



## Commack High School Counseling Center Newsletter

Fall 2023

### Dates to Remember:

**August 25**

College Review Essay Workshop

**August 28**

Freshmen Orientation

**August 28 & 29**

College Application Workshops

**September 5**

First Day of Classes

**September 20**

Senior College Planning Night

**September 21 & 22**

Senior Class Meetings

**October 14**

PSAT at Commack High School

**October 7**

Homecoming

**October 17, Pds. 2 & 3**

Mini College Fair

Register in Naviance

**November 6**

SAT ACT All You Need to Know

**November 14**

Financial Aid &  
Scholarship Night

**December 12**

Junior College Planning Night

**SENIORS:**

[Click here](#) for the monthly  
Scholarship Bulletins

**Welcome Back** to Commack High School and the 2023-24 academic year! We are excited to welcome you back!

Commack High School has a tremendous support system for students and families. We are here to support all students as they transition back so they can experience academic and social success.

**Course Schedules for the 2023-24 year will be available on the Parent Portal on August 24th.**

- ⇒ Schedule changes are not permitted until after the first week of classes—September 11th
- ⇒ The best way to get scheduling questions answered is to email your school counselor directly
- ⇒ **As always, we cannot honor requests for change of teacher, lunch period or friend groupings**

All counselor emails can be found [here](#)

**PSAT: Saturday, October 14th @ 7:45am**

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is offered to all 10th and 11th grade students. Learn more by visiting the [College Board website](#).

**The PSAT will be DIGITAL for all students this year. Save-the-date for a Virtual Workshop on changes to the test and more: Tuesday, October 3rd.**

A letter will be emailed and mailed to all parents/guardians in September with detailed information.

[Click here](#) to register for the PSAT exam. The deadline to register is Friday, October 6th.

## Freshmen Orientation at Commack High School

**Monday, August 28th at 6:00pm**

- Students and their parents/guardians will be welcomed in the Auditorium by our administrative team.
- Students will be able to tour the building, find their locker, their classes, and other locations.
- Student volunteers, teachers, counselors and mental health professionals will be here to welcome families.
- **There are no formal “Supply Lists” in high school. Teachers will share supply needs with students on the first day of school.**

### CHS Grade Level Assemblies

Each grade level will have a 2 period assembly on the date below. One period will be with the building administrative team and student life, and one period will be in a smaller group with students’ individual counselors.

Monday, September 11	Grade 12
Tuesday, September 12	Grade 11
Wednesday, September 13	Grade 10
Thursday, September 14	Grade 9

Each assembly will highlight the exciting events and important information students need to know. More information on locations will be shared by classroom teachers.

**THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS: It takes hard work to guarantee your college application stands out.** Make it rise to the top of the pile by becoming familiar with the application process and getting organized. A lot of moving parts go into applying to college—tests, essays, recommendation letters, transcripts—and each element has a deadline attached. Make careful note of deadlines so you don’t miss them!

[CLICK HERE for a great website with tips on college, military enlistment, military careers, degrees and jobs in demand.](#)

### College Application Workshops

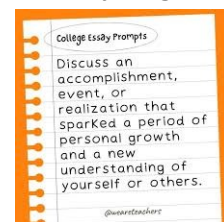
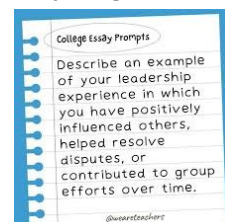
Register in Naviance if you haven’t done so already!

#### Essay Review Workshop

Friday, August 25th

#### Common Application Workshops

Monday, August 28th and Tuesday, August 29th



## Senior College Planning Night: Wednesday, September 20th at 7:00pm

Please note this event is Virtual! Links to your school counselors' zoom are on the website.

- 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 two days where they will be receiving similar information in a small group setting. Schedules will be posted outside the Counseling Center.

**It is important that all seniors attend their individual session!**

- *Students are asked to review the transcript mailed home in August and inform the Counseling Center of any issues.*
- Don't forget to remind teachers of earliest deadline dates for applications and to invite them to upload their letters in Naviance



## The College Processing is digital!

Complete and submit [this form](#) at least 20 school days prior to earliest college deadline

## Colleges Visits at 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 will receive a pass in their Commack email prior to the scheduled visit. Students must notify their teacher in advance and are expected to make up any missed work.
- If a student is unable to attend, each college hosts their own private information sessions and tours, and students should register on the college website.

## College Counseling Help Desk—New location in the Senior Cafeteria!

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

- ⇒ The Common Application
- ⇒ Submitting applications
- ⇒ Sending ACT/SAT scores
- ⇒ Navigating Naviance
- ⇒ Office application procedures
- ⇒ Essays/Supplements and more



**FREE Virtual Practice Test offered by:  
The Princeton Review  
Saturday, November 18th - 9:00am**

- Students can choose an SAT or an ACT.
- A great way to find out how you may score on the SAT or ACT without having the scores count.
- Multiple timing options available for students with approved testing accommodations.
- Students will receive immediate scores and a comprehensive score report upon completing test.

**SAT vs. ACT All You Need to Know  
Monday, November 14th**

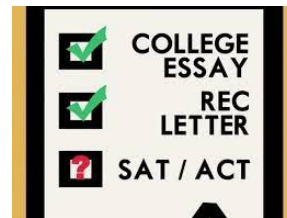
**Registration information to follow  
for these virtual events**

**Test-Optional Policies**

Many colleges and universities continue to have Test-Optional policies for this admissions cycle.

Visit [FairTest.org](https://FairTest.org) for more information

- SUNY will continue as Test-Optional for the fall 2024 admission cycle. Students will decide whether or not to include scores for admission.
- Test-Optional is NOT for all majors! Some colleges require test scores for merit based scholarships.



**Financial Aid Information and  
Scholarship Night  
Tuesday, November 14th at 7:00pm  
at Commack High School**

Begin filing the FAFSA on December 1st

Families will learn about:

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



**Junior College Planning Night  
Tuesday, December 12th**

Items for Juniors to know until then:

- ⇒ Register for the PSAT, qualifier National Merit Scholarships.
- ⇒ [Click here](#) for upcoming testing dates.
- ⇒ [Click here](#) for test prep opportunities through the Princeton Review.
- ⇒ Review the [Important Information for Juniors](#)
- ⇒ Use your Naviance account for college and career searches.



# Back to School Tips for High School Students

## 1. *Be patient with yourself and others this year.*

Just like you, your peers and teachers are getting back into a routine. Take breaks when you need, ask for help when you need, and understand that everyone will adapt at a different pace.

## 2. *You don't need ONE study space.*

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

## 3. *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, SAT dates, half-days and holidays are just a few examples of reminders for your planner.)

## 4. *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.

## 5. *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.

## 6. *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.

## 7. *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 tasks at hand.

## 8. *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.

## 9. *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.

## 10. *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.

## 11. *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 long term exams, 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.

## 12. *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 asking your teacher for extra help if you need it.