



The Guardian

*"Like trees, we have our common roots,
but our growth is very different." Nancy Wood*

Mount Alvernia High School
Maureen T O'Rourke, Director
Sarah Brandt, Counselor
Megan Reilly, Counselor

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News from the Guidance Department

Dear Parents and Students:

According to the poet, Kevin Mayne, "The seasons of our lives are seasons for change that are full of people, thoughts and actions that rearrange our days into memories." As we begin the colorful Fall Season and witness the real and symbolic changes that annually occur, the Guidance Department at Mount Alvernia High School wishes to emphasize its continuous commitment to journey with your daughters while here at Mount Alvernia as they develop a sense of who they are as women and as individuals with their own unique gifts and talents. We will continue **to guide** them in their academic journey as their worldviews are expanded, **to present** them with a variety of experiences which will help them make responsible choices as members of the larger community, and **to give** them common roots and the encouragement to grow into caring, educated, well-rounded women. Each counselor works with the students on her assigned level—Megan Reilly, Grades 7 & 8; Sarah Brandt, Grades 9, 10 & 11 (first semester); and Maureen O'Rourke, Grade 12 & 11 (second semester)—and focuses on common issues which need to be addressed on each specific level.

As the culmination of the counseling and guidance program, the senior level tends to be all-encompassing as the focus touches on the four specific areas affecting the holistic growth of each student: **personal development, academic progress, college selection, and career choice.** The adolescent at this point is continuing to establish her identity and beginning to question what her role as an independent, self-confident woman in society will be. Issues addressed on this level continue to flow from those responded to on earlier levels. However, priority during the first semester is given to college selection and career choice. The second semester emphasizes high school to college transition and becoming freshmen again. The focus of this area is threefold: **stress/time management, college preparation** (i.e. do's and don'ts, financial awareness, date abuse, substance abuse, eating disorders, self-defense, etc.), and **college survival.**

In addition to meeting with seniors individually and in small groups, a joint meeting with each senior and her parent(s) or guardian(s) is required. **Regarding this, parents or guardians who have not done so are requested to contact the Guidance Office to select an appointment. If I may be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at extension 14.**

Sincerely yours,

Maureen T. O'Rourke
Director of Guidance

Dates to remember

October 10
SAT I & SAT II

October 14
Standardized Testing Day

October 15-16
Senior Retreat

October 21
College Financial Aid Night

October 24
ACT

November 1
Mount Alvernia Open House

November 7
SAT I & SAT II

November 14
Entrance Examinations for 7th,
8th, and 9th Grades

COLLEGE FAIR SCHEDULE
October 4
College of the Holy Cross, 9-1

October 14, 20
Newton South High School 7-8:30



*"Among human advantages,
education holds first place."*
-St. Gregory Nazianzen

*"Education for a woman is the
first step toward achieving
equality and liberation. She
must learn about herself, her
sexuality, her body, her abilities,
and her potential to contribute
to society as an active, produc-
tive human being in order to
achieve her goals."*
-Mary Washington College

The College Search, 2009-2010

The Class of 2010 has embarked on the College Search, 2009-2010. Many have visited colleges, had interviews, and begun early action/early decision applications. Others are still exploring their options, and sorting through catalogs, folders and review books. The college search can be at one and the same time frustrating, scary, exciting and challenging. However, we can only achieve as high as we are willing to reach. The time and effort now will reap the benefits in the spring.

Make the college search work for you. Finding out as much information about colleges you are interested in, visiting the campuses, and being realistic about the "fit" will enable you to make an informed decision later.

Suggested Web Sites

College Information & Special Programs

*www.collegeboard.com

*www.massmentor.edu

*www.nebhe.org

I am excited to begin my second school year at Mount Alvernia High School. This year, I will be working with the 9th and 10th grade students throughout the year and the 11th grade students for the first semester only. I have begun getting to know the new students and have enjoyed seeing familiar faces from last year. Also, it was a pleasure to meet all of you at Back to School Night. I look forward to being in touch with you throughout the 2009-2010 school year.

As the counselor for the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades, I will work with the girls to ensure that their level placements are on target with their learning abilities, talk with them about any social, emotional, or personal issues they might be having, and assist them in making goals for their futures, and looking at career paths and college options. Throughout the year, I will meet with the students individually to review their progress and help plan for their futures. Students are welcome to come and see me during their study periods, breaks, or after school to talk about any concerns that they are having.

An important date to keep in mind for this month is October 14th, the school-wide standardized testing day. The 9th grade will be taking the NEDT tests, the 10th grade will be taking the PLAN test, and the 11th grade will be taking the PSAT test. The 11th grade students have been given a booklet to help them prepare for the PSAT, a practice SAT test. The 10th grade students have received an information card on the PLAN test, which is a practice ACT test. The PLAN consists of four components: English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Practice questions can be found at <http://www.actstudent.org/plan/>. The NEDT practice booklet has not yet come in, but will be given out to the 9th grade students once it arrives.

As a second year guidance counselor at Mount Alvernia High School, I realize that the first few weeks of school are often difficult and that it may take time to adjust. If your daughter is still struggling with new teachers and subjects and/or a new environment, please give me a call at (617) 969-2260 ext. 49 or by e-mail at sbrandt@mountalverniah.org.

Ms. Sarah Brandt
Counselor 9, 10, 11

It's hard to believe that the new school year is already underway. I enjoyed meeting many of you at the recent Back to School Night and look forward to working with you and your daughters throughout the school year.

In this first issue of the Guardian for the 2009-2010 school year, I'd like to tell you a little bit about my role as the Guidance Counselor for grades 7 and 8. Throughout the school year I will be meeting with each of the students individually to review their academic progress and to assist them as they work towards their goals. As always, students are welcome to schedule appointments with me during their study periods, after school, or during arranged times regarding academic and/or personal concerns.

On Wednesday, October 14th students in grades 7 and 8 will take the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills as part of the Standardized Testing Day. Results of these tests will be given to parents in late November or early December.

I know that the first few weeks of school can often be a stressful time for students. Whether this is your daughter's first year at Mount Alvernia or not, adjusting to new teachers, new classmates, and new academic demands can sometimes seem overwhelming. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist your daughter in this time of transition. I can be reached at (617) 969-2260 ext. 48 or by e-mail at mreilly@mountalverniah.org

Ms. Megan Reilly
Counselor 7, 8