The Oakton High School (OHS) pyramid includes OHS and all of the elementary and middle schools that feed into OHS. The school counselors collaborate on programs and transitions and have chosen this newsletter format to share information for all grade levels (K-12) with parents, students, and staff.

In this first issue we have chosen “Organization” as it relates to a variety of topics because it is a concern we have across all grade levels. We want to provide you with helpful resources and information, and we hope you see the school counseling department at your school as a valuable, problem-solving resource. Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

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Moving to a New School or Grade

Going to middle school or high school can be scary for any student, as well as parents. A new environment with unfamiliar faces and more responsibility makes transitions like this seem overwhelming. While this time can be stressful, it can also be fun! Here is a checklist of activities and resources designed to assist students and parents through the process:

Plan to attend events like these in order to learn more:
- Student Visits/Tours of their future school
- Curriculum Nights (parent/family information nights)
- Curriculum Fair (during student day)
- Counselor visits to Elementary and Middle schools (students only)
- Summer Orientation Programs such as Jumpstart (OHS) and Survivor (LJMS)
- August Open Houses (Cougar Kick-Off at OHS, Open House at other schools)

Course Selection sheets are due in February or March at all schools. It is important to register for your courses and electives at this time, otherwise you may not be assigned to the classes of your choice. Some schools may send you a list of your course selections in May. Take the time to look at the classes you picked to make sure your schedule is correct by the beginning of June. Please contact your School Counselor with questions or to make corrections to your courses for next year.
Selecting Courses with a Vision

Listed below is important information to consider when choosing between advanced- and regular-level core classes:

Advanced level classes may be in order if the following are in place:
- You are internally/intrinsically motivated and self-directed
- You are naturally curious
- You have a passion for a particular subject
- You welcome a challenge even when difficulties arise
- The extra time commitment fits into your schedule
- Advanced academic class placement supports your long-term academic/career goals

By committing to these courses, remember that the pace is fast and that extensive reading and class involvement are expected.

K-12 College Financial Planning

Tuesday, April 2, 2013 from 7pm to 9pm. The Oakton Pyramid is coordinating with experts who will present three separate sessions on the same night at Oakton High School. The workshop for the elementary and middle school level will cover saving, planning and coursework. The workshop for 9th through 11th grades will address resources, scholarships and career planning. Parents of seniors and seniors themselves will look at the FAFSA and award packets and next steps. Bring your tax forms and questions. Spanish interpreters and child care will be provided.

Mission and Vision

The Fairfax County School Counseling Program provides comprehensive and sequential services to all students in grades K-12. The primary goal of the school counseling program is to support the success of all students by providing academic, college and career, and personal/social counseling. School counselors help build a foundation for learning while supporting students’ achievement and post-secondary goals.

Our vision is for every student to graduate from Fairfax County Public Schools, college- and career-ready.

The mission of the Fairfax County Public Schools’ school counseling programs is to work with students, parents and guardians, school staff, and community members to provide academic, college and career, personal and social counseling services that are comprehensive and developmentally appropriate. Services are provided to maximize the academic achievement of all students and promote the necessary skills, attitudes, and beliefs for all students to graduate prepared to manage future challenges effectively in a 21st century society.