

January 13, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian of a City Honors Senior:

I am writing you to address a number of issues related to the last few months of your child's education here at City Honors. I want to commend you on your work to guide your child to this advanced point and congratulate you as they finalize their plans for college.

As your child may have shared with you, the majority of our seniors will participate in the Senior Service Learning Initiative following AP and IB examinations in May. I made the decision to resurrect this program three years ago based on recommendations from our School Based Management Team, our student representatives, and an exploratory committee composed of faculty members. These groups indicated that there was a desire to give some structure and purpose to the last few weeks of senior year following AP and IB examinations through an internship program. Because we have seniors with a variety of course requirements and internship interests, this is certainly a complex initiative which may not fit every senior's schedule. The SLI committee will be providing more information in the coming weeks. We encourage all eligible seniors to participate in this valuable program.

City Honors is required to send the college your child intends to attend a final transcript following graduation. **Keep in mind that this transcript contains not only a summation of your child's academics during the second half of their senior year, it also includes a tardy and attendance summary.** Almost all colleges make their admissions, scholarship, and financial aid offers contingent upon what they deem to be a successful completion of a high school career. We are increasingly finding that colleges are scrutinizing the last segment of the senior year for any signs of character or motivational lapses. Colleges rescinding or decreasing their offers based on these final reports are not uncommon. Please discuss this information with your child and encourage them to finish their courses in the second semester with diligence. I have enclosed a recent *New York Times* article discussing the growing trend for colleges to rescind admission and financial assistance based on final transcripts of seniors.

All families must provide the following to their school counselor in order to conclude their career at City Honors:

- **Submit a stamped and addressed envelope to the guidance office with the address of the admissions office of the college your child has selected.** This envelope will be used for the purpose of sending out their final transcript in July. Please remind your child to do so as soon as they know which school they will be attending. Your college will not allow you to register in August unless they have this final transcript.
- **If your child has been accepted to an honors college or program within the college they will attend, we ask that you notify your school counselor of this in writing or by email.** We will be sure this is reflected on our annual profile sheet.
- **Parents and seniors are asked to provide a final list of any scholarship or grants they have been offered, even if they choose not to accept these offers.** A worksheet will be supplied to seniors in the coming weeks. The names of these scholarships and grants are listed in the graduation program to

recognize our students. We also use this information to track the amounts and types of offers received by our students. The class of '08 garnered a total of \$6,812,922 in scholarship and grants (an amazing amount considering the small size of our cohorts). Can '09 beat them? Be sure your child submits their form so that the achievements of the Class of '09 are accurately represented!

I would ask you to note the following important dates related to seniors:

- **May 27**     **6:00pm: Senior Dinner & Awards at Pearl Street Grill**
  - seniors are pre-paid through seniors dues, contact Mrs. Banas for questions
  - senior parents are encouraged to attend, \$25 per parent
- **June 12**     **7:00pm: Senior/Junior Prom at the Statler Terrace Ballroom**
  - Additional details coming out soon. See Mrs. Holden for questions
- **June 25**     **Graduation**
  - 1:30pm: Graduation Rehearsal at Kleinhans Music Hall  
*(seniors must attend in order to participate in graduation)*
  - 6:00pm: Graduates arrive to receive flowers and get into formation for procession
  - 7:00pm: Graduation procession begins
  - Seniors should plan to arrive at all graduation events early.*
  - All events will begin as listed.*

During my years as an administrator, I have found that there is a great tendency among students in their senior year to take chances they might not normally take or to push the boundaries established by both parents and their school. Although I think this is certainly a natural phenomenon as students look toward the next chapter of their lives, it can have very dangerous outcomes. I have spoken to our seniors a number of times this school year and encouraged them to take exactly the opposite approach to their inclinations, being more careful and subdued than they normally would be in both their school and social activities. I have told them that despite what anyone tells them, their motto should be, "I plan to go out quietly." They have worked so hard to get to the point where they will receive a City Honors diploma, have been admitted to college and perhaps offered a scholarship. To take chances this close to the finish line is jeopardizing everything they have worked for.

In speaking with our seniors, I have shared a number of stories where seniors demonstrating risky behavior during their senior year have had disastrous results in terms of receiving their diploma, the ability to participate in commencement exercises, their status with the college that they plan to attend or their participation in spring sports and extra-curricular activities such as prom. Out-of-school activities and socializing are no exception to the risks students will often take. I have also shared with them several stories of students who ran into legal consequences or who have even died by using judgment impaired by the belief that the conclusion of senior year was a time to "let loose." I have greatly enjoyed working with our seniors over the past four years, and my most sincere hope is that we will not face any such situations as we conclude this school year. I would greatly appreciate if you could talk with your child and emphasize the need for even greater caution and discretion over the next few months.

Thank you for your continued participation in your child's education. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming senior events and activities.

Sincerely,

William A. Kresse, Ph.D.  
Principal