

# BRISTOL EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR COMMENTS

March 2016



## Monthly tip: Quick Tips and Tricks to Course Selection

Course selection is one of the pieces that students have the most control over as they continue their high school education. It is a way to explore interests and talk with their teachers about careers in these fields. While school counselors have gone into the classrooms and explained how to choose their courses, here are some quick tips to help along the way.

1. Check your course history in PowerSchool to make sure that you are not taking courses that you have already had. Very few courses allow you to retake it for credit, the exceptions being band, choir, piano, or guitar. Everything else follows a sequence or is only allowed once.
2. Think about the courses you want to take over all four years. Sometimes you may need to work backwards, especially if you plan to take Advance Placement courses your junior or senior year.
3. Think about the career you want to go into. If you want to become a doctor, you will probably need more sciences. If you want to start your own business you may want to look at the vocational courses like Small Business Ownership or Website Design.
4. Everything is available online! Visit the Bristol Eastern webpage to find the program of studies with the complete course descriptions and suggested course paths or the step-by-step guide for how to select your courses.
5. Talk with your counselor if you end up having any trouble entering your requests...you may not be the only person with this problem. So when you speak up you're not only helping yourself, but your classmates too!

## News from the Career Center

The month of March is loaded with Career Workshops and Seminars! Following are some of the upcoming offerings for students...

U.S. Army Careers  
U.S. Air Force Careers  
Banking for High School Students  
Job Seeking for High School Students  
Automotive Careers  
Careers In Manufacturing  
Careers In Cosmetology  
Careers In Social Work  
"Secrets Of Communication"

Please have your children see Mr. Hochman or their counselor for more information.

## CONTACT US!

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***“Kindness is the language  
which the deaf can hear  
and the blind can see.”***

Mark Twain

Such a profound quote and one that is so true. Kindness is something that one can sense. Often times we may not even know what our impact on others is, especially in light of the fact that we have no way of knowing what that other person’s life is like, nor what personal stressors they may face.

When I think of kindness I think of the value and importance of “Paying it Forward”. How wonderful to do something for another without the need or benefit of repayment for doing it...just passing on the good deeds as they were passed on to us can be such an exhilarating act.

Why do I make kindness a point of interest for this month’s newsletter? It is because as parents I want you to know that I see it every day in the halls of Bristol Eastern High School. You have beautiful children whom you can be very proud of in the acts of kindness they display often and with little regard for payback. I am sure it is no accident that they come by this most meaningful character trait and we thank you for teaching this most basic of life lessons.

## What’s coming up for...

### ...FRESHMEN

Well, you’ve made it more than half way through your freshman year of high school. Now would be a good time to reflect, review your progress, and assess your plan moving forward. While many of you have had a strong start and, as Dr. Seuss writes, “You’re off to great places!” others have encountered some obstacles and setbacks. Today I was reminded that sometimes all it takes is some words of encouragement to help us get back on track. This morning I came across a poem from American songwriter, Jason Blume:

*The challenges you’re facing are not easy,  
But one step at a time,  
you will get through them –  
because you are strong,  
resilient, and powerful,  
and you have the love and support  
of people who will stand beside you.*

*You are a courageous person.  
You’ve come through hard times before,  
and you’ll come through this too.*

*You are stronger than you know.*

### ...SOPHOMORES

Course planning is taking place so be sure to talk with your parents about what courses you are thinking about taking. This is a great time to find out what you are interested in...or possibly what you don’t like. Talk with your teachers about careers possible in the subject you are interested in. Visit the Naviance webpage to look over your “Do What You Are” results for careers that might be interesting. If you don’t know how to log in to get this information stop by the school counseling office and we can help you access your account. If you are interested in a trade or looking at BTEC for your junior or senior year, be sure to speak with your counselor about completing an application and scheduling a shadow day. This is a great way to still be able to participate in sports or activities while finishing your education with an emphasis in a hands-on trade you can start right after high school.

### ...JUNIORS

First semester is behind you and second semester will be a busy time for you! Please be sure your schedule reflects the classes you need for graduation and that you are on track with your credits. If you have any questions see your counselor!

Most of you have received e-mails from the College Board that your PSAT scores are available and can be accessed through your College Board account. You have also received your PSAT paper report in the recent PSAT/course selection workshops in your English class. If you are still having trouble assessing your scores or linking your account to Khan Academy to take advantage of the personalized practice available, please see your counselor for assistance. There are also some study hall sections dedicated to Khan Academy help. If you have a study hall and are interested in this type of support, see your counselor too see if this fits into your schedule.

## ...JUNIORS continued

As required by the state, Juniors took the school day SAT on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, remember that you can use these scores for college admissions. You can also register on your own to take the test again on a regular Saturday administration. The remaining 2016 test dates are May 7th and June 4th. May and June 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 and log onto your College Board account at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) to register. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch can see their counselor for a test fee waiver. If you are a student who is eligible to take the SAT with extra time or with other accommodations, be sure to see your counselor to ensure this is approved by College Board.

Spend the second semester researching and making your post secondary plans. Develop your list of schools, research college websites and plan your visits! Most colleges have spring open houses. 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. Talk to your counselor and start early! We will also be offering post secondary planning workshops later in the spring so keep your eyes and ears open so you don't miss it!

**The Capitol Region Interdistrict Leadership Academy, also known as CRILA, invites you to apply for one of 30 positions in the 2016-2017 Academy, which includes:**

- A seven day, all expenses paid, Outward Bound experience in Colorado from June 21st- through June 28th;
- The chance to develop community service projects throughout the Hartford area; and
- An experience that will help your leadership skills show and grow.

This is an amazing opportunity and experience. Check out their website [www.crec.org/crila](http://www.crec.org/crila) for more info. If you believe you are a good candidate for CRILA, you can pick up an application in the Guidance Office or download one on their website. These are due by March 15th!

## ...SENIORS

### Senior Checklist:

1. **File your FAFSA online at [WWW.fafsa.gov](http://WWW.fafsa.gov), or complete and mail your PDF FAFSA or paper FAFSA.** Do this as soon as possible after Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>. Submit the FAFSA in time to meet each college's financial aid deadline. Contact the financial aid offices at your college for more information.
2. **Confirm receipts of your information.** Check with your colleges to be sure they have received the information from your FAFSA and any revised SAT or ACT test scores.
3. **Look at your Student Aid Report (SAR) in the mail or via email, if address provided.** You should receive it within three to ten days after filing the online FAFSA, or two or three weeks after filing the paper FAFSA. Each college you included on your FAFSA will receive a copy of your SAR.
4. **Review the SAR.** Make any necessary changes and return the corrected form to Federal Student Aid as indicated on the SAR. If you filed electronically, make corrections online. Contact your college for more directions if necessary.
5. **Tie up loose ends.** If required, send any additional information to the colleges to complete the admissions and/or financial aid process.
6. **Send your midyear grades if colleges ask for them.** See your counselor.
7. **Continue researching and applying for scholarships that might be available to you.** Check Naviance often and pay attention to deadlines!