It is now late fall and many colleges have begun the first phase of the college application process. Fortunately, many schools begin accepting applications in December so you still have time to complete your application.

**Step one:** You will need to identify five or six schools that meet your qualifications and make certain that among those schools at least one school is a safety. A safety school is a school where you are sure to receive acceptance such as a two year community college. Many students attend a two year school and after a year or two transfer to a four year college.

**Step two:** Applications are found on the Common Application or on the college website. You will need to complete the college application and any application requirements such as taking the SAT or ACT, completing the college essay and obtaining recommendations from your teachers. Request a recommendation letter now to ensure that you give your teacher enough time to write your recommendation. This is a busy time for your teachers and your Guidance Counselors so try to give as much notice as possible.

Finally, **Step 5:** Go to www.pin.ed.gov and obtain your PIN (Personal Identification Number). Begin to work with your parent/guardian to collect all the materials required to file your FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in January. You will need the following: taxes from the previous year, W2 forms, bank statements, investments, i.e. mortgage and additional income information. Make certain to listen for announcements concerning financial aid seminars at BHS and in the surrounding community. You are now well on your way if you follow these 5 steps.

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**Developmental Guidance Workshops**

The Guidance Department frequently visits your classrooms and conducts various developmental workshops. This past fall we visited freshmen and conducted an orientation program. Topics included tips on how to be a successful student as well as BHS rules and policies. Additionally, bilingual counselors conducted an orientation program, “Success @ BHS”, with newly entered students focusing on similar topics as well as other issues related to life here in America. At the end of September we met with seniors and presented information about future planning. Much of the discussion included details on the college application process. Next, the junior class was informed about the upcoming PSAT exam, Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test. Shortly following the junior presentation counselors met again with freshmen this time to talk about early college planning. This discussion focused on what colleges are looking for when they review candidates for admission.

Finally, adjustment counselors conducted workshops with freshman about how to recognize and prevent bullying.

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**Some student comments from recent workshops**

**Freshman:** “In order to be a successful student, you need to be responsible. You need to have good grades”.

**Freshman:** “I will focus on being academically prepared for college, also school and community involvement”.

**Success @ BHS Mentor:** “Students were very interested in learning about how to move up to a higher level in their classes. Also, they wanted to know what kind of after school programs are offered at BHS”.

In addition, the majority of the juniors who attended the PSAT workshop agreed that the workshop was helpful. We look forward to seeing you in your classrooms throughout the year. Our group lessons are designed to benefit everyone in their classroom setting but please remember you’re always welcome to see your counselor individually in the Guidance office. Stop by any time with questions or if you need help.
Exercise
Teens should get 60 minutes of physical activity each day. This can include aerobics, flexibility exercises and strength training. Consider sports, weight lifting, aerobics, dancing, swimming, walking or running.

Avoid Bad Habits
Stay away from tobacco, drugs and alcohol. These bad habits could lead to serious conditions including lung and heart disease, liver problems, and even destroyed relationships.

Eat Healthy
Eat a variety of foods from each of the food groups. It is ok to have an occasional treat but watch out that you don’t go overboard! Remember... always eat breakfast.

Sleep
Teenagers need at least nine hours of sleep each night to function at their best. Set a daily regular bed time.

Think Positive
Seek positive relationships. Stay away from unhealthy ones. Be optimistic. A positive outlook helps us to be happier, be more successful and productive. Take time out of your day to meditate, get to know yourself, and set goals for your life.

Do you know that some professions require a professional license?
Are you interested in a career as a professional accountant, cosmetologist, electrician, engineer, plumber, social worker, or veterinarian? If so, after receiving your training/education, you will have to obtain a professional license in order to work in your field.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Professional Licensure (DPL) has a student career outreach program that seeks to raise awareness of career opportunities in the more than 50 trades and professions licensed by the DPL.

Through this program, the DPL staff visits high schools and presents to interested students. The Brockton High School Guidance Department will be hosting the DPL presentation on January 9, 2015 during period 5. Seniors that are interested in learning more about professional licensure and trade programs, please see your Guidance Counselor for a pass. Space is limited.

You can also go to their website at www.mass.gov/dpl for more information.