

## Junior Year Post-High School Planning

It is now the time that Juniors need to begin some serious thinking about what they plan to be doing after they graduate from high school. We have more than 40 years of combined experience working with high school students (probably close to 12,000 students in all). So, hopefully, we have at least some valuable information to pass on to you.

We usually start by pointing out that in reality there are only three things that students can do after they graduate.

- **GO DIRECTLY TO WORK**
- **GO DIRECTLY TO SOME FORM OF EDUCATION**  
(which we will call “college”)
- **JOIN A BRANCH OF THE MILITARY**  
(really a form of work and education)

You need to think about, discuss (with parents, guidance counselors, friends or any one else who helps with decision making) and determine which of these is your first or most likely choice. You may wish to list the possibilities in order of your preference.

If **WORK** is your first choice, you need to determine if you are qualified for a full-time job with adequate pay and benefits. Your Guidance Counselor or Ms. Wiggin in the Career Center can help with this. Doing a career search such as Choices or Bridges Explorer in the Career Center would be helpful. You may also wish to take an ASVAB test (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, a career exploration tool).

If **COLLEGE** is your first choice, you need to begin your college search and make sure you are taking the correct courses. Make a plan about College Bound Testing. See the form, “ESSENTIALS OF COLLEGE BOUND TESTING FOR PHS STUDENTS”. Develop a list of colleges to which you might apply in the fall of your senior year. In doing this, you will learn a lot of new acronyms, abbreviations and definitions that you may not have heard before: SAT, ACT, COMMON APPLICATION, FAFSA, CSS-PROFILE, CHOICES, NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE, HIGH SCHOOL CODE, CEEB CODE, Secondary School Report, Transcript, Transcript Release Form, EFC, SAR, NHHEAF... and others too numerous to mention. If you have questions about any of these new terms, be sure to refer to the “Guidance Glossary of Abbreviations and Titles” or check in Guidance.

If **MILITARY** enlistment is your first choice, you need to contact the various recruiters and learn all you can from them. You will definitely need to take an ASVAB test. Your Guidance Counselor can also provide you with decision-making help.

**REMEMBER!** While the college search and application process will require some significant decision making and occasional stressful times, it should **not** be a major source of anxiety and family stress. If you or your parents are feeling overwhelmed or particularly stressed out, please make an appointment to see one or both of us, and we almost always can provide helpful and de-stressing information.

**COURSE SELECTION FOR SENIOR YEAR!** Make sure you have all the courses you need for graduation! Make sure you are taking appropriate courses to attain your future goals. **Senior year grades are very important!** Work hard to get the best grades you can.

**DO NOT!** drop an extra curricular activity, this includes sports, that you have been involved with for 2 or 3 years without a discussion with one or both of us.

**IN ADDITION:** You will need to start doing some information gathering. Visit the College Center in the Guidance Office. Check out the resources at the PHS Library or your local Library, the Career Center (for the Choices program, resume help, and job shadowing). Local Bookstores and on-line resources also provide helpful information. *(Refer to the list of websites as starters. Some of these are links on the PHS Website.)* You should also ask people you know for their thoughts and information, obviously your guidance counselor, but also teachers, parents, current seniors, college students, people with whom you work, friends, relatives, etc. You will need to filter all this advice and information through your own thought process. This is another stage where we can be quite helpful to you (and your parents).

**“Spring College Night at PHS”** Wednesday, April 16, 2008. Be sure to mark your family calendars **NOW!**

**“Destination College”**, a free College Planning Program for juniors and parents will be held at Southern New Hampshire University on Saturday, March 29, 2008. Registration information available at [www.destinationcollege.org](http://www.destinationcollege.org) or ask in the Guidance Office.

There will be many other information sessions and materials to be distributed. If you or your parents do not get e-mail from Mrs.Garneau, please send her a message at [jgarneau@portsmouth.k12.nh.us](mailto:jgarneau@portsmouth.k12.nh.us) so your address can be added to the mailing list.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to stop in the Guidance Office. If you have a number of questions or know you will need some discussion time, please schedule an appointment.

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**Jamie Garneau, Guidance Counselor 2009**  
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