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September 24, 2019

Dear Parents of Seniors:

I'm sure in many cases it is hard to believe, but your child's senior year is finally upon us! Over the next few weeks, I will meet with each senior individually to review important timelines and look at what their current plans for life after graduation entail. We will review their current transcript including current rank. After we meet I will mail home a copy of the transcript and a quick review of our meeting.

Being a small school, it is also easy to partner with the parents to help them through this often challenging process. Please do not hesitate to call or email with any concerns. I am also willing to set up night or early morning appointments if it is more convenient to meet face to face at a time when school is not in session.

Here are a few reminders:

- Scholarship Searches – Some companies will offer to do a scholarship search for you or find the best college to fit your child's personality. These outfits are often times scams and have bilked hundreds of thousands of parents out of millions of dollars. You should never pay for any services to help with finding a college or scholarship. There are plenty of free services that we can show to your child. A good web site to use is www.fastweb.com.
- Application deadlines – Application deadlines vary from school to school but are important to adhere to. Most deadline will fall between January 15th and April 1st. It is generally a good idea to try to have your application completed 2-4 weeks before the deadline. If the student fills out a paper application it should be turned into the Guidance office at least two weeks prior to the deadline. Almost all applications are now done online. It is extremely important that if your child completes an online application that they let Mrs. Coon or myself know immediately so we can forward the transcript and letters of recommendation to the college.

- Letters of Recommendation – If your child is applying to a 4 – year college it is likely that they will need 2 to 3 letters of recommendation. I will be more than happy to write one for every senior and highlight their high school accomplishments. In addition, the student should have 2 more letters from a teacher, coach, employer, or other individual that can accurately speak to the child being ready for college. It is a good idea for the student to ask for these letters as soon as possible. It is hard to expect somebody to write a letter of recommendation a day or two before the deadline. Seniors that have letters of recommendation should file them with the Guidance office so we can make copies and forward them to the schools to which they apply.
- Financial Aid – It is important to remember that financial aid for the 2020-2021 school year will be based on income for the 2018 year. Financial aid forms (FAFSA) can now be completed as early as October 1st. To learn more about the financial aid process, visit www.fafsa.ed.gov
- The guidance department link on the Madison Central website contains updated information on scholarships as they come into school as well as links to almost everything you will need during the college selection and application process. This includes links to both the Common Application website and SUNY application website and information on upcoming SAT test dates (if still needed).

This should be an exciting time for you and your child. However, it can definitely also be stressful. Please feel free to contact me with any and all questions. Hopefully, by working closely together, we can make this experience a positive one. If you need to reach me please call the school, extension 206, or email me at mlee@madisoncentralny.org.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Lee
School Counselor