

PKY SCHOOL COUNSELING PARENT NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2009

The PKY counselors enjoy working with you and your students. Please feel free to call on us if you have a question or concern. You can reach us by dialing 392-1554 ex. 233. Students are assigned to counselors as follows:

Grades K - 5	Mrs. Maritza Ettinger
Grades 6 - 8	Mrs. Lisa Clemons
Grade 9	Mr. Eric Thompson
Grades 10 – 12	Mrs. Susan Ireland
Program Assistant	Mrs. Valerie Otero

Employment Guide

The school counseling office has received 100 copies of Giving Children Hope and Skills for the 21st Century. This excellent guide helps parents prepare their children for the future world of work. It was produced by the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation and the US Department of Labor. Please come and pick up a copy while supplies last.

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING NEWS:

PSAT

The PSAT will be given at PKY on Wednesday Oct. 14th. The PSAT is an indicator for performance on the SAT. It includes verbal, math and writing components and is a diagnostic tool that measures strengths and weaknesses.

The PSAT is instrumental in identifying the untapped potential in each student and the results can open up discussion about future educational plans. All 10th grade students are strongly encouraged to take the PSAT. The legislature has appropriated funds for this testing, so there is no fee for 10th grade students. Parents have the opportunity to exempt their children from the PSAT. Please call Mrs. Ireland if you want your child to opt out of this test.

The PSAT is used as the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSQT). As you must be a Junior to be eligible for the National Merit Scholarship Program all academically strong Juniors must take the PSAT on Oct. 14th. There is a \$17.00 fee for Juniors to be paid in the business office.

College bound juniors and/or seniors should take the SAT (Reasoning Test) or ACT. Students should first test during the winter or spring of their junior year. Students may test more than once to meet the criteria established by either the college of their choice or by the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

Sat Subject Tests

Subject Tests are one-hour multiple-choice tests. They're designed to show your child's knowledge, and ability to apply that knowledge, in specific subject areas. Only the most selective colleges require Subject Tests for admission. Approximately 5 or 6 % of

colleges require Subject Tests. College bound students must visit the websites of the colleges they are interested in and carefully read the admission criteria.

The Subjects

Subject Tests fall into five general subject areas:

- **English**—Literature
- **History and Social Studies**—United States History, World History
- **Mathematics**—Mathematics Level 1 and Mathematics Level 2
- **Science**—Biology E/M, Chemistry, Physics
- **Languages**—Chinese with Listening, French, French with Listening, German, German with Listening, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese with Listening, Korean with Listening, Latin, Spanish, Spanish with Listening

When Should Your Child Take Them?

Most students take Subject Tests toward the end of their junior year or at the beginning of their senior year. Your child should take tests such as World History, Biology E/M, Chemistry, or Physics as soon as possible after completing the course in the subject. Your child will do better on other tests like Languages after at least two years of study.

SAT & Subject test dates:

October 10
November 7
December 5
January 23
March 13 (SAT only)
May 1
June 5

Regular registration date:

September 9
October 1
October 30
December 15
February 4
March 25
April 29

You will find additional information and may register online at www.collegeboard.com. Our school code # is 100555 (for both SAT and ACT).

ACT

ACT test dates:

September 12
October 24
December 12
February 6
April 10
June 12

Regular registration date:

August 7
September 18
November 6
January 5
March 5
May 7

You will find additional information and may register online at www.actstudent.org. Please note that if a child currently receives free or reduced lunch you may be entitled to a fee waiver for the SAT and ACT. Please see Mrs. Ireland for details.

Florida Virtual School (FLVS)

FLVS is an online High School that offers over 80 courses. Although the courses are web and technology based, students are assigned to teachers and these teachers communicate with students and parents on a regular basis.

Students may take a course to remediate a failure, to accelerate, to prepare for the FCAT or AP tests or for their own enrichment. Visit www.flvs.net to learn more or to register. Your child must download the course request form, have a parent or guardian sign it and bring it to their counselor for approval to complete the registration process.

Please note that students may drop a FLVS course within 28 days without penalty. A grade of “WF” will be issued if a course is dropped after 28 days. For further information on the FLVS withdrawal policy, please visit www.flvs.net.

Academic Difficulty

If your child is experiencing difficulty in a class, please contact your child’s teacher for additional information. We will be happy to work with you as a team to problem solve. We hope and work towards making every child’s experience at PKY a successful one. Unfortunately there are occasions in which a child does not have a successful academic outcome. If your child failed a high school class earlier in his/her high school career they likely need to make up that credit outside of PKY, at either FLVS.net or at the School Board of Alachua Adult Education Program. Please call Mrs. Ireland if you have any questions about this.

College Admissions Workshop

We will host a college admissions workshop on Thursday, October 1st at 5:30 pm.

Location: Performing Arts Center. UF’s Assistant Director of Admissions will speak about college admissions in general and also about UF in particular. 11th and 12th grade students and their parents are encouraged to attend.

SENIOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Ireland will meet with all senior students during their English classes on September 21st. Many issues pertinent to seniors will be discussed. All issues will be summarized in a Senior Newsletter which will be posted on our website under high school counseling. Please look for it after 9/21.

Scholarship Newsletter

The first scholarship newsletter of the year will be distributed to seniors on 9/21/09. This newsletter will also be posted on our website under high school counseling.

Senior Conferences

Mrs. Ireland is currently meeting individually with senior class members. Graduation requirements are being reviewed, post high school plans are being discussed and all questions are being answered.

Community Service

High school students are required to complete 75 hours of community service prior to graduation. Some students are unclear that their required 75 community service hours must be completed at nonprofit organizations and are unclear regarding the definition of nonprofit. Please stress with your students that their hours must be completed at nonprofits only. Below is a definition you may share:

adjective

1. not established for the purpose of making a profit; not entered into for money: *a nonprofit institution.*

Students should know that the following schedule for completing hours is recommended:

Freshman year: 20 hours

Sophomore year: 20 hours

Junior year: 20 hours

Senior year: 15 hours

Bright Futures Scholarship Program

Learn more about the Bright Futures Scholarship program by visiting their website:

www.floridastudentsfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf/

Please note that the Bright Futures GPA is not the same as the PKY GPA. Bright Futures only includes academic subjects in their calculations. All required coursework must be completed by the graduation date. Seniors apply for Bright Futures between Dec. 1st and their graduation date.

FCAT Retakes

All Juniors and Seniors who have not yet passed either the reading or math portion of FCAT will be tested on October 20th . All students requiring FCAT testing will soon receive an informational letter. FCAT preparation is offered through both www.flvs.net and through www.fcatexplorer.com and through PKY's reading classes.

Mygradebook.com

A great way to stay informed of your child's academic progress is by logging on to www.mygradebook.com. After logging on, enter the classword and password (obtained from your child's classroom teacher). To see grades for the entire grading period, go to "click here" under the blue stripes.

Rosa Rabell Travel Scholarship

We are pleased to announce the Rosa Rabell Spanish Language Study Scholarship, named in honor of P.K. Yonge's retired Spanish language teacher, the beloved Señora Rosa Rabell.

This is a wonderful opportunity for a deserving P.K. Yonge student to study the Spanish language in Madrid and also visit London and Paris this summer (June 21st through June 30th).

The Rosa Rabell Scholarship covers air fare, accommodations, breakfast and dinner. The scholarship also includes a nominal amount of pocket money and an international phone card.

Eligibility:

The P.K. Yonge student must:

- Be at least 15 years old,
- have completed a minimum of two years of Spanish study,
- have a minimum 3.0 unweighted GPA,
- and have carried a minimum 3.0 average in his or her current Spanish class.
- Students who can prove financial need will be given special consideration.
- Seniors and students who have not taken Spanish are not eligible.

Enrollment and Application Deadline: Students are asked to:

- Obtain approval and application from Mrs. Santiago, Spanish teacher
- Submit the application and parental waiver, along with
 - a one-page essay (in English): *My Thoughts on the Benefits of Studying Spanish*
 - (1) letter of recommendation from a PKY teacher
 - (2) letters of recommendation from contacts not employed by PKY
- Submit application and attachments to Mrs. Santiago P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School, 1080 SW 11th Street, Gainesville, FL 32601 by September 25th 2009.

-Susan Ireland
High School Counselor