

Senior Update: January 2013

Greetings seniors! Your final semester of high school is officially underway. By the time you read this, you will have completed 630 of your 720 days as a high school student. Of the 630 days you have spent as a high school student, I am sure that you have enjoyed several days full of laughter, others filled with tears, and some with just the frustration that being in high school may present. Over the course of the next five months, the choices you make will have a serious impact on your future. Make every possible effort to soak up all the opportunities you've been given as a Dawson-Bryant student. Apply for scholarships, enjoy school dances, and help your fellow students along the way. May 26, 2013 is creeping closer every day! Make the most of your last ninety days in high school because the real world waits for no one!

January To-Do List

Early action decisions begin to arrive. Some of you should begin receiving correspondence from major state schools if you have not received a decision yet.
Submit remaining college applications. This allows us to narrow our focus for scholarships. Otherwise, we must prepare for everywhere.
Follow up on outstanding applications to make sure they are complete.
Complete the FAFSA and other financial aid applications. Several of your school-sponsored applications will have early February deadlines.
Continue researching and completing scholarship applications.
Complete special talent portfolios if you are applying to special arts related schools.
Attend DBHS Financial Aid Workshop Night with your parents.
Check out your second semester courses. Can you squeeze in a more rigorous math, science, or social studies class. At the end of the day, these courses look more appetizing than an internship on a transcript.

ACT: Due to the timing of the February ACT, you will have your scores in time to meet financial deadlines at all local universities except Shawnee State. If you are interested in taking the ACT a first or final time, please see me as soon as possible. The registration deadline for the February test is January 11th. All students have access to ACT Online Test Prep accounts, and I can guide you to strong free web-based ACT resources as well.

FAFSA: All college bound and career technical students should complete the FAFSA for 2013/2014. The FAFSA went live on January 1, 2013. You must fill out the FAFSA in order to receive federal grant money, apply for federal loan programs, receive a federal work study, or receive institutional scholarships. It is best to complete your FAFSA as soon as your parent(s) file their 2012 taxes. If they do not receive all of their tax information by the end of January, go ahead and base your responses on the 2011 tax return. We can always amend the data. The FAFSA is required even if your family does not qualify for federal financial aid.

FAFSA Pin Number: The most efficient way to complete the FAFSA is online at fafsa.gov. At the end of the FAFSA, you and your parent must electronically sign this document. You will utilize a self-selected

pin number to complete this process. I recommend selecting your pin before you begin the FAFSA filing process. You and your parent can generate a FAFSA pin at www.pin.ed.gov/PINWebApp/pinindex.jsp. This will make the process at financial aid night move more quickly as well.

FAFSA Workshop: On Tuesday, January 29, 2013, Dawson-Bryant High School will offer a free FAFSA Workshop for DBHS seniors and their parents. Jacki Adkins from Ohio University Southern will share a brief financial aid presentation before assisting families with the completion of the FAFSA. Students and parents should bring their 2012 tax information to this meeting if they would like assistance completing the FAFSA. Light refreshments will be served as well.

Financial Aid Update: The maximum amount for the Pell Grant has increased to \$5,635 for the 2013-2014 School Year. Financial aid eligibility will be determined by the completion of the FAFSA. It is imperative to watch the financial aid deadlines for the universities you are considering. Shawnee has an early February deadline while Marshall, Morehead State, and Ohio University have early March deadlines. Do not miss out on scholarship money because you did not submit your paperwork in time.

Scholarships: The only way you can guarantee that you will not get any scholarship money is to not apply for any scholarships. Several local and state scholarships will be coming available in the next few months. I pass every scholarship that crosses my desk off to all members of the senior class. If you need help completing the scholarship applications, I am available before, during, and after school. Helping seniors with scholarships is my passion, and I would love to help each of you secure as much money as possible for college. This is a great time to ask your parents' employers if they offer a scholarship as well as local churches and clubs. Several of you have a parent or step parent whose employer provides generous scholarship money. Also, please check out your own employer as many restaurant and retail shops have scholarship programs for employees.

Debt: It is nearly inevitable that all of you will incur some debt as you pursue a college education. However, education debt is a positive. Educational debt is an investment into your future. With that being said, do not go hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt, but realize that a \$40,000 debt is quite manageable when you consider that most of you will graduate college earning at least \$40,000 a year. I am confident that you can successfully fulfill that financial obligation while getting established in your career. Do not be afraid of college debt!

Please come and update me as your future plans change and develop. I've loved meeting with each of you throughout the first semester, and I look forward to doing the same during the second semester. I have a scholarship goal of \$1 Million dollars for your class, and I am confident that with an effort on scholarships we will far exceed this total. Please let me help you reach your future goals!

Mrs. Lemon ☺