

# COUNSELING OFFICE NEWSLETTER



## NEPTUNE HIGH SCHOOL

Dear Flier Families,

Welcome back for the 23-24 school year! We are about a month into the school year and the students are working hard. It's exciting to be back and see the hallways bustling yet again. We have many important events coming up, such as Homecoming, the PSATs, & Parent/Teacher Conferences.

This edition of the Counseling Office Newsletter has important information on our Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy that parents/guardians should read and become familiar with. It also includes a lot of information on the college application process, which is particularly helpful to parents of the seniors and juniors, but it's never too early to start preparing. As always, we are here to help. Reach out to us with any concerns. Thank you!

*Sincerely,*

*Neptune High School Counseling Department*

### Important Upcoming Dates

- **October 10-13**—NJGPA make ups
- **October 14**—Homecoming
- **October 18**—PSATs (10th and 11th grade)
- **October 17, 19, 20** — Parent/Teacher Conferences
- **November 6 - 10**—School Closed (Staff PD days and NJEA Convention)
- **November 14**—Financial Aid Night
- **November 22**—Abbreviated Day
- **November 23-24**—No School
- **December**—NJ SLA dates to be announced



### Senior Corner

Below is a to-do list for this fall! We are here to assist your students throughout the application process. You can help too! See below for what the students should be working on. More information is provided throughout this newsletter.

- ☐ Take SATs or ACTs (October or November) if still needed
  - ☐ Send scores to colleges through College Board or MyACT
- ☐ Visit colleges!!! It's important to get a feel for the campus
- ☐ Identify colleges you plan to apply to
- ☐ Prepare your personal statement
- ☐ Complete Brag Sheet
- ☐ Ask teachers for Letters of Recommendation
  - ☐ Provide them with your brag sheet
  - ☐ Add them to Naviance
- ☐ Complete applications (many schools accept the Common Application—create an account here: <https://www.commonapp.org/>)



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## How is harassment, intimidation, and bullying defined?

Under New Jersey law, “harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is”:

#1: Reasonably perceived as being motivated by

Either any actual or perceived characteristic

OR

Any other distinguishing characteristic

AND THAT

#2: Takes Place

On school property, OR

At any school-sponsored function, OR

On school bus, OR

Off schools grounds

AND THAT

#3: In addition to causing substantial disruption or interference to the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students:

Has effect of insulting or demeaning  
student or group of students OR

Creates hostile educational environment for student by interfering with  
student’s education OR

Severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to student



## What Can Parents Do?

Parents play a crucial role in both **preventing** and **intervening** in bullying. One important piece is to recognize possible signs that your child is being bullied and open the lines of communication immediately.

Another component is talking to your child about the importance of kindness and inclusion. Creating a culture of acceptance is a priority at NHS; however, this starts at home. Having conversations about treating others with respect can have a positive impact on their behavior in school and decrease incidents of bullying.

These discussions are also great opportunities to establish an environment where your child feels safe talking to you about these issues. Even though there might not be an issue at the time, this increases the likelihood that they will come to you if a problem occurs later on.

Lastly, understanding what is bullying and what is not is very useful. This will help you to determine next steps. Regardless, **the school is here to help!** Call an administrator, the anti-bullying specialist, school counselor, or case manager to talk through the situation. We can help you determine whether or not an investigation needs to occur or, if it doesn’t fall under bullying, what other steps could be taken.

## 2023-2024 SAT Dates

- October 7, 2023
- November 4, 2023
- December 2, 2023
- March 9, 2024
- May 4, 2024
- June 1, 2024



## 2023-2024 ACT Dates

- October 28, 2023
- December 9, 2024
- February 10, 2024
- April 13, 2024
- June 8, 2024



## School Protocol for HIB

If bullying is suspected, the anti-bullying specialist will conduct an investigation and meet with all students involved separately. →

Parents of students involved will be notified of the investigation; however, the details provided will be limited. We understand this can be frustrating for a parent, but we have to protect student information and follow FERPA law. →

The investigation will be completed within 10 school days. →

Parents will receive follow up information regarding the outcome of the investigation. We will not be able to share discipline information of other students involved, but know that we take these cases very seriously. →

Our goal is to make sure each and every student feels safe and comfortable here at NHS.

## Tips for Parents– If Your Child is Being Bullied

- Listen openly and reassure them that coming to you was the right thing to do. Try and establish the facts. It can be helpful to keep a list of events to share with the school.
- Assure them that the bullying is not their fault and that they have family that will support them.
- Don't encourage retaliation to bullying - such as violent actions. It's important for children to avoid hitting or punching an abusive peer. Reacting that way has negative and unpredictable results- they may be hurt even further, and find that they are labeled as the problem. Instead, suggest that they walk away and seek help.
- Find out what your child wants to happen next. Help to identify the choices open to them; the potential next steps to take; and the skills they may have to help solve the problems.
- Encourage your child to get involved in activities that build their confidence and esteem, and help them to form friendships both inside and outside of school.
- Discuss the situation with your child's teacher, counselor, or administrator. Every child has a right to a safe environment in which to learn.
- Schools have a HIB policy which sets out the measures that will be taken to prevent all forms of bullying between pupils.

*Taken from the Anti-Bullying Alliance*

## Mental Health Resources

Is your teen in crisis? Call the Family Crisis Intervention Unit at 732-542-2444. More details [here](#).

The **988 Lifeline** is utilized across the United States. This shorter phone number has made it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services. Available 24/7 Call, Text, Chat.

[Click here](#) to learn more about 988.

\*Note: The previous 1-800-273-TALK (8255) number will continue to function indefinitely.



The TLC & AFSP NJ created a helpful padlet with various [Suicide Prevention Resources](#). Click to view.

## Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

September was Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. It is crucial to be aware of behaviors that may indicate someone is at risk for suicide. Please review the warning signs (to the right). On September 20, NHS students participated in an activity to raise awareness of suicide prevention and identify healthy coping strategies to use when struggling.



## WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:

The behaviors listed below may be some of the signs that someone is thinking about suicide.

### TALKING ABOUT:

- > Wanting to die
- > Great guilt or shame
- > Being a burden to others

### FEELING:

- > Empty, hopeless, trapped, or having no reason to live
- > Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage
- > Unbearable emotional or physical pain

### CHANGING BEHAVIOR, SUCH AS:

- > Making a plan or researching ways to die
- > Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away important items, or making a will
- > Taking dangerous risks such as driving extremely fast
- > Displaying extreme mood swings
- > Eating or sleeping more or less
- > Using drugs or alcohol more often

If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline  
Call or text 988  
Chat at [988lifeline.org](#)

Crisis Text Line  
Text "HELLO" to 741741



[www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention)

NIH Publication No. 04-22-436



## Vaping—Facts to Know

- Companies market toward youth by making the products fun flavors.



- Products are made to be easily concealable and look like every day objects.



- Vaping has an effect on brain growth and development, can cause incurable lung damage, and may have potential long-term effects to learning, addiction, and more.
- The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2021) reported that 31.3% of youth who vape reported usually purchasing the device themselves. This is compared to 6.8% of youth nationwide.



30ml = 30 packs



## Help is Available

- Youth and young adults can access the new e-cigarette quit program by texting "DITCHVAPE" to 88709.
- Parents and other adults looking to help young people quit should text "QUIT" to (202) 899-7550
- Information on how to quit: <https://teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping>
- NJ Tobacco Quit Options: [https://www.tobaccofreeNJ.com/files/ugd/fbbd59\\_67c2d88938684c2997131eb3415e07d0.pdf](https://www.tobaccofreeNJ.com/files/ugd/fbbd59_67c2d88938684c2997131eb3415e07d0.pdf)
- The school's Student Assistance Counselor, Ms. Peters, is a confidential resource who can help students quit!

**NEW JERSEY  
QUITLINE™**  
**1-866-NJ-STOP**  
No More Excuses.  
Free Phone Counseling That Works.  
[www.njquitline.org](http://www.njquitline.org)

## Signs of Substance Abuse

Excessive absences/tardiness	Nervousness
Forgetfulness	Oversensitivity
Lack of attention span	Sudden rage
Poor school performance	Excessive laughter and/or talking
Loss of interest in usual activities and relationships	Paranoia
General apathy/lack of motivation	Unexplained need for money/stealing
Moodiness	Change in personal hygiene
Excessive sleepiness or drifting	Defiance of rules
Possession of drug paraphernalia	Secretiveness



**Behavioral Signs**

## Did you know?

Participation in school activities has been shown to serve as a protective factor against the use of substances.

## Physical Signs



Red, watery eyes	Runny Nose
Dilated or constricted pupils	Change in appetite or weight
Blank stare	Excessive sweating
Cold, sweaty palms	Trembling hands
Aroma of drug or alcohol on hair, breath, or clothes	Unhealthy complexion
Needle marks on lower arm, leg or bottom of the foot	Vomiting 🤢
Hacking cough	Overall poor physical condition

# Neptune High School

## Upcoming College Visits

Students can view college visits on Naviance. The list is always expanding so it's important they keep an eye on it throughout the year. The college reps set up outside the cafes during lunch periods. Students are encouraged to stop by and ask questions! Here is a list of some of the upcoming visits:

Thu October 5, 2023	University of New England
Fri October 6, 2023	Georgian Court University
Tue October 10, 2023	U.S. Army
Fri October 13, 2023	Monmouth University
Mon October 23, 2023	The College of New Jersey
Tue October 24, 2023	Seton Hall University
Wed November 1, 2023	Brookdale Community College
Thu November 2, 2023	Rider University
Wed November 15, 2023	Seton Hall University
Fri November 17, 2023	Drew University
Wed December 14, 2023	Moravian University

## Junior Year Information

### All year -

- Get involved!
  - Sports, clubs, volunteering, working, etc.
- Meet with your school counselor
- Stay organized and put in 100% effort
  - Remember that when you apply to colleges, your GPA is based on the end of junior year
- Explore potential scholarship opportunities
- Take the SATs and/or ACTs (work with your counselor to determine which time of year would be best for you)

### Winter

- Start to narrow down post-grad plans
  - Ex. where you plan to attend college
- Start to familiarize yourself with the college process

### Spring

- Visit colleges you know you want to apply to
- Think about who to ask for letters of recommendation
- Complete your brag sheet

Follow the Counseling Department @Flier\_Wellness



**Visit our website on**

**<https://hs.neptuneschools.org/>**

## FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid Application opens **12/1/23 this year**. Many states and colleges set priority deadlines by which you must submit the FAFSA form to be considered for the aid programs they administer. It is very important to complete this application as soon as possible!

Attend NHS's Financial Aid Night on November 14 at 6pm to learn about the process! View the flyer [here](#).

- Helpful documents/videos found here:  
<https://www.hesaa.org/Pages/FAFSA.aspx>

### Other Resources:

<https://studentaid.gov>

College application checklist for students and parents: <https://studentaid.gov/resources/prepare-for-college/>



## Hotlines

**2nd Floor Hotline:** 888-222-2228;  
Text: 908-280-0235 between 3pm-8pm

**National Suicide Crisis Hotline:**  
1-800-784-2433

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline:**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**Crisis Text Line:** Text TALK to 741741

**NJ Hopeline:** 855-654-6735

**LGBTQ Hotline:** 866-488-7386

**Trans Lifeline:** 877-565-8860

**Womenspace:** 800-281-2800