

# **Class of 2013 – Planning your future begins now!**

As you begin your junior year of high school, it is very important that you start planning for your future. Whether your goal is to attend a state university, a community college, a local technical school, a private college, or if it is still undecided, you'll have to make some important decisions about your future education (ACT, 2010).

## **Mark your calendars!!**

Comal ISD College Fair – September 28, 2011 from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. at Smithson Valley High School

## **Do I need to take the PSAT as a Junior?**

Yes!! The PSAT for juniors is for scholarship purposes if you qualify as a National Merit Scholar, as well as for preparation for the SAT. The test will be given at CHS on Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. The fee is \$14 and you need to sign up with Mrs. Ricker in the counseling center by September 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **When should I take the ACT or SAT?**

Waiting until your senior year to take the ACT or SAT may be too late, so I recommend testing the tests the Spring of your Junior year. I also recommend taking BOTH tests.

## **What is the difference between the ACT and SAT?**

### **SNAPSHOT: SAT**

The SAT is the most widely taken college entrance examination. The SAT tests critical thinking and problem solving skills and is designed to test your skill level in math, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The test is divided into seven sections: 3 math, 3 verbal, and 1 experimental section. The math and verbal sections each have their own distinct question types, including quantitative comparisons, sentence completions, grid-ins, and more. The experimental section, used by the test developer to try out new questions, is not scored and can be either math or verbal. You will not know which section is experimental.

The SAT is scored on scale of 200-800 for both the math and verbal sections. The College Board sets the average for all test takers at 500 for each. A perfect score on the SAT is 1600.

### **SNAPSHOT: ACT**

The ACT is a content based test and is designed to test your skill levels in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. The writing portion has an optional essay, that I strongly encourage you to take. On the test, you will have 2 hours and 55 minutes to complete a variety of multiple choice questions divided into four sections, one for each tested subject area. The English, reading, and science sections each include several reading passages with anywhere from 5 to 15 questions per passage. The math section includes 60 questions each with 5 possible answer choices.

You will actually receive 12 separate scores on the ACT: 1 composite, 4 subject scores, and 7 subscores. However the composite or scaled score is the most important. It ranges from 1-36 for each test, averaged together for a composite score of 1-36. The range for the writing test is 2-12.

**Test Preparation:**

[www.actstudent.org/sampletest](http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest)

[www.actstudent.org/onlineprep](http://www.actstudent.org/onlineprep)

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

<http://student.education2020.com> (Username is the first three letters of students first name followed by the first five letters of their second name. Password is students ID number (must be 6 digits long).

**Additional college planning websites:**

[www.cafecollege.org](http://www.cafecollege.org)

[www.everychanceeverytexan.org](http://www.everychanceeverytexan.org)

[www.collegeforalltexans.com](http://www.collegeforalltexans.com)

[www.GenTX.org](http://www.GenTX.org)

[www.actstudent.org/college](http://www.actstudent.org/college) or [www.actstudent.org/wwm](http://www.actstudent.org/wwm)

[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)

[www.findyourcollegetours.com](http://www.findyourcollegetours.com)

<http://txccrs.org>

[www.careercruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com) (Username: CHS Password: comal)

[www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

**I intend to play sports in college. What do I have to do?**

You must register with the NCAA clearinghouse at the beginning of your junior year. Complete the online registration at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)

**How can I get upcoming information?**

Sign up for the Canyon High school listserv at <http://www.comalisd.org/ListServ/Listserv.asp>

Sign up for the College and Career Center listserv at <http://wp.comalisd.org/chscollegecareercenter>

I will continue to make class visits to all at least once each nine weeks. I will post any information I pass out to students at [http://www.comalisd.org/Schools/CHS/CHS\\_Counselors.asp](http://www.comalisd.org/Schools/CHS/CHS_Counselors.asp). In addition, a counselor will be available in the cafeteria during both lunches to answer any questions during the school year. This is the start of a very important phase of your life, so please feel free to contact me with any questions!

Mrs. Gamez

Counselor-Class of 2013

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