

Senior Year Tip Sheet

Senior Year can be a variable experience for students. Some kids feel very “finished” with high school during this year; some really enjoy their final year. Generally, however, bonding among many senior students occurs, especially during second semester. Be aware that “senior slump” is also a reality. Continue to monitor your child’s attendance and engagement so that no negative long-term effects occur from their “slump.” Here’s a helpful list of milestones for his important year. *Please note dates refer to the 2010-2011 school year.*

Senior Photos are taken during the summer. Your child will receive an appointment from Blanton Studios; rescheduling is permitted.

Senior Group Picture (September 28). The picture is taken outside, usually in the stadium bleachers. Students do not have required dress.

Senior & Parents Meeting “The College Application Process” (Mon. September 20, 7:30pm, Auditorium). This meeting, sponsored by the Counseling Advisory Committee (CAC), is for seniors and their parents to help navigate the upcoming college admissions process.

Senior Parent Post-Prom Meeting (February 3, 7:30pm, Auditorium) is a meeting during which Administration, Senior Class Officers, and PTSA coordinators present details about this important event which helps keep our kids safe and off the streets after Prom. Senior parents are expected to donate toward this effort, usually during this evening.

Cap & Gown Measurements (February 16). The students complete order forms after being measured in the Cafeteria. Additionally, forms for Senior Superlatives are distributed at this time. Seniors will be asked to pay for their cap and gown.

Senior Picnic (April 10)-(rain date: May 1) Time –TBD; Place - TBD.

Senior Class Post-Prom Meeting (April 14) is for the students, held during the school day, in order to inform and motivate them to attend this important event.

Graduation Ticket Distribution (April 28) Seniors will be instructed to pick up graduation tickets during lunch. Each student will receive a fixed number of tickets. These tickets are free and required for admission to the Graduation Ceremony; Seniors and other students participating in the ceremony get special student tickets that are not counted in the family allotment. Unused tickets can be returned to the front office for use by families needing more than their allotment. Parents may request additional tickets on a first-come, first-served basis by contacting the assistant principal. Sometimes extra tickets are advertised on Whitcom.

Senior Graduation Speech Auditions TBD Since Whitman has no class ranking and no valedictorian, any senior may audition to speak at graduation. This opportunity is advertised on-line and through flyers. Auditions are in front of Senior Class Officers, Senior Sponsor, an administration, and a few teachers. A few speakers are usually chosen, usually with different viewpoints to their speeches. (There is also a formal graduation speaker at graduation.)

Senior & Parents Meeting “Transition to College” (Wed., May 18, 7:30pm, Auditorium).

This meeting, sponsored by the Counseling Advisory Committee (CAC), is for seniors and their parents and provides helpful tips from recent Whitman graduates about some of the issues that freshmen may face when transitioning to college life.

Cap & Gown Distribution/Graduation Rehearsal (May 19). Seniors file into the gym as they will into Constitution Hall, walking to music. Each student is called up to receive their cap & gown as well as any award they may be receiving.

Senior Prom (May 27) is in a local hotel from 9:00p.m.-1:00 a.m. This is a senior event, although underclassmen may attend if accompanying a senior. Students may attend alone or with a date. Kids usually go to dinner beforehand, often in groups. The girls generally wear evening wear (short or long dresses); the boys wear suits or tuxedos. Boutonnieres and corsages are usually given to dates. Groups very often rent limousines, splitting the cost; limo drivers are now certified. (Please see separate tip sheet #11 - Prom and Post-prom for additional information.)

Post-Prom (after prom, 1:00-5:00 a.m.) takes place in the gyms at school following Prom. It is planned and executed by parents. All the gyms and hallways are transformed according to the theme of the Post-Prom (which is kept secret from the students as long as possible). Many games, activities, a casino room, and lots of food are provided, with many prizes given, in order to keep the students engaged and on-site as long as possible. Students usually change into casual clothing before attending Post-Prom. Often their car has been left in the Whitman parking lot before dinner so they may use it after Post-Prom to get home. If any student leaves Post-Prom early, they are not allowed to return. Parents staff the party in two shifts, and lower grade parents are ideal for this job because they can experience this wonderful event yet not “infringe upon” their own kids. Some kids continue on out to breakfast before their big night ends! (Please see separate tip sheet #11 - Prom and Post-prom for additional information.)

Senior Final Exams are held earlier than exams for the rest of the school so that the seniors are finished before graduation! Students in AP courses do not take final exams for those courses if they take the AP Exam. **May 23** – Periods 8 & 7; **May 24** – Periods 6 & 5; **May 25** – Periods 4 & 3; **May 26**– Periods 2 & 1; **May 27** – Make-up exams.

Graduation (TBD) is decided on by MCPS in early spring and occurs anywhere between June 1-12th, either in the afternoon or evening. It is held at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, DC. Seating is on a first-come basis; opening time will be announced and no one is admitted before that time. Seniors are usually asked to arrive no later than one hour before the ceremony begins, and the doors will be closed during the processional. Parking in the area is limited, so many families find it easier to take the Metro. There is a special area in a box near the stage where parents may go to take pictures during the ceremony.

Senior Dues (\$45) Includes cap and gown, graduation tickets and program, hall rental, flowers, etc. Dues will be collected in the main office beginning Monday, November 22, 2009.