

# COUNSELOR UPDATE

Academics | Social-Emotional Learning | Career and College

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ 11/25 - Quarter 2 Midterm Ends
- ◆ 11/25 - Shadow Day: OLHMS/ Other Schools
- ◆ 11/26 - Shadow Day: Simmons Middle School
- ◆ 12/2 - Senior 1st Semester Final Exemption: Deadline for Service Hours
- ◆ 12/12 - Service Hours Due for Senior Early Graduates
- ◆ 12/18-12/20 - Final Exams
- ◆ 12/23-1/3 - Winter Break
- ◆ 1/6 - Semester 1 Ends
- ◆ 1/7 - Semester 2 Begins
- ◆ 1/8 Current Student Curriculum Night, 7pm
- ◆ 1/22 - Incoming Freshmen Curriculum Night, 7pm



## First Semester Ends Soon!

As we get closer to Winter Break, 1st semester is coming to an end. Semesters are important, as they are the time when grades are finalized for a student's permanent record. Here are some terms and reminders for the end of the semester.

**Quarter vs. Semester:** Each semester is split into two nine-week grading periods. These grading periods are referred to as "quarters." Quarter grades are useful to monitor grade progress. However, it is the student's overall semester grade that will go on a student's official transcript.

**Final Exams:** All students will take their 1st semester final exams on December 18th-20th. These exams are critical, as they can count up to 20% of your child's final semester grade in the class. Students should give themselves ample time to study for their finals, and they are strongly encouraged to meet with their teacher or counselor to learn more about studying tips.

## Upcoming Seminars

- ◆ 11/18-11/22 Freshmen Career Cluster Finder Results
- ◆ 11/25-11/26 Office Hours
- ◆ 12/2-12/6 Freshmen 4-Year Academic Planning
- ◆ 12/19-12/13 Sophomore Career Interest Profiler
- ◆ 12/17-12/21 Office Hours and Academic Check-Ins

**Credits:** Students need 44 credits of required coursework in order to graduate. Students earn one credit for every class that they pass with a D or higher each semester. For example, a student who takes 6 classes each semester can earn 12 credits over the course of the regular school year.

**GPA:** GPA stands for "Grade Point Average." Students are awarded grade points for every class that they pass with a D or higher at the semester. Students earn one point for a D, 2 points for a C, 3 points for a B, and 4 points for an A. Students in honors or AP classes earn extra points for their work in more rigorous classes. For example, a final semester grade of an A in an honors class earns 5 points. All points are averaged to calculate a student's GPA. This GPA is cumulative, meaning grades from each semester of a student's high school career are considered as a whole to determine their GPA. GPA is one of the major factors used by colleges to determine student enrollment and qualification for scholarship opportunities.

## College Week Review



The second week of September was a busy one at OLCCHS as we focused on exploring College & Career options. Various sessions were offered for students:

- Admissions Reps from Northern Michigan University, Indiana State University and College of St. Benedict & St.

## Trades & Apprenticeships

Go to [Union Apprenticeship Application Info](#) to view more information about apprenticeships in our area.

## College, Career, & Military Visits

Go to [goo.gl/5wdpM7](http://goo.gl/5wdpM7) to view our visit calendar!

## Service Learning Opportunities

Go to [www.olchs.org/students/service-learning/](http://www.olchs.org/students/service-learning/) to view our Service Learning Calendar and list of Pre-Approved Sites!

John's University hosted a Mock Admissions panel to help students see "behind the scenes" of the application process.

- The College & Career Fair hosted 45 reps from various college, career and military organizations.
- Mrs. Kenny and Mr. Krupa spoke to a packed Little Theater, presenting the basics of applying to college during the College 101 event.

- Mrs. Kenny hosted several workshops to help students create an FSA ID in preparation for the FAFSA opening October 1. These workshops will continue to be offered throughout the year, and seniors especially should plan to submit their FAFSA before leaving for Winter Break in order to meet deadlines.

Feedback about these events and suggestions for other activities are always welcomed. Please contact Kelly Kenny at 708-741-5853 or [kkenny@olchs.org](mailto:kkenny@olchs.org).

## QuestBridge Finalists

QuestBridge is a unique scholarship program with specific criteria that offers a full four-year college scholarship to highly selective colleges and universities. Every year OLCHS counselors nominate students. There were 5 students who met the qualifications and nominated. This year one highly qualified and talented student has been selected as a finalist. There were 14,926 applicants and only 5,842 were selected as finalists. Less than 10% of the finalists will be matched with one of the colleges and universities. On December 2nd, our finalist will learn if she has been matched to receive a full college scholarship to a highly selective college. Congratulations to Kendalyn Julkowski for making it to the final round.



## Spartan Plus Highlights & Upcoming Events

Spartan Plus kicked off the year with College Application and FAFSA/ FSA ID workshops, career, Moraine Valley office hours, and service-learning information sessions. The Media Center offered enrichments such as book club, poetry coffeehouse, and the Foreign Language department offered enrichments for Hispanic Heritage month. During the week of October 28<sup>th</sup>, students participated in Stress Relief sessions during Spartan Plus such as Therapy Dogs, Yoga, Mindful Meditation, and Art Therapy. Mindful Meditation was offered by our social worker, Erin Lee, who recently published a book entitled *"Mom's in Her Closet Again!"* highlighting the benefits of meditation. The tutoring center has been a great chance for students to get homework help, staffed by our National Honor Society peer tutors. Students find these sessions in Arena Scheduling by filtering by Subject: Other, Student Services, the Media Center, or by the academic department.

This coming quarter, we will have Technology Mentor sessions where our student tech mentors will teach about iPad apps and offer tools and tips to help students. Additionally, we offer interventions by subject area, academic strategies, and executive functions. Several academic and social/emotional targeted groups meet during Spartan Plus to improve academic performance and social/emotional well-being. If you have any questions or would like an intervention for your student, please contact your student's counselor or Mrs. Meierkort at [tmeierkort@olchs.org](mailto:tmeierkort@olchs.org).

## Junior Re-visit of SoS Program in Advisory

As we recognize the rise in depression among teens in recent years, we are now offering junior level advisory classes the opportunity to revisit the information they learned in their health classes from the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program through Elyssa's Mission. In November and December, juniors will watch a short video and will be encouraged to reach out to counseling/social work staff to seek support if needed. We want to make sure our students know it is always ok to ask for help.

## Community Outreach for Spanish & Arabic Speakers - 11/13, 6-8pm, Media Center

Do you Speak Spanish or Arabic at home? Would you like to learn more about Oak Lawn Community High School in your home language?

Students in Spanish 4 and 4 Honors along with the Muslim Student Association and Heritage Arabic students will host the fourth annual Community Outreach Event for Spanish and Arabic Speaking parents. This community outreach event is scheduled for the evening of November 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00pm in the Media Center. The purpose of this event is to foster a relationship between Oak Lawn Community High School and its Spanish and Arabic speaking communities. This will be a wonderful opportunity for students in Spanish and Arabic classes along with the Muslim Student Association to use the Spanish and Arabic languages in a safe and fun environment.

Additionally, parents will be able to access important information about Oak Lawn Community High School in both languages regarding (but not limited to): Athletics, clubs, graduation information, and technology. Samantha Razik will represent student services to share information about post high school planning. We will have community resources available from Moraine Valley Community College, Arab American Family Services, and Pillars.

The students along with their teachers are looking forward to reaching a broader audience to welcome and bring together our Spartan community!

To find out more information, or if you would like to offer your resources during this event in the future: Please contact Samantha Razik at 708-741-5643 or [srazik@olchs.org](mailto:srazik@olchs.org), Alexandra Wong at [awong@olchs.org](mailto:awong@olchs.org), or Marwa Elmasry at [melmasry@olchs.org](mailto:melmasry@olchs.org).

## Hello Class of 2023!

Eighth graders can look for some special events in the upcoming months. The counselors will visit both OLHMS and Simmons this December. We will be visiting eighth grade classrooms for both middle schools to introduce ourselves, talk a little bit about freshman year, and answer questions students have about starting high school. We find that this is a great way for students to get to know us and learn a little bit about the differences between junior high and high school. It also helps us to get to know our future students.

Also, Shadow Days for eighth graders will be November 25<sup>th</sup> (for OLHMS students) and November 26<sup>th</sup> (for Simmons students). The eighth-grade student will shadow a current high school student's schedule from first period to ninth period. Students will sit in actual high school classes, meet teachers, and get a feel for the building. If you have questions, contact Mrs. Malkowski at 708-741-5611.

Finally, eighth graders will be choosing their freshman year classes on February 5, 2019 here at the high school. Parents and students will have an opportunity to talk about required classes and

elective classes for Freshman year. We look forward to welcoming all incoming freshman to high school.

## **Help Us Improve!**

Did you enjoy receiving this newsletter? Do you have recommendations or questions for the OLCCHS Counselors? Take this brief survey to help us improve our services. [Click here to take the survey!](#)