

# BRISTOL EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR COMMENTS

April 2017



## CONTACT US!

860-584-7876

Michelle Kalfayan x731

Guidance Chairperson

[michellekalfayan@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:michellekalfayan@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Lawrence Hochman x190

[lawrencehochman@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:lawrencehochman@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Elizabeth Lefrancois x729

[elizabethlefrancois@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:elizabethlefrancois@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Cynthia Lombardo x732

[cindylombardo@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:cindylombardo@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Laura Stabile x727

[laurastabile@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:laurastabile@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Jennifer Tulacro x728

[jennifertulacro@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:jennifertulacro@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Erin Winger x263

[erinwinger@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:erinwinger@ci.bristol.ct.us)

Marie Pasqualicchio x717

Guidance Secretary

[mariepasqualicchio@ci.bristol.ct.us](mailto:mariepasqualicchio@ci.bristol.ct.us)

## MONTHLY TIP:

Happy Spring! The end of the year is only a few months away and it could be a busy time for many. It is important to take the time to take a break and relax. Here are some relaxation tips:

- **Deep Breathing**

Bring your stress levels down by taking deep breaths, holding it in for a moment and then releasing it slowly

- **Visualization**

Help put your mind in a better place by closing your eyes and imagining something peaceful or comforting to you

- **Stretch**

Stretching relaxes built up tension in the muscles

- **Meditate**

Listen to meditation recordings or do it yourself. Sit in a quiet area and get comfortable. Focus on your breathing and in the present moment. Let any distracting thoughts or noises go and return to meditation.

- **Get outside**

Get some fresh air by going outside and take a walk or a run now that the weather is getting nicer

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## What's coming up for...

### ... Freshmen

With the weather turning warmer and kids being willing to venture out, April is a great time for some new experiences! When was the last time your child went to work with a parent? When was the last time they shadowed someone in a career they might be interested in doing? When was the last time they set foot on a college campus?

These are all activities that just became much easier to accomplish. What are your plans for April vacation? If all the days aren't already spoken for, this would be a great time to start looking toward the future.

And if you do some of these great things, please come back and share your experiences with us!

## ...Sophomores

As we head into the last semester it is important to keep up the hard work. Have a conversation with your school counselor if you think that you need to go to summer school or need some help. Also, keep track of your attendance, especially if you plan to go to prom with an upperclassman. You can only use your attendance appeal once so make sure it's worth it! To find out if you are set to go to prom or need to submit an appeal, be sure to check with your administrator.

## ...Juniors

Please be sure to see your counselor to finalize your course requests for next year. Your senior year courses and grades matter very much in the college admissions process.

Don't become one of the students denied admissions to a college of your choice because you opted to take a minimal and lightweight course load for your last year of high school. You still have time to avoid this mistake. Colleges view a willingness to take a challenging curriculum throughout high school as a good indicator of success in college. The more you challenge yourself, the better prepared you will be for college and throughout your career and beyond.

As required by the state, all Juniors took the SAT in school on April 5th. In most cases, your score can be used for college admissions and will be important in helping you meet your graduation requirements.

Please remember: May and June SAT administrations offer the subject tests which you may need to take depending on the college you are thinking of applying to. Be sure to research the admission requirements of the college you are considering. Log onto your college board account at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) to register for upcoming tests. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch can see their counselor for a test fee waiver.

Continue researching and making your post secondary plans. Develop your list of schools, research college websites and plan your visits! Spring is great time for college tours! Many campuses have spring open houses. Touring campuses is essential to the process of selecting which schools to apply to and, once accepted, which school to attend. Visiting schools allows students to get a firsthand impression that brochures and websites simply can't compete with. Students should try to schedule their tours while classes are in session in order to get the best idea of what life on campus will be like. If you go on a college tour bring back your registration or confirmation that you attended and your absences will be excused. If you are not planning on college you should still be making your plans for visiting a technical school or community college or talking to military recruiters if that is your plan.

**Juniors, please mark your calendar for an important upcoming event:**



Thursday, April 27, 2017  
5:30pm – 8:00pm  
Bristol Eastern High School  
Auditorium and Cafeteria

Learn How:

- Going to college can change your life
- To choose the right college or academic program
- To find financial aid and make college affordable
- To search for scholarships and avoid scams

Limited Seating Available for Juniors and one parent.

**Additional information and R.S.V.P. form will be provided to students the week of April 10<sup>th</sup>.**

## ...Seniors

### SCHOLARSHIP REMINDER

Seniors are reminded to check the local scholarship board in the counseling office weekly as many new applications continue to arrive! Don't miss out on an opportunity to gain some financial assistance for college. Check the scholarship board weekly and ask your counselor if you need assistance.

### Comparing Financial Aid Award Letters

You may receive award letters from different colleges. Keep the following in mind when making your final decision:

**Look carefully at your award letters:** Letters from different schools will probably have their figures and costs in different formats. Compare award letters to see how their offers measure up. Ask if outside scholarships will affect your aid.

**Compare loan offers:** Interest rates, how interest compounds, repayment terms and cancellation provisions can vary widely from loan to loan.

**Compare affordability of aid offers over time:** Ask how your financial aid package will change over time. The aid package made available to you in your senior year may look very different from the one you were offered freshman year.

**Look beyond the "sticker price":** The school with the lowest cost of attendance may not be the most affordable. The amount and type of aid offered will influence affordability.

**Don't accept an offer just because it has the lowest "unmet need":** You may save more by accepting an offer with a higher unmet need, if the aid package offers scholarships, grants and work-study instead of loans.

**Compare like terms:** How do the schools determine cost of attendance? Do they all include direct costs as well as indirect costs? How do they handle outside scholarships? What work-study options are available? What are wages like? Can you substitute work for a loan?

## ... Career Center

Summer is coming and believe it or not, now is a great time to start looking for ways to explore careers and build up that resume!

Here are a few ideas to get you started!

**College summer programs:** Many colleges offer programs in the summer to focus on different careers and majors. Many programs have a fee but will also provide opportunities for scholarships. While the possibilities are endless, here are a few places to start your search:

Naviance (under the colleges tab and click on enrichment programs)

<http://www.usummer.com/>

<https://www.questbridge.org/high-school-students/college-prep-scholars>

**Volunteer:** Bristol and your surrounding towns offer a number of volunteer opportunities that can help build skills for career readiness.

Local suggestions: summer camps/enrichment programs (Boys & Girls Club, Parks & Rec, etc), programs for children, museums, religious organizations, food pantries, hospitals/convalescent/retirement homes, animal shelters, library, soup kitchen, sports organizations (soccer, little league, etc), farms/stables, start a collection for a cause, tutoring

**Work:** Many employers will start looking for summer help in the next month or so and with college students returning for the summer, those openings will get filled quickly. Here are a few local options to think about for the summer:

Babysitting/Nanny/Parent Helper  
Dog Walker/Pet Care  
Landscaping/Lawn Mowing  
Tutoring  
Camp Counselor  
Painting

Make/sell crafts  
Car washing/detailing  
Window Cleaning  
House Cleaning



As I was researching topics on the internet for Parents Corner for this month, the one that jumped out at me was titled “Stop Overindulging Your Children” from [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com). Intrigued, as I am a parent myself and wanted to see what I have been doing wrong all these years, I read the article with some trepidation but ended up feeling that it was a necessary topic to share and an appropriate contribution to our monthly newsletter. If nothing else the hope is that this article will spark conversation between you and your child as to the distinction between your meeting their needs but not necessarily always their wants.

“What do your children really need from you? Love, guidance, shelter, food, clothing, medical care and an education. Everything else is a want, a luxury: video games, iPods, cell phones, the latest fashion-whatever new item their friends have. Today far too many parents fall for the “nag factor”. They know their kids are bombarded by ads telling them to buy certain products and that many parents are buying those products for their children. They know the pressure that comes from their children’s peers and so they buy their kids far more “stuff” than they can even use, all in the hope that their children will fit in and be accepted by their peers. Sadly, our self-absorbed society has told parents to help their kids feel good about themselves, that it is the parents’ duty to make their children happy. But underneath it all, kids don’t need parents to make them happy, they need parents who will make them capable.”

Dr. Connie Dawson, co-author of *How Much is Enough* writes, “When parents give children too much stuff that costs money, do things for children that they can do for themselves, do not expect children to do chores, do not have good rules and let children run the family, parents are overindulging.”

You can begin to remedy the damage done by overindulgence by doing two things that this article offers:

1. Help your children to cultivate patience...real life problems cannot be solved in 15 minutes, it takes time, so don’t be so quick to solve your children’s problems for them as a bit of a struggle is good for them.
2. Give children opportunities to develop responsibility and to feel valuable. Your children are going to need your help if they are going to learn necessary life skills...that will help them become valuable members of the family and valuable members of society.

I believe that the most important take away from this article is that while you are asked not to overindulge your children’s wants it is encouraged that you “overindulge them with love, real love. Love that molds and shapes them into the young men and women they are meant to become.”