



Commack High School Counseling Center Newsletter

August/September 2019

Dates to Remember:

August 28

Freshman Parent Orientation
7:00pm

August 29

Freshman Student
Orientation
10:30am

August 27—29

College Application
Summer Camp

[Register on Naviance](#)

August 30

Commack's First
College Essay Workshop
[Register on Naviance](#)

September 4

School Opens and
Wilson Tech Begins

September 10

Senior College Planning Night
7:00pm

September 18

Financial Aid / Scholarship
Night
7:00pm

September 21

Free SAT or ACT Practice Test
8:45am

September 26

Open House, 7:00pm

High School Counselors return on Monday, August 26

High School Schedules will be available on the portal on the afternoon of 8/26.

Schedule changes will only be accommodated beginning the 2nd week of school.

- Schedule Change Form will be sent to students' homeroom

Remember, schedules will not be adjusted to:

- Change teachers
- Change lunch periods (unless supported by medical documentation)
- Change to more convenient and/or desirable periods
- Group friends together in the same class
- Add a Study Hall or free period

Freshman Orientation Program: Thursday, August 29

- Students report at 10:30 am to the High School Auditorium
- Students will hear from Principal Boritz, their 9th grade transition counselor and student leaders on school related activities, programs and important information
- Second part of the program will be a tour of the building, including classrooms and locker assignments
- Students will take part in a Club Fair, to learn about offerings at CHS!

Parents are invited the evening of August 28th, to meet with administration, faculty and the 9th grade Transition Counselors:

Mrs. Julie Russo and Mrs. Courtney Meyer



Back to School Tips for High School Students

1. *You don't need ONE study space.*

A well-stocked desk in a quiet place at home is key, but sometimes you need variety. Coffee shops, libraries, parks, or even just moving to the kitchen table will give you a change of scenery which can prompt your brain to retain information better.

2. *Track more than HW in your school planner.*

Keeping a calendar helps you plan ahead—but you've got more going on than just homework assignments! Make sure you're marking your extracurricular, work, and social commitments, too. (Tests, band practice, away games, SAT dates, half-days and holidays are just a few examples of reminders for your planner.)

3. *Start small.*

If you've got a big assignment looming, like a research paper, stay motivated by completing a piece of the project every few days. Write one paragraph each night. Or, do 5 algebra problems from your problem set at a time, and then take a break.

4. *School supplies (alone) don't make you organized.*

Come up with a system and keep to it. Do you keep one big binder for all your classes with color-coded tabs? Or do you prefer to keep separate notebooks and a folder for handouts? Keep the system simple—if it's too fancy or complicated, you are less likely to keep it up everyday.

5. *Get into a routine.*

When will you make the time to do your homework every day? Find the time of day that works best for you (this can change day-to-day, depending on your schedule!), and make a plan to hit the books.

6. *Learn how to create a distraction-free zone.*

A study on workplace distractions found that it takes workers an average of 25 minutes to return to what they were working on pre-interruption. Try turning off your phone notifications or blocking Twitter (temporarily) on your computer so you can concentrate on the homework tasks at hand.

7. *Get real.*

When you're looking at the homework you have to get done tonight, be realistic about how long things *actually* take. Gauging that reading a history chapter will take an hour and writing a response will take another 30 minutes will help you plan how you spend your time.

8. *Use class time wisely.*

Is your teacher finished lecturing, but you still have 10 minutes of class left? Get a jump on your chemistry homework while it's still fresh in your mind. Or use the time to ask your teacher about concepts that were fuzzy the first time.

9. *Look over your notes each night to make sure you've got it.*

Fill in details, edit the parts that don't make sense, and star or highlight the bits of information that you know are most important. Interacting with your notes will help you remember them.

10. *Study a little every day.*

Cramming Spanish vocabulary for a quiz might work in the short-term, but when it comes time to study for mid-terms, you'll be back at square 1. You might remember the vocab list long enough to ace the quiz, but reviewing the terms later will help you store them for the long haul.

11. *Don't let a bad grade keep you down.*

A rough start to the semester doesn't have to sink your GPA. Take proactive steps by checking your grades regularly online and getting a tutor if you need one.

12. *Make a friend in every class.*

Find a few people you can contact from each of your classes if you have a homework question or had to miss class (and do the same for them!). Then when it comes time to study for exams, you'll already have a study group.

[Click here](#) for full article from the Princeton Review

Common Application Summer Camps—August 27, 28 & 29

- Students must register on Naviance
- Students will have the opportunity to complete their FERPA agreement, and connect their Naviance and Commonapp accounts. - Two important parts of the application process

Essay Writing Workshop—August 30

- Students must register on Naviance
- College representatives will read and give feedback on student essay(s). **Students must bring complete, typed essays for review.**

[Kindness Goes a Long Way—NY Times article about letters of recommendation](#)

Senior College Planning Night: Tuesday, September 10th at 7:00pm

- Students and parents are invited to review information on the college admissions process, deadlines and Commack's procedures.
- Seniors will be attending *Senior Class Meetings* the following week where they will be receiving the same information in a small group setting. Schedules will be posted outside the Counseling Center. *Students are asked to review the transcript sent home via mail in August and inform the Counseling Center of any issues.*

[Click here](#) for video on 19 College Application Tips

Colleges Visiting Commack High School

- Between the months of September through December, colleges and universities visit Commack High School to share information on admissions and academic programs. A full list of scheduled appointments is viewable on students' Naviance accounts.
- Students must register through their Naviance account and stop into the Counseling Center to obtain a pass to present to their teacher, should a meeting occur during a class period. Students are expected to make up any missed work and notify their teacher in advance.

College Counseling Help Desk—Located in the Counseling Center

[Click here](#) to see the help desk days and times. A counselor will be readily available to answer questions about:

- ⇒ Submitting applications
- ⇒ Sending ACT/SAT scores
- ⇒ Navigating Naviance
- ⇒ Office application procedures



Fall SAT® and ACT® Courses At Commack High School

Don't delay—reserve your seat in a fall course today!

Go to PRINCETONREVIEW.COM/COMMACKHS or call 800-2Review (800-273-8439) to enroll.

SAT Ultimate Course #441074

Session	Date	Time
Test 1	Sat, Sept 14th	9:00am - 1:00pm
Class 1	Tue, Sept 17th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 2	Tue, Sept 24th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Test 2	Sat, Sept 28th	9:00am - 1:00pm
Class 3	Tue, Oct 8th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 4	Tue, Oct 15th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Test 3	Sat, Oct 19th	9:00am - 1:00pm
Class 5	Tue, Oct 22nd	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 6	Tue, Oct 29th	6:30pm - 9:30pm

ACT Ultimate Course #441718

Session	Date	Time
Test 1	Sat, Oct 19th	9:00am - 1:00pm
Class 1	Mon, Oct 21st	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 2	Mon, Oct 28th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 3	Mon, Nov 4th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Test 2	Sat, Nov 16th	9:00am - 1:00pm
Class 4	Mon, Nov 18th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 5	Mon, Nov 25th	6:30pm - 9:30pm
Test 3	Mon, Dec 2nd	5:30pm - 9:30pm
Class 6	Mon, Dec 9th	6:30pm - 9:30pm

Courses include

- 18 hours of instruction
- 3 proctored practice tests
- Review and practice books
- Extensive online resources
- Personalized study plan

~~\$899~~

\$629

Commack HS students receive 30%
off courses! Use promo code
LIPARTNER to save.*

Partnership has benefits! 30% course discount applies to all Princeton Review locations and both in-person and LiveOnline options. Go to PRINCETONREVIEW.COM/COMMACKHS for more schedules.

Looking for a private tutor? Commack HS students receive a 10% discount off tutoring packages! Call 800-2Review to reserve your tutor now—availability is limited.

*Must use promo code at the time of enrollment in order to receive discount; discount cannot be combined with any other offer (except the referral program). SAT is a trademark registered and owned by the College Board, which is not affiliated with and does not endorse this product. ACT is a registered trademark of ACT, Inc. The Princeton Review is not affiliated with Princeton University.

Upcoming College Programs:

- Nassau Counselors' College Fair
Sunday, September 15: SUNY Old Westbury 11am – 3pm
- Long Island National College Fair
Sunday, September 15: Nassau Coliseum 11am – 3pm
- Western Suffolk Counselors' College Fair
Tuesday, October 29: Huntington Hilton 5:30-8:30pm



[Click here](#) for 100+ questions to ask when speaking with a college representative or on a college campus!

College Board AP Updates—Here's what you and your students need to know:

Early Registration is Mandatory!

Different from past years, students in AP classes will be required to register for AP Exams this fall. **Registration will open on Monday, October 14th and be open through Friday, November 1st.** Students will register through the Commack website. More information to be shared when we return to school. Please note:

- The cost per exam is \$98
- After November 1st, the late fee will be an additional \$20 per exam.
- After November 7th, the late fee will be an additional \$65 per exam.
- AP Exams will be given from May 4th — May 15th
- Students receiving free/reduced lunch should speak with their counselor or Mr. Ayres, AP Coordinator, about reduced fees.

To prepare for the coming school year, please encourage your children to sign up for a College Board account. All College Board programs are connected through one account, so if your student created one for the PSAT, SAT, or College Board Opportunity Scholarships, they're all set. They'll just need to have their username/password available.

Please email AP Coordinator, Mr. Ayres, with questions: bayres@commack.k12.ny.us

Financial Aid Information and Scholarship Night:

Wednesday, September 18th at 7:00pm

Join the Counseling staff for an informative evening on the following and more!

- Prior-Prior Year (PPY)
- In's and Out's of the FAFSA
- NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)
- Excelsior Scholarship
- CSS Profile
- Scholarship procedures



Career Café—October 16th at Commack High School

All ninth grade students will take part in this career exploration opportunity. Local business owners and professionals will be coming to Commack High School to share information on their respective careers and to answer student questions. More information to follow in September.

Save the date and time for 7:30am on 10/16.

Any parent volunteers who would like to present to CHS students, please contact:

Mrs. Diane Nelson, dnelson@commack.k12.ny.us

What is the Community Service & Involvement Program (CSIP)?

- Graduation Requirement
 - 15 Points per year in grades 9, 10, 11
 - 20 Points in grade 12
- School and Community Involvement
- Builds Character and Relationships



PSAT: Wednesday, October 16th

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), co-sponsored by the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, is an important **first step toward college**. Test results and their accompanying analysis are valuable tools that can help prepare students for the SAT and education opportunities beyond high school.

All students in grades 10 and 11 will test during the school day. **No preparation or registration is necessary**, but students can learn more information by [clicking here](#).

Students are encouraged to use Method Test Prep located in their Castle Learning account.

Updates to Commack's Grading Procedures

- Report cards are posted to the Parent Portal four times each year, following the end of the marking period. No hard copy report cards are mailed home to families.
- Full Year Course Model for Marking Period Weighting:

MP1	22%
MP2	22%
MP3	22% (Includes Midterm)
MP4	22%
Exams Grade	12% (Regents or Final)

- A student's final grade for a full-year course shall be the numerical average of all marking period grades (88%), plus the final exam grade or Regents exam grade, which will be averaged in with the weight of 12%. A student's midterm exam grade will count as 25% of the third marking period final grade. This weighting of 25% will be uniform across all departments and courses which administer a midterm exam.
- The following will be used to determine if a student qualifies for the **Growth Incentive**:
If a student shows a minimum of 5% growth or more from their midterm exam grade to final exam or Regents exam grade, one (1) point will be added to the student's final course grade.
- More information on grading procedures can be found by [clicking here](#), in the Curriculum Guide.

FREE SAT or ACT Practice Test

Offered by The Princeton Review

Who: Open to Commack High School Students in grades 10 and 11

What: Practice SAT or ACT Test

When: Saturday, September 21, 2019, 9:00am—12:15pm

(Students should arrive by 8:45am)

Where: Commack High School—Room assignments will be posted

Why: Practice tests are a great opportunity for students to get realistic practice with the types of questions asked on actual exams, without having their score count.

Students must register by the deadline: Friday, September 13, 2019

[Click here](#) or call 1-800-273-8439

Horizons Counseling and Education Center

161 E. Main Street, Smithtown

[Click here](#) for website

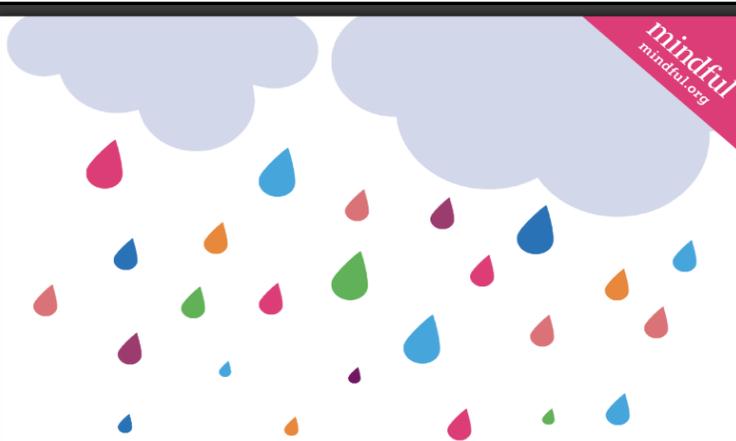


- ⇒ Horizons works alongside Commack High School to provide students with education, prevention and treatment based services to develop the coping skills and insights needed throughout various challenges in adolescence.
- ⇒ Prevention services include evidenced based programs in hopes to offer students and the community with resources and supports. Topics may include: mindfulness, substance use education, alternative coping skills, refusal skills, decision making skills as well as development of self-esteem and personal strengths.

Questions about Horizons at CHS? Contact Mrs. Radziul, Social Worker, at kradziul@commack.k12.ny.us

- ⇒ Onsite at Horizons, the need of the individual is evaluated through an assessment process and programs are tailored to fit their personal needs in a safe and empathetic environment. Onsite adolescent programs include individual and group counseling as well as a psycho-educational topic based groups.

Questions about Horizons in Smithtown? Contact Horizons staff at 631-360-7578.



Feeling Overwhelmed? Remember "RAIN"

Four steps to stop being so hard on ourselves.

R

Recognize what's going on

A

Allow the experience to be there, just as it is

I

Investigate with kindness

N

Natural awareness, which comes from not identifying with the experience

