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March 13, 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian of a City Honors Senior:

I am writing to address a number of important issues related to the completion of your child's education at City Honors.

Ninety five percent of our seniors participate in the **Senior Service Learning Initiative** towards the end of AP/IB examinations. We launched this program seven years ago based on recommendations from our School Based Management Team, student representatives, and an exploratory committee composed of faculty members. Because we have seniors with a variety of course requirements and internship interests, this is certainly a complex initiative that may not fit every senior's schedule. Our IB Diploma Coordinator, Mrs. Elissa Banas, is in charge of administering this program. A detailed description of the program and forms were distributed during a senior class assembly last week and are available through the parent resources section of cityhonors.org. Please take the time to carefully review the requirements of this program with your child.

All senior families should attend to the following issues in order to successfully 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.
- **Our senior exit survey will be supplied to all seniors the first week in May. Parents and seniors are asked to provide a final list of any and all scholarships/grants/work study offers, schools they where they received admission etc... even if they choose not to accept these offers.** 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 2011 garnered a record breaking total of \$13,144,292 in scholarship and grants (an amazing amount considering the small size of our cohorts). Will the Class of 2012 beat them? If your child has been accepted to an honors program within the college they will attend, this final exit survey will also provide them an opportunity to officially record this information this information and have it indicated graduation program. If you receive additional scholarships after submitting the form, be sure your child gets this information to their school counselor so that it can be a part of the final tally. This exit survey is also used so that Mrs. Banas can inform International Baccalaureate (IB) of your child's college destination. In turn, IB will send an electronic transcript of your child's performance on IB exams to the college he/she will be attending.
- **Our last senior meeting at school will take place on May 9, 2012.** At that time, seniors will be provided information sheets that they are to use to access their IB scores when they become available on July 6, 2012.
- **Seniors who have not paid their senior dues, owe library books, debts, team uniforms, etc. need to resolve these issues to receive their official diploma the evening of graduation exercises.**

(over, please..)

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

- **May 15** **First Day of Senior Service Learning Initiative (SLI)**
- **May 22** **Senior Dinner & Awards at Pearl Street Grill**
 - event begins at 6:00pm
 - seniors are pre-paid through seniors dues, contact Mr. Cooney for questions
 - senior parents are encouraged to attend, the cost is \$25 per parent
- **May 22** **Senior Exit Surveys Due to Mrs. Banas**
- **June 12** **Last Day of Senior Service Learning Initiative**
- **June 15** **Senior Service Learning Initiative Time Logs/Reflections are due to Mrs. Banas**
- **June 15** **Senior/Junior Prom**
 - Templeton Landing at the Inner Harbor from 7:00 to 11:00 pm
 - Tickets are available from Ms. Chimera
- **June 21** **Graduation**
 - 10:30am: Graduation Rehearsal at Kleinhan's 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

There is a pressure 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 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. 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, taking chances this close to the finish line jeopardizes everything. I have shared a number of stories where seniors demonstrating inappropriate behavior 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. 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."

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. I have enclosed a *New York Times* article discussing the growing trend of colleges rescinding admission and financial assistance based on final transcripts of seniors. Since this article was written in 2007, we have only seen this trend increase.

I have greatly enjoyed working with your child over the past seven years. My most sincere hope is to see them off to an enjoyable and successful completion of their studies at City Honors. Thank you for your ongoing support of your child during these final months. 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. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming senior events and activities!

Sincerely,



William A. Kresse, Ph.D.
Principal

