

AMHERST - PELHAM *Regional* SCHOOL DISTRICT
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

Amherst Regional High School
21 Mattoon Street
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002
(413) 362-1700 FAX (413) 549-9704

Mark Jackson, Principal
Marta Guevara, Assistant Principal
Annie Leonard, Assistant Principal

January 2008

Dear Juniors and Parents/Guardians of Juniors:

The spring of junior year is a good time to begin to explore the many post-high school educational and vocational opportunities that are available. By reading printed materials and websites, networking with college students and professionals, and visiting post-secondary institutions, you can get a lot of information about different options, and begin to develop your preferences. Students grow and change a lot between their junior year and April of the senior year, when most college decisions are made. It is not uncommon for a student to make a choice that wasn't even on the radar screen in their junior year. Juniors should research and visit many kinds of institutions and should keep several kinds of options open when creating their ultimate lists.

Guidance staff will periodically be distributing information to help you keep up-to-date on things and to let you know of upcoming events. Materials will generally be distributed in classrooms and posted on the arps.org/hs/offices/guidance/ website. Students are advised to share this information with parents/guardians. Phyllis Lehrer has kindly agreed to highlight contents of notices and to make additional announcements for us in the Amherst Bulletin whenever appropriate. We encourage parents/guardians to keep an eye out for these announcements in the "School Days" section of the paper.

Whatever a student's post-graduate intentions, we believe that planning is essential and parental involvement is most beneficial. We will do everything possible to assist students with their post-graduate planning, and to keep students and Parents/guardians informed of opportunities, events and deadlines during the year. Please keep in mind, however, that the ultimate responsibility for learning about and taking advantage of opportunities and resources and for meeting deadlines rests with the student. The enclosed materials will help you get started. Pay close attention to the testing registration deadlines and workshop information (listed on the last page of this mailing). Note that this year's March SAT date is much earlier than usual.

We strongly encourage juniors and their parents/guardians to take full advantage of the many resources available from the school counseling staff. Call on us; we're here to help! We subscribe to the comprehensive internet resource for career and college exploration called Choices Planner. All ARHS students can use it free from any computer with internet access. Students who took the PSAT this year also have free access to the College Board's "My College QuickStart" program, which contains MyRoad, a web-based program similar to the Choices Planner. Look for more information about both of these resources later in this packet.

Juniors are encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor and with Myra Ross, the college advisor, during the spring term to discuss post-high school options. Appointments with the college advisor can be made **after** the February vacation break. An online questionnaire must be completed and submitted by the student before this appointment can be scheduled. Find it at www.arps.org/hs/juniors/. Students make their own

college advising appointments, in person, with Mrs. Tracy in the Guidance Office. Parents/guardians are welcome to attend these counseling meetings. Post-high school options can also be discussed **at any time** with Guidance Counselors.

Next year, the Senior Year Option program will again be available to all seniors. Via the SYO, students who wish to participate in an internship or community service should see Ms. Balzano to plan their program. Students interested in taking a college class or participating in a work study should see their guidance counselor.

This handbook contains important information for juniors including admission testing deadlines and suggestions for test preparation, a list of useful websites, general suggestions for juniors, information about Choices Planner and My College QuickStart, an outline of the ARHS college advising program, and more. The handbook is also posted on the ARHS website. We will distribute or send additional materials in the future if it is thought to be useful. Students will receive important additional handouts in science classes within the next few weeks and next fall on the first day of school. Please share all materials with Parents/guardians. If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call us.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bardsley, Department Chair
(413) 362-1721

Ericka Alschuler, Counselor (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12 S-Z)
(413) 362-1781

Kelly Cortis, Counselor (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12, A-C)
(413) 362-1716

Alessandra Mucci-Ramos, Counselor (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12, D-He)
(413) 362-1782

Na'imah Muhammad, Counselor (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12, Me-R)
(413) 362-1724

Myra Ross, College Advisor
(413) 362-1715

Derek Shea, Counselor (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12, Hi-Mc)
(413) 362-1712