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Guidelines is now available online:
http://academics.tjhsst.edu/dss.html

Upcoming Events

TRANSITIONING TO COLLEGE: A
PROGRAM FOR SENIORS AND
PARENTS: May 25th

Be sure to attend our annual
“Transitioning to College” program
scheduled for Tuesday, May 25th at
7:30 p.m. in the auditorium. This
very special night provides an
opportunity for Seniors and their
parents to share some hopes and fears
about the many changes ahead as
Seniors prepare to go off to college.
With leadership provided by the
TJHSST counselors, seniors and their
parents will talk separately and then
together about their questions and
concerns. Each year parents find this
to be a meaningful and comforting
evening. The date will be announced
as soon as it is determined.

Student Services Advisory Board

Thursday, May 20
TJHSST Library at 7:30 pm

All are welcome! These meetings are
designed for parents to offer
suggestions for improvements to our
school programs and climate.

THE TJ DIPLOMA

Students at TJ, as well as the newly
admitted freshmen class, have
demonstrated a specific interest in
mathematics, science, and technology
and indeed are fortunate to have the
opportunity to be a member of this
excellent academic community. All
other students in the state of Virginia
earn either a Standard (22 credit) or
Advanced Studies (24 credit)
Diploma. However, at TJ, in keeping
with our school’s expectation of
academic excellence, all students must
complete the mandatory 26 credit
graduation requirements in order to
earn a TJ diploma.

Incoming Frosh/ Transfer/New Students
to TJ – SOL Test Info

If your future TJ student is coming
from an out-of-county/non-FCPS
public school in Virginia (including
Arlington, Falls Church City,
Fauquier, Loudoun, and Prince
William), please save all of your
student’s End of Course (EOC)
Standards of Learning (SOL) score
reports. Copies of these score reports
should be given to Lisa Moore, our
Student Services Administrative
Assistant, during the summer or to
your student’s counselor as soon as
the school begins in September.
Otherwise, we may not be able to
confirm that a Verified Credit can be
issued for the SOL course. However,
if your future TJ student is coming
from a private school or out-of-state,
he/she will be required to take SOL
tests for any high school course that
was completed prior to enrollment at
TJ. SOL tests are necessary for any
mathematics coursework of Algebra 1
and beyond, as well as Biology and
World History/Geography 1. Students
will be required to take the SOL test(s)
during the school year in order to
fulfill this Virginia graduation testing
requirement.
Summer Coursework Expectations

Students at TJ are expected to fulfill their graduation requirements by taking courses here during the regular school year or during TJ’s summer school.

♦ Students may only take Computer Science, Chemistry, and their required fourth social studies course at TJ. Approval will not be granted for these courses to be completed at another institution.

♦ Rising freshmen may only take World History and Geography 1 or Geometry for credit during TJ’s summer school.

2010 TJHSST summer school information

Dates for summer school, as well as times and course offerings have been decided. Please note that some course selections may change due to faculty availability and student interest or even lack of enrollment.

Summer school will run from July 6 to August 6. The summer school day will last from 8:00 am until 3:00 pm. One credit courses will cost $820 and semester courses will cost $420. All courses will be offered at TJHSST, but unfortunately, transportation and lunch are not provided and therefore the responsibility of the parent and student. However, the PTSA will most likely facilitate a carpooling option as it has in the past.

Students may miss only two days for a one credit course and one day for a semester course before being withdrawn from the course. However, students are encouraged to attend class everyday since one summer school day is the equivalent of a week during the regular school year.

There will be two different types of courses offered at TJ this summer: for-credit, enrichment (which includes the Summer Tech Institute and two research opportunities), and refresher courses. All TJ summer school information can be found on the TJ website: www.tjhsst.edu under “News”, then “Summer School Information,” including descriptions and details of each of the courses and programs. Please note: The TJ Test Prep Program listed on the FCPS website is not a TJ sponsored program and therefore not offered at TJ. Registration for the TJ Test Prep Course is conducted through FCPS.

TJ Summer courses are offered to students interested in the possibility of exploring additional course options. No student is required to attend TJ Summer School and no student is guaranteed a place in any TJ Summer School program. Final course offerings are based on student enrollment and available resources.

The following courses are planned for summer 2010:

- Computer Science (1 credit)*
- Advanced Geometry (1 credit)
- Chemistry (1 credit)
- World History/Geography 1 (1 credit)
- 20th Century World History (.5 credit)
- America and the World since 1989 (.5 credit)

Honors credit is NOT awarded for any summer courses. Registration will be through ACE and is expected to open May 10th.

Summer Research Opportunities in Chemical Analysis and Biotechnology

Summer research opportunities in chemical analysis and biotechnology are available to all FCPS rising 11th and 12th graders in the TJHSST research labs. More information and an application can be found at www.tjhsst.edu under summer school information.

Fast Facts About Summer School

Dates:
- Session A: July 6 – 21 (semester course)
- Session B: July 22 – August 6 (semester course)

Cost:
- $820 for a one credit course
- $420 for a semester course

*Registration begins May 10th

Math & Computer science

Several questions and concerns related to math and computer science courses often arise as the school year progresses.

First of all, students should think very carefully about attempting to place out of a course by taking a placement test. Learning an entire year’s work on their own is very difficult even for the best students. Please consider this carefully. Unless there is a valid reason to accelerate (for example, in order to co-enroll in AP Physics), this option should not be considered.

Precalculus

The only math course that a student may attempt to place out of is...
Precalculus. In order to attempt this, a student must have met the following requirements:

1. Earned an A in both Algebra 1 and Geometry.
2. Earned a 97% average in Advanced Algebra 2/Trigonometry.

Each year approximately 50 students apply to take the placement test; 30–35 take the test; and, approximately one-half pass the test (minimum score required: 90%). Please remember that the test allows placement, not credit.

**The test date is Friday, August 27 from 9 am to 12 noon in room 243.**

**Computer Science**

Students may attempt to place out of Introductory Computer Science and move immediately into AP Computer Science. In order to attempt this, a student must have met the following requirements:

1. Earned A’s in all previous math courses.
2. Earned a 97% average in his/her most recent math class.
3. Obtained his/her math teacher’s verification that he/she is a good problem solver and independent thinker.

Each year approximately 5 or 6 students apply to take this test and approximately one-half pass the test (minimum score required: 90%). Please remember that the test allows placement, not credit.

**The test date is Friday, August 27 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in room 236. (Please note: Students also taking the Precalculus placement test will take both tests on August 27.**

All information and necessary forms for the placement are on the website [http://academics.tjhsst.edu/mathcs.html](http://academics.tjhsst.edu/mathcs.html).

**Freshmen who have completed Advanced Algebra 2, but not Trigonometry or Data Analysis**

These freshmen have a few options. First, they may choose to study the material on their own during the summer and take a placement test on Friday, August 27 proving their mastery. Students must earn an 84% in order to prove mastery. Students who do not pass the placement test or do not want to study on their own during the summer, may elect one of the following options: enroll in our Trigonometry semester course or take the online Trigonometry course over the summer. Either way, students will receive one-semester of credit.

However, when students new to TJ first register, they must sign-up for the semester course of Trigonometry. Counselors are notified once students pass the test and schedules are changed to enroll students in Precalculus. Students who would like to attempt the placement test should visit the TJHSST website and click on “Academics” and then “Math and Computer Science.” Under the Mathematics program, there is information about placement testing. Additionally, a listing of the Trigonometry topics that are necessary to master will be provided on the TJHSST website. Furthermore, the Data Analysis I and II packets that are included in the placement test are available for downloading. The placement test request form must be returned to Mrs. Jennifer Allard by May 28.

**Preparing for next year’s math course**

It is not unusual for one’s math skills to get rusty over the summer. There are skill inventories posted on the TJHSST math/comp sci. website [http://academics.tjhsst.edu/mathcs.html](http://academics.tjhsst.edu/mathcs.html). Currently there are skill inventories for students entering Geometry or Advanced Algebra 2/Trigonometry where they can ascertain if they need to review any Algebra 1 topics for the fall. They can be downloaded, and once completed the solutions to the problems can also be downloaded and results checked. It is strongly suggested that all students complete the appropriate skill inventories. Students who need to review any particular topic before September should visit the many websites available with tutorials.

**Congratulations to you and your senior!** The exhilarating, challenging, and rewarding four years at TJHSST are almost at an end. You and your student have accomplished so much in these last four years, and there is so much more ahead. Before the celebrating begins, students should be reminded that colleges will receive their final grades and transcript. As a result, a precipitous drop in grades can cause colleges to reconsider or even rescind offers of admission. In fact, low final grades are the #1 reason for colleges rescinding admission offers.

**Senior Surveys**

By now most seniors have made a commitment to attend a particular college. Seniors will be asked to complete a required Senior Surveys the week of May 17 during Geosystems when counselors are available to walk students through this process. An additional scholarship survey will be completed online. It is imperative that all information reported is accurate and honest, as it is may be used in assisting the next graduating class at TJ in their college search and planning process. Additionally, post-secondary plans of all graduates are required to be reported to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

These surveys will provide us with very important information, including where to send the final transcript. We do not use the college forms requesting the final transcript. In the event that your student changes his/her college commitment, Mrs. Linda Guglielmo, our transcript secretary,
Guidelines

College Acceptances and Decision

It is essential that students inform colleges whether or not they plan to attend in the fall. As you may be aware, this was an extremely tough year in college admissions. This resulted in a large number of students being waitlisted. If your student is waitlisted at a college in which he/she has a strong interest, it is important to immediately notify the college of that interest and send information about any recent achievements. We encourage our students to write a formal letter to the admissions representative for our region. A word of caution: admissions officers are not impressed by calls from parents or “influential” neighbors—they would truly prefer to hear from the students themselves. Also, if any new information-honors-awards, etc becomes available, sending an updated letter never hurts.

Additionally, if your student decides that college at which they were waitlisted is no longer of interest, once again, he/she should notify the college and remove themselves from the waitlist. This may allow other students with a strong desire to be pulled off the waitlist and ultimately attend the college. Getting off the waitlist is unpredictable at best, so it is strongly recommended that students make plans to attend a college that indeed has offered them acceptance. Most colleges do not rank order students on the waitlist, but instead see where the “gaps” are once all the acceptances have been received. So, if there is more space for students with certain majors, an imbalance between men and women, or even a need for a cello player, those students may be pulled off the waitlist first. Also, students who have shown consistent, strong interest may be noticed since the colleges often view this behavior as indicative of someone more likely to attend if offered admission. Please be aware that if a student decides to accept an offer from a college at which he/she has been waitlisted, a deposit made earlier to another college will most likely not be refunded. If you have any questions and/or concerns about how to navigate this process, please contact your student’s counselor. We are here to support you and your student throughout the entire college process!

Program: Transitioning to College

From experience, we know that the months between now and when your student is firmly ensconced in college can be a roller coaster ride of emotions. This time of transition can be surprisingly difficult. A book which many have found helpful in navigating through this period is *Letting Go* by Coburn and Treeger. We also recommend that you attend our parent/student program titled “Transitioning to College” at 7:30 pm in the Auditorium on June 2.

Thank you!  Best wishes!

Once again, please know that you are encouraged by the Student Services Staff to contact us with your questions and concerns. We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation for the opportunity to be a part of the TJ journey with you and your student. We are so fortunate to work with the most compassionate, giving, involved, and patient parents in the country. Thank you!

See the College and Career Center section of this newsletter for more information about:

* Reflections on Freshmen year in college
* Gap year options
* How to find a job
* Interview etiquette

Junior Journey

It has been heartening for counselors to reconnect with their students after Spring Break. Many juniors combined vacation time with a chance to visit colleges, and it is exciting to listen to students’ descriptions of their college visits. These visits help clarify students’ preferences, and in some cases, act as catalysts for students to go back to the drawing board and revise their college list. Counselors encourage parents to schedule meetings with them throughout the spring in order to discuss the future of their rising senior. TJ students have fantastic academic preparation for college, and colleges have high regard for our school. This enables most students to have a broad array of choices when it comes to higher education. A healthy mixture of optimism and realism will help to ensure a favorable outcome in the college admission process.

In order for counselors to write a comprehensive, accurate letter of recommendation for each of their seniors, students are asked as juniors to complete a College Planning Packet. Included in this Packet is a portion for the parents to answer. It is essential that both students and their families take time to respond to these questions thoroughly and honestly. Counselors strive to write recommendations that are unique and, therefore, anecdotes or examples that illustrate students’ interests, abilities, and/or character are especially helpful. By providing us with your insights and knowledge about your student, you will aid your student’s counselor in obtaining all of the information necessary to write a meaningful recommendation that highlights his/her best qualities, accomplishments, and/or resiliency. By working together, the counselor can be your student’s absolute best advocate.
Students have copies of the College Planning Packet and it is available on Blackboard via Family Connection/Naviance (under Student Services and then Library documents). Some counselors have even sent it via email as an attachment. Please note that these packets are due to your student’s counselor in June.

College Admissions Night

On April 20, the auditorium at Thomas Jefferson was filled with students and their parents eager to learn about the college admissions process. Our college admissions panel consisted of three admissions officers representing the College of William and Mary, Virginia Tech and University of Virginia. As Mr. Brandon Kosatka, Director of Student Services, explained, the purpose of this program was to enlighten parents about the admissions process and help students and parents make informed decisions. Mr. Kostaka posed several different questions to the panel members. The following are the questions and responses:

In summation, the Junior journey is an opportunity for self-reflection, as well as a time to explore college options that are best for the individual student. Communication is key for families as they consider their options. All students should be sure to identify one school that is a perfect fit and where they feel acceptance will not be an issue.

‘Specially for Sophomores

Sophomores and families – It is hard to believe that the year is coming to a close. Which leads us to the all-important question beginning to echo in the halls of TJHST: “What are you doing this summer?”

The summer after your sophomore year is one of the most flexible summers of high school where options are abundant! Now sophomores are afforded the time and freedom to travel, start/continue a community service project, earn extra money, catch up on TJ graduation requirements in summer school, or simply get some much needed rest and relaxation! Pre-college programs or internships are a great way to explore career options, meet new people, and learn new skills. Hopefully students have seen Mrs. Kobick’s displays for “Summer Programs of the Week” posted on the easel outside of the College and Career Center. If not, students may want to peruse the College and Career Center webpage at http://academics.tjhsst.edu/careercenter/summrpg.htm. With any luck, students will find the perfect program for them, but they should not forget to find time to rest and relax – especially in the days leading up to the start of school in September!

By the end of the third quarter, counselors have met one-on-one with all sophomores to select courses for next year. You should have received in the mail a copy of your son/daughter’s requested courses for additional discussion and input as well as some other important forms. The deadline to make any changes to course requests for 2009-2010 was April 16th. All juniors must take English 11, US History (AP is optional), Physics, and the next level of mathematics. Most juniors will take another year of foreign language, along with required or recommended courses for the various senior research labs. An updated list of requirements for senior research labs can be found on pages 97 and 98 of the online Course Selection Guide. Please note that only one senior research lab is without prerequisites, and students should take the required courses for at least two research labs in order to keep their options open. We encourage our students to select courses that challenge them, but do not overwhelm them. If you have any additional questions or concerns about the scheduling process, please contact your student’s counselor for a meeting, an email exchange, or telephone conversation. We truly want to be a part of this ongoing dialogue.

And now, drumroll please! It’s time to begin thinking about college and the tests required for admission! Many sophomores are taking an AP science or language class or completing precalculus, and therefore, we recommend taking the SAT Subject Test for that subject in June. June is an ideal time to take a subject test, because your student has been studying for the AP exam and is better prepared to do well on the SAT Subject Test. To register for all SAT testing, please visit the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com.

The CEEB school code for TJ is: 470054. Be aware that TJ is no longer a testing site; therefore students should pick the site that is most convenient for them.

Speaking of college, summer is a great time to begin informally visiting college campuses. If you are out of town visiting friends or family, why not stop in and take a tour at a local college or university? It is never too early to gather information about colleges or get a “feel” for what the college is like by visiting its campus, interacting with students, and researching popular majors or programs.

As always, the counselors and staff of Student Services are available and willing to help with any questions or concerns you may have. We encourage you to use us as a resource as you navigate high school and the world beyond!

Freshmen Focus

Congratulations! You and your student are this close to surviving Freshman year, and here at TJ, we think you deserve….a SUMMER! What a perfect time to unwind, relax, rejuvenate, and, in the case of TJ students, catch up on some much
needed sleep! Although the Student Service Staff does not advocate a “free for all” summer, we do recommend that our students avoid being over-scheduled or over-structured during the summer. Instead, we recommend that they add or maintain balance in their lives by doing an activity just for fun, having some free time to just hang out, or even learning just for the sake of learning. Since there is no “right way” to spend the summer, students can do any number of things including, but not limited to, summer camps, enrichment programs, volunteer service, sports, travel, and part-time employment. Summer may also be the perfect time to review work in a subject area in which they lack confidence. Regardless of how students decide to spend their break, it is important that they use July and August to re-energize for a whole new school year.

Speaking of next year, families should have received a printed list of their student’s requested sophomore course selections.

When it comes to academic advising, we in Student Services believe in maintaining a balance; one that provides your student with a challenging schedule, not an overwhelming one. Although your student may tell you that everyone takes an AP in their sophomore year, this is not exactly accurate. Some students are established enough and possess the time management skills necessary to be successful in a college-level, faster-paced class. Some students struggle more than others and may need an additional year of TJ’s already advanced curriculum. We encourage you as parents to help your student determine if he/she is in fact ready for the added demands of this type of course.

Lastly, Precalculus is the only mathematics course that can be waived. Information about placing out of Precalculus is available in the Math and Computer Science article in this newsletter on pages 3-4.

Until next time! Have a great rest of the school year and a happy summer!

Welcome Class of 2014!

We want to welcome the Class of 2013 who, in a few short months, will be joining the TJ community. The Student Services Staff is happy that you have made the choice to become a Colonial and we look forward to working with you for the next four years. More than likely, many of your initial questions about TJ’s academic program and school life were answered at the Freshmen Preview Night and the time you registered for courses. However, as you make your transition from middle school to high school, we know that there may be many more questions. Because our goal as counselors is to help you make a positive and smooth transition to our high school community, we encourage you to call the Student Services Office if you have questions about courses and scheduling. If we cannot answer a question, we will direct you to the appropriate resource. We also encourage you to call the Student Activities Office at 703-750-8333 if you have questions regarding sports and/or other activities at TJ.

One of the most enjoyable ways to get your questions about TJ life answered is through the summer picnics sponsored by various clubs and activities. At these informal gatherings, incoming Freshmen will meet students from all grade levels and have an opportunity to have their questions answered about specific activities or concerns, as well as learn more about the “in’s and out’s” of high school life. Typically, these gatherings are held in August and each organization will mail information regarding the date, time, and location.

Specific questions regarding TJ’s Math/Computer Science and Foreign Language programs can be addressed by the following Division Managers:

**Math and Computer Science**

Jennifer Allard
jennifer.allard@fcps.edu

**Foreign Language**

Genevieve Delfosse
genevieve.delfosse@fcps.edu

Important Information about Athletics and Music at TJ for Incoming Freshmen

Freshman Preview Night Monday, May 17th. The Sports and Activities portion of the evening is scheduled for 5:30-6:30pm in Gym II. This is an excellent opportunity for incoming 9th graders to gather information about TJ Athletics, Fine Arts program, co-curricular activities and many of the student clubs and organizations represented at TJ. Wednesday, June 9th is registration day for the class of 2014. On that day the Athletic Department has scheduled time for Athletic Physicals for students from 4:30-6:30pm. TJ Sports Preview is scheduled for that evening at 7:00pm in Gym II.

**Thomas Jefferson Marching Colonials**

Freshmen who wish to participate in the TJ Marching Band must enroll in a curricular band class for their freshman year and will be auditioned for appropriate placement within these ensembles in early June. Summer admission students are asked to contact the band director immediately to express interest in the marching band (703-750-8384). MARCHING BAND IS NOT REQUIRED IF YOU ENROLL IN A BAND CLASS. BAND CLASS IS REQUIRED FOR THREE YEARS IF YOU WISH TO MARCH FOR FOUR YEARS; TWO YEARS OF CURRICULAR FOR THREE YEARS MARCHING, ETC. (THE FRESHMAN YEAR IN MARCHING BAND REQUIRES A DUAL ENROLLMENT IN CURRICULAR BAND).

Marching Band students (only!) will be asked to take part in summer rehearsals for marching band starting on Thursday, June 10. During these summer rehearsals, June
and July vacations are excused, but prior notification of absence is expected. However, in August, it is mandatory for students to attend rehearsals as scheduled. A detailed schedule of rehearsals will be available at the Frosh Preview Night on May 19 and again at the Fine Arts Meeting scheduled for May 25 at 7pm. Interest meetings and auditions for Color Guard or the Drum Line will be held in mid- to late-May. If you have any questions about the Band camps or any other aspect of the Band program, please contact Mary Ulrey, Band Director, at 703-750-8384 or MEUlrey@fcps.edu.

Orchestra Information
All freshmen will be placed in Concert Orchestra for 2010-11. Any freshman who would like to audition for higher placement may audition Saturday, June 12. Audition requirements include a prepared piece of the student’s choice, major and melodic minor scales through 3 sharps and 3 flats (2-3 octaves), and an additional prepared excerpt provided by Ms. Bailey. Orchestra information and audition materials will be distributed at the Music Department Orientation Meeting on Thursday, May 20, at 7:00PM in the Band Room at TJ. If you have any questions, please email Allison Bailey, Orchestra Director, at akbailey@fcps.edu.

Choir Spring Show is open to incoming freshmen who are interested in participating in chorus at TJ. Two Saturday rehearsals, May 9 and May 16 from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm are required, as well as a dress rehearsal on Thursday, May 28 from 5:00 – 6:00 pm. Incoming freshmen who participate in the spring show receive a t-shirt and free admission to the show.

Choir Camp will take place from September 1—3 with a performance on September 4. Detailed information will be sent via mail this summer. Please contact Mr. Luke Frels for more about Choir Camp at adam.levowitz@fcps.edu.

Freshmen Orientation
All parents and students are strongly encouraged to attend the Freshmen Orientation which will be held on Friday, September 3. Be on the lookout for more information regarding this wonderful opportunity to meet teachers and classmates. In addition, information also will be sent out regarding our Big Sibs Program that teams upper-class students with freshmen. Please note: On the afternoon of the Freshman Orientation, the Big Sibs will hold an afternoon program filled with fun activities. The freshmen who attend this afternoon program will need to bring lunch and provide their own transportation home.

We know that you are looking forward to high school and that you are ready to take advantage of the opportunities you will have to develop intellectually, make new friends, get involved in extracurricular activities, and gain independence.

Schedule Information for the Class of 2014
Once all rising ninth graders register for courses, families will be mailed a print-out of the student’s requested courses for the 2010-2011 year. It is important that you look over this list carefully. Information concerning how to correct schedule errors, as well as the deadline for doing so, will be included in this mailing.

College and Career Center News

Reflections on Freshman Year - Students Look Back

I Wish I Had Known . . .
• College isn't all fun and games. It is hard work and takes a lot of self-discipline.

Best of luck next year, TJ Class of 2010! We will miss you!

Keys to Academic Success

Getting into college may seem like a big hurdle, but once you arrive on campus, you must be prepared to meet your school's academic requirements. Here are some tips to help you handle your courses with maximum efficiency and minimum wasted effort:

• Learn About Your Teachers.
  Find out which teacher is most interesting or which one is the fairest grader. Also, find out which teachers are the most accessible in terms of office hours
such as getting married, choosing or changing careers, but it is as significant. No book or counselor can make the decision for a student or family to take time off. For many students approaching the end of school, the decision about taking a gap year is a difficult and complex one. The first question a student needs to ask is how will a student spend the year off? If you close your eyes, can you imagine yourself in a college student union or can you transport yourself in your imagination to a Costa Rican rainforest or an Italian language class? Putting off the start of college life is a common practice in the United Kingdom and Australia for at least 20 years, but grown in popularity with US students. While the reasons to take a gap year are personal and diverse, the majority of high school seniors considering a gap year are some of the most hardworking, conscientious and academically driven members of their graduating class.

Instead, they seek a gap year in order to explore their interests or focus on a special goal. Some admit they need the time to recover from the rigors of intense study during their high school career. Others feel their chances of admission to top schools are greater with valuable work or volunteer experiences a part of their resumes.

What do college admissions offices think of taking a gap year? In 1997, William Fitzsimmons, dean of admissions at Harvard College, published an article in the New York Times entitled “Time Out or Burn Out for the Next Generation.” In the article, Fitzsimmons encouraged students to take at least a year off. He stated a “time out can take many forms… it is a time to step back and reflect, to gain perspective on personal values and goals, or to gain needed life experience in a setting separate from and independent of one’s accustomed pressures and expectations.” This year Princeton University recently announced a new “bridge year” program, which allows newly admitted students a year to perform community service abroad before the start of their freshman year.

Reasons for gap years vary, and as long as the application next year includes information about how the year has been spent, hopefully in a productive manner.

To find out information about gap year programs you can investigate the following sites:

- [www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)
- [www.takingoff.net](http://www.takingoff.net)
- [www.planetgapyear.com](http://www.planetgapyear.com)
- [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)
- [www.interimprograms.com](http://www.interimprograms.com)
- [www.outwardbound.org](http://www.outwardbound.org)
- [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov)
- [www.enrouetgapyear.com](http://www.enrouetgapyear.com)
- [www.cityyear.org](http://www.cityyear.org)

This is only a sampling of what is available and the TJ College Career Center and any college study abroad office or career development office can provide more resources.

TJ students who have taken a gap year have traversed the Appalachian trail, volunteered at City Year in New Hampshire, worked on political campaigns, interned, worked at jobs to gain employment experience, traveled to Europe, and learned new languages. The gap year experience can be a maturing and tremendous growth time period in the life of an eighteen year old. Time off may also give a student the opportunity to investigate career interests. Students who have taken the time to explore the world bring a different perspective to the college classroom that can enrich the academic experience for everyone.

### How to Find a Job During the Recession

According to Harry Dahlstrom, author of The Job Hunting Handbook, lots of companies say they have hiring freezes. But it is amazing how quickly a hiring freeze can shatter if you start chipping away at the ice.

- Start with the people you know - family, friends, teachers, coaches, religious contacts, doctors - ask if they know someone who could help you get a job interview. You will be surprised who can make a phone call and set up a job interview for you.
- Fill out a job application everywhere else - look for...
companies that display "Now Hiring" signs. Visit web sites of your favorite companies and search their employment page. Search the newspapers. Search job boards like CareerBuilder, Monster, and CraigsList. Visit an employment agency or the College Career Center.

- Target 5 new companies a day - call each company and ask the receptionist for the name of the manager in the department you wish to work who is the hiring manager. Send each hiring manager your resume and a letter asking for a job interview. Then follow up with a phone call.

- Keep a list of the all the companies you have applied to and every week send each hiring manager a follow-up note. Let the managers know you are still available and you still want to work for them. Workers come and go and jobs do open up. Eighty percent of all job openings are not advertised. Let them know that you are still available and interested.

### Interview Etiquette for High School Students

The concept of a college or job interview can be nerve-racking for students and parents alike. Many students have not had the experience of a professional interview before and may feel a bit intimidated and apprehensive. Although the interview experience can vary from college or job, in general, these conversations provide the admissions or personnel office with a chance to get to know the student. Interviews give students the opportunity to ask their questions and get an insider's perspective on a particular college community or company. Listed below are some tips for effective and less stressful interviews that may take some of the anxiety out of the process:

### Preparing for the Interview

- Feel free to ask about the expected dress code. Even if the dress is casual, dress appropriately and if in doubt, dress on the conservative side.
- Get a good night's sleep before in order to be energetic and alert.
- Research the university or company before the interview.
- Arrive 5 - 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled interview time.
- Have a list of prepared questions you want to ask the interviewer and bring a résumé.

### During the Interview

- Look the interviewer in the eye and shake hands firmly.
- Smile pleasantly, be friendly and answer questions truthfully and directly.
- Ask questions to show that you are interested.
- Know yourself! Talk about extracurricular and community service activities, or even previous work experience. Discuss your interests and remember it is easy to talk about what you know and love.
- Remain positive, energetic, and conversational throughout the interview. Remember, the interview begins when you are first greeted by the interviewer - not when you sit down to talk.
- If asked, be able to articulate why this institution or company may be a good fit for you. Consider what you want in a university or corporation, including such important factors as the size, location, specific academic programs, research opportunities, study abroad options and the campus community.
- Avoid chewing gum, using slang or profanity, responding with one word answers or yes/no responses, and stretching the truth. Individuals come across best when they discuss topics with which you are familiar and passionate.

### After the Interview

- If you can, obtain a business card from the interviewer and follow up with a brief handwritten thank you note or email. Don’t forget to thank the interviewer for his/her time and mention what you enjoyed most about your visit or conversation, as well as sincerely express your interest in the college or job in the note.

#### Seniors-Has Senioritis Arrived?

It is a true fact that colleges can revoke an admissions acceptance to students if they don’t finish their senior year the way they started it. The senior slide, known as senioritis can be in the form of many symptoms – laziness, slipping grades and slacking off once the college acceptance letter arrives. Most offers are usually conditional meaning that a student is expected to complete their senior year with the same quality of work they achieved during the first semester. Students are expected to fulfill their obligations in high school and by slacking off it appears to admission officers students arrive to college unprepared to complete college work. Official transcripts of accepted students are sent to colleges at the end senior year not only as proof of graduation, but if an intended major has any prerequisites, those are completed, as well.

If last semester grades start to slide, many admission officers will contact the student or the high school to find out the reason. Summer remediation classes or support services at the college can be recommended as a method to rectify the situation. A mid-year change in course load can also affect entry into a top-choice college. College officials will look at the final transcripts, so the motivation to continue to keep academics at a strong level should continue. Preparing and learning for college while in high school will assist in making the transition to college life an easier experience.

#### Summer Opportunities

If your student is still looking for summer or volunteer programs, please encourage a visit to the College/Career Center for last minute suggestions. Although some deadlines have passed, there are still programs available.

The College/Career Center website also has a myriad of summer
opportunities and volunteer programs. Check out available programs at: http://www.tjhsst.edu/supportingtj/careercenter/summrpg.htm.

**College Admissions Representatives Visiting TJ**

Over 125 college representatives will visit TJ to meet with interested students between mid-September and December in the College Career Center. By the time school begins again in September, students will have the opportunity to access the list of college reps, dates and times of their visit on Family Connection and on the College Career Center webpage. Students should take advantage of this special opportunity to learn more about specific colleges from the admission representatives. College reps scheduled to visit TJ come during the summer months while the College and Career Center could not manage to assist TJ students, parents, staff and the community without the capable and knowledgeable support of all its volunteers. Thank you CCC volunteers for all you do!

A sincere **THANK YOU** to the 38 wonderful parent volunteers who devote countless hours and energy every week to maintain the efficient operation of the College and Career Center. The College and Career Center is not structured to assist TJ students, parents, staff and the community without the capable and knowledgeable support of all its volunteers. Thank you CCC volunteers for all you do!

**STANDARDS OF LEARNING (SOL) SPRING TESTING SCHEDULE**

The Standards of Learning (SOL) tests will be given to students in grades 9-12 from May 24 – June 3. A formalized schedule is at the end of this newsletter. These end-of-course tests are not timed and are administered in the following subjects:

- **Biology** Grade 9
- **Geometry** Grade 9
- **Algebra 2** Grades 9 & 10
- **World History** Grade 10
- **2 (Hum 1)**
- **Chemistry** Grade 10
- **English 11** Grade 11
- **Geosystems** Grade 12
  *(Earth Science)*

These SOL tests are required for graduation. **Please make note of which tests your student will be required to take** and do everything you can to **ensure that he/she is present on the day of testing.** In the event that your student has an unavoidable conflict please contact his/her counselor ASAP so that we can develop a make-up schedule. It is our hope that any appointments currently scheduled at this time will be moved in an effort to accommodate this state required testing. With your help, we will successfully complete over 3,000 tests in seven days. These SOL tests are also not timed and are required for graduation.

**Thank You!**

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**CEEB CODE 470 054**

**CALENDAR**

- **May 1** SAT and SAT Subject Tests
- **May 3-14** AP Exams
- **May 14** Fourth Quarter interims emailed home
- **May 24- June 3** SOL Testing
- **May 20** Student Advisory Board
  7:30 pm in the library
- **May 21** Leadership Service Awards, 8th period
- **May 25** Senior Parent Program:
  Transitioning to College at 7:00 pm, Auditorium
- **May 31** Student Holiday
- **May 27** Mentorship Fair
- **June 2** TJSTAR Research Symposium
- **June 4** J-Day
- **June 5** SAT and SAT Subject Tests
- **June 11** Senior Exam, period 7
- **June 11** Senior Prom at Westwood Country Club, Vienna, VA
- **June 14** Senior Exams, periods 3 & 4
  *(Blue Day)*
- **June 15** Senior Exams, periods 6 & 7
  *(Red Day)*
- **June 16** Senior Exams, periods 1 & 2
  *(Blue Day)*
- **June 17** Graduation Rehearsal and Senior Picnic (Red Day)
- **June 18** Underclass Exam, period 4 at 1:50 pm (Blue Day)
- **June 19** Graduation at GMU Patriot Center, 7 pm
- **June 21** Underclass Exams, periods 1 & 2
  *(12:50 pm dismissal)*
- **June 22** Underclass Exams, periods 3 & 4
  *(12:50 pm dismissal)*
- **June 23** Underclass Exams, periods 6 & 7
  *(12:50 pm dismissal)*
- **June 24** Last Day of School, Dismissal at 10:50 am
- **June 30** Last Day for Counselors
- **Last week in August** Course
  Corrections & Adjustments
- **Day (date TBA)**
- **Sept. 4** Freshman Parent/Student
  Orientation at 9am
- **Sept. 4** Big Sib Program
- **Sept. 7** First Day of School 2010-11
## SOL SPRING TESTING SCHEDULE

The Standards of Learning (SOL) Exams are not timed and will be administered according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>SOL Exam</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, May 24</td>
<td>Geosystems</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Modified Anchor Day (no 8th period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 25</td>
<td>Algebra 2, Biology, Chemistry, English 11, Geometry, and US &amp; VA History</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
<td>Blue Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, May 26</td>
<td>Algebra 2, Biology, Chemistry, English 11, Geometry, and World History 2</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
<td>Red Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 27</td>
<td>Algebra 2, Chemistry, English 11, Geometry, and World History 2</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
<td>Blue Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 1</td>
<td>Chemistry, English 11, and World History 2</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
<td>Red Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 3</td>
<td>English 11, World History 2</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
<td>Blue Day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TJHSST FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Underclass</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, June 11</td>
<td>Period 7 Exam</td>
<td>Regular Day</td>
<td>Modified Red Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, June 14</td>
<td>Period 3 and 4 Exams</td>
<td>Regular Day</td>
<td>Blue Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 15</td>
<td>Period 5 and 6 Exams</td>
<td>Regular Day</td>
<td>Red Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, June 16</td>
<td>Period 1 and 2 Exams</td>
<td>Regular Day</td>
<td>Blue Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 17</td>
<td>Graduation Rehearsal/Picnic</td>
<td>Regular Day</td>
<td>Red Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, June 18</td>
<td>Period 4 Exam</td>
<td>Regular Day</td>
<td>Modified Blue Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, June 21</td>
<td>Periods 1 and 2 Exams</td>
<td>Half Day (12:50 pm dismissal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 22</td>
<td>Periods 3 and 5 Exams</td>
<td>Half Day (12:50 pm dismissal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, June 23</td>
<td>Periods 6 and 7 Exams</td>
<td>Half Day (12:50 pm dismissal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 24</td>
<td>Period 7 Exam</td>
<td>10:50 am dismissal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduation at the GMU Patriot Center, Saturday, June 19 at 7 pm.**