

**NOTES FROM 5TH PTO MEETING
FOR SOPHOMORE CLASS OF 2012**
December 2, 2009
(7:05 PM in MLK Room)

ALPHABET OF HIGH-STAKES TESTING

- Carol Levin opens meeting
 - Gives reminder re: upcoming meetings

- Headmaster Weintraub reviews protest by outside “church” the day prior
 - One parent reports that the *Globe* commented favorably on the comportment of BHS students
 - Dr. Bob shares pride in the BHS student reaction and of the unity embedded in the great diversity of the student body, which he observes represents an evolution from past “Balkanized” notions of diversity – from exclusive groups to inclusive individuals
 - Outside protestors got no attention/reaction

- Dean Lande introduces herself and Jackie Brown, head of Guidance
 - Notes that first report cards that really “count” were given out the day prior. Parents should contact guidance if they didn’t get one or are otherwise concerned.

- Re: MCAS:
 - See attached handout describing MCAS (science in 9th grade, English, Math spring in 10th grade)

- Re: PSAT (from Jackie Brown)
 - Shows what your SAT equivalent score would be
 - Great SAT diagnostic; breaks down what you got right/wrong
 - Need to see guidance counselor first to go over results; makes for good study guide
 - Also can qualify you as National Merit Scholarship (if you take it during junior year)
 - Practice PSAT is offered in Spring of 10th grade
 - given by KAPLAN, and is free
 - covers strategy
 - one workshop, one practice session
 - Kids must sign up for PSAT in career center
 - Dates are already on website
 - Guidance will send out reminder

- Re: SAT and SAT Subject Tests (a/k/a SAT II or Achievement Test)
 - Seven times a year
 - Register at home on line or get paper and mail it in
 - BHS location fills up, so you may have to test elsewhere
 - can show up standby if you miss it
 - website lets you pick from available sites
 - Math Subject Test is recommended at end of sophomore year
 - Usually schools want Math Subject Test plus any Science or History (could do English also, but now that SAT includes an essay portion, some schools no longer require it)
 - Student can choose which scores to report to which schools
 - student can also take subject test more than once
 - For tests, you need photo ID, calculator, and pencils

- Most schools do not require Subject Tests
- More competitive colleges may require it, but ACT can sometimes be used as substitute
- See attachment for idea of what Subject Test best matches which BHS course
 - no perfect match with BHS course, so separate prep is good idea
 - interested students should talk to their teachers; some may offer practice test. (e.g. x block prep)

NB: This is a good time for students to begin developing leadership/extra curricular activities

-- Re: ACT

- Used to be mostly for Mid-West schools, but is now more ubiquitous/popular
- Tests student more on knowledge/facts (like the SAT Subject Test), vs. SAT, which is said to be more logic/thinking based.
- Colleges generally all take either, and you can choose which test you send to college
- Kaplan, Princeton Review and Brookline Adult Education offer prep courses
- Kaplan course through BHS is at reduced rate
- Can get practice book from book store

NB: Stay calm – your anxiety will translate to your kids, and you don't want them “testing” into school that is not a natural fit.

(Q & A Period)

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

PTO website: www.bhs-pto.org

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