

# **REACH for Sophomore Year**

## **Discover the College and Career Process**

Sophomore year is the year for expanding your horizons regarding college and career choice and the process that will be forthcoming in getting there. Grades and the quality of your coursework are very important. It is not too early to begin identifying potential majors and career choices and colleges you may be interested in attending. And, even though there is a nominal fee, you should plan to take the PSAT this year as practice for junior year when the test is required. **REACH** is all about proactiveness and starting the process earlier – at least a year earlier than traditionally has been the case. That translates to sophomore year.

By now you understand the high school process and where you fit into the system. It is time to ask yourself the question: “Where do I see myself and what will I be doing in three years, after graduation from high school. Right now it is more important for you to ASK the question than it is for you to be able to answer it. Although some of you will have an answer, most of you will not. And almost all the answers you come up with will change many times over the next six or seven years.

Also, by the end of sophomore year you should be beginning to focus less on doing many, many activities and more on identifying those that are of particular interest to you. Now is the time to consider increasing participation in a smaller number of activities, especially to the point of assuming a position or positions of leadership. Whether it is a sport, extracurricular activity, or employment, college admissions officers are looking for progression. Whatever your approach, enjoy your sophomore year of high school, make sure you get everything you want and need from it, and move through it with an eye toward the future.

## **Throughout the Year**

- Strengthen relationships with peers, teachers, counselors, coaches, activity leaders, and employers – this will be the source for recommendations later;
- Research college majors on the internet and in the guidance office;
- Maintain your journal and resume/portfolio;
- Add to your college and career folders;
- Research and consider Advanced Placement courses to take during junior year;
- Attend some individual visits to Dunellen High School by college representatives; visit college campuses close to home and when you travel.

## **Fall Semester**

- Schedule a semi-annual conference with your guidance counselor;
- Develop a list of college majors and occupations that interest you and review and revise your four-year education plan with these in mind;
- Identify academic and personal/extracurricular goals that you would like to accomplish during the year;
- Sign up for the PSAT (there is a nominal charge for sophomores) and take this SAT practice test in October – review your PSAT results with your guidance counselor in December and figure out how to make improvements if necessary;
- Attend the Dunellen High School College Fair in October;
- Access a college application and/or common application from the internet and see what kind of information colleges will be seeking from you;
- Seek out leadership roles in clubs and activities;
- Discuss college financing options with your family – attend Financial Aid Night at Dunellen High School in October.

## **Spring Semester**

- Schedule a semi-annual conference with your guidance counselor;
- Attend College Night at Dunellen High School (usually in February) with your parents – learn about such things as college admission and testing requirements, the college application process, and choosing a major;
- Consider taking an SAT prep class and taking the May or June SAT;
- Look into NCAA requirements if you think you may want to participate in sports in college;
- Make plans (in early Spring) for an interesting summer job, internship, educational program, community service or travel experience;
- Spend some time researching colleges – try to narrow down a list of schools that are appealing...urban or rural, big or small, public or private.