

Butler High School

William A. Hanisch, Principal

Guidance Newsletter

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“Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.”

Thomas Jefferson

Improving Grades by Overcoming Procrastination

When report cards are evaluated by students and their parents/guardians, quite often they want better results. Typically, a renewed game plan is created and everyone sets out to work harder by studying more, getting homework done or writing better notes. These goals are set but time and again procrastination sets in! Procrastination is the act or habit of putting things off until later. We hear many reasons students procrastinate and avoid doing what they know is important for their ability to learn and get good grades.

There are a variety of explanations that students give as to why they procrastinate. Some indicate that they plan on getting their work done but end up doing more fun or pleasurable things instead (i.e. play video games, chat on the computer, watch television, text message or hang out with their friends, etc.). Other students seem to avoid homework and studying because the task seems too overwhelming or they don't know where to start. Another explanation is disorganization or not having a clear picture of what needs to be completed. Lastly, some students tell us that the work seems irrelevant to them and/or their real lives.

If these reasons sound familiar, here are some helpful solutions. Most of these methods may also be applied to tasks, such as, filling out applications to colleges, getting a job, household chores and cleaning up their rooms as well!

Plan to have fun. If a student is dreading the “thought” of doing his/her school work, what typically happens is that the student avoids or puts off the unenjoyable task (homework, studying) and heads for the more pleasurable ones (i.e. video games, texting or hanging with friends, computer, etc.). Consequently, time slips by and then the work never gets done or is rushed and done poorly. The ideal solution to this occurrence is to plan to do the less pleasurable tasks first and reward oneself with the more enjoyable things. The successful method of thinking is to

“plan for the fun.” Make the fun the focus of your time. Make a commitment to getting the work done so that you have the time for doing what one enjoys. For example, if your child loves to play video games, emphasize that after getting homework/studying done, then he/she gets to have fun/play.

Break down the work load and time into chunks. If school work is too overwhelming to a student then an appropriate solution is to break the work and the study time into “chunks.” Most teachers already do this for students; however, often the student does not realize this. Parents can help by assisting them in breaking the work down to more manageable “chunks” and/or time periods. For example, if a student has 50 math problems to do for homework, instead of trying to sit down and finish all 50 at once, break them up into sets of 10-15. Then plan on finishing a chunk, take a break, and then finish another chunk and so forth. The same chunking can be done based on time. Have the student pick an amount of time 15-20 minutes, for example, that they feel they can sit and concentrate on homework or studying. Allowing them to choose the block of time is important, and using a “timer” will help to prevent them from watching the clock and just work. Allow the student to select the free time as well.

“You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

Get organized and visualize the finished product. When a student can visualize or see the end result of their work, it really helps them to get into the process. If a student is not able to visualize the final product, they must get help first to better understand what is expected. Make sure they have thoroughly understood what the teacher has assigned. If they do not have a clear vision, then it is essential to seek out the information, if not from the teacher or “schoolnotes,” then from another student in the class.

Next, is getting and staying organized. Students need to write down all assignments for every class in the agenda/assignment book. Students can also organize their home as homework at the end of the day. With an organized locker, students can easily collect the books and notebooks that are needed for that day's assignments or studying. Imagine how it will feel to be organized and to have a system.

Finding relevance in homework. The best argument for students who complain that homework and school work is not relevant to them is for students to realize that the adolescent years are preparation for the real world. Adults know that school properly teaches the basics of Math, Science, History, English, etc. but also, and almost as important, are the habits that one establishes during their teen years. These habits lay the foundation for a

books, notebooks and papers into a logical sequence. Also organizing their lockers according to their daily school schedule helps with remembering what they need to take productive, healthy, successful life. Adults can explain to their students that in any aspect of life (career, work, owning a house, etc) there will be tasks they like and those they do not like. Students need to understand the correlation between performing well in school and being reliable, consistent, and productive in life and being able to cope with the drudgery of tasks that are not particularly fun or interesting. Parents, teachers and counselors can easily help a student to find the relevance to students' future in every type of homework or school assignment, but sometimes the more important "lesson" is in learning how to cope with the challenges of education and not always be so preoccupied with finding relevance. In other words, if there's homework "just do it!"

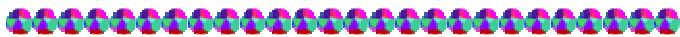
SPRING NEWS!

The **Sophomore/Junior post secondary parent** night, held on April 6, 2009, was well attended, and the speakers from Principia NP presented information on "College Funding." Additionally, the guidance counselors reviewed the many resources available in the college search selection and funding process. If you need further information on this program or any guidance on the post secondary school process, feel free to contact your student's counselor or the presenters from Principia NP at 908-400-1363 or info@principianp.com. Also, each family is entitled to a copy of The ABC's of College Planning Book; see your school counselor for a copy of this valuable resource for the entire college/post secondary process.

Any juniors planning on visiting colleges are encouraged to take an unofficial transcript. While visiting a college, students can ask admissions officers or campus representatives whether their "numbers," SATs, GPA, and class rank make the college a reach, realistic or safety school. Students can request an unofficial transcript from the Guidance Office.

Another valuable resource that is effective for finding college money based on a students' academic record and test scores is: <http://www.meritaid.com/media/20InsiderStrategies.pdf>

Summer opportunities. Summer courses, job and volunteer opportunities, internship and enrichment programs are all posted on the bulletin boards just outside the Guidance Department.



The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (**NJSIAA**) **eligibility requirements** for participation in high school sports are the following:

Fall and Winter Sports

Grade 9-----No credit requirements

Grade 10, 11, 12-----Student must have earned 27.5 credits from previous school year

Spring

All grades-----Students must have earned 13.75 credits the 1st semester

Registration forms for local **summer school** programs are available in Guidance. Each student must see their individual counselor on the last day of school (June 22, 2009) to have accurate information about their summer school needs/requirements.

Student/athletes interested in playing in a sport in college need to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. All information can

be found at <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter>. Information on appropriate core courses and eligibility requirements can be viewed at this website.

Schedule changes can be made until August 20, 2009. Guidance Counselors are available intermittently throughout the summer; they can be reached by phone or email.

All male, U.S. citizens, 18 years or older, need to register for the Selective Service. Register at www.sss.gov to be eligible for financial aid under Title IV of the Higher Education Act.

“They’re Just Being a Teenager... Right?” is a program being offered by Chilton Memorial Hospital. This *free* program, on May 18, 2009 from 7-8:30 PM, is for parents who have concerns about their teenager’s behavior/moods and will review the signs and symptoms of depression. For further information or to register call Lauren Schuitema.

Congratulations!! 2009 Acceptances

The Butler High School Guidance Department is pleased to announce and express congratulations to the students receiving acceptances to a multitude of post-secondary schools. The following list consists of acceptances as reported by seniors to the Guidance office.

ALBRIGHT COLLEGE
BERDAN INSTITUTE
BINGHAMPTON COLLEGE
BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
CALDWELL COLLEGE
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE
COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ST. ROSE
COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS
DOMICIAN COLLEGE
DREW UNIVERSITY
EAST STROUDSBURG UNIVERSITY OF PA
EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
EASTERN UNIVERSITY
EMBRY RIDDLE
FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY
FAIRMOUNT COLLEGE
FELICIAN COLLEGE
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE
GREEN MOUNTAIN COLLEGE
HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY
HOWARD UNIVERSITY

JAMES MADISON COLLEGE
JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY
KEAN UNIVERSITY
KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
LAFAYETTE COLLEGE
LOCK HAVEN UNIVERSITY
LYCOMING COLLEGE
MANHATTAN UNIVERSITY
MESSIAH COLLEGE
MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY
MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY
MOUNT ST. MARY COLLEGE
NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
PASSAIC COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
PHILADELPHIA BIBLICAL UNIVERSITY
RAMAPO COLLEGE
RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE
RIDER COLLEGE
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
ST. ELIZABETH COLLEGE

ST. JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY
ST. VINCENT'S COLLEGE
STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY
SUNY BINGHAMPTON
SUNY COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCE & FORESTRY
THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
TOWSON UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
URSINUS COLLEGE
VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
WESTERN NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE
WILKES UNIVERSITY
WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY
WYO TECH
YORK COLLEGE