for these tests. If you're not sure you'll take the time to study on your own, you might want to invest in an SAT Prep online or face-to-face course. Hiring a private tutor, registering for a free practice test at www.princetonreview.com, or enrolling in an SAT or ACT Seminar or BootCamp through www.cap-ed.com or other organizations might be worth considering. Remember, the more time and effort you put into preparing for college entrance tests, the better prepared you will be for the tests.

Most juniors should take two to three college entrance exams during their junior year. Depending on which semester their math class is scheduled, the counselors will recommend a December, January, or March testing date for the SAT, with other administrations often recommended for late spring and early fall of the senior year. All juniors will also take the ACT in March during the school-based administration as required by the state. Registration for all college entrance exams (with the exception of the state mandated ACT in March) is the responsibility of the student. Registration for the SAT should be completed at www.collegeboard.org and ACT registration is available at www.actstudent.org. New this year students will need to upload a photo when they register for the SAT. The photo should be a headshot much like on a driver's license. Pictures that contain more than one person or are meant to be funny will result in the student not being admitted to the testing site. There is a charge for these tests and students who are eligible can receive fee waivers for up to two administrations from their counselor.

More information about on these college entrance exams and test prep suggestions can be found at the Counseling Center Website: <http://sshscounselors.weebly.com/>.

Community College and Technical School Bound Students

Students planning to enroll at a community college or technical school after high school should thoroughly research the type of placement test required at the school of their choice. Unlike the four-year colleges, most community colleges and technical schools are open enrollment: all students who apply are admitted.

Schools like Forsyth Tech, Guildford Tech, Surry Community, and Rockingham Community College do not require students to take the SAT or ACT to determine whether students can enroll. They do, however, require that students take a placement test for almost all of their courses. The placement test determines what level the student is working at and which classes the student can take first. Students who score well on the placement test enter the community college and immediately begin taking courses that count towards the degree they are pursuing. If placement test scores reveal deficiencies in basic reading, writing, or math skills students often have to take developmental or remedial courses before enrolling in credit bearing courses.

We will be administering the community college placement test here at school this year for students planning to attend two-year colleges after graduation. Start preparing now to save yourself HUNDREDS of dollars in tuition, fees, and books for remedial classes. Practice booklets are available in the Counseling Office or online and it is extremely important to understand the types of questions that are asked in order to do well on these tests. Also, be sure to practice doing math problems WITHOUT A CALCULATOR in order to obtain the best scores possible on the math sections. For more information, see <http://sshscounselors.weebly.com/community-college-placement-test.html>.