

Wow, this week's edition is packed with info!



An important SAT opportunity for juniors in our seminars in the second quarter and beyond
In April, all juniors take the SAT to fulfill both PPS graduation and State of Michigan requirements. While we address content and skills necessary for success in college as part of our classroom curriculum, our hope is that we can do more to help our students succeed on this important test. We know that our students are busy, and finding the time to take advantage of online resources can be tough. But we also know that students feel more comfortable with the test and score better when they practice. **That is why we created a new program two years ago that provides direct instruction and targeted practice for the SAT to juniors who are enrolled in a seminar.**

We are encouraged and motivated by the results we've seen so far, and are pleased to offer this opportunity to our students again this year, despite the strange circumstances we are all experiencing. Once per week, juniors will leave their seminar by joining a new Google Meeting to work with a teacher on strategy and skills needed to improve their scores. Using the resources of Khan Academy and the College Board, students will be able to see how they scored on the PSAT 10 and PSAT/NMSQT. Using this feedback, students will spend time doing individualized practice to improve their skills. Since juniors will be missing seminar one day per week (the same day every week), we ask that you help your son or daughter come up with a plan for how to complete homework or studying that would've been done that class period. For juniors not in a seminar this year, we encourage them to use the resources from Khan Academy at <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat> and to check out the counseling page on the school website for more testing information.

Just a few PSAT reminders...

Juniors taking the PSAT/NMSQT, do you need a calculator?

If you already have a calculator that is approved by the College Board, great -- please bring that with you for the test on Thursday, October 29. If you are not sure if yours is approved, no worries: take a look at this link to find out.

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/taking-the-test/calculator-policy>

If you do need a calculator, please sign up through the link below by noon on Monday, October 26. (If you don't sign up for one by the deadline, we will not be able to give you on the day of the test.) On the day of the test, your proctor will give you the calculator.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf_JNRIKsjCPI3cfFWIpmC5UPqX6rbJni_GQHEyBmlxW-MBKg/viewform

And, remember, juniors taking the PSAT, there is a PSAT preparation session tomorrow, Friday, October 23rd in the Commons

If interested, sign up on the Junior landing page of the Grade Level Information Center. Here is a direct link: <https://sites.google.com/portageps.org/pchsglic/juniors/sat-testing-information-for-juniors>

Instruction on October 29th, the date of the PSAT/NMSQT

On October 29th many of our juniors will be taking the PSAT/NMSQT, which will tie up our entire teaching staff. We will still have instruction on that day, but it will be asynchronous, meaning that students will have independent work to do but will not be logging in at a specific time with their teachers. We will continue to offer in-building support on that day for those who need it. (Make sure you fill out this form each week if you plan to use in-building support:

<https://forms.gle/me95mTva0EcP42GP9>)

Last reminder, I promise...

IB, AP test registration ends Oct. 31

IB and AP Test Registration will open Thursday, October 1st and run through October 31st. The PC IB & AP testing schedule and registration pages are located on our registration website at www.portagecentralexams.com. Payment is expected at the time of registration.

For IB test registrations, please go to the 2021 IB Test Registration tab on www.portagecentralexams.com. Fill out the personal information and identify which IB tests you are registering for. Read all the directions before submitting please. IB Tests are \$119 per test.

For AP test registration, you will need a class join code for each AP test you are taking. These are located on the 2021 AP test registration tab at www.portagecentralexams.com, and you will need to enter this join code on the College Board website linked to the registration page. You will need your College Board login information to register for AP tests. Follow the directions on the AP Test Registration page to register and pay for AP tests. AP Tests are \$95 per test. You will find a link to directions for AP test registration here

If you have questions about registration please email Mr. Lancaster at elancaster@portageps.org

Just a reminder of a few yearbook deadlines

These are especially important for our seniors, so thanks for taking a close look if you are a parent of a senior. Thanks!

Thanks -- as always -- for your feedback

It is always helpful to get useful and thoughtful feedback. And your insight has been even more important over these past eight months. Our shared history has always been a helpful guide; we have learned over time from our successes and even more from our mistakes. But of course these are unique times. Our past is not as instructive as usual. So we need your advice and opinions and perspectives more than ever to help keep our heads on straight and to help figure out the steps ahead.

Much of this more important feedback has come from healthy and clear conversations with you all: at Distribution Days and standing in the produce section at Meijer, through emails and visits at a volleyball game, during talks on the phone and connections after our August graduation. On a deeply personal level, I am so grateful for all these conversations -- the fun ones as well as the hard ones. At the same time as I serve in this role, I am also a PC dad. Just as I wanted the best for my sons and daughter here, I want the best for all our daughters and sons. So thank you -- a great, great deal.

I am also grateful for the feedback that parents and students have given on district surveys about how the school year has gone so far. At this point we don't have results for Portage Central High School; instead these are the joint results for the three middle schools (North, West and Central) and the three high schools (Northern, Community and PC). The highest scoring areas are below.

From parents

I am confident that my child's school is handling the COVID-19 challenge to keep my child safe.

Average/Mean score: 3.93 out of 5

I have access to my child's teacher(s) when needed.

Average/Mean score: 3.87 out of 5

Back
like never before

Seniors, 2021 Yearbooks on sale now.

1
Order your 2021 yearbook online today for \$75.
Price increases to \$80 Dec. 26.
Online orders only this year!
Go to www.yearbookordercenter.com
School code: 3604

2
Order a Senior Book for just \$12.
24-page full-color book of special senior features and moments
Go to www.yearbookordercenter.com
School code: 3604

3
Parents, buy a Senior Memory Ad!
New this year: Custom design and order a Senior Memory Ad for your grad.
It's easy! You can even design and purchase your ad from your cell phone!
Senior Memory Ad pricing:
1/8 page (business card size) ad - \$75
1/4 page ad - \$125
1/2 page ad - \$180
Full-page ad - \$250
Go to www.yearbookordercenter.com
School code: 3604
Click on *Buy a Yearbook Ad*.
Deadline for ad design/purchase: Dec. 1.

4
Upload your Senior Photo for the yearbook by Nov. 6.
Go to www.hjeshare.com
School code: 3604
Photos must be vertical.
Please name the .jpg or .jpeg file with LAST NAME, FIRST NAME.jpg before uploading.

Got questions?
Email yearbook adviser Ann Alburnus
aalburnus@portageps.org

From students

I feel safe when I am doing my school work.

Average/Mean score: 4.34 out of 5

I know how I am doing on my schoolwork.

Average/Mean score: 4.01 out of 5

And here are the lowest scoring areas.

From parents

I am confident that my child will not fall behind in school.

Average/Mean score: 2.96 out of 5

I am confident that my child's school is focused on the social emotional well-being of my child.

Average/Mean score: 3.43 out of 5

From students

I am connected to school friends.

Average/Mean score: 3.30 out of 5

I am ready to learn each day.

Average/Mean score: 3.46 out of 5

And we share all these same values and concerns.

From the start of summer we were working to prepare for this fall. The state legislature made it clear this September: we need to address all of our yearly curriculum. At the same time, we know this is not a normal year. So we need to keep working to get better at this online education -- and plan for whatever approach lies ahead. Too, right on the heels of academics are our Activities and Athletics. We understand and very much value our kids developing healthy relationships with friends. If we cannot be together in class yet, we can choose to engage our kids in extracurriculars.

So we are thrilled that the state has given more space to engage in Athletics and Activities. From the marching-band rehearsal to volleyball, from the amazing performance of our actors in "Our Town" to our wonderful victory last Friday for our football team, from club meetings to community-service opportunities, we want to find every way possible for our kids to engage with one another.

Please keep giving us your feedback, by email or phone or at Meijer. Look for another district survey near the Holidays. And we will continue to work through all of this, together.

Grateful for your feedback and your commitment to this community,

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