

Dear Students and Parents.

Welcome (Back) to another school year at Capital High School. As we get rolling this fall, the counseling department wanted to get some important information out to all parents and students to better assist you as you go through the Fall semester.

Schedule Changes for Semester 1

8/31/17 The 1st day of the new semester- Students wanting to make schedule changes for the new semester have until 9/14/17 to get them signed off and finalized. All changes require teacher and parent signatures. Changing of instructors only is not permitted by the counseling department. In addition, going less than 6 credit bearing classes must be approved by Mrs. Kidder.

Changes in our Department

We are welcoming 2 new additions to our counseling department this year. Mrs. Joscelyn Crane is our new guidance secretary and Ms. Rebecca Troianos is our new career counselor. We are excited to have them join our department and they will be the first welcoming faces you will see.

Scheduling Appointments

With our changes, we have also decided to make some changes for appointments in hopes to have students miss less class time and spend less time waiting to see their counselor. After the 14th (last day for schedule changes) students or parents that want to see their counselor, we ask that you make an appointment with Mrs. Crane. She will then write the student a pass to get out of class at an appropriate time. Of course, if there is a student in crisis we will adjust to help them, but for everything else we are going to try and have it be scheduled appointments.

If you want to schedule an appointment, you can call your students counselor or Mrs. Crane @ 324-2604 or email jcrane@helenaschools.org

This will be a big change and will take a little getting used to, but we hope it will allow us to not rush through our time with you and be able to provide a better service to you.

Dual Credit Time Line

Students in Dual Credit Courses (College Writing, Technical Writing, Speech, Technical Math, College Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Accounting, MS Word, MS Excel, Welding 3, Calc-Linear Algebra, Computer Science) will be getting their registration forms on Tuesday. (9/5/17)

They are due to the counseling department on this Wednesday, September 13th. The reps from Helena College will be in the counseling department from 7:30-2:30 to collect the registration papers. If they are not turned in during this window, students will have to deliver them to Helena College by 9/15. Bills will be sent out 9/18 and will be due to Helena College 9/28. Items that miss the deadlines will not be accepted.

If your student does not have the appropriate ACT scores for the college credit portion of the dual credit course, they will need to call 447-6939 to schedule an appointment to take the Accuplacer test at Helena College. For more info, please check out

http://www.helenacollege.edu/student_support_center/advising/accuplacer.aspx

Senior College Fair

On September 25th, the MPSEOC will be hosting a college fair at Carroll College from 1:30-3:30. Seniors will not be excused early to attend, with it being a PLC Monday, all students are out of school by 2:30. If you want your child to attend earlier, please call the attendance office to excuse them.

We will be registering students for the college fair on September 19th and 20th. For more information regarding the college fair and which schools will be there, please go to <http://www.montanacolleges.com/college-fairs.html>

Senior Credit Checks/Senior Career Cruising

The counseling department will be meeting with all seniors 2 times at the beginning of the school year to make sure they have everything they need for graduation and to start the post-secondary planning process.

September 19th and 20th in their American Government classes. We will be doing credit checks, giving them their transcript ordering information, as well as signing them up for the college fair

September 25th and 26th in their English 4 classes, we will be doing a career cruising lesson, where we will focus on narrowing down the college search as well as scholarship searches, and post-secondary planning for all paths.

Senior Parent Night

We will be hosting a Senior Parent night in the Auditorium on Wednesday, September 27th from 6-7 PM. We will be presenting a lot of information about scholarships, college admissions, FAFSA. We will also be having a presentation by Marti Johnson of Reach Higher Montana about the changed FAFSA process.

If you are unable to attend the parent night, we will be posting the presentations after the fact on our website in the counseling department's page. <http://chs.helenaschools.org/departments/counseling/>

Suicide Prevention at CHS

September 10th through the 16th is National Suicide Prevention Week and we will be having special announcements, this will all build up to the NAMI walk, Sunday September 24th at Memorial Park. We hope to see you there.

The counseling departments at both high schools have worked hard to help develop a comprehensive suicide prevention and mental health awareness program.

YAM (Youth Aware of Mental health)- Freshman year program run through the Frosh PE courses presented by outside mental health professionals. Some completed in the fall, the rest are finishing this month. For more info on YAM, please contact Mrs. Meldrum or Joslyn Davidson at jdavidson@helenaschools.org

QPR (Question, Persuade, Respond)- Sophomore program run through the Health classes by health teachers. The focus of this program is for students to reach out for help if they feel their friend is at risk.

SOS (Signs of Suicide)- Junior year program, presented in US History classes by counselors. SOS was presented throughout the past 3 weeks, and the focus was to try to learn how to recognize the signs of

mental health struggles in themselves or peers and to reach out for help. Students learned ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell)

Career Cruising for other grades

The counseling department has completed career cruising lessons with the Freshman, Sophomore, and Senior classes.

The focuses at each level are

Freshman Year- Learning Styles Inventory, Career Matchmaker(looking at interests and careers that match them (Tentatively scheduled for November 20/21)

Sophomore year- Reality Check- Looking at the lifestyle students want and the salaries needed to provide that lifestyle. We then researched careers and the salaries and checked to see if they would match up with the lifestyle plan. (Tentatively scheduled for December 20/21)

Junior Year- Post Secondary High School planning. We will spend the period working with them on their post high school plans. (Tentatively scheduled for April 12/13)

College Application Week/FAFSA Help

We will once again be hosting College Application week at CHS. We will have dedicated application support as well as other fun activities. This year it is November 6-10th and during this time all Montana schools have either deferred or waived their application fees.

Also during this week will be offering a FAFSA workshop (11/8) at Helena High, where you can come in and get help filling out the FAFSA with experts from Helena College, Carroll College, and Reach Higher Montana. This is extremely important due to changes that went into effect last year that moves the timeline up to the fall. The FAFSA window now opens October 1st and most colleges have their priority deadlines for things like grants set at December 1st.

College Reps and College Visits

As you are starting to narrow down your college choices we have some opportunities for you to meet with reps from various colleges around the region. Keep up with our Facebook page and webpage as well as daily announcements to see when they are coming in.

Also, you can have 2 absences marked as school related if you are using those days to tour colleges. See your counselor for more information.

Career Center Evening Hours

The 1st Wednesday of every month, we keep our career center open from 5-7 to offer help on things like college applications, scholarship searches, job searches, career matching, etc.

We do that so parents can come in after work and get help with our career counselor. Also you can call and set up an appointment with Ms. Troianos.

PSAT for Juniors

Capital High will be hosting the PSAT Test October 11th at the Civic Center and students will sign up through the book keeper between September 18th to October 6th. We should know the cost soon, typically its in the 10 to 15 range. The PSAT is a practice SAT exam that also is a qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Program. For more info on the PSAT please go to:

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10>

ACT for Juniors

Once again, CHS will be facilitating the ACT test for all juniors on Tuesday, March 20th . You will receive several communications from CHS regarding this, but we wanted to make sure it is on your calendar.

We have several ACT Prep opportunities upcoming, you should receive an orange flier about this as well this spring.

Scholarship Information

Remember to keep checking our scholarship page; it is updated at least weekly. There are currently over 50 scholarships listed on the page.

<http://chs.helenaschools.org/departments/college-career-center/scholarship-opportunities/>

As always, you can also follow our social media accounts for up to date information.

<https://twitter.com/BruinCounseling>

<https://www.facebook.com/BruinCounseling/>

Contact Info

If you need to contact your counselor, you can at

A-D students- Mr. Robinson jrobinson@helenaschools.org

E-K Students- Mrs. Meldrum dmeldrum@helenaschools.org

L-Ri Students- Ms. Bawden jbawden@helenaschools.org

Ro-Z Students- Mr. Ferlicka cferlicka@helenaschools.org

We hope this helps you navigate this fall and all the big things happening.

All the best, CHS Counseling Department