

*Guide to Guidance
for
11th Grade Students*



*Kingsway Regional High School
Guidance Department*

<http://kingswayguidance.com/>

Introduction

Now that you are a junior, we hope that you are one step closer to making a decision about your future. The information provided in this booklet is intended to be a reference guide for you to use throughout the year. Keep in mind, that now more than ever it is important to work closely with your Guidance Counselor. You can request an appointment at any time. Remember, the more preparation and research *you do*, the more you will get out of the meeting with your counselor. Because the more we know about your plans for the future, the better we can help you find the right school for you.

Please feel free to contact your counselor directly with any questions or concerns you may have.

The Guidance Counselors

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11th Grade Student Planner

As soon as junior year begins there are things that you will need to do right away:

- **Take the PSAT** – Juniors who plan to apply to 4-year colleges are urged to take the PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) in the fall of 11th grade. The PSAT/NMSQT is a “practice” SAT only offered **once** a year and is administered here at Kingsway on the third Saturday in October. **NOTE:** Those students who took the PSAT in 10th grade should **still** plan to take it again in 11th grade. In order to qualify for National Merit Scholarship consideration you must take the PSAT as a junior. Also, it serves as good practice, it is inexpensive, and it exposes you to the format of the SAT one last time before taking it in the spring of your junior year. The test consists of three (3) parts: Critical reading, Math problem solving, and Writing skills. For more information on the PSAT/NMSQT you can check out the College Board’s website www.collegeboard.com. You will receive your Score Report sometime in December along with your test booklet (the same one you used on the day of the test). The Score Report provides you with a summary of the answers and information on how the test is scored. This valuable information allows you to see what areas are strengths or weaknesses and can help you can focus more in preparation for future tests. Listen for morning/homeroom announcements sometime in September to come to the Guidance Office and sign up to take the PSAT.

TIP: Want to prepare for the SAT? Kingsway offers an SAT Prep course for juniors as an elective. It covers the material tested in all three sections of the SAT: Critical Reading, Math and Writing. More information about this course is available in the Course Selection Book. Also, Gloucester County College offers SAT prep classes in the evening. For further information contact the Division of Lifelong Learning at 856-415-2217. The office is located on the 2nd level of the College Center building. Lastly, checkout www.collegeboard.com for tools to help you prepare for the SAT. There is an “SAT Preparation Center” as well as “Official SAT Questions of the Day” on the site.

- **Attend College Fairs - AGAIN** – At different times throughout the year you will hear announcements that there will be a College Fair either at Gloucester County College or in Philadelphia in the fall or other neighboring schools in the spring. We strongly recommend that you attend at least one college fair in your junior year. As you begin to refine your search and narrow down your choice of schools, you may have more specific questions that can be answered by the college admission representatives. In addition to obtaining applications and printed material, you can get detailed information regarding campus life. It also gives you the opportunity to learn about different schools from outside this area that you might not otherwise have known about.

TIP: Before the fair write down a list of specific questions you would like answered by the representatives. By being prepared you can get some in-depth knowledge about colleges that really interest you.

- **Attend our annual “College Information Night”** – This program presented by the Guidance Department in January is open to 11th grade students *and* their parents. Even if you attended a program in 10th grade, it is strongly recommended that you attend in 11th grade. You will find that it has greater significance the closer you get to the actual application process in your senior year. The program is designed to provide you with information and tools to help you explore colleges and narrow down your choices. It is important that you have this information so when the fall of your senior year arrives you are ready to submit applications.

- **Make sure you take courses that are appropriate for your goals** – Each college has entrance requirements that you must fulfill in order to be considered for admission. Find out what those are and make sure they match up with what you have.

- **Continue activities** – Whether it is participation in Kingsway sponsored or community based clubs/activities, sports or a part-time job, make sure that you are using your time after school wisely. Begin to create an activities resume describing your involvement and achievement in activities. Once again consider volunteer work in the community. But remember – it’s not about how many activities you are involved in, but rather how involved you are in those activities.

Colleges would much rather see you focus on a few worthwhile activities, than scatter your time on lots of them.

- **Have a conversation with your parents** - At some point during this process it is important to discuss *all* of the aspects of college planning with your parents. Since college is a big investment, it would be wise to involve them in the decision making process. Informed decision making will lead to success in college as well as in the future.

- **By the end of junior year** – You want to have a few things in place such as:
 - SAT/ACT scores – you should have at least one score (if not two).
 - Student Profile – Complete the Student Profile Form found in the back of this packet and submit one copy to your counselor. Keep two copies to give to teachers when requesting recommendations.
 - Request letters of recommendation early – Select a teacher who knows you well and give him/her a copy of your Student Profile. (NOTE: Do not select a teacher simply because you got an “A” in the class.)
 - Transcript Release form – must be signed and on file in the Guidance Office the end of junior year. This form permits the Guidance Office to send transcripts upon request to colleges and scholarship organizations throughout the year.

If these things are completed and in place you are well on your way to being ready to send out applications in the fall.

- **During the summer** – Make the most of your free time in the summer:
 - Make plans to visit as many schools as your schedule will allow. For the schools that you are most interested in schedule a tour of the campus and an interview with an admissions counselor. It may seem early but it will be harder to schedule them in the fall of your senior year. Colleges may tell you that interviews are optional – but we think they are a good idea. Remember to dress appropriately!
 - Students who plan to participate in athletics in college, now is the time to submit your NCAA Clearinghouse form. You can do this on-line at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. A printout of the “Transcript Release Authorization” should be given to your counselor so that he/she can submit your transcripts.
 - Find out what is required on applications. Focus on the essay portion of the application so that you will be prepared to write one in the fall. While the essay is not the most critical part of the application – it can be if you take the time to get it right. You want your essay to bring personality to your overall application.