

SG helps take PSAT off students' transcripts

By JUNGSI HONG

As seniors are getting ready to apply to college and filling out the common application, they might notice that their transcripts look different.

Starting the 2013-2014 school year, NCSSM will no longer include PSAT scores on students' transcripts.

Previously, PSAT scores were reported on NCSSM students' transcripts sent to colleges. This was a problem because students went into the test thinking that their score would not be reported to colleges because it was stated in a document packet distributed to students taking the PSAT but later found out the NCSSM sent the PSAT scores regardless.

It might be argued that even if they are sent, colleges won't pay much attention to them; however, most colleges evaluate transcripts holistically regardless of the format and the reported PSAT score can give a strong impression if it contrasts with actual SAT scores.

Due to these issues, Parth Thakker, President of SGA, contacted the counseling department to ask for PSAT scores to be taken off students' transcripts with the CollegeBoard documentation

as proof.

The counseling department met to discuss this issue and provided support, however they could not change the current transcript and how the PSAT and other scores are reported.

The registrar and academic programs were then contacted to finalize the process.

After being approved by NCSSM Chancellor Todd Roberts, ITS has begun working on necessary coding changes to modify NCSSM transcripts so that beginning with the Class of 2014, PSAT scores will no longer be displayed on transcripts.

On this change, SGA President Parth Thakker said, "Personally, I think this change is a big step in the right direction. The administration was very receptive to our concerns and ultimately decided to remove PSAT scores from student transcripts - presumably thanks to the evidence that we presented, as well as the precedent that was set by the removal of SAT Subject Test scores a couple years ago."

"The current policy of automatically including ACT/SAT test scores on transcripts makes it difficult for students to withhold scores from either

or both exams in accordance with listed 'Score Choice' options. Many high schools have already eliminated standardized test scores from their transcripts in order to give students full control over that information; we hope that NCSSM will soon do the same."

Although PSAT scores will no longer be reported on transcripts, juniors are still encouraged to do their best on the PSAT as it offers an opportunity to qualify for scholarships through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

The PSAT also serves as a firsthand practice for the SAT and gives access to NMSC college and career planning tools.

The PSAT measures critical reading, math problem solving, and writing skills and allows students to receive feedback on strengths and weaknesses in these areas which are necessary for college study. It is similar to the regular SAT, but shorter and without an essay component.

This year, the PSAT will be administered to all juniors Wednesday, Oct. 16. Seniors who scored high enough to qualify will be notified sometime in the fall.

"I-week" introduced for 2013-2014 year

Monday 8:00-8:55 9:00-9:55 10:00-10:55 11:00-11:55 12:00-12:55 1:00-1:55 2:00-2:55 3:00-3:55 4:00-4:55	MONDAY	Tuesday 8:00-8:55 9:00-9:55 10:00-10:55 11:00-11:55 12:00-12:55 1:00-1:55 2:00-2:55 3:00-3:55 4:00-4:55	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1	A	C	E	G	B
2	B	D	F	H	C
3	C	A	E	G	B
4	D	B	F	H	C
5	E	C	A	G	B
6	F	D	B	H	C
7	G	E	C	A	G
8	H	F	D	B	H
9	A	C	E	G	B
10	B	D	F	H	C
11	C	A	E	G	B
12	D	B	F	H	C
13	E	C	A	G	B
14	F	D	B	H	C
15	G	E	C	A	G
16	H	F	D	B	H

I-week class schedule

Photo courtesy of NCSSM

By JUNGSI HONG

Beginning the 2013-2014 school year, NCSSM will be implementing "I-Weeks" where regular class schedules are altered to operate on a special Innovation Week Timetable (see above).

The weeks are the following: Sept. 16-20, Jan. 20-23, April 28-May 2.

During these weeks, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays will be open for extended innovation, collaboration, and creative academic activities that the normal schedule does not accommodate.

The Calendar/Schedule Working Group has provided some suggestions on what

students could do during I-week which include student interaction/collaboration, academic/cultural field trips, film screenings, service learning activities, PSAT/AMC Math test, college/scholarship applications, visiting Articulation Agreement schools, career fairs, and summer opportunities fair.

These activities would allow students to have some time off from school and to catch up on extra work such as visiting colleges, planning for the future by exploring interests, and college applications.

Students should be on the lookout for further I-week information and thinking of ways to spend it.

The science of surviving Science and Math

By SARAH COLBERT

Here is a collection of helpful tips from current seniors to better your NCSSM experience. Keep in mind that if you ever have any questions, contact a trustworthy senior to ask.

1. Talk to people. It's the best way to get help when you need it. Friends are what makes SMATH bearable.

2. Participate in hall activities. They provide fun ways to relieve stress, and you'll grow closer to your hall mates.

3. Join a club. It's a great way to make friends and have fun. When you first walk into the club fair, you might feel overwhelmed. Look for subjects that you are truly interested in and sign up. Just don't try to sign up for everything and overextend yourself. Choose a few and be an active participant in them.

4. Get SOME exercise every day. It improves morale and general well-being. Consider participating in a sport or physical activity course. Get a group of friends together and go work-out, run, or play a game. Play in an IM game to help your hall win points toward the Chancellor's cup; you get some points just for participating, and if your hall

wins, you get bragging rights and a free t-shirt. It can even just be taking ten minutes to walk around (not in class or anything.)

5. Don't take out the trash for Sunday housekeeping after 10:30 check. Regardless of how good your intentions were, you will get stuck with a level II.

6. Do not wait until the end of the year to dust your room. Dust and vacuum regularly. If you don't, you will regret it when you find dust bunnies the size of actual rabbits later on.

7. Don't burn popcorn—especially on cold, rainy nights, unless you want to acquire a few enemies. The smoke detectors are exceptionally sensitive. Kettle corn is better anyway, and it does not require a microwave. This also helps conserve energy and makes us a more sustainable school. Save popcorn for the movie theater and eat kettle corn instead.

8. Do not wait until you are completely out of clean underwear to do your laundry.

9. Make sure you have money on your laundry card BEFORE you load the washing machine.

10. If you and your roommate have agreed to keep your room locked, make sure

you carry your key. If you get locked out, the security guards will laugh at you.

11. Keep an updated calendar in your planner, phone, or computer to keep up with events and deadlines. There are always a lot of things going on at NCSSM. Stay organized to be prepared and manage stress.

A special thanks to Paul Smith and Alice Li for their contributions to this article.

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New Teachers

France and Francophone Africa. He is fascinated by intellectual, urban, environment, health and gender history.

Mulvey says, "NCSSM appeals to me because it is a place where a humanist can think with future leaders about how to put technologies into motion." Mulvey is also interested in organizing a bowling league. He'd like to hold a bowling tournament over a few months, with the winning team having the honor of receiving a bowling award similar to the Stanley Cup.

Gibson will be teaching

Pre-Calculus and AP Calculus AB. He grew up in Connecticut and completed a Masters of Education and Mathematics from the University of Georgia. He has previously taught in Georgia and Texas and is looking forward to NCSSM.

Sheridan grew up in Hershey, PA. "A very sweet childhood, indeed," he says. For the past 14 years, Sheridan has lived in Chapel Hill with his wife and 6-year old daughter Maya. He will be teaching Pre-calculus and AP Calculus BC with Topics. He is excited to be a part of the NCSSM community as well.

New policies for a new year

By KANAN SHAH

NCSSM has changed a few policies for students during the upcoming school year.

Based on advice from Michael Delafield, the school's Chief Legal Counsel, and changes in North Carolina state law that were passed during a recent session of the General Assembly, NCSSM is revising the Code of Student Conduct and some disciplinary procedures.

There have been some

changes in technology that students will have already noticed. All students' emails have been migrated to Gmail accounts. This is where all school-related emails will come. Students can set it to forward to their own address if they please.

The website my.ncssm.edu is the new intranet for all students. It allows students a one-stop access to a variety of resources such as schedules and software downloads.

NCSSM has also changed the rule that requires a signature from a SLI to sign out after 6:00pm. Instead, students are now only required to get an SLI signature if they will be off-campus after sunset.

Another change in procedures that may be coming in the near future is being led by a student. Senior Allan Jiang has been helping to create an electronic sign out system that will hopefully be implemented this fall.

"The current paper trail sign-out system struck me as inefficient, so I thought it'd be nice to put everything online, so creating and searching for sign-out records would be unified and convenient," says Jiang.

Also, this year Jennifer Ashe will serve as the new Title IX officer.