

INTRODUCTION TO GUIDANCE SERVICES AT NEWTON SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

August 31, 2014

To: Freshmen and New to South Parents/Guardians
From: Shelly Borg, Director of Guidance

Welcome to Newton South! I hope that you have had a wonderful summer and that your son or daughter is ready to begin the 2014/15 school year. Each year at this time, it is exciting to usher in a new freshman class, as well as the families new to our community. This letter is meant as an introduction to the services of the NSHS guidance department. I encourage you to check the school's website for guidance department resources and other information throughout the year at www.newton.k12.ma.us/nshs.

Upon entering Newton South, students are assigned a counselor with whom they'll remain until graduation. Siblings are assigned to the same counselor and House. Our counselors are experienced and knowledgeable professionals who work collaboratively community on behalf of your child and family with teachers, administrators, one another and the larger Newton South community.

Counselors are advisors and primary support for students. They work with students individually and in groups, focusing on developmental issues, academic planning and course selection, personal matters of concern that might arise, and the college and post-high school transition process. Assisting students to achieve their maximum potential academically, while encouraging social and extracurricular experiences, is a major focus of our work. Above all, counselors seek to promote healthy development in all students in our school community.

As support for students and families, counselors are often the first person a parent or guardian contacts with questions or concerns. Please note that we respect the confidentiality of the relationships we form with students. We seek to understand the expectations and concerns parents have for their children and advise accordingly.

In addition to guidance counselors, Newton South has other specialists available to meet with students, including a Prevention/Intervention Counselor, School Psychologists, Clinical Care Counselor, and two College and Career Counselors. Additionally, our METCO counselor advises Boston students and works in collaboration with each student's designated guidance counselor.

As a general rule for parents and guardians, if you have a question or concern about your child, please contact us. If we are unable to answer your questions, we will direct you to someone who can. A few general guidelines are:

Please call or email your child's counselor when:

- You have a concern regarding your child
- You'd like to check on their overall progress
- You have information that may effect your child academically, socially or emotionally

- You have not seen your child's report card or mid-term notices
- You have a personal matter to discuss about your child
- You have a question regarding your child's schedule or course selection
- You don't know whom else to ask!

Please do NOT call the counselor when:

- Your child is out sick or will be late (contact their House Secretary)
- You wish to reach a particular teacher (e-mail the teacher directly or call the House Office to leave a message with the House Secretary for the teacher).

It will be extremely helpful if you would advise us of important change(s) in your family, such as an extended illness, separation, divorce, remarriage, a death in the family or other events or issues that may be impacting your child. While it is up to you to decide how much information to share, it is important to remember that the more we know about a student, the more support and guidance we can offer. It is often a counselor's responsibility and in the student's best interest to inform teachers of major changes in your child's life. Whenever possible, this kind of information sharing is done with you and/or your child's knowledge.

We look forward to partnering with and getting to know you and your son or daughter during the next four years.

Guidance Department:

Shelly Borg, Counseling Dept. Chair, Cutler and Wheeler Counselor	617-559-6537
Sue Butler, Goldrick	617-559-6536
Marcy Davidson, Goodwin	617-559-6703
Christopher Hardiman, Goldrick	617-559-6541
David Kershaw, Wheeler, Goodwin	617-559-6535
Aaron Lewis, Wheeler	617-559-6538
Jim Medeiros, Cutler	617-559-6540
Hae-Kyung Choi, Wheeler, Goldrick, Cutler	617-559-6545
Kathleen Sabet, Cutler, Goodwin; College & Career Counselor	617-559-6551
Donna Segal, Cutler	617-559-6539
Sarah Style, Goodwin	617-559-6542
Homer Turner, Wheeler	617-559-6543
Barbara Brown, College & Career Counselor	617-559-6544
Brian Deleskey, Prevention/Intervention Counselor	617-559-6577
Katani Sumner, METCO Counselor	617-559-6569
Janice O'Neil, Registrar	617-559-6511
Jenn Pontillo, Clinical Care Counselor	617-559-6519