From the Director

Larry Ramos

I would like to wish all of the students a wonderful holiday season and Happy New Year. This first part of the school year passed by so quickly that it seems like just a short time ago that we held our "Jump Start" program for seniors and their parents. Many of you are probably thinking what happened to this year? Did you get done what you wanted to accomplish? And Seniors, did you apply to college yet? Are you planning to apply for financial aid right after the New Year? If you can't answer "yes" to all of these questions, you will want to read the rest of this newsletter. Our counselors have written many pieces of wonderful advice on how students can create a plan of action for the coming months and beyond.

If you want to go to college, NOW is the time to get serious. The counselors are ready to work with you. Last year, the counselors helped 343 students get into the college of their choice and all of those students were assisted in applying for financial aid (federal, state and private aid). That means 80% of high school graduates who received Project Discovery services enrolled in college this Fall and were helped to obtain the resources necessary to pay for college.

What happened to the other 20% who did not enroll in college? Well, some are doing very honorable things like joining the military or working full-time. However, some haven't been as fortunate due to unemployment, incarceration, or even death. Some graduates are taking time off to decide their future plans.

One of my wishes this holiday season is that all of our Seniors will do what's needed to have an educational future. I also hope that they will spend some "quality time" with their Project Discovery counselor in the coming weeks to finalize or formulate their college plans. Let the counselors help you get it all together!

Happy Holidays!
MAKING BETTER USE OF YOUR TIME
By Darryl Neighbor, Assistant Director

Better study skills usually result in better grades, which will be a major factor when applying for admissions to a college. Even if you decide to go to a business or technical school, join the military, learn a trade or start a business, there's going to be a lot of things you'll need to learn. Sharpen your study skills now and you'll be able to handle it just fine.

GETTING ORGANIZED

Find a place to study. Your study space should be:
* Quiet – a place where you won’t get distracted
* Have good lighting
* Enough desk space – to spread out papers and books
* A comfortable chair

Get a System. Use these ideas to choose a system to organize your notes and other class materials.
* A 3-ring binder.
* Dividers to separate notes for different subjects.
* A pocket folder to store completed assignments.
* Invest in a planner to help you keep track of your assignments.
* At home keep a file folder for each class to keep tests and other papers that you might want to look at later.

Fall into a Routine Before Leaving School. Have all your books and materials you need for studying:
* Make a list of homework or tests you have to study for.
* Check what you wrote down and take home any books you need.

Plan Your Time. Schedule your study time area
* Responsibilities at home.
* After school activities, like sports or a club

Some Other Tips.
* Work on the most difficult assignment first.
* Don’t cram all night before a test.
* Take good notes and review them at least once each week.
* Learn to say no. If you have an assignment to get done, plan a time to meet your friends later when your assignment is complete.

This information was reprinted from Clanning L. Bte Co., Inc. ON BUILDING STUDY SKILLS. Check out their web site at www.onstudyskills.com (password: StudyWell)

GOING RIGHT ON
By Earl Vore, Counselor

Where will you be and what will you be doing when you’re 35 or 40 or even 55 years old? Someday you will be the parents with sons and daughters in high school. You will be the voters and people who run the country. How can any of us prepare and plan for a future in a changing world? Think of all the inventions and technological advances we have seen in your life. Most students in high school today will be working with products and equipment that have not yet even been invented.

Your Project Discovery counselor can help you find answers to these questions about your future. Good training and advanced education will be required by everyone in the next century to be a successful and productive member of society. Student should begin to plan early in high school for college or trade school (see Tic Tock on page 3). Many students would like to go to college, but don’t believe it is possible for them to do. This is not true.

Your Project Discovery counselor has expertise on the following topics: academics in high school, planning for college, what admissions officers look for in students, SAT and ACT tests, common excuses for not going to college, career planning, choosing a college. They can help you set up a planning calendar, what classes to take, and how to prepare for the SAT and ACT tests.

Your counselor helps you make a strong connection between a good education and future success. If you are concerned about your future and would like further counseling to assist you in educational and career development, contact your Project Discovery counselor.

Campus visits for Spring semester are as follows:
February 5 – Butler County Community College
March 14 – Langston University
April 2 – Pittsburg State University

April 11 – Coffeyville and Independence Community College
April 24 – Cowley County Community College
GOOD JOB, BOE!!!
by Gael McCully, Counselor

Monday, November 4th, the Wichita Board of Education initiated a series of well deserved and overdue awards. The “99 Percent Award” is given to students who attend class regularly and earn good grades. They honored 28 students from schools in USD #259. We applaud the board for recognizing these students and realize these students represent many others in the district.

We also are proud that six students in our program were chosen to be in the initial group of honorees. They are:

Morgan Ginyard, East
Adam Lopez, Metro Boulevard
Jacquelin Duarte, Metro Meridian
Rachel Dillman, Metro Midtown
Abbel Owens, North
Vu-Thu Nguyen, Northeast Magnet

Our congratulations to you and to the 99 percent you represent!

Crystal Allen
by Gael McCully, Counselor

Crystal Allen is a young woman you would enjoy meeting. A product of the Wichita Schools, she graduated from South High in Spring 2002. As a young girl she aspired to be a pilot for NASA, but found her eyesight was not adequate for that career. She began living on her own at the age of sixteen and in her senior year at South she was chosen to participate in Project Discovery. She had goals she wanted to accomplish and needed help. She was assisted in completing admission and scholarship applications, and received a TRIO scholarship to attend summer school at Wichita State University. Crystal enjoyed the casual, but fast-paced, atmosphere of summer school and continues at Wichita State this fall. Her interest in Spanish continues from middle school. She hopes to use her bilingual skills in her chosen field after graduation and to live in Spain for two years. Her advice to seniors is to start early. Get those applications for admission and scholarships in now.

Tic Tock, Tic Tock
by Stephanie Haynes, Counselor

Tic Tock, Tic Tock: Seniors it’s time to check your list for the count down to college. Here is a list of things that you should have done by now. If you can not check off at least three of the items listed below, contact you Project Discovery Counselor at once. Do not let time catch up with you, stay ahead of time.

- Request and complete college applications from three to five schools.
- Ask teachers, counselors and coaches for letters of recommendation.
- Visit colleges that interest you.
- Complete scholarship applications using your Activities Resume.
- Attend the College Fair in your area.
- Retake the ACT and SAT and try to increase your score.
- Attend the financial aid program at your high school.
- Complete the FAFSA before March 1.
- Compare your top colleges and make final selection.
- Notify the other schools of your decision.
- Complete education loan applications if needed.
- Attend college summer orientation.