

**JUNIOR NEWS**  
**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016**  
**SOMERSET BERKLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT**

Welcome back! We look forward to your having an enjoyable and productive school year. The Junior News is for juniors and their parents and is available four times a year. Since there is a great deal of information about planning for after high school (career decisions, college or vocational school), it is felt that it would be best to communicate these important matters through a regular newsletter. Juniors should read the newsletter carefully.

(Important: Newsletters will be available to students in the guidance office and on the high school website. Announcements will be made when the next newsletter is available. Parents/guardians should obtain newsletters from their students.)

**COURSE SELECTION DEADLINE:** The course add/drop period for students ends on Monday, September 19th, this school year. Students should insure they are in the appropriate classes and also realize they are responsible for missed work, should they decide to change a course. The deadline for level adjustments (with written approval from parent/guardian) is one week after the second parent-teacher conference.

**DROPPING A COURSE BEYOND THE DEADLINE:** A grade of “W” (withdrawn) will be entered on a student’s transcript when a course is dropped after the deadline, as outlined on page 115 in the student handbook. This policy also outlines that a “W” for a course means no average or credit will be awarded.

**PSAT/NMSQT:** The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT/NMSQT) will be administered here at SBRHS on Wednesday, October 19, 2016 in the morning (during the school day). Students should report to school as usual, but be sure to bring with them two number 2 pencils and a calculator. Students may use a four-function, scientific or graphing calculator on specified math sections. (The PSAT informational bulletins will be given to students via homeroom the second week of October.) Students will be dismissed to their classes directly after the test on that day. This year, all sophomores and juniors will be tested, so there will be no need for students to pre-register. The district will also be paying for the students to test, so there will no cost for students/families to take the test. Since most 4-year colleges require the SAT Reasoning Test for admissions purposes, it is highly beneficial to take the PSAT for practice and for exposure to the test. In addition, it is a good guidance tool for both the student and counselor as the scores are indicators of verbal and math strengths and/or weaknesses. The PSAT is a good measure of how you will perform on your first SAT Reasoning Test. The PSAT also qualifies juniors for participation in National Merit Scholarships.

**SATs:** The first opportunity that Juniors will have to take the SAT Reasoning Test here at SBRHS will be on Saturday, November 5, 2016. Other administration dates are December 3, 2016, January 21, 2017, March 11, 2017, May 6, 2017, and June 3, 2017. Visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) for surrounding test centers and to register. The SAT subject tests are also offered at each SAT administration. These subject tests are usually required or recommended by the selective four-year colleges, but please be sure to check if your potential colleges require you to take them so you can plan your testing schedule accordingly.

**“My College Quick Start”:** The College Board now provides a free, online tool for career, major, and college exploration called, “My College Quick Start”, which has proven to be valuable to thousands of students. It is highly recommended for students to use this resource, which can be accessed by logging onto [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

**PERSONAL INTERVIEWS:** Each junior will have an individual appointment with their guidance counselor. These interviews should begin in February. The purpose of the meeting is to assist the student in career exploration and plans for after high school. Students’ academic background, interests, skills and abilities will be discussed. If for any reason you have a need to see your assigned guidance counselor prior to your interview, please feel free to stop by the guidance office and make an appointment.

**FINANCIAL AID NIGHT:** The annual financial aid workshop will be held on Wednesday, November 2, 2016, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the SBRHS Performing Arts Center/auditorium. There will be a presenter from the

Massachusetts Education Finance Authority (MEFA) that evening. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) along with the Financial Aid Profile will be reviewed. In addition, the financial aid process will be discussed in detail.

Although thoughts of financial aid in relation to college and vocational school costs are a year away, it is never too early to become acquainted with the financial aid assistance programs that are available. It may be helpful for juniors and their parents to gain some insight into what lies ahead for them. Juniors and their parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend any financial aid information sessions that they see advertised.

**SOMERSET-CASE ANNUAL COLLEGE NIGHT:** “College Night” will be held at Joseph Case High School on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Please note that not only will two-year and four-year colleges be represented but also one and two-year technical and vocational schools, as well. A list of schools attending will be posted outside the guidance office the week before College Night. This night affords both students and their parents the opportunity to speak directly with college admissions representatives concerning programs of study, costs and financial aid, facilities and admissions requirements at their respective institutions.

**NAVIANCE:** This interactive tool can help students with career exploration, the college search process, and ultimately, submitting transcripts and recommendations to colleges. Last year, all students were provided access codes and asked to create accounts. Students may see their guidance counselors for assistance with logging in and using their Naviance accounts. Naviance also offers an SAT prep function entitled, “Test Prep”, that is highly recommended.

**MCAS RETESTING:** Any student who has not taken the appropriate MCAS testing will be notified. Please feel free to see your guidance counselor with any questions regarding the MCAS tests and/or scores.

**REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS:** In addition to quarterly progress reports, midterm reports are made available for all students. These reports are available online using the SBRHS gradebook program called “Aspen”, which is newly in place of “MMS”. Information on how to access grades will be provided to parents/guardians prior to the first mid-quarter. This information is helpful in monitoring students’ progress as well as in being prepared to speak with teachers at parent/teacher conferences. Report cards will also be mailed after the completion of each term, as they are no longer distributed to students in school.

**REMINDER OF STUDENT HANDBOOKS:** Each student has received a student handbook which contains various helpful and necessary pieces of information. Included is a built-in ’16-’17 eight-day schedule with lunch times on the back cover, study skills and test skills reference pages, career possibility listings, and general resources for English, Math, Science and Social Studies. Parents should also review the handbook/agenda book, keeping in mind that there may have been changes to the handbook from the previous year.

**\*\*HOMEWORK CLUB REMINDER....There is now a late bus available for Berkley students should you be interested in attending/needing to attend our homework club in the library after school!!!! ☺**

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