

## Important Information from the Guidance Department

*For additional information, please visit our website: [www.melroseschools.com](http://www.melroseschools.com), and click on the "Guidance" link, which you can access from the "High School" link.*

### SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS

*Classes of 2011 and 2012*

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test / National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test will be administered on Saturday, October 17, 2009 at Melrose High School. Students should register with Mrs. O'Connor in the Guidance Office by Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$20.00; please make checks payable to *Melrose Public Schools*. When students register, they will be given a practice booklet to help them prepare for the test.

The PSAT gives sophomores and juniors an opportunity to practice for the upcoming SAT's and to compete for scholarship programs such as the National Merit Scholarship, the National Achievement Scholarship for Outstanding Negro Students, and the National Hispanic Scholarship Program. It also affords students the opportunity to participate in the Student Search Service, which provides information about colleges and universities to students.

For the vast majority of students, the primary benefit of this test is having the opportunity to assess their relative strengths and weaknesses in the areas of writing/grammar, critical reading and mathematics prior to taking the SAT. Upon completion of the test, students will receive a copy of their individual score report, noting their answers and correct answers, along with their actual test booklet. With this information, students can take steps to improve their scores relevant to the range of their score goals, which will vary. It is appropriate for students to discuss their score goals with their guidance counselor, who can assist with helping them focus on a range that is appropriate and meaningful to them as individuals. Counselors will begin meeting individually with juniors in the spring of junior year to discuss college planning.

Some families will make the decision to employ the use of test preparation services following administration of PSAT's. If you and your child feel that additional tutoring and/or test preparation is appropriate and would be useful, please contact Mrs. O'Connor in the Guidance Office (781-979-2208) for a list of services in the area. Guidance Counselors can answer any specific questions that you have about test preparation services.

Please visit the following websites to familiarize yourself with the Spring 2010 dates for the SAT and ACT exams: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.act.org](http://www.act.org). In the Guidance Department, **we do encourage students** to consider taking BOTH exams in the spring of junior year and possibly, in the fall of senior year.

As always, please contact your child's guidance counselor, who will be happy to assist you with any specific questions that you have regarding your child's individual goals and plans.