



# Elder High School Guidance Department

October 2009

[www.elderhs.org/guidanceweb](http://www.elderhs.org/guidanceweb)

Guidance Newsletter

## TESTING

### **PSAT/NMSQT**

#### **Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test**

All juniors will take this test at Elder on Wednesday, October 14. This test is both a practice for the SAT, as well as the qualifying test for National Merit Scholarships. All students tested will be considered for National Merit. (The semifinalists are chosen from the highest combined scores in each state (critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills) on this test. The semifinalists are then invited to compete in competitions to work towards becoming a finalist. Approximately 8,200 students will become finalists and be awarded a scholarship.) This test measures verbal, math and writing skills generally associated with academic achievement in college. It is an aptitude or ability test rather than an achievement test. Each student will be given an information packet and a complete practice test to assist in their preparation. There is an informational sheet regarding the PSAT/NMSQT at the end of this newsletter.

### **OHIO GRADUATION TEST**

Any junior or senior who still needs to pass any section of the Ohio Graduation Test will have the opportunity the week of October 26. As a reminder, a student must pass all five tests in order to graduate from high school. If you have any questions, you should see your counselor.

### **PLAN TEST**

All sophomores will take the PLAN Test on Wednesday, October 14. The PLAN is a great way to get familiar with and prepare for the ACT. PLAN contains four multiple-choice tests-English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science measuring curriculum-related knowledge and the complex cognitive skills important for future education and careers. It also contains an interest inventory that, when correlated to the academic assessment, will help students explore relevant career options. There is an informational sheet regarding the PLAN at the end of this newsletter.

## ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

### **ELDER ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

Each academic quarter a student must pass five (5) courses (Phys. Ed. excluded). If a student fails one (1) course and passes five (5), he is eligible. If a student fails two (2) courses and passes five (5), he is eligible BUT must complete weekly progress reports with the athletic department.

### **NCAA ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

If you are interested in playing a collegiate sport at a Division I or Division II school, there are certain requirements that you must meet in order to be eligible.

- Grade Point Average: Minimum 2.0/4.0
- 16 Academic Core Course taken during 9-12 (mainly English, College-Prep Math, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language)
- Earn a sum of scores on your SAT and ACT depending on your current GPA (to determine what you need – see your counselor)

The grades you have earned in the core courses during your freshmen and sophomore years are already a part of your record. Take your education seriously and work hard to earn A's and B's because C's and D's won't cut it.

**Remember that the person who has the biggest stake in your future is you. It's up to you to stay on top of opportunities and deadlines, to take control of your future.**

## NEED HELP!?

### **END OF QUARTER – OCTOBER 30**

The end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter is Friday, October 30. If you are in need of some extra help to get your grades up before that time stop in to see your Guidance Counselor to get a tutor or talk to your teacher directly! Tutoring is usually done before or after school and meeting times are decided by the tutor and person being tutored.

### **TUTORS**

We need tutors in ALL areas. This is a great way to get involved and earn some community service time. If you have time and are willing to make a commitment to help another student, please see your counselor to sign up to be a tutor.

## COLLEGE FAIRS

### THE NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIR

The National College Fair will be held at the Duke Energy Center on Sunday, October 11 from 1-4 PM. It is FREE and open to the public. This is an excellent opportunity for any college bound junior or senior and their parents. Go to: [www.gotomyncf.com](http://www.gotomyncf.com). DON'T MISS IT!

### COLLEGE FAIR 2009

Miami University Hamilton Campus will host a college fair on Tuesday, October 13 from 6:30-8:00 PM. For more information call (513)785-3111 or visit this website: [www.ham.muohio.edu/collegefair](http://www.ham.muohio.edu/collegefair).

## COLLEGE VISITS

Students and parents are encouraged to visit colleges before making a decision. Most colleges welcome your visit which can be arranged with a simple phone call. Because regular attendance in school is so important, it is recommended that you visit on non-school days. There are several of those days in October! **Do your best to visit colleges on Thursday, October 8, Friday, October 9, or Wednesday, October 14.** If you need to make a college visit on a school day, see your guidance counselor right away.

## COLLEGE VISITATIONS TO ELDER

College visitations to Elder will be posted on **PrepHQ**. If you are interested in attending the presentation, sign up **at least one day in advance**. Log-in to your PrepHQ account or Click [HERE](#). *Also, Sergeant Humphries will be here on October 15 at 9:00am to help students complete Navy ROTC scholarship applications. See Mr. Sovern for information. \*\*There will also be representatives at lunches this month from various branches of the military. An appointment does NOT need to be made to speak to the military representatives.*

## NEW! - CAREER EXPO

Elder's Guidance Department has developed a new career program, "Career Expo", to help students investigate careers. The primary goal of the program is to help students evaluate their interests, skills and aptitudes when choosing a career. Listening to individuals speak about their careers will allow students to gain specific career information concerning various occupations. These visits will occur throughout the year. The first Career Expo will take place on Tuesday, October 13 at 8:05 AM. Our first guest speaker is a Physician Assistant (PA). According to the 2009 Occupational Outlook Handbook, PAs are formerly trained to provide diagnostic and preventative health care services. As part of the health care team they take medical histories, examine and treat patients, order and interpret laboratory tests and x-rays and prescribe medications. They also treat minor injuries, by suturing, splinting, and casting. PAs earn master's degrees from universities accredited by the American Academy of Physician Assistants. Employment for PAs is expected to grow by 27% through 2016 and the 2006 median income for PAs was \$80,960. Interested juniors and seniors wishing to learn more should sign up 24 hours in advance on PrepHQ. Register the same way you would for a college visit. If you have further questions please contact Mr. Sovern in the guidance office.

## SENIORS!

**You should be working on college and scholarship applications. The sooner you can complete these and submit them the better! See your Guidance Counselor if you need help or information. Make plans to attend the Application Fest on Tuesday, October 20 from 2:30-4 in the Guidance Resource Center. Counselors and computers will be available to help you with your applications! Take advantage of this opportunity!**

# The PLAN<sup>®</sup> Test

PLAN includes four multiple-choice tests: English, Math, Reading, and Science. Your skills in these subjects will make a big difference—in school and, eventually, in your career. Once you know what each test covers, your PLAN test results can show you where you're strong or weak.

## The English Test

The PLAN English Test measures your understanding of standard written English—punctuation, grammar and usage, and sentence structure (Usage/Mechanics) - and your understanding of the use of strategy, organization, and style in writing (Rhetorical Skills). The test consists of four prose passages, each accompanied by a number of multiple-choice questions. You receive a total score for the English test and separate scores (called "subscores") for Usage/Mechanics and Rhetorical Skills.

## The Math Test

The PLAN Math Test measures your mathematical reasoning. The test focuses on your ability to reason in math rather than on how well you have memorized formulas or can do involved computations. The skills tested are those you learn in first- and second-year high school courses (pre-algebra, first-year algebra, and plane geometry). Most of the questions emphasize content presented before the second year of high school. You may use a calculator on the Math Test, as long as it's one of the [approved kinds](#).

## The Reading Test

The PLAN Reading Test measures your reading comprehension by focusing on skills such as:

- referring to details in a passage
- drawing conclusions
- making comparisons and generalizations

The test consists of three prose passages: one in the social sciences, one in the humanities (literature, history, philosophy, etc.), and one in prose fiction. Each passage is followed by several multiple-choice questions. To answer the questions, you don't need to know information outside the passages, vocabulary taken out of context, or rules of formal logic.

## The Science Test

The PLAN Science Test measures your scientific reasoning skills, based on material that is typically taught in first- and second-year high school general science courses. The material includes topics in biology, chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy, and meteorology. Several multiple-choice questions follow each set. To answer them, you must:

- understand the information provided
- examine critically the relationships between the information and the possible interpretations
- generalize from the information in order to draw conclusions or make predictions

You may not use a calculator on the Science Test.

## Doing Your Best

- **Get plenty of sleep the night before the test.**
- **Follow directions exactly, and don't be afraid to ask questions.**
- **Mark your answer folder carefully. Fill in the ovals neatly.**
- **Don't spend too much time on any single question. For hard ones, choose the answer you think is best and move on.**
- **Just like the ACT, there is no penalty for guessing. Be sure to answer every question.**

Subject	Number of Questions	Time Allowed
<b>English</b>		30 minutes
Usage/Mechanics	30	
Rhetorical Skills	20	
<b>Math</b>		40 minutes
Pre-Algebra/Algebra	22	
Geometry	18	
<b>Reading</b>	25	20 minutes
<b>Science</b>	30	25 minutes

# PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is a program cosponsored by the College Board and [National Merit Scholarship Corporation \(NMSC\)](#). It's a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT®. It also gives you a chance to enter NMSC scholarship programs and gain access to college and career planning tools. The PSAT/NMSQT measures:

- Critical reading skills
- Math problem-solving skills
- Writing skills

You have developed these skills over many years, both in and out of school. This test doesn't require you to recall specific facts from your classes.

The most common reasons for taking the PSAT/NMSQT are to:

- Receive feedback on your strengths and weaknesses on skills necessary for college study. You can then focus your preparation on those areas that could most benefit from additional study or practice.
- See how your performance on an admissions test might compare with that of others applying to college.
- Enter the competition for scholarships from NMSC (grade 11).
- Help prepare for the SAT. You can become familiar with the kinds of questions and the exact directions you will see on the SAT.
- Receive information from colleges when you check "yes" to Student Search Service.

## Preparing for the PSAT

Spending your school years taking challenging academic courses and reading widely is the best way to get ready for the PSAT/NMSQT. The PSAT/NMSQT includes the same types of critical reading, math, and writing skills multiple choice questions as the SAT® Reasoning Test. Ready to give the questions a test run? Pick a section below, and you'll find tips and practice questions with answers and explanations for each type of question.

### Critical Reading

- **Sentence Completion** questions measure your knowledge of the meanings of words and ability to understand how the different parts of a sentence logically fit together. [Practice now.](#)
- **Passage-Based Reading** questions measure your ability to read and think carefully about a single reading passage or a pair of related passages. [Practice now.](#)

### Math

The math section of the PSAT/NMSQT requires a basic knowledge of number and operation; algebra and functions (though not content covered in third-year math classes--content that will appear on the new SAT); geometry and measurement; and data analysis, statistics, and probability. You can use a [calculator](#) to answer math questions, but no question on the test requires a calculator.

- **Multiple Choice** questions ask you to decide which is the best of the five choices given. [Practice now.](#)
- **Grid-ins**, or student-produced response questions, require you to solve a problem and enter your answer. [Practice now.](#)

### Writing Skills

The multiple-choice questions on writing skills measure your ability to express ideas effectively in standard-written English, to recognize faults in usage and structure, and to use language with sensitivity to meaning.

- **Identifying Sentence Errors** questions test your knowledge of grammar, usage, word choice, and idiom. You are required to find errors in sentences or indicate that there is no error. [Practice now.](#)
- **Improving Sentences** questions ask you to choose the best, most effective form of an underlined portion of a given sentence. [Practice now.](#)
- **Improving Paragraphs** questions require you to make choices about improving the logic, coherence, or organization in a flawed passage. [Practice now.](#)