

SVHS Parent Survival Guide



How to help your student successfully get through high school

9th/10th grade years:

- ✓ **When meeting with the counselor for the four-year planning, seriously look at what courses you should take during your high school years as preparation for your area of interest. 2005-06 Freshmen enter high school with a higher number of required classes to meet graduation requirements.**
- ✓ **Many courses have prerequisites that must be taken first. Some courses require teacher approval. Read the school catalogue.**
- ✓ **Your ninth grade year begins your journey toward graduation, meeting qualified admission standards or being named a Kansas Scholar. Understand the different requirements for each of these. These requirements and how they compare to our graduation requirements can be found within the first few pages of the course catalogue. You may also ask the counselor for more information.**
- ✓ **Your grade point average and units toward graduation begin at the end of the first semester of the Freshman year and build cumulatively at the end of each of the eight semesters.**
- ✓ **NHI's (homework not turned in) are a very quick route to making unsatisfactory grades. Remember that you may turn in work one day late and only receive a 30% grade dock on daily work (this does not include long-term projects...they are due on the assigned date).**
- ✓ **If you are an athlete with good potential, you will need to take a certain selection of courses while in high school to meet Division I or II NCAA guidelines. You will want to check with the guidance counselor about the NCAA Clearinghouse requirements well in advance of your senior year to be sure to get them covered.**
- ✓ **The material you place, sites you visit and e-mails you send on the school issued laptop can be, and are, monitored by school personnel. The school has an obligation to make sure you are using this technology appropriately.**

- ✓ Meeting assignment deadlines takes planning and staying current on daily work. The laptops have many features including calendar, "stickies" and other applications that can help you organize yourself for success. See the laptop coordinator for hints on how to better utilize the power of this machine.
- ✓ A student doesn't fail on the last day of the semester... the failing happens over what you do during the entire grading period. Keep up with your grades at least weekly on PowerSchool.
- ✓ Semester grades are final grades that go on your high school transcript/nine week grades are reporting grades to you and your parent. The grading period is continuous in each semester. We have only two true grading periods, first and second semester.
- ✓ Eligibility to participate in sports and activities that occur away from our building is based on successfully passing classes as determined by district and activity association guidelines. These guidelines can be found in the student handbook.
- ✓ Activity periods are times that allow you to return to your teacher to clarify assignments, ask questions, and receive additional help.
- ✓ Enrolling in a course at the area technical school is only finalized after you go to the school and pay the program fee. No spot for you is saved until this fee is paid. In most cases, you must be prepared to do this at the end of your sophomore year.
- ✓ If you want to go to our area technical school during your Junior/Senior years, you will need to have four blocks of time available for their part of your school day...failure of classes stands in the way of having this option available to you.
- ✓ Begin keeping a notebook listing all of your school involvements/community involvements/volunteer activities so that you will have an up-to-date list when you need this information for scholarship/admission issues during your Senior year.
- ✓ The PLAN test you take in the Sophomore year is a good indication of what you will do on the ACT your Junior or Senior year...take advantage of this testing provided by our school district.

- ✓ If you have questions about course offerings, requirement, career questions, etc. seek out the counselor to get answers. You may also download the course guide from the principal's website.
- ✓ There is a step-by-step process and requirements that must be met to attempt to quiz out of a high school course. These steps are detailed in the student handbook.
- ✓ Some Sophomores take the PSAT/NMSQT during the Sophomore year as practice for the Junior year testing.

Junior year:

- ☞ This is the year to take the PSAT/NMSQT to be eligible for consideration for National Merit scholarship funds.
- ☞ If interested in a military academy, the Spring of the Junior year is a good time to begin this process.
- ☞ Some Technical School courses must be started in the Junior year...others may be started at either the Junior or Senior year level...others may be started only at the Senior year. Remember, you do not have a spot saved for you at the technical school until you pay the program fee at the technical school.
- ☞ The NCAA Clearinghouse paperwork is usually completed immediately following the Junior year.
- ☞ Many student take their first ACT or SAT test in February or April of the Junior year. Since you may take the ACT exam as many times as you would like, we encourage you to take this at least once your Junior year. Our research shows that many students do better the second time around.
- ☞ ACT is the accepted test for most colleges/universities in the Midwest. The SAT is often preferred for schools located in the coastal states. Information about test registration can be obtained in the counselor's office. There are also many programs that will assist in preparing you for these exams. Seek them out...they do help.
- ☞ Career planning isn't a one step process. Begin to think about where your interest lie and utilize the counselor and materials available in the counseling office or library for career investigation. The "Choices" program that was used during your sophomore year is a good place to start in relation to aptitudes and interests.
- ☞ Being a teacher aide becomes a possibility during the Junior year. Aides are selected from students who are not in graduation difficulties.
- ☞ Hutchinson Community College/SVHS dual credit classes are available during the Junior year.

- ☞ If you have a strong interest in an area of study that we are unable to offer here at SVHS, the online elective course offers the possibility of finding either a high school level or college level course.
- ☞ The Junior year is a good time to start thinking about post high school training. Start investigating schools that offer programs of study in your area of interest. You have two college days as a Junior. It is in your best interest to begin thinking about how to use them wisely.
- ☞ Begin taking advantage of college and military representative visits/College Night at McPherson/Visit Days hosted by colleges to help you in making a wise choice of where you wish to continue your training after high school. Announcements are made daily about these in PowerSchool.
- ☞ The courses you take in high school provide you with the knowledge to be successful on college admission testing and being successful at the college level. Studies show that those who follow a college prep curriculum score significantly higher on ACT/SAT testing and are more successful once they enter college.
- ☞ Continued participation in athletic/activities events is dependent upon your successful passing of classes as set by the district and activities association.

Senior Year:

- ☞ **Begin the application process to be admitted to a college/university /technical school early in the Senior year. Invitations to some special events/ scholarship opportunities go to those who are admitted to universities as early as October 1.**
- ☞ **The October/December ACT testing dates are important dates to have a test score you can be happy with as you are considered for scholarships.**
- ☞ **Early in the first week of October is the last date you may submit materials to congressmen for consideration for a military academy nomination.**
- ☞ **Deadlines are deadlines whether it be registering for a test or meeting a scholarship deadline...always plan ahead!**
- ☞ **Watch out for scams! Invitations to financial aid nights hosted at area hotels/motels should be evaluated very closely. Read the Scam Report on the counselor web site.**
- ☞ **Early submission of applications for admission/scholarships/housing will increase your chances of receiving a positive outcome. Many local scholarships have traditionally had small numbers of applicants. These groups, clubs, and service organizations want to give money to young people. Take the initiative and apply. Most of these applications are not too lengthy.**
- ☞ **Work releases are available during the Senior year but may not be awarded to work with immediate family.**
- ☞ **Hutchinson Community College/SVHS dual credit classes continue to be an option during the Senior year.**
- ☞ **If you take courses through HCC or the Bethany Bridge Program, remember to send that school's transcript to the school you plan to attend following graduation.**
- ☞ **Request transcripts be sent to schools you are applying to for admission. Make sure you have all transcript requests for the end of**

your Senior year taken care of by late May. The office generally closes in mid-June.

- ☞ If you haven't done NCAA Clearinghouse paperwork and hope to participate in an athletic program at Div. I or II, do so early in the Senior year.
- ☞ Invite your parents to attend the September Senior Parent Night and the December Financial Aid Night hosted by our school.
- ☞ Attend the College Night at McPherson High School held in late October/early November.
- ☞ Always read the daily announcements and senior newsletters from the counseling office. Refer to the Counselor link at the SVHS site.
- ☞ If in question on whether or not you should apply for a specific scholarship, ask the counselor - the answer will many times be "yes".
- ☞ Apply for all scholarships where you meet the minimum qualification.
- ☞ Utilize Senior Visit Days, representative visits to SVHS, and individually schedule Senior visits to get a better look at the school/schools you are considering.
- ☞ Many students raise their scores when they take the ACT or SAT a second time.
- ☞ There is nothing wrong with applying to more than one school and then making a decision at a later date.
- ☞ Organize your files so you know what paperwork you have done for each school/scholarship.
- ☞ Utilize online registration for testing, downloading college applications or submitting these applications, clearinghouse paperwork, and scholarship applications.
- ☞ You haven't graduated until you have been certified that you have met all requirements...keep working up to graduation day.

- ⇒ Do not think of the Senior year as a year to take an easier schedule...your Senior year is your final preparation in being ready for your next steps.

- ⇒ Remember that graduation honors are calculated at the end of the third nine weeks. You CANNOT take a semester off if this is important to you. Why work hard for three and one-half years only to have this deserved honor slip away during the last semester?