

# North Judson-San Pierre High School Counselor Connection: Fall

Mrs. Susie Matzat, Grades 9-10 School Counselor

Miss Colleen McCarthy, Grades 11-12 School Counselor

**School Website:** Please visit [www.njsp.k12.in.us](http://www.njsp.k12.in.us) to obtain school information. This site is updated regularly and contains information about athletic events, school activities, contacts, and much more.

**PowerSchool:** The PowerSchool website, <https://njsp.powerschool.com> can easily be accessed through the school website. PowerSchool allows parents and students access to grades and attendance. You can even email teachers from this site. If you or your child has a Smartphone, you can download the app for PowerSchool and check grades and attendance anywhere or anytime! The app does request a 4-digit code and that is FZHN. If you do not have PowerSchool login information, please contact the guidance department.

**PSAT Testing at NJ-SP High School:** Sophomores and juniors who plan to attend college are encouraged to take the PSAT on in mid-October. This will be administered at no cost to sophomores and juniors. When scores are returned to the school, each student will have an access code, which will link to the results and additional information at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

**Audits:** An audit is the retaking of a course for which credit was already granted OR for taking a course for no credit. An audit allows a student to improve a grade, to improve skills, or to allow movement to a more advanced class. Students may NOT receive credit twice for the same class. No credit is earned for an audited class.

**Sports Eligibility:** Students must be enrolled and have passed five credited subjects. Audited classes, being an aide, or having a study hall do not count as a credited class.

## SAT Registration

There are several options of testing sites in our area. Be sure you are aware of time zone differences. The cost and registration information can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). If you qualify for free or reduced lunch, you may qualify for a fee waiver. Please see Ms. McCarthy to discuss this fee waiver process.

## Testing: PSAT, SAT, ACT, ASVAB...

Which standardized test should be taken when? Here's a simple guideline for standardized tests administered during the high school years.

**PSAT:** The Preliminary SAT measures a student's skills in critical reading, mathematics, and writing. These scores may be used to determine a student's acceptance into college and eligibility for grant scholarships. The PSAT is also the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMQT) for juniors. Sophomores and juniors who plan to attend college are encouraged to take the PSAT.

**SAT:** The SAT measures a student's math, reading and writing skills. Colleges use the scores to compare students regardless of the high school curricula. It is recommended that students take the SAT near the end of their junior year and possibly again at the beginning of their senior year. Most students do improve their score the second time the SAT is taken.

**ASVAB:** The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery helps students identify and understand their interests, abilities, and preferences. Students can then match careers with their personal characteristics. The test is used to determine eligibility for military service. Juniors or seniors who are interested in military service should take the ASVAB test.

**ACT:** The ACT measures a student's skills in English, math, reading, and science. These scores are often used to determine a student's acceptance into college and for grant scholarships. ACT recommends taking the test second semester of a student's junior year.

**ACT or SAT?: It all depends on YOU!** In spite of their differences, neither test is more likely than the other to produce a great score. In fact, when compared, most students perform comparably on both tests. If the college your child is interested in accepts scores from either test, he/she may want to take both admission tests.

***\*While the counseling department and career center will provide registration information and make every effort to encourage and assist the students, we must place the responsibility on the student to register for the appropriate tests.***

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**End-of-Course Assessments:** Students graduating before May of 2019 will continue to take ECA's. These exams are taken after the completion of Algebra, English 10, and Biology. If students do not pass, they are notified of retesting and review opportunities for Algebra and English 10, as these two tests are a graduation requirement. Results are also mailed home. The ISTEP+ Tests will replace ECA's beginning with the Class of 2019.

**College Visitation Days Available to Juniors and Seniors:** Spending time on a college campus is a great way for students to see what it's like to live and study there. It is recommended that juniors and seniors utilize the Career Visitation Days (CVD) afforded to them during the school year. Students can meet with an admissions officer, take a campus tour, complete entrance testing, and even sit in on a class. Juniors are allowed one day (spring semester only) and seniors are allowed two days. Students can also use these days to job shadow an adult or interview for a job. Students are to make their arrangements first prior to seeing Ms. McCarthy for a pre-arranged absence sheet. Please do so at least a week in advance.

**SADD Parent Website:** Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) has a parent website, [www.ParentTeenMatters.org](http://www.ParentTeenMatters.org). Visit this site to find answers to commonly asked questions, check out the latest research on teen behaviors, and follow the action steps provided to guide your teen to positive decision-making. You can even sign up for a monthly e-newsletter.

**Bully Reporting:** Students are encouraged to let staff know about safety or bullying incidents at school. We also encourage students NOT to be bystanders but to assist victims by safely separating the bully and victim or reporting this to an adult. Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power. An anonymous report can be made online.

**Career Exploration:** By the end of October, all freshmen and sophomores will have completed a career exploration activity utilizing [www.IndianaCareerExplorer.org](http://www.IndianaCareerExplorer.org). Each student has chosen a login and password that can also be used at home. Parents are encouraged to review these career assessment results with their child.

**The Bluejay Way:** The high school continues to recognize students who excel in the areas of achievement, respect, and responsibility. Students receive a written statement, a drink coupon, and are recognized in the Bluejay Way area.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars Update:** Requirements for students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars program have changed. All underclassmen must now achieve a C+ (6.0) high school cumulative average. Freshmen and sophomores are now required to participate in the Scholar Success Program and self-report activities on the Scholar Track Portal. Seniors must review the presentation available in December and must affirm by March 10; seniors must complete the FAFSA as well. These are just a few of the changes so please be sure to read all correspondence from 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars!

**Attendance Update:** Students with high absenteeism will be required to attend afterschool sessions to make up missed time. Students missing six days in the first six weeks or twelve days in the first twelve weeks of school must attend two after-school sessions.

**Community Service and Extra-Curricular Activities:** All students are encouraged to participate in activities outside the school day. This could be anything—a church group, school group or a sports or academic team. Keeping track of activities and awards or honors earned outside the regular school day is very beneficial. Students will be asked to list this information on scholarship forms and college applications.