



Frontier Charter School Sponsors
'Steps to Your Future'
with Mari Jo Parks, M.Ed., Career & College Coach



So Much to Do, So Little Time

March Madness has more than one meaning... For high school seniors and juniors, it is that time of year when so many choices and decisions need to be addressed. I have talked with a number of students and parents and they all said they are feeling really stress right now. So my best advice is...

- > Take a deep breath and relax. Yes, there are lots of decisions that need to be made but remember there are NO WRONG DECISIONS. If you decide on one thing and then find it is wrong, you can change. One college freshman I talked with over spring break told me how he had really done his research and decided on a college in the Lower 48. But once he got there, he realized it was not right for him. So wisely he transferred to UA-Fairbanks second semester. He is very happy with his decision.
- > Go back to basics. Look at your calendar, or create a calendar, to help you see the big picture.
- > REMEMBER you are going to live to be over 100, you have lots of time to do it ALL. But decide on your first steps now.

College Bound Seniors To Do:

1. Get your scholarship applications in.
2. This month colleges are notifying you about your acceptance. Record the information in your notebook and your calendar. Keep all letters or emails in one place.
3. In April watch for your financial aid awards. Record them and start comparing the college offers.
4. Set May 1st as your deadline to select your college. Be sure to notify them.
5. Check your transcript so there are no errors.
6. Be sure you have received your FAFSA statement. Colleges use this to decide on financial aid.
7. OK, this one is more personal but hug your parents, they are going through a lot right now!!!

Non-College Bound Seniors

1. Are you going to a trade school or an apprentice program? Get your paperwork completed. Contact your program and ask what needs to be done. Keep the information in your notebook and follow through.
2. Unsure of what you want to do? List all the possibilities and research these ideas. Just before Spring Break I worked with a young man who was confused and uncertain. We did a brief assessment, discussed some possibilities and in the end he selected 3 colleges he wanted to attend. It was not too late to get the applications in. He is waiting for his acceptance letters now.
3. If you have any allotment money left this might be a good time to contact me for some assistance. You don't have to do this alone; I am here to help. Know that you are right where you need to be.
4. Summer jobs are opening up. Maybe find a good job that meets some of your interests. Apply now.

Juniors

1. Sign up for the May 8th SAT. It will be good to take it during your Junior year, so you can learn about the test and plan on taking it again in the Fall. You can ask your school representative for a fee waiver.
2. Have a discussion with your parents about college and the financial aspect of how they can help.
3. Plan some special activities for the summer. Think about the opportunities to job shadow, volunteer or have a summer job? All of these can help you make decisions for your future.
4. Meet with your Academic Advisor to plan your classes for next year.

Sophomores and Freshman

1. Research programs that are available in the Anchorage School District. Do you know about the CTE Programs? Anchorage School District offers 12 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs. <https://www.asdk12.org/Page/5360>
2. Talk with your Academic Advisor about your courses for next year.
3. Do you need to take a summer school class? Now is the right time to sign up for it.
4. Plan some special activities for the summer. Think about the opportunities to job shadow, volunteer or have a summer job? All of these can help you make decisions for your future.

Parents

Try not to worry. (I know easier said than done!!!). Try to listen and not offer a lot of advice. At this stage your senior in high school has heard it so often they quit listening. Leave little notes and treats...for some reason kids listen to information when food comes with it!!! There will come a day when you look back on this time and realize you made it through!!!

Don't forget the next Zoom seminar is Financial Aid and Understanding Your College Award Package on March 30, time to be announced. Contact me to register at future.incl@gmail.com

Have a great week, *Mari Jo*