

# The Guidance Gazette

From the North Kingstown High School Guidance Staff

FIRST EDITION

NOVEMBER, 2009

Welcome to the first edition of the Guidance Gazette. This newsletter is brought to you by the NKHS Guidance Department and is meant to give you the latest and greatest news and information about what we are doing to support the academic, social and future career needs of your student.

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## ILP'S FOR ALL STUDENTS

All NKHS students have begun the process of developing an **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)** in grades 9-12 this year. The ILP helps students focus on goals and how to use the time in high school to accomplish their personal objectives in addition to completing their graduation requirements. An Individual Learning Plan is primarily authored by students themselves through advisory and classroom visits with their guidance counselor, advisor, and input from their parents. Students will revisit ILPs throughout the year and rewrite them as the student chooses new high school courses, documents his or her outside activities, prepares to meet graduation requirements, and plans for their future. The ILP is a collaborative effort shared by the student, the student's family and educators.

**Each of us** has a role in the ILP process:

**The Guidance Counselor** provides direction for when and how to complete academic, career and personal/social goal setting and reflections. The guidance counselor assists the student in choosing courses appropriate for their post-secondary goals and provides opportunities for families to access the ILP document upon request.

**The Advisor** facilitates the development and implementation of the ILP, providing regular and multiple opportunities for revision in support of the school counselors and assists the student in writing goals, plans and reflections.

**The Family** provides input and is actively involved in the process, by contributing to the document by completing the *ILP Parent Questionnaire* annually, and supporting and advocating for the student's success by engaging in conversations with their children about their choices, learning experiences, and future goals.

## FRESHMEN – MRS. NORMAND

As the freshmen guidance counselor, one of my responsibilities is to ensure each student in the freshmen class develops an Individual Learning Plan. To date, I have visited the freshmen via their English class (during the month of September) and their History class (during the month of October) to begin working on their ILP's. In September, I focused on what it takes to be a successful student here at NKHS. Students were asked to fill out a brief questionnaire on what they feel are the "ingredients" needed to be a successful student. Using their planner, doing homework on a nightly basis (the day it is assigned), staying after school for extra help, obtaining a peer tutor through the National Honor Society and getting involved in at least one extra-curricular activity were some of the popular ingredients students shared with each other. I discussed the various domains the NKHS guidance department focuses on; personal, social, educational, career and occupational. In addition, students were given two handouts filled with fabulous tips to take home to review with their parents and hopefully, periodically reflect back on

throughout the school year.

During the month of October, all freshmen were given the NWEA test in order to assess their literacy and math skills. The NWEA was administered by the reading teachers and their respective English and math teacher. I used the last twenty to thirty minutes of the testing period to review the technology use policy, specifically addressing email communication. I instructed each student on how they can access their email and how to access the NKSD directory. Students wrote down two reasons/examples of appropriate times they would want to email either a teacher, staff member or coach. One of the common examples students gave was if they were out sick, they would email their teachers to see what work they missed.

During the month of November, I will be visiting the freshmen in their respective advisories to continue working on their ILP's. I will be asking students to reflect on their first quarter experience here at NKHS. They will be asked to write several goals they have for themselves for second quarter and what steps they will take to achieve their goals. I will also discuss how to deal with possible roadblocks that may get in their way of reaching their goals.

As always, I am available to meet with students and parents on an individual basis so please do not hesitate to email me or call me if you have a question or a concern.

## SOPHOMORES- MS. FONTES

It's been a busy start to the academic year for the tenth grade students! During the month of September, I visited the US History 1 classes and worked with the sophomores on a graduation requirement checklist and transcript review to determine if they were on track for graduation. They were also asked to reflect on their experiences in the ninth grade and determine if there was an area such as homework or class participation they could improve on this year. This information became the initial piece of the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for this year.

During October, I visited American Literature classes to lead students in an exercise involving Holland's Theory. John Holland was an American psychologist who argued that "the choice of a vocation is an expression of personality". Students reviewed personality traits and their relation and importance in the choice of a career path. This lesson relates directly to a future activity in which students will participate in an online career interest inventory through [WaytoGoRI.org](http://WaytoGoRI.org).

As the second quarter begins, students are reminded to utilize their planners and complete homework and other classroom activities. This will contribute to higher grades and a greater understanding of concepts in the classroom. Students should also be completing anchor assignments which need to be uploaded in a timely fashion to their electronic portfolio. Since earning proficiency in electronic portfolio is a graduation requirement which needs to be completed by the conclusion of junior year, it is highly important that students consistently work on their assignments throughout the tenth grade. If parents are curious about their student's electronic portfolio, we recommend that they have the student open the online program and share it with them.

## ARE YOU USING I-PARENT YET?

All NKHS teachers currently utilize i-Parent to display student progress in their classes. i-Parent is a convenient home-to-school collaboration tool that allows parents to keep track of their children's academic progress online, via our student information system from any Internet connected computer. Parents can visit the password-protected site to view their students' schedules, grades and attendance as well as discipline information.

If you have not signed up yet for this service, please request sign in information by sending an e-mail to [iParent@nksd.net](mailto:iParent@nksd.net). In your e-mail, please include your student's school, grade and any other siblings in the family.

## JUNIORS- MRS. SWEET

During the first month of school Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Atkinson-Santos and Mrs. Sweet visited all junior advisories to introduce themselves to their new students. During that visit students began to work on their ILP, an Individualized Learning Program geared to help each student chart their course through high school.

The junior class is no stranger to the ILP process and this was another step towards self advocacy and personal growth. During that visit students reviewed their transcript, created a Graduation Checklist, and identified their GPA/Rank through sophomore year.

Counselors discussed the three reasons why junior year is so important. The first reason is that this will be the highest level of completed academic work that students will accomplish before applying to college next year.

Next, this is the last effective year to change their GPA/Rank. We rank twice a year at the conclusion of first semester and then again at the close of second semester. Current juniors have up to three semesters worth of grades to average with the four semesters they have completed towards their cumulative GPA. By senior year, this GPA is much harder to move.

Finally, students were encouraged to make good academic impressions on their junior year teachers since these are the teachers that will be asked to write recommendations for colleges next year. Students were encouraged to show their effort, take opportunities to correct their work, seek out extra help, actively participate in class discussions and create professional relationships with their teachers.

In the second quarter we will continue to work on the ILP document as we discuss social and personal domains. Counselors will also be meeting with students individually to discuss first quarter grades and future goals..

## SENIORS- MRS. WARD

During the first month of school Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Atkinson-Santos and Mrs. Sweet visited all senior advisories to introduce themselves to their new students. During that visit students began to work on their ILP, an Individualized Learning Program geared to help each student chart their course through high school. During that visit students reviewed their transcript, created a graduation checklist, and identified their GPA/Rank through junior year.

In addition to the advisory visit, all three senior guidance counselors met with students during their English class to talk about the college application process. Letters of recommendation, the college essay, application process, resumes, important dates, and choosing colleges were all emphasized during this 45 minute visit. Students were encouraged to make an appointment with their guidance counselor if they had any questions along the way. This presentation was a follow-up to the Senior Parent Night on September 23<sup>rd</sup> where the senior guidance counselors presented similar information to a packed house of seniors and their parents.

The senior guidance counselors offered Common Application tutorials during the week of October 12<sup>th</sup> during advisories and all four lunches for any senior requesting help navigating through this system. These tutorials were fairly well attended and we are considering offering more help sessions as the second quarter moves along.

In the second quarter we will continue to work on the ILP document as we discuss social and personal domains during advisory period.

**Students who have already sent applications to colleges, please note:** it is the student's responsibility to send their first quarter grades to their respective colleges. Applications that are submitted to guidance after report cards have been printed will include a copy of their first quarter report card.

## CAREER CENTER UPDATE

The NKHS Career Center has hosted Admissions Representatives from over **60** colleges since September. Many seniors have taken full advantage by "visiting" a college they're interested in without ever leaving NKHS. Did you know these Admissions Reps are often the person who will read your college application and recommend you for admission? If you're strongly interested in a school, then treat this visit like an interview!

### What professions are you curious about?

Beginning in January the Career Center will resume our Speaker Series with professionals working in a wide variety of jobs.

We have an extensive list of volunteers willing to share their careers, and we want to know which fields you're interested in learning about. Stop by the Career Center and drop your suggestions in the Speaker Suggestion Box. We'll do our best to find a speaker to address your questions.

You can drop into the Career Center any **Tuesday** or **Thursday 2-4**, and the **2nd Wednesday of the month from 6:30 - 8PM**. Parents are encouraged to join you during the evening hours.

## PSAT/SAT/AP ACCOMODATIONS

A student with a **documented** disability may be eligible for accommodations on College Board tests. A Student Eligibility Form needs to be submitted if you are requesting accommodations for your child to take either the PSAT, SAT or AP exams. To be eligible, the student must: Have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations

1. Have documentation on file at school that supports the need for requested accommodations and meets the Guidelines for Documentation
2. Receive and use the requested accommodations, due to the disability, for school-based tests

Even if the criteria above are not met, a student may still be eligible for accommodations on College Board tests. The student may send his or her disability documentation with the Student Eligibility Form to College Board. Because the review process is thorough, it takes about seven weeks from the receipt of all documentation for the College Board to make a determination. Students and schools are encouraged to forward requests for accommodations early, even in the year **before** a student may take the first College Board test. Begin the process early! When a student's school annually verifies that he or she continues to receive these accommodations on school tests he student will not need to reapply for accommodations again. Below is a list of test dates and deadlines. If you have any questions, please call your child's guidance counselor.

| 2009-10 Test Date                                | Date by which completed Student Eligibility Form must be received (for school verification)* | Date by which complete disability documentation must be received (for document review)** |
|--|--|--|
| SAT and SAT Subject Tests<br>January 23          | Dec. 18  | Dec. 4   |
| SAT March 13                                     | Feb. 5   | Jan. 22  |
| SAT and SAT Subject Tests<br>May 1               | Mar. 26  | Mar. 12  |
| SAT and SAT Subject Tests<br>June 5              | Apr. 30  | Apr. 16  |
| Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) May 3–7, 10–14 | Mar. 5   | Feb. 19  |



*The NKHS Guidance Department  
is proud to be an ASCA National  
Model Program*