



Mark T. Sheehan High School—Wallingford, Connecticut

Principal's Newsletter

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Evening Conferences December 15

Evening Conferences: Conferences provide an excellent opportunity for parents to both give and receive information. Teachers are able to provide information on how a student is performing in a specific class, and parents can share information that will help teachers better understand their son/daughter. This shared information can be used to determine what teachers and parents can both do to enhance a student's classroom experience and performance.

Parents have the opportunity to meet with teachers and school counselors on Tuesday, December 15 (snow date, December 22) from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Students are encouraged to accompany their parents to these conferences so they can be part of the discussion.

To schedule an appointment, contact the school at 203-294-5905 starting December 7 through December 11 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. This will give us the opportunity to provide teachers with information regarding their appointment schedules. Since teachers will only have 12 appointments scheduled for 15 minutes each, parents may not be able to speak to each of their son's/daughter's teachers.

Second Interim: The second interim ends on December 9, 2015. Parents/guardians are reminded to visit the PowerSchool Portal to view their son's/daughter's academic progress to date. After entering your personal username and password, click on the "grades and attendance" icon to obtain current grade information by course.



Coffee Talks

This month, Sheehan High School introduces "Coffee Talks," which are informal gatherings of parents and school personnel. These gatherings will be held periodically throughout the school year and provide an opportunity for informal conversations on current educational topics. The first Coffee Talk is Thursday, December 10, with the school administration. The gathering will be held in the Drama Lecture Room from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. and will focus on mastery-based learning. The School Counseling Department will host the second Coffee Talk on Monday, December 21. It will be held in the Drama Lecture Room from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. Conversation will center on the new SAT, which previews this March 2016.

**Mark T. Sheehan High School
provides a challenging and supportive environment
that inspires students to be
critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible,
contributing members of a dynamic global society.**

Upcoming Events:

- *Financial Aid Night, Dec. 1, 6:30 p.m., Lyman Hall*
- *PTAC, Dec. 3, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., LMC*
- *Advisory Schedule, Dec. 4*
- *Fall Sports Awards Night, Dec. 8, 7:00 p.m., Auditorium (snow date Dec. 17)*
- *Second Interim Ends, Dec. 9*
- *Marching Band & Color Guard Banquet, Dec. 9, 7:00 p.m., Cafe A*
- *Advisory Schedule, Dec. 11*
- *Evening Conferences, Dec. 15 (snow date, Dec. 22), by appointment*
- *Half Day Schedule, Dec. 16*
- *Sheehan Blood Drive, Dec. 18*
- *Winter Concert, Dec. 18, 7:00 p.m., Auditorium (snow date, Dec. 20)*
- *Vacation, Dec. 23, Early Dismissal; Dec. 24 to Jan. 1, School Closed*
- *School Reopens for Students, Jan. 4*
- *PTAC, Jan. 7, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., LMC*



Financial Aid Information and Special Workshop

Paying for college tuition today is obviously a major investment for both students and parents. Counselors encourage parents and students to complete a FAFSA form (Free Application for Student Aid) to discover if you are within financial guidelines established by the federal government. Like the lottery, you can't receive federal funds if you don't play, or in this case complete the FAFSA form. The FAFSA application is free and is submitted electronically after January 1 of a student's senior year by using the web site www.fafsa.ed.gov.

The FAFSA asks for financial information from both parents and students. A Student Aid Report, or SAR, will be returned to the home address after seven weeks. A copy of the SAR will also be shared with the Financial Aid office of each college identified on the FAFSA application. The federal formula will be applied to the financial information supplied on the FAFSA and will de-

termine if you are eligible for student aid. This is only the beginning, as in most cases the full cost of college will not be completely covered. Today, parents and students must often consider applying for a loan from a local financial institution to cover the remaining cost of college. Lending institutions can provide parents with information on the various types of loans that are available.

For high achieving students, many colleges offer merit based scholarship incentives for incoming freshmen. This is where a student's academic efforts can pay off for families. In many cases various incentives are offered to applicants who maintain a Grade Point Average of 3.2 or higher. Seek out this information on individual college web sites under freshmen achievement awards. Often students who are accepted to colleges and meet their qualifying GPA threshold will discover this type merit opportunity in their individual acceptance letters.

WORKSHOP: In order to help parents better understand their college funding options, Lewis DeLuca, Coordinator of Student Financial Literacy & Advising, Southern Connecticut State University, will speak to parents and students about college funding strategies on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 (snow date 12/3). The workshop will be held in the Lyman Hall Auditorium beginning at 6:30 p.m. Parents and students of all grade levels will find the information presented at this workshop of value and are strongly encouraged to attend.

HELPFUL WEBSITE: www.finaid.org is a great resource to learn about financial aid. There is information about the paperwork involved in applying for financial aid, and even a place where you can email your questions to a financial aid advisor. There is also a section on the most common mistakes people make when filling out the FAFSA.

Current SAT vs The New SAT

Current SAT

Final Administration: January 2016
171 questions; 3 hours, 45 minutes
Sections: Mathematics, Critical Reading, Writing (Essay Required)
Tests general reasoning skills
Scores: Range from 600–2400
Points subtracted for incorrect answers

The New SAT

First Administration: March 2016
154 questions; 3 hours (3 hours, 50 minutes with essay)
Sections: Math, Evidence-based Reading and Writing (Essay Optional)
Measures skills and knowledge students need for college and beyond
Scores: Range from 400–1600
No penalty for guessing

Of Special Note: If a student-athlete takes the current SAT before March 2016 and then takes the redesigned SAT at a later date, the NCAA Eligibility Center will not combine section scores from the current and redesigned SAT when determining the student-athlete's initial eligibility. Because the redesigned SAT varies in design and measures different academic concepts than the current SAT, a numerical score on the current test may not be equivalent to the same numerical score on the redesigned test.

To Learn More: Visit sat.org/new or #NewSAT

Sheehan PTAC

The next meeting of the Sheehan Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) is Thursday, December 3. The meeting will be held in the Library Media Center located on the school's lower level beginning at 6:30 p.m. The school budget, internships, and career exploration will be discussed among other topics. All parents are invited to attend.



Cancellation Info: Should school be cancelled due to inclement weather, the day that is missed will be run. For example, if school is closed on an "A" day, when students return to school, the "A" day schedule will be followed.