



UAIS December Newsletter

December 1, 2016

Dear UAIS Parents,

I hope that you and your family enjoyed a relaxing Thanksgiving weekend. With the longer holiday quickly approaching, our current seniors are turning in the final drafts of their Extended Essays and also anxiously awaiting a wave of college application decisions in the coming weeks (more on that below). Juniors have currently proposed their Extended Essay topics to the staff and will be proposing their required CAS projects before our next holiday break, if they have not already done so. Soon, all UAIS students will begin preparing for midterm exams in mid-January. I'll have more information about the adjusted schedule in next month's newsletter.

Know Resolve: On December 7th, we will have speaker Dennis Liegghio visit UAIS from an organization called Know Resolve (<http://knowresolve.org/>). He will be talking to all sophomore and junior classes. He teaches students about positive mental health as well as suicide prevention. He will be talking with students about how to help yourself or someone else with thoughts of suicide and gives them very practical tools for managing difficult times while maintaining a focus on developing positive mental health. Please feel free to contact our counselor, Susan Fitzsimonds, at susan.fitzsimonds@uticak12.org if you have any further questions. Parents wishing their children to opt out of this 45-minute session, please call Mrs. Fitzsimonds no later than December 5th.

College Application Decisions: Senior parents, I want to make you aware that a significant portion of Early Action and Early Decision applications are made by during the week prior to Christmas, including Christmas Eve. This includes a number of highly selective schools, including the University of Michigan. These responses typically arrive in an email to students. What we have discovered is that more often than not, we see a greater number of deferrals than acceptances in this initial process, as well as a few rejection letters. I have spoken to all senior classes about keeping these initial decisions in perspective.

Among my points that I want to share with senior parents as well include the following:

- We emphasize to students that a deferral is NOT a rejection letter, nor does it foreshadow that a rejection is more likely. It simply indicates the college wants to gather more information. Encourage your child to focus on finishing strong with his/her first semester grades, which schools will request.
- We discourage students (and parents!) from comparing themselves to other classmates who may have an acceptance when they have not. GPA and ACT/SAT comparisons are typical examples we hear. We tell students that riding this train of thought is not helpful. The reality is that the college application process has evolved to a holistic evaluation where other factors play increasing roles in the acceptance process. Please remind them that their future success is independent of others' acceptances.
- We tell students that if they do receive a rejection letter, it does mean the process is over. This is no appeal to this decision. Please encourage your child to take this decision in stride and move forward. This may be the first time in their life they have not been accepted to something, and learning to overcome that loss is a good life skill as well.
- UAIS enjoys a significantly higher acceptance rate compared to most other schools because of its academic rigor, but this doesn't really show until April and May once all schools complete the process. Patience is important.
- Some students may cling to the belief that acceptance to their dream school is required for their success. We believe that our students define themselves, not a school they attend. This is also consistent with our alumni feedback. If you also remind them of this, it will reduce their stress and reinforce that hard work, no matter where you do it, pays off in the long run!

Coordinator's Corner: UAIS seniors have officially been registered for IB May exams. We have 251 registrations in 11 Higher Level (HL) subjects and 250 registrations in 13 Standard Level (SL) exams for a grand total of 521 exams for the entire senior class. Very impressive!

Jostens Visitation: Jostens will be visiting UAIS on Friday, December 6th. All seniors will attend a meeting for graduation information, including information about the ordering of caps and gowns. Sophomore lunch meetings will consist of class ring information on December 9th. Seniors are responsible for the ordering of their caps and gowns for graduation at UAIS, though they do not need to be ordered right now. I will have more information regarding graduation/commencement and senior activities beginning in January. A separate mailing will be emailed to senior parents only so that I can keep in regular contact with senior parents regarding these important events and deadlines.

IB a Parent Booster Update: The IB A Parent Booster was organized for the purpose of supporting the education of high school students by fostering relationships between the school, parents and teachers. Our organization "IB a Parent Booster" is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to enrich the educational experience of the students

while attending UAIS. The IB Parent Booster would like to thank all the parents who donated, paid their Booster dues and updated their contact information during parent-teacher conferences. It was a success! :) However, for those who still would like to donate to the IB A parent Boosters, please send in your donations to:

IB A Parent Booster
P.O. Box 1324
7007 Metropolitan Pkwy
Sterling Heights, MI 48311

The next meeting is on December 13th in the Media Center. I would like to encourage you ALL to attend at least one Booster meeting. The Agenda, Booster Minutes and other important information are always posted on our Facebook (UAIS IB A parent Booster (*Join us!*)). You can also contact the president at: swojtara@yahoo.com, or uaisbooster@gmail.com (alt).

UAIS Application Process for Class of 2021: The school district will release the application with criteria for applying to the specialty programs (CSI, MST, UAIS) on January 4th. For more information, please visit: http://uais.uticak12.org/about_us/prospective_students.

In closing, I would like to wish you all a very happy, healthy, and relaxing upcoming holiday with family and friends. I wish you all the very best for the upcoming New Year.

Warm Regards,

Justin Spear
Program Director, UAIS