

CHS College and Career Newsletter #2 (08/03/07)

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Reminder: The Senior Class Yard Sale will be held in the Cullman High School Lunchroom on Saturday, August 4th from 6 a.m. until ??? If you have items that you would like to donate for the yard sale, the CHS lunchroom will be open from 4 p.m. today until late for donations. Please spread the word and encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to plan to stop by and shop. All proceeds go to the Senior Class of 2008.

Dear Seniors and Parents/Guardians:

As the first day of school approaches, I wanted to be the first to welcome you to your Senior Year at CHS! I am looking forward to working with each of you as you plan your post-high school activities. Please see me if you would like to make an appointment to discuss college information, resumes, essays, careers, or any other questions you may have. I am including my contact information for you and your parents to use throughout the school year.

As I am out of the office temporarily (on maternity leave), please use my e-mail to communicate with me. I will be in and out of the office during the first few months of school, but Mrs. Wren and Mrs. Ponder (in the Guidance Office) will be available for any urgent, must-have-answered-during-the-school-day questions.

As you plan your senior year activities, please read each of the CHS College and Career Newsletters carefully for important scholarship information and senior reminders. In addition to your personal newsletter e-mails from me, this information will be updated daily on the CHS website under the Guidance link (click on "Senior Newsletter").

Don't forget to check out the **CHS College and Career Handbook** located in the center of your CHS Student Handbook (gold cover with bearcat on the front). You will receive a copy of the CHS Student Handbook on the first day of school and will need to keep it handy as a reference throughout your senior year (The CHS College and Career Handbook will also be posted to the CHS website by the beginning of next week). The CHS College and Career Handbook contains important information concerning college, career exploration, standardized testing, financial aid/scholarships, and Internet resources. A sample resume format is also included. Please let me know if you have questions about any of the information provided.

I look forward to hearing from each of you! I expect this senior class to be the best graduating class yet, and I feel blessed to be your counselor. I will see you at the Senior Class Meeting on Friday, August 10th!

Mrs. Bishop-Hollis

CHS College and Career Counselor

j.hollis@cullmancats.net

734-3923 extension 223

Important Senior Reminders

1. Keep your grades up your senior year at CHS. All college acceptances are conditional on the successful completion of the third trimester. A final transcript should be requested by you and will be sent to the college you select.
2. Remember, the published average ACT or SAT scores of an entering freshman class is just that - an average. If you feel your academic record is solid, do not let fear of rejection stop you from applying to the school of your choice.
3. If you are dissatisfied with your ACT or SAT scores, try again. Tutoring and special courses are available in the community.
4. Do not expect anyone to do your college preparatory work for you (not even Mom or Dad). Double check all transcripts sent, teacher recommendations requested, and counselor forms requested. Take responsibility – follow up!
5. Notify all other colleges as soon as you know you will not be accepting their offer of enrollment. Thank them for considering you. All such letters are placed in your file. You never know when you might want to transfer there.

What is a transcript, and how do I request a transcript be sent to the college/university of my choice?

In order to request a transcript, complete a Transcript Request Form in the Guidance Office. Return the form to the Registrar (Mrs. Parker) in the Guidance Office.

NOTICE: Do not assume that your transcript has been sent. It will only be officially mailed to the college if you complete the form and submit the request to Mrs. Parker. A transcript is not “official” unless it is mailed directly from our high school to the college of your choice. The transcript will show your yearly grades for grades 9, 10, and 11 plus your standardized test scores (EXPLORE, PLAN, PSAT, ACT, SAT I, and SAT II) for those years.

CHS College Visitation Policy

Students are encouraged to use vacation days to visit college campuses for the purpose of tours, information, and interviews. School-day visits may be arranged by following the regulations listed below:

Students are allowed **3** excused days to visit colleges. The students may use their college days starting from the third trimester (spring) of their junior year until April 4, 2008 of their senior year. Prior to the college visit, the students must provide Mrs. Phillips (assistant principal whose office is located in the main school office) a note from their parents granting permission for the college visit absence.

Upon the student’s return from the college visit, the student must provide written verification from the college that confirms the visit. All college visit verifications must be given to Mrs. Kilpatrick in the main

office the next school day following the approved absence. Both the written verification and the excuse from the student's parents will be filed to indicate an excused absence.

SENIORS MUST COMPLETE ALL COLLEGE VISITS BY APRIL 4, 2008.

Special permission may be granted by Mrs. Phillips for an additional absence or an absence after the deadline.

College Fairs

On September 16, 2007, the National Association for College Admission Counseling National College Fair will be held in Birmingham at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. NACAC National College Fairs have been held in cities across the country since 1972. The fair affords students and their parents an opportunity to meet with admissions and financial aid representatives from colleges and universities throughout the nation. Students of all grade levels (9th through 12th grade) are encouraged to attend.

On Monday, September 24, 2007, the National Honor Society's College Night will be held at Cullman High School in the CHS Lunchroom from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. This college fair is open to **ALL** Cullman High School students and parents. The Guidance Office will have a comprehensive list of participating colleges. Participating colleges typically include all in-state schools, many out-of-state schools, and representatives from the various branches of the armed services.

The Performing and Visual Arts (PVA) College Fairs are designed for students interested in pursuing undergraduate and graduate study in the areas of music, dance, theater, visual arts, graphic design, and other related disciplines. Held each fall, attendees learn about educational opportunities, admission and financial aid, portfolio days, audition and entrance requirements, and much more!

Attend a PVA College Fair and meet with representatives from colleges, universities, conservatories, festivals and other educational institutions with specialized programs in the visual and performing arts.

(Closest to Cullman) Atlanta, GA Wednesday, October 17th 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Pebblebrook High School

For more information, go to <http://www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/Events/CollegeFairs/PVA/>

Scholarship Information

If you are interested in searching the Internet for scholarship resources, the list below contains several of the best sites to visit. **I encourage all seniors to visit www.fastweb.com and try the FastWeb scholarship search services. Several of our students have extensively used this website with positive results.**

Fastweb: www.fastweb.com A FREE, searchable scholarship database that enables you to locate sources of financial aid that are suitable for you. It is a comprehensive source of local scholarships, national scholarships, and college-specific scholarships. Search and compare detailed college profiles.

BrokeScholar: www.brokescholar.com This website allows you to browse thousands of scholarship awards worth over \$2.5 billion, utilize quick and easy search tools, organize all your scholarship files in one place, and receive regular scholarship email updates

College Tool Kit: www.CollegeToolkit.com This website contains scholarship searches, college searches, career exploration, and calculators/expert guides (get answers to your tough financial aid questions).

The Immigrant Legal Resource Center: www.ilrc.org/scholarship.html This website also has resources available for ALL students. At the top of the webpage, you will see the title "Scholarships and General Resource". Click on "General Resource" (these two words should be a different color and underlined).

Scholarships.com: www.scholarships.com The largest independent free college scholarship search and financial aid information resource on the Internet. This website provides a great deal of the information and resources necessary to discover local, state and national scholarship and grant opportunities, in addition to the many Federal and private loan options for funding a college education.

Weekly Scholarship Alert www.weeklyscholarshipalert.com/ WeeklyScholarshipAlert.com is a free service that delivers a manageable one to five college scholarship announcements to your inbox each week. Will you qualify for all of them? Probably not. You will get the scholarships in easy to handle bits, so you don't get overwhelmed. There is no charge and they do not gather personal information beyond name and email address.

School Soup www.SchoolSoup.com – The size of their database is \$32 billion in awards. The website is new, but their experience in scholarship research is not. They have been collecting scholarship information since 1988 and leasing it to a limited number of Fortune 500 companies. SchoolSoup.com does not collect students' personal information for resale to third parties.

Standardized Testing Information (ACT and SAT)

ACT ASSESSMENT AND ACT ASSESSMENT PLUS WRITING

The ACT is a two hour and 55 minute college entrance exam that is designed to evaluate your overall educational development and your ability to complete college-level work. The multiple-choice tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading and science. The Writing Test, which is optional, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay. The ACT is administered six times per year. There is no penalty for wrong answers. The test is scored from 1-36 for each subject area and the four subject area scores are averaged for an overall composite score. A 36 is the highest possible composite score. The ACT test content is as follows: **Mathematics:** up to trigonometry; **Science:** charts, experiments; **Reading:** four passages, one each of Prose Fiction, Social Science, Humanities, and Natural Science; **English:** stresses grammar.

Students are able to choose either of two test options – the ACT Assessment or the ACT Assessment plus Writing, which includes a 30 minute Writing Test. Not all colleges and universities require a Writing Test. Go to www.actstudent.org for a list of colleges that require or recommend the Writing Test. ACT registration packets are available in the Guidance Office or you may register on-line at actstudent.org. **The CHS School Code (CEEB) is 010-795.** CHS is a registered ACT Test Center, and the CHS Test Center code is 164556.

<u>ACT Test Dates</u>	<u>Registration Deadlines</u>	<u>Late Registration (Late fee required)</u>
September 15, 2007	August 10, 2007	August 11-24, 2007
October 27, 2007	September 21, 2007	September 22 – October 5, 2007
December 8, 2007	November 2, 2007	November 3-15, 2007
February 9, 2008	January 4, 2008	January 5-18, 2008
April 12, 2008	March 7, 2008	March 8-21, 2008
June 14, 2008	May 9, 2008	May 10-23, 2008

The September 15, 2007, test date is available only in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and West Virginia.

SAT I ASSESSMENT AND SAT II SUBJECT AREA TESTS

The SAT I Reasoning Test is a three hour and 45 minute test that measures critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills that students have developed over time and need to be successful in college. The SAT is designed to evaluate a student's general thinking and problem-solving abilities. The SAT I is administered seven times per year. There **is** a penalty for wrong answers (guessing is not advised). The three sections of the SAT I are scored from 200-800 and then are added together for an overall combined score. A 2400 is the highest possible combined score. The SAT I test content is as follows: **Mathematics:** up to 9th grade basic geometry and Algebra II; **Reading:** sentence completions, short and long critical reading passages, reading comprehension; **Writing:** an essay, and questions testing grammar, usage, and word choice.

Unless otherwise noted, both the SAT I and the SAT II subject area tests are administered on the test dates listed below. Registration for the SAT I and SAT II subject area tests must be completed online at www.collegeboard.com. **The CHS School Code (CEEB) is 010-795.**

<u>Test Dates</u>	<u>Registration Deadlines</u>	<u>Late Registration (Late fee required)</u>
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October 6, 2007
November 3, 2007
December 1, 2007
January 26, 2008
March 1, 2008 (SAT I only)
May 3, 2008
June 7, 2008

September 10, 2007
October 2, 2007
October 30, 2007
December 26, 2007
January 29, 2008
April 1, 2008
May 6, 2008

September 14, 2007
October 11, 2007
November 8, 2007
January 4, 2008
February 7, 2008
April 10, 2008
May 15, 2008

MORE STANDARDIZED TESTING INFORMATION (ACT AND SAT)

REGISTERING AND TAKING STANDARDIZED TESTS (ACT and SAT I)

Registration for any and all of the tests you plan to take is your responsibility. Registration deadlines are important and are well ahead of the test dates. All upcoming test dates are available online at the ACT website (www.actstudent.org) or the College Board website (www.collegeboard.com). You are encouraged to register online at these same websites because the process is faster and you will be more likely to receive your preferred test center; however, the test companies send a limited number of paper registration packets to the Guidance Office.

Juniors should take the ACT and/or SAT I during the winter / spring of their junior year (this allows for additional test dates during the summer and the fall of their senior year, if needed). As you choose your test dates, take into account factors such as athletic commitments, family travel, and any other obligations you might have throughout the year.

REPORTING YOUR SCORES

Most in-state colleges in Alabama will accept test scores that are listed on official school transcripts.

NOTE: If you include the CHS CEEB code (010-795) when you register, your scores will be sent to CHS, and we can include them on your transcript. However, many out-of-state colleges require students to have official score reports sent directly from the testing agency, so **you must request that your scores be sent to the colleges of your choice**. You may send your scores to several colleges for no extra fee if your request is made when you register for the tests. To request additional score reports, you must contact the testing agencies and pay a fee.

NON-STANDARD TESTING

Both the ACT and SAT are offered in different forms or with extended time to accommodate students with learning differences or disabilities. If you currently qualify for **and** receive services from our Special Education program, you **may** qualify for non-standard testing accommodations. Contact your Special Education case manager for information on how to apply for special testing/accommodations. A variety of documentation is required, and the process can take several months, so start two or three months ahead of the deadline for the test that you wish to take. Please note: ACT and the College Board determine which students may be granted non-standard testing; Cullman High School has **no control** over this process.

TEST PREPARATION

If you are disciplined and take the time to practice, your standardized test scores will likely improve. There are many community and internet test preparation resources available, some for a fee and others that are free. Cullman High School offers an ACT Prep / College Seminar course for seniors, and seniors may request this course be built into their class schedule during their course request meeting with their counselor in the spring of their junior year.

Sample test questions for the ACT and SAT I can be found at both the ACT and College Board web sites (www.actstudent.org and www.collegeboard.com). Finally, while the best test preparation is a lifelong process of reading and doing well in school, intensive test preparation courses are most effective when taken just before the exam.

Before you take any standardized test, be sure to get enough sleep the night before the test and eat a good, nutritious breakfast. Leave plenty of time to get to the test center safely so that you are not rushed. Take a small snack, such as a granola bar, with you to eat during a break.

College Search (for both two and four year colleges and universities)

Alabama Colleges and Universities www.50states.com/college/alabama.htm A listing of all four year colleges and universities in Alabama, web address, contact phone numbers, and general information

Alabama Community Colleges www.50states.com/cc/alabama.htm A listing of all two year colleges in the state of Alabama, web address, contact phone numbers, and general information

Alabama Mentor: www.alabamamentor.org An online source for higher education information and online applications for the state of Alabama. A student can find the college that is right for him or her, check out exciting tools to make the path to college worry free, apply to colleges online, and pursue financial aid.

AnyCollege.com www.anycollege.com If you are looking for college information or an online college search tool, AnyCollege.com is the place to look. Their resources include search tools, scholarship drawings, college information request forms, information on featured colleges and universities, and other resources for students, parents, and counselors.

Careers and Colleges.com www.careersandcolleges.com Use this website to search for the right college and get advice about admissions, applications, financial aid, college sports, student life, and entrance exams.

College Answer www.collegeanswer.com This site addresses college preparation, college selection, college and scholarship applications, paying for college, deciding on a college to attend, and financial aid (includes a scholarship search).

CollegeNet www.collegenet.com The CollegeNET search engine helps you quickly find the ideal college. Narrow down by region, college sports, major, tuition, and several other criteria. Review, compare, and sort schools according to exclusive, detailed profiles provided by ACT.

College Toolkit www.collegetoolkit.com They strive to be a one-stop resource for life after high school. Their site offers: College Searches – tap into their database of 4,000+ 2-year and 4-year colleges; Scholarship Searches – access their extensive database of award opportunities; Career Exploration – take one of their career assessments and explore 900+ career profiles; Interactive Calculators – get help on everything from saving for college to repaying loans; and Expert Guides – read articles on topics ranging from visiting schools to choosing a college.

College View: www.collegeview.com One of the most detailed search engines on the Internet, with wide-ranging criteria that includes diversity, field of study, religious affiliation, athletics, special programs, and services for the disabled. It provides facts on every school throughout the United States and has a scholarship search engine.

eCampusTours.com (Making College A Virtual Reality) Features over 1,200 featured campuses / financial aid, college and career planning / Online registration for campus visits / 10,000 independent scholarship programs / \$40 million in scholarship nationwide / 1.5 million scholarships available

The Princeton Review: www.princetonreview.com A good search engine with a wide array of variables, including location, academics, sports, student life, and housing.

Career Information

Career Cruising: www.careercruising.com Career Cruising is an Internet-based career exploration and planning tool you can use to explore career and college options and develop a career plan. **Career Cruising** can be accessed from school, home, or wherever you have Internet access. Features of the program include:

- Interest and Skills Assessment - a world-renowned career assessment tool to help people identify suitable career options based on their interests and skills
- Career Profiles - thorough and up-to-date information about hundreds of different occupations, including direct links between careers and college programs
- Multimedia Interviews - interviews with real people in each occupation, adds depth and realism to career profiles
- College and Financial Aid Information - comprehensive college and financial aid information, with a number of useful search tools to help students find the right college and the right scholarships
- Electronic Career Portfolio - available online, so students can develop their education and career plans from wherever they access Career Cruising
- Resume Builder - integrated with the portfolio to help students format and print professional-looking resumes quickly and easily

Login at: www.careercruising.com

Enter your User ID: **chs**

Enter your school's password: **cullman**

Click on "Start Career Cruising"

The Career Key: www.careerkey.org The Career Key™ gives you expert help with career choices – career changes, career planning, job skills, and choosing a college major or educational program.

Mapping Your Future: www.mapping-your-future.org One stop site for students and parents with information on career options, college planning, and financial information.

MyMajors.com www.MyMajors.com Have you decided that you want to go to college, but don't know what you want to major in? If you aren't sure, MyMajors.com can provide useful advice on college and university majors that a high school senior or first year college student with your interests and achievements might do well in. Here's how it works: Enter data about your experience with high school courses in a short interview; MyMajors.com analyzes this data and suggests six majors to think about because they match your interests and high school experience; MyMajors.com gives you more information about what those majors are, what type of courses you would take to get a degree, and what jobs are available to graduates with this major.

Your Child's Career – www.yourchildscareer.org This website is designed to help parents help their children with career planning. It covers the career development process, what is happening in the world of work, and traits employees are looking for in the 21st century.

America's Career Resource Network Parent's Guide – www.acrnetwork.org/parents.aspx

Comprehensive resource site with excellent material and ideas on including and educating parent's regarding career guidance at each of the three grade levels: K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Contains useful parent's brochures,

college funding information, presentations to parents, library, and links to other parental involvement sites. Also has an extremely user-friendly friendly student link at www.acrnetwork.org/students.aspx

About.com Career Planning: www.careerplanning.about.com

America's Career Info Net: www.acinet.org/acinet

Occupational Outlook Handbook: www.bls.gov/oco

The Career Development eManual www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/

This is the one of the BEST career exploration tools I have found on the Internet. There is NO FEE!!

The **Career Development eManual** is designed to help you consider the questions associated with choosing a career. The advice on this webpage has come from years of talking with students, employers, alumni and through research by the staff and volunteers in Career Services at the University of Waterloo. The most important things they have learned are that:

- The world of work is rapidly changing
- Employers are interested in hiring people who can demonstrate their skills and abilities
- You will need to develop goals and strategies to make your dreams come true
- You are in charge of your own career and you need to be proactive

The **Career Development eManual** has been prepared to guide you through the necessary steps. In order to help you do this in an efficient and effective way, the eManual has been organized into six steps. To help you navigate this site, they recommend that you start with the introduction: Steps To Success.