

**UPDATE  
FROM THE  
GUIDANCE OFFICE  
2016**

**June 17**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OUR LADY OF LOURDES  
CLASS OF 2016**

**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT  
WILL MAIL YOUR FINAL TRANSCRIPTS TO THE COLLEGE  
YOU ENROLLED IN BY THE END OF JUNE.**

**GOOD LUCK!  
GOD BLESS!**

**MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE FOLLOWING IS  
AVAILABLE IN THE GUIDANCE OFFICE:**

**ITBS student test results** were distributed to students in grades 8 and 7 the week of June 1<sup>st</sup>. The narrative student report is designed to give parents information regarding their child's achievement level in core subject areas. Please also refer to classroom work, grades and course tests for a comprehensive review of academic progress.

**Parents, because you know your child, you are the best person to help him or her make the right decisions and find the right path in life. You can refer to the following and discuss over the summer with your child.**

# How to make your summer count

It's important to take a break, relax and have some fun over the summer, but it's also a great time to do something that will interest and challenge you. Here are some suggestions for ways to make your summer worthwhile.

## 1. Get hands-on experience

Make the most of your summer by getting hands-on experience in the real world, whether through a paid job, volunteer work or an internship. Summer work allows you to develop new skills and looks good on a college application. It shows that you are a dedicated, goal-oriented person — and one who's likely to succeed.

## 2. Take a class

Consider exploring an interest that you don't have time for during the school year. It may mean learning a new language or gaining in-depth knowledge in a favorite subject, such as chemistry. Get more information about [summer learning programs](#).

## 3. Join or form a book club

Participating in a book club is a great way to become comfortable sharing your thoughts in a group setting, a common activity in college classes. You can also work on organizational and leadership skills if you help create the reading list or set up some of the meetings.

## 4. Keep a journal

Keeping a diary or a blog is a great way to boost your writing skills. You may even find the perfect topic for a college-application essay as you write about a vacation you took or your experiences at work or with friends.

## 5. Read the news

Reading is the best way to build your vocabulary, expand your knowledge and learn to analyze text. Reading newspapers and magazines — in print or online — keeps you informed about important current and world events. You might even discover a new passion if you stumble across the right story.

## *What now?*

When summer's over, keep the excitement and motivation going. Read [Learning What You Love in High School](#) to learn how.

Here's something no one tells you about your high school education: You're in control. You're in charge of what you do and how well you do. It's up to you whether you treat high school as something imposed on you — something to simply get through — or as an experience you can use to figure out what you're excited about.

And here's another secret: When you're doing something you love, it doesn't feel like work. So what can you do now to find out what you're passionate about? Here are some ideas.

# Answer 10 Questions and Discover Your Future

## *What are some things you feel you do well?*

Think about the talents you already know you have, and ask friends and family what they think you're good at. You might be surprised by what they say.

## *What challenges you?*

The things that challenge you might be opportunities to improve and move toward your goals — and they might suggest areas of study and work that will keep you interested long into the future.

## *What do you like to do for fun?*

Think about the reasons you enjoy your favorite activities, the things they have in common and the strengths they bring out in you.

## *Who do you look up to?*

The people you admire — whether they're celebrities, historical figures or people you know personally — can tell you something about who you are and what you value. Consider what it is about them you like and whether those qualities are worth reaching for.

## *What's something you've always wanted to try?*

Consider your reasons for wanting to do this — and why it is you haven't done this yet. Do you find it exciting? What do you expect to get out of it?

## *What accomplishment has made you most proud?*

Your answer might have nothing to do with a hard-won A or a trophy — it might be the time you stuck up for someone who needed your help. What you're proud of can help you see what matters most to you.

## *What's your favorite class?*

Don't limit yourself to the subjects that come easiest to you. Think about which classes make you lose track of time. Is it the teacher or the subject matter that holds your interest?

## *What do you read about in your free time?*

The kinds of stories you follow in the news, your favorite books and websites — these can help you figure out what really makes you curious.

## *If you could do any job for a day, what would it be?*

Think about which careers you want to try on. What is it about them you find so appealing? What would you change to make them fit you better?

## *As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?*

Even if your childhood dreams seem silly now, remembering them may show you what's always been important to you.  
pealing? What would you change to make them fit you better?

Just passing this along for your reference as the latest scam going around. Remember the IRS or other financial aid related entities will not call and verify information over the telephone.

If you know of a student or his/her family who has been scammed, please remind them to report it to the proper authorities. If they aren't sure whether the call or email is a scam, they should error on the side of caution and not give out any personal information.

<https://www.irs.gov/uac/newsroom/irs-warns-of-latest-scam-variation-involving-bogus-federal-student-tax>

## **READING SKILLS AND SPEED READING PROGRAMS – Online this Summer**

Individual programs include engaging online instruction, independent reading in great books, and a skilled and encouraging teacher. Programs start for 4-year-olds and entering kindergartners, up to 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Programs include:

- Phonics
- Comprehension
- Fluency
- Textbook Study Skills
- Speed Reading
- Love of Reading

For more information or to register, call 1-800-903-0942.

## **ATTENTION JUNIOR PARENTS AND JUNIOR STUDENTS**

### **2017-2018 FAFSA CHANGES**

The **2017-2018 FAFSA (Free Application Federal Student Aid)** will be available to students and families on October 1<sup>st</sup>. This means students who need to complete the 2017-2018 FAFSA will be able to access and submit the form anytime from October 1, 2016 through June 30, 2018.

In order to complete the FAFSA online, every student and one parent must have a FSA ID, made up of a username and password. The FSA ID can be created at [fsaid.ed.gov](http://fsaid.ed.gov).

#### **BEFORE CREATING A FSA ID**

- Users will need to provide their Social Security Number, full name, date of birth, mailing address, email address, telephone number, and language preference.
- Each FSA ID user must have access to their own unique email address.
- If a user has previously accessed the FAFSA with a PIN, they have the option of entering the PIN while registering for the FSA ID. This will expedite the process.
- A dependent student will also need to have one legal parent sign the student's FAFSA, so the parent needs a FSA ID as well. Parents with

more than one child attending college can use the same FSA ID to sign all applications.

## **HOW TO CREATE A FSA ID**

- STEP 1** Visit [fsaid.ed.gov](https://fsaid.ed.gov).
- STEP 2** Enter your email, create a username and password, and confirm your age.
- STEP 3** Enter your Social Security Number, date of birth and full name. If you have a Federal PIN from the old system, you will receive a prompt to enter it. A Federal PIN is not required, but it can expedite the application process.
- STEP 4** Confirm your personal information.
- STEP 5** Enter your security questions and answers for future verification purposes. Select two predetermined questions, two custom questions, and a memorable date.
- STEP 6** Confirm your security questions. Read and acknowledge the FSA ID terms.
- STEP 7** Enter the secure code that was sent to the email address submitted in Step 2. This will allow you to use your email address as your username.

## **AFTER CREATING A FSA ID**

Users can immediately sign an original FAFSA with their newly created FSA ID. Once the Social Security Administration verifies their information in 1-3 days, or if they have linked their Federal PIN to their FSA ID, they will be able to start a renewal FAFSA, make changes to an existing FAFSA, and log in to other Department of Education websites.

## **REPORTING INCOME ON THE FAFSA**

The Department of Education has announced that students will file the 2017 – 2018 FAFSA with 2015 year income tax information. This impacts students who are currently juniors, graduating in 2017.

The process will enable students to file their FAFSA earlier, with more accurate information (no need to estimate taxes anymore), and aligns more directly with the admissions process. Students will be able to receive earlier notification of their financial aid eligibility and, hopefully, make better decisions regarding the affordability of their final school choice.

### **ATTENTION PARENTS OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 11, 10, AND 9.**

**Students can link their PSAT/NMSQT and PSAT 8/9 results to College Board and Khan Academy, to generate free, personalized online practice for the SAT.**

Encourage your child to:

- Visit **studentscores.collegeboard.org** to create a College Board account and get their full PSAT/NMSQT and PSAT 8/9 score report.
- Create a Khan Academy account at **satpractice.org** and link it to their College Board account to get free, personalized practice for the SAT.
- Link their Khan Academy account to their College Board account to get free, personalized practice for the SAT. Khan Academy resources may also be used to prepare for the PSAT/NMSQT and PSAT 10 because of the close alignment of these tests to the SAT.
- Spring of junior year is the perfect time to take the SAT for the first time - students can take advantage of their PSAT/NMSQT experience, and they will still have time to practice, increase their skills, and test again if they want to improve their scores

Instead of SAT or ACT scores being considered for admission, some colleges offer a **Write Option**. The Write Option requires the applicant to send the college two graded writing samples from junior or senior year. These samples should demonstrate ability to communicate complex ideas, theories and opinions and to write effective, well-supported arguments. Samples include an analysis of a book, work of art, or literary style, a research project from a natural or social science course or a position paper.

It is very important that the applicant (student) check the box for the write option on the college application in order to be considered. Limited colleges offer this option. Check with the college that the student is considering.



## **JUNIORS - COLLEGE PREPARATION**

Have a file, (a folder or binder) to manage your paperwork i.e. test scores, college application data, financial aid information, etc.

### **COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS:**

SAT I, SAT II (Subject Tests), ACT

Register: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) (SAT I, II)

Register: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) (ACT)

You will need to sign up for an account at CollegeBoard and have a user name and password.

\*Please send scores to at least four (4) schools. If you do not send scores directly from CollegeBoard there could be problems with admission documents being received at colleges.

### **PREP FOR ADMISSIONS TESTS**

Prepare to take college admission tests (SAT I, SAT II, ACT) two to three times.

Colleges will consider all scores but document highest scores.

Review PSAT from 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Order Official SAT Study Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition from [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

Review SAT Question of the Day daily, also from the CollegeBoard website.

Begin thinking about and working on a college essay and resume.

Consider asking two (2) high school teachers to write a college recommendation for you. (Try to ask teachers who can attest to your performance in the classroom (attendance, work performance, effort))

### **COLLEGE VISITS**

List of Favorites (Based on admission requirements, majors, location, size, cost, environment, extracurricular activities that are important to you) (List of 3-5 schools).

Take advantage of college websites to investigate facts about a college, however, this is not in place of actually visiting your college choices.

Include a state university on your list (\$\$ lower). Guidance has a list of state schools and information about each.

Keep in mind that private colleges cost more but they may offer more in academic merit scholarships.

College Open Houses (usually on Saturdays in March and April) – register online. These are ideal because you do not have to miss school and parents/guardians may be off from work commitments.

**You are allowed three (3) college visits on school days during junior/senior year and you must do the following for these visits:**

- \* make up any class work missed
- \*Bring a parent note in day before you are going and indicate the date you will go on college visit.
- \*Get a note from the college that you were there to visit, and bring that back to attendance officer when you come back to school.

### **College Expectations:**

SAT I, Scores (Critical Reading, Math, Writing). Many colleges take the highest score in each. There are colleges that take the highest total of all three.

SAT II Scores (Subject tests - Some colleges require, some students elect to take)

ACT Scores

Academic Record (Grade from grades 9 through 11)

Mid-year Senior year report card

Admission Test Scores

Recommendations from high school teachers

Application Essay (If required or optional)

Interview at college (College will request an interview if necessary)

Extracurricular Activities

Community Activities

Employment (Part-time during school year & Summer)

College classes during high school

### **WEBSITES:**

[Collegeboard.org](http://Collegeboard.org)

[Educationplanner.org](http://Educationplanner.org)

[Collegemajors101.com](http://Collegemajors101.com)

[BigFuture.org](http://BigFuture.org)

[Pheaa.org](http://Pheaa.org)

[bls.gov.oco](http://bls.gov.oco) (Occupational Outlook Handbook)

[Careerbuilder.com](http://Careerbuilder.com)

Talbotsbook.com  
MyMajors.com  
FederalStudentAid.ed.gov  
Studentloans.gov  
MySmartBorrowing.org

**NETWORK: ASK ABOUT VOLUNTEER INTERNSHIPS THROUGH BUSINESSES, RELATIVES OR FRIENDS. INQUIRE ABOUT MAJORS/CAREERS FROM YOUR PARENTS, RELATIVES, AND FAMILY FRIENDS.**

Plan senior high school courses to coordinate with interests (major)  
Keep grades up (Some colleges will ask for midyear senior grades)

View college websites and the college's application for admission for the 2017-2018 school year. Most schools will post application in late August.

\*If you plan to apply for Early Decision, you will be required to have admissions documents ready by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Deadline for all Seniors for top three college applications will be first week of November.

*Give serious consideration of your qualifications for admission to colleges of your choice. Narrow your choices to three or four institutions that you feel reasonably certain will grant you admission and will be affordable to you. Look at the basis for selection for the college(s) that you are interested in.*

You should be prepared to apply to colleges when you return to school in August.  
**HAVE A PLAN!**

**Schoolguides.com** is a good resource link for college-bound students. Students and parents can check college profiles, financial aid information, scholarship tips, college fairs and college news.

**The Advance College Experience (ACE) at Bloomsburg University** is designed for college-bound high school juniors and seniors who seek to “jump start” their college career by earning college credits. Bloomsburg University offers a selection of courses intended to supplement high school offerings and to expose students to the academic environment at the college level. Students save 75% of the tuition. Typical offerings will include courses in exercise science, composition,

psychology, history, public speaking, political science, language, music, biology, chemistry, mathematics, and geography. For more information call 570-389-4824 or visit [www.bloomu.edu/ace](http://www.bloomu.edu/ace).

**Luzerne County Community College** will be offering an **EMS-101 Basic Emergency Medical Technician Class** – this class is designed to serve as the initial basic emergency care training program which directly follows the National Standard Curriculum and concludes with the Pennsylvania State Certification as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Emphasis is on accurate observations, evaluation of emergency situations, effective communications with the medical network, and high skill proficiency. The class also serves as a required building block to the Paramedic Class. It is preferred candidates are at least 17 years old (18 years old when ready to take the national certification test).

**Start Date:** August 20, 2016

**End Date:** December 16, 2016

**Days:** Tuesday, Thursday, Friday  
There will also be a few select Saturdays (TBA)

**Time:** 6pm to 10pm

**Where:** Northumberland Regional Center, Room 403, in Shamokin

For more information or to register, contact:

Nicole Edmondson, Director  
LCCC Northumberland Regional Center  
2 East Arch Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Shamokin, PA 17872  
Phone: 570-648-2544  
Email: [nedmondson@luzerne.edu](mailto:nedmondson@luzerne.edu)

**Luzerne County Community College's Young Scholars Program** - Qualified Juniors and Seniors can take college courses at Luzerne County Community College through the Young Scholars Program and take advantage of a reduced rate on tuition. Contact the Shamokin Campus at 648-2544 or the Guidance Office for more information regarding registration and courses.

Stream Ecology

July 10 – 16

Apply at [www.susqu.edu/sei](http://www.susqu.edu/sei)

Deadline is June 12

The **Pennsylvania Bullying Prevention Consultation Line** is a toll free number available to school staff, students and parents across the commonwealth. The Consultation Line offers discussion of effective strategies and resources available to deal with school-based bullying. Messages can be left 24 hours a day, seven day a week, and will be returned Monday-Friday during normal business hours. The Consultation Line is 866-716-0424. For more bullying prevention information, please visit the PA Department of Education website.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

The **Board of Directors of the Northumberland County Conservation District and Don Cotner Farms of Danville** are proud to award the annual **Don Cotner, Sr. Scholarship**. This scholarship is open to seniors **living in Northumberland County** who will enter college in the fall of 2016 to pursue a career in an agricultural or environmentally related field. The amount of the scholarship is \$1,500.00, and the recipient will be honored at our annual awards picnic on August 4. Deadline is July 1, 2016. Applications are available in the Guidance Office.