

Seton Guidance Newsletter

December 2017

A Message from Mrs. Montavon:

Merry Christmas Greetings to each of you!

What an adventure it has been during this exciting ride through my first year at Seton. This semester is coming to an end and I have loved teaching in classrooms, dressing up on Halloween with the staff, helping students with schedule changes and other issues, cheering on ALL the classes during Spirit week, meeting with students and parents, watching our athletes practice and compete, reverently participating in the Christ our King procession and so much more! As I get to know the students, staff and families, I feel privileged to be with you in the present and am working to develop a strong school counseling program for the future.

This week the Today show highlighted the very real issue of Anxiety and Adolescents. Young people have so many challenges and temptations. May I encourage you to take some time to relax, talk and listen to each other over this Christmas break. Many of the students interviewed shared what a difference it made when their parents "really listened".

I wonder if you might be able to review and reflect over the Christmas break on how this semester has gone academically, socially and spiritually. As a family perhaps you can grab a cup of hot cocoa and a plate of Christmas cookies and read the Seton Guidance newsletter together. In this newsletter we hope you will find some helpful information for the present and also some things to think about and consider for the future. How powerful it would be if we as parents, could slow down and take the time to model active listening skills, and with open hearts and open ears, hear from our children how this semester has gone for them and listen to their hopes and dreams. Students, what would it be like if you really considered how much your parents love you and care for you, and how they want to guide and support you to become the amazing person God has created in you?

In the New Year ahead, my prayers for myself and for each of you is to follow these wise words of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, "The first end I propose in our daily walk is to do the will of God; secondly, to do it in the manner he wills it; and thirdly to do it because it is his will."

Peace be with you,

Mrs. Montavon
Guidance Director
Seton Jr/Sr High School



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SAT NATIONAL TEST SCHEDULE 2018

March 10, 2018
May 5, 2018
June 2, 2018

Register at least one month
prior at
www.collegeboard.org

ACT NATIONAL TEST SCHEDULE 2018

February 10, 2018
April 14, 2018

Register at least one month
prior at www.act.org

How to Get Good Grades (Part I):

❖ **Step One: Believe in yourself.** - In order for you to succeed, you have to believe in yourself and in your abilities. Here's a story to help illustrate this idea.

Two high school athletes are preparing to compete against each other. They are the same size, and they have about the same athletic abilities. Everyone assumes that it will be an exciting match. The first athlete runs out. He looks confident and says to himself, "I'm ready. I can do this." The second athlete appears. He slowly shuffles out with his head down and mutters to himself, "I'm gonna get killed." Two athletes, same size, same abilities... even before the competition begins, everyone knows who's going to win.

Whether you're an athlete preparing for competition or a student tackling a difficult subject, it's important that you believe in yourself!

❖ **Step Two: Be successful in class.** - Be in school every day, on time. When you miss school, you miss class presentations, notes, discussions, assignments, quizzes, and tests. Unless you have an extended illness or a serious health problem, you should miss no more than a few days of school a year. To get good grades, you must be in school every day!

Learn how to adapt to different teachers. In the classroom, the teachers are in charge and they make the rules. You might have one teacher who counts you tardy if you're not in your seat when the bell rings, and another teacher who considers you on time if you have one foot inside the door. It doesn't matter whether or not you agree with the first teacher's rule; it only matters that you are in your seat when the bell rings. Part of your education is to learn how to adapt to different sets of rules, personalities, and teaching styles.

Have all of your homework done. When you've done your homework, you get more out of the class, the material being taught makes more sense, and you can participate in discussion.

Be a good group member. Knowing how to work well in a group is a very important skill. Whether you're working on a school project, involved in an extracurricular activity, or working at a job, you need to be able to get along with the other people in the group.

Participate in class. Participating in class makes the class more interesting. It also helps keep your mind focused. Ask and answer questions, and get involved in class discussion.

Treat others with respect. Treat your teachers and classmates the same way that you want to be treated. Be polite, look at your teachers when they're speaking, and listen when others are talking.

Involve your parents. Ask a parent to read over a paper you have written, listen to a speech, or help you study for a test. You'll get better grades and your parents will see that you're really trying to do well in school.

Take responsibility for your grades. If you get a good grade on an assignment or test, be proud of your accomplishment. If you received a poor grade, don't make excuses. Take responsibility for your grade and then figure out how you can get a better grade next time.

❖ **Step Three: Take good notes.** - Be an active listener. When you're actively listening in class, you aren't just hearing the words the teacher is saying, you're also thinking about and trying to understand the information that's being presented. For example:

Kylie is listening to the radio while she's getting ready for school. The DJ plays several songs, and then he announces that he's going to play a new song by Kylie's favorite artist. As soon as she hears this, Kylie sits down next to the radio and listens carefully to the song. She tries to hear every word so that she can understand the meaning of the lyrics.

In this scene, Kylie went from passive listening to active listening.

Take notes to help you pay attention. Sometimes our minds wander in class, but when you take notes, however, your mind has something additional to do and you do not have time to think about anything else. Taking notes, therefore, helps you stay focused.

Go over your notes as soon as possible. While the information is still fresh in your mind, go over your notes and fill in spaces and rewrite anything that is confusing. Also, don't forget to get copies of notes and handouts if you are absent. (Woodburn Press 2013 - How to Get Good Grades)

How To Choose A College That's Right For You

Who are you and why are you going to college?

Start by examining your reasons for going to college. What are your abilities and strengths? What are your weaknesses? What do you want out of life? Are you socially self-sufficient or do you prefer familial support? Talk with your family, friends, teachers, priest and school counselor as you ask these questions. The people who know you best will be able to help you the most with these important issues.

Size matters.

... Most good liberal arts colleges have a population of fewer than 4,000 for a reason. College is a time to explore, and many students find a smaller community more conducive to internal exploration. What really matters, however, is not the number of people, but the people themselves and the kind of community in which you will learn. Many large universities have established smaller “honors colleges” for these reasons.

A name-brand college will not guarantee success.

Think about the people in your life who are happy and successful. Find out whether they went to college and, if so, where they attended. Often you'll find that success in life has less to do with your college choice and more to do with your personal qualities and traits coupled with the experiences and opportunities you will have in college. Employers and graduate schools are looking for outstanding skills and experience, not college pedigree. As you search for colleges, ask about student outcomes. You will find that many colleges you've never even heard of actually outperform the Ivies and “name brands”.

You don't need to pick a major yet.

Very few high school students have enough information or experience to choose a major. Most students need the variety and depth of college coursework to determine their interests and aptitudes. In fact, many college students change their minds two or three times before they settle on a major and still graduate in four years! Being “undecided” can be a good thing; it will leave you open to exploring more academic experiences.

Don't be scared by the stories.

If you pay attention to the headlines when it comes to college admissions, you might believe that not one is getting in anywhere! The truth is, the majority of the colleges and universities in this country admit more students than they reject. If you are worried about your chance for admission and are willing to explore beyond the very narrow band of highly selective colleges, you will find many options that could be a great fit for you.

You can afford to go to college.

If you assume that you cannot afford college based on the “sticker price,” you will miss out. It may be difficult for you to talk about money, but if you investigate all the options and ask for help and advice, you will find affordable choices. Online resources as well as financial aid workshops sponsored by high schools in your community are widely available to get you started. College and university financial aid websites offer useful information and links as well. Investigate early and ask for help.

The most important factor is fit.

Choosing a college because your friends are going there or because of where it ranks on a list does not take into account who you are and who you will become. College is a match to be made, not a prize to be won. Finding a good fit requires time and introspection. Visiting a college's website, learning about campus events and guest speakers, and getting in touch with current students and faculty are good ways to supplement a campus visit – or to decide if you even want to spend the time and money on a visit. When you do visit, take the time to sit in on classes, eat in the dining hall, and hang around in the student center or other high-traffic areas. Imagine yourself as part of the community. Talk to students. Ask if they would make the same college choice if they were going through the selection process again. (Adapted from Colleges That Change Lives (CTCL) Brochure 2017)

Above all, pray for guidance as you choose a college that is right for you!!

As the cold weather approaches, think summer opportunities!

Building Leaders for Advancing Science and Technology (BLAST) offers an exciting three-day summer experience designed to increase student interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). BLAST provides a residential opportunity to current 8th and 9th grade students with at least a C+ grade average and a desire to explore STEM opportunities. The program includes innovative hands-on sessions and demonstrations that seek to motivate and inspire students for STEM studies and careers. BLAST is free of charge for students who are selected to participate. The program is a partnership between Virginia Space Grant Consortium, Old Dominion University, the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Application deadline is February 5, 2018. For more information and to apply, visit www.blast.spacegrant.org.

Christendom College Summer Program – Students who will be entering their senior year of high school in the fall 2018 are welcome to register for the Summer 2018 programs. Summer 2018 will mark the 20th year of this very popular program, which boasts over 2,200 alumni since 1999. Each year, hundreds of high school students spend a week on campus and describe the week as one of the best weeks of their lives. Registration for the 2018 Experience Christendom Summer Program is now open. ***Seton students receive 50 percent off program cost!*** For more information, visit <http://www.christendom.edu/admissions/ecsp/>.

Hillsdale College is offering high school students a unique summer opportunity: the chance to study abroad while earning Hillsdale College credit. The two week programs include options for travel to England, France, or Italy. Because these programs result in college credit, students must apply for admission. For more information, visit <https://www.hillsdale.edu/academics/high-school-study/applying-to-high-school-study-abroad/>.

The Catholic University of America Summer Program – Light the World - Live Your Faith program is a chance for rising juniors and seniors to learn how faith and culture interact with everyday activities. Students spend one week in Washington, D.C., visiting sites like the U.S. Capitol, National Gallery of Art, and the Washington Nationals Stadium. Students witness daily how faith and culture intermingle by hearing from each locations' leaders, and how faith helped them achieve success in their particular field. Registration opens January 22, 2018. For more information, visit lighttheworldcua.org.

University of Dallas – High School Rome and Summer Programs – For over twenty years, the University of Dallas has provided high school students with rigorous and illuminating summer programs both on its Rome, Italy, and Irving, Texas, campuses. These programs offer college credit as well as an opportunity for a UD scholarship. Students who participate in an UD high school summer program in Rome and later enroll as an undergraduate student at the UD will be eligible to receive a \$4,000 college scholarship (\$1,000 per academic year). Registration by January 18, 2018, is encouraged to receive special discounts. To apply, visit <https://udallas.edu/travel/>.

**Please note – summer opportunities are not endorsements of the programs. They are shared as options for students and parents to carefully consider.*

**Official SAT Practice on
Khan Academy:**

**Personalized Practice, Anytime,
Anywhere, For Free!**

With Official SAT Practice on
Khan Academy, you will:

- **Get** a personalized plan tailored to your strengths and weaknesses based on your previous PSAT/NMSQT® or SAT results.
- **Hone** your skills with thousands of practice questions, hints, and video lessons.
- **Take** up to eight official full-length practice tests [online](#) or on [paper](#).
- **Receive** instant feedback and adaptive recommendations for what to practice.
- **Set** a personalized practice schedule to get reminders for when to practice.
- **Review** [expert tips and strategies](#) for the test.

Khan Academy makes SAT preparation available to anyone, anywhere, to help level the playing field so that every student has equal opportunity for college readiness.



**Lions Club of Virginia
presents The 2018 James
Bland Music Competition**

Saturday, February 10, 2018

2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**American Legion Post 10
9950 Cockrell Rd.**

Manassas, VA

**Categories: Vocalist and
Instrumentalists**

Open to all middle and high school students. Register by January 5, 2018 at <https://e-leoclub-house.org/sites/metz/project.php>.

**John F. Kennedy Profile in
Courage Essay Contest**

This contest is open to students in grades 9 through 12. Essays must describe an act of political courage by a U.S. elected official who served during or after 1917, the year John F. Kennedy was born. Essays can be no more than 1,000 words but must be a minimum of 700 words. The contest features a first place prize of \$10,000. **Essay must be submitted by January 4, 2018.** For more information, visit <https://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest.aspx>.

**GE-Reagan Foundation
Scholarship Program**

Honoring the legacy and character of our nation's 40th President, the GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship Program rewards college-bound students who demonstrate exemplary leadership, drive, integrity, and citizenship with

financial assistance to pursue higher education. Selected recipients receive a \$10,000 scholarship renewable for up to an additional three years. **Deadline to apply is January 4, 2018.** For more information and to apply, visit <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/education/scholarship-programs/ge-reagan-foundation-scholarship-program/>.

**National AG Day
Essay Contest**

Students in grades 9 through 12 are invited to enter the National AG Day essay and video contest, sponsored by the Agriculture Council of America. This year's theme is "How Will Agriculture Feed The World". The Council's objective is to celebrate agriculture and to help consumers better understand how farmers and the companies serving them produce abundant, healthy, nutritious and safe food that nourishes our families and consumers around the world. Winner receives \$1,000. Deadline is January 31, 2018. For more information, visit <https://www.agday.org/essay-contest>.

**Christmas Blessings to all our
Seton Families!!!**

