

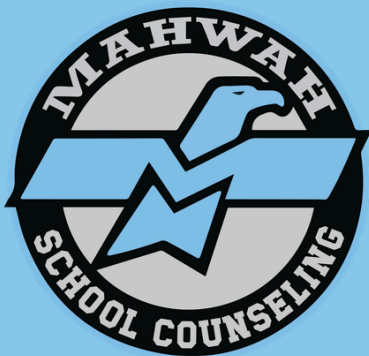
# SCHOOL COUNSELING NEWSLETTER

MAY 2026



## INSIDE, WE ALSO TALK ABOUT:

- Page 2 - College & Career Corner
- Page 3-6 - Student Opportunities
- Page 7-8 - Mental Health Awareness
- Page 9 - Upcoming Events



Dear Students and Families,

May is always a busy month both in school and out of school. But it is also an exciting time with the weather getting warmer, end of year celebrations, and planning ahead for next steps.

Finding balance between ending the year strong and planning for summer activities is very important at this time of year. Please take a look at the enclosed information and our website for more information on summer opportunities.

May is also Mental Health Awareness Month, and one of the best ways to support students is through fostering connections, and enclosed are two articles on that topic.

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

**Jim O'Hara**

**Director of School Counseling K-12**



## Seniors

**We are in the home stretch!**

### **Last Call for Scholarship Info:**

We love to recognize all the amazing scholarship offers our students receive from colleges in our graduation program each year, so please bring, or e-mail, any MERIT BASED monetary award information from your colleges to the School Counseling Office by Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. We would like ALL the scholarships you have earned - even from the colleges you may not be attending. We simply need a copy of a letter outlining the merit scholarship the college has offered.

Please bring the letters to the School Counseling Office OR you can e-mail them directly to Mrs. Mariani: [nmariani@mahwah.k12.nj.us](mailto:nmariani@mahwah.k12.nj.us).

## Juniors

### **Tip of the Month - Demonstrated Interest**

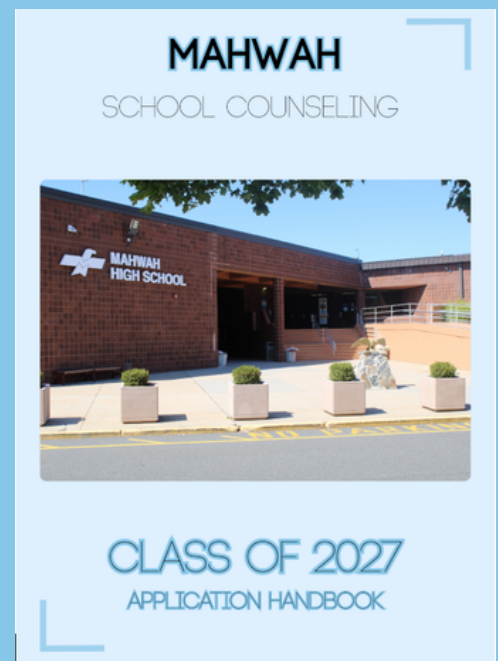
While visiting and connecting with colleges is helpful for you as an applicant, it can also be a valuable factor when colleges review your application. It is important to understand which of the colleges you are applying to track demonstrated interest - which means ways in which you engage or show that you are strongly considering attending.

Visiting campus, connecting virtually, and meeting with an admissions rep are all examples of ways an applicant can demonstrate interest.

**You can learn more by researching a college's Common Data Set, or see page 13 of our Application Handbook linked [here](#) for more information.** Some colleges DO and some DO NOT track demonstrated interest. Keep this in mind as you plan your college visits and build your list!

### ***Some Colleges that Consider Demonstrated Interest:***

- **Syracuse**
- **Lehigh**
- **Tulane**
- **Elon**
- **Fordham**
- **U. Miami**



# STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Ready to make this summer exciting, meaningful, and unforgettable? Want to meet new people, gain real-world experience, and make a positive impact in your community? Then don't miss the Volunteer & Community Service Fair hosted by the LEO Club in partnership with the Mahwah High School Option 2 Community Service Program!

- Thursday, May 28th
- During Lunch
- Gymnasium

Over 15 amazing organizations will be there to share volunteer opportunities, summer programs, leadership experiences, and ways YOU can get involved and make a difference. Whether you're passionate about helping people, protecting the environment, working with children, supporting animals, or giving back to the community, there's something for everyone!

Volunteering is more than just a resume booster — it's a chance to create memories, build skills, discover new passions, and positively impact the lives of others. As one famous author once said: "Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more."

**BONUS:** Students can earn high school credit for volunteer work through the Option 2 Community Service Program!

To receive credit, students must complete the required paperwork and obtain Mrs. Mandel's signature using the following form:

[Option Two Community Service Form](#)

Stop by the gym during lunch, explore exciting opportunities, and find a cause that inspires you.

Come discover how YOU can make a difference this summer — we can't wait to see you there!

**SEE NEXT PAGE FOR PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS!**

# STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES



## VOLUNTEER FAIR

THURS

28

MAY

**DURING LUNCH - 10:33AM  
IN THE GYM**

### ORGANIZATIONS ATTENDING:

- ACCESS FOR ALL
- EMMANUAL CANCER FOUNDATION
- ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH ALLIANCE
- MEVO
- CAMP ACORN
- CAMP IGNITE
- CHRISTIAN HEALTH
- MAHWAH EMS
- REFLECTIONS AND RISE
- TABLE TO TABLE
- MAHWAH PUBLIC LIBRARY
- PONY POWER
- SPECTRUM FOR LIVING
- THE SEEING EYE
- THE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM
- THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

# STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

## Alternative to Four Year College Fair Success



On Monday May 18<sup>th</sup>, Mahwah HS welcomed industry professionals, technical/trade schools, military, and 2 year educational programs. Exposing students to options beyond - and in addition to - a four year college path.

### Organizations in attendance included:

- Atlantic Health Systems/NJ Society for Respiratory Care
- Bergen Community College
- various military branches
- Bergen County Technical Schools (adult and continuing education)
- BOCES
- Aviation Institute of Maintenance
- Bergen County Sheriff's Office
- Dental Studies Institute
- Eastwick College and The HoHoKus School of Trade
- Fortis Institute
- Hackensack Meridian Health
- Land Improvement Contractors of America (LICA)
- Lincoln Tech
- Mahwah Police Department
- Pennsylvania College of Technology
- Terrie O'Connor Real Estate
- The Pro Beauty Academy
- In addition, the following institutions provided information: Berkeley College, Electrical Training Academy, FedEx, NJ Transit, The Landing School, PSEG, United Association of NJ: and Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Division.

# STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Alternative to Four Year College Fair  
Success:



Special thanks to all of our visiting partners and School Counselor Stacy Mandel for organizing.

# Mental Health Awareness Month

## Tip #1 - Connections



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CENTER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

Please see the helpful hints below from The Ohio State University on supporting teens.

### 5 EASY WAYS TO

## *Support Your Adolescent's Mental Health*

#### 1 Help your teen know they belong in the school community.

- Talk about school often at home. Tell your teen what you see them learning and achieving.
- Support your teen's participation in extracurricular activities.

*I know your classes are more challenging this year, but I'm proud of how you've \_\_\_\_\_*

#### 2 Support your teen's relationship with their teachers.

- Ask your teen which teachers or other adults at school they feel supported by.
- Make sure the teacher or school counselor knows if your teen feels lonely or unwelcome at school.

*Who can you talk to if things are tough at school?*

#### 3 Experience family and school traditions together.

- Encourage your teen to share with their friends and teachers about cultural or family traditions that are important to your family or community.
- Participate in school traditions with your teen (*Example: Attending school concerts*).

*Let's celebrate together! Remember last year when...*

#### 4 Support behaviors that build success and well-being.

- Talk about and model healthy sleeping habits (*Example: Early, regular bedtime*).
- Promote activities that align with your teen's interests and that build problem solving skills (*Examples: Sports, yoga, music, theater*).

*What do you need to do today to meet your goal? Do you need any help from me?*

#### 5 Continue to build nurturing relationships at home.

- Have fun together as a family by playing games, making food together, etc.
- Have simple, daily conversations with your teen about school, friends, and more.

*How are you feeling about \_\_\_\_\_?*

# Mental Health Awareness Month Tip #2 - Parenting



Below is an article from local parent coach Fern Weis. Learn more about coaching and classes at [www.fernweis.com](http://www.fernweis.com).

## Why the instinct to correct works against you and your child.

By Fern Weis

*The instinct to correct. Sit with that for a while.*

*When children make mistakes, the instinct to correct just appears. It is, after all, an instinct. It comes unbidden, without thought.*

🎯 *To quote Star Trek, it comes from the brain's "prime directive" – to protect and ensure survival. This leads to an often-uncontrollable need parents have:*

🌿 *to teach*

🌿 *to guide*

🌿 *to prevent mistakes*

🌿 *to help their child do better next time*

*But there's a small – and quite significant – step that often matters even more.*

### **Connection before correction.**

*When a child feels understood first, they are far more open to hearing guidance afterward.*

*Without that connection, correction is taken as criticism.*

*And criticism tends to shut conversations down.*

*Connection opens the door.*

*Correction becomes easier to hear.*

*For more support in how to talk to your child, see Fern's website to learn more or schedule a consultation.*

*Take a deep dive into what keeps you struggling with that impulse to correct, or anything else on your mind about raising your child and maintaining your sanity.*



# **Important Dates and Events**

## **May:**

- Thurs. May 28<sup>th</sup> - Volunteer Fair during Lunch

## **June:**

- Sat. June 6<sup>th</sup> - SAT Date
- June 19<sup>th</sup> - Give Back Day - Schools Closed
- June 18, 22, 23, 24 - Final Exams
- June 25<sup>th</sup> - Last Day for Students & MHS Graduation!



# THUNDERBIRD EXTERN/INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

*Mahwah High School is proud to offer our Summer Externship Program (for rising juniors and seniors) and Internship Program (for rising seniors)—unique opportunities designed to give you real-world, hands-on experience in a career field that interests you. This is your chance to explore your passions and build meaningful connections beyond the classroom.*

*Whether you're curious about a future profession or already have a specific pathway in mind, these programs allow you to step into the professional world and see what your future could look like.*

*Take a few minutes to learn more here:  
[Thunderbird Externship Internship Programs](#)*

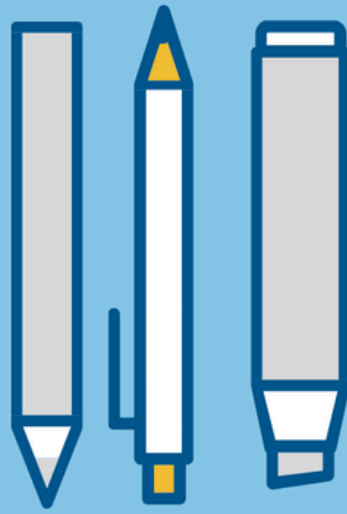
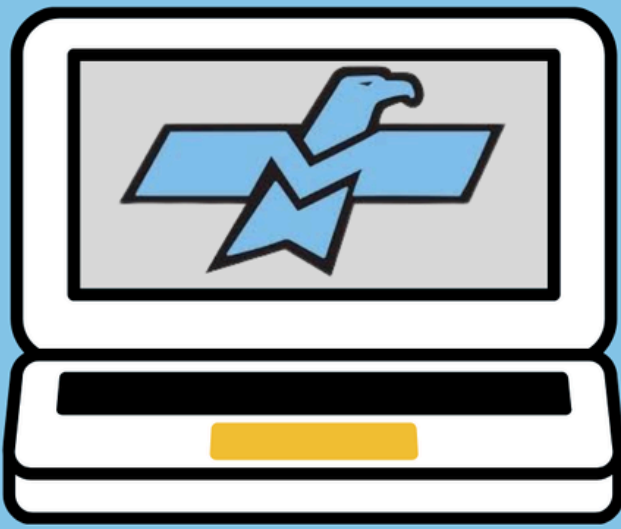
*Ready to take the next step? Complete the application by April 24th (here):  
<https://forms.gle/xgzkzPdf6p2tvKSY7>*

*Participation in an externship or internship is also a key component of earning a Career Pathway Endorsement—a powerful transcript distinction that demonstrates your commitment, initiative, and depth of learning in a chosen field.*

*Earning this endorsement can:*

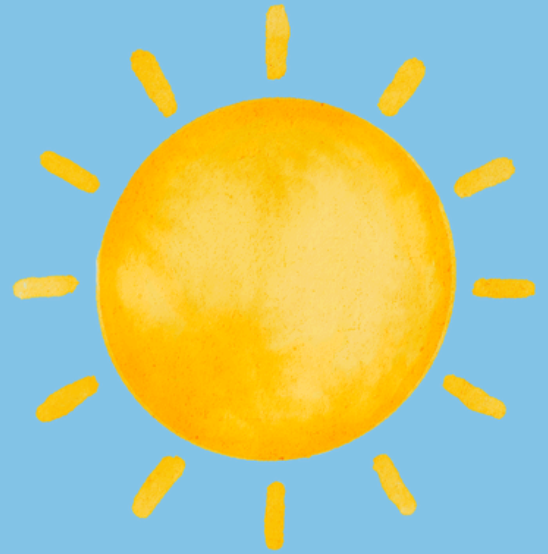
- *Set you apart in college, job, and scholarship applications*
- *Showcase your real-world experience and career readiness*
- *Help you develop valuable skills like independence, perseverance, and professional communication*
- *Connect your interests to meaningful, future-focused opportunities*

*Not sure where to start? Externship is a great place to begin - see Mr. Gregson in the School Counseling Office to begin the conversation.*



MAHWAH HIGH SCHOOL

# SUMMER BOOSTER PROGRAM



**SAVE THE DATES:  
MONDAY JUNE 29<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH FRIDAY JULY 24<sup>TH</sup> (CLOSED  
JULY 3RD)**

**New this year - our high school summer program will be located in our Media Learning Commons! More info will be released in April, but potential offerings include:**

- Summer remediation
- SAT Prep Class
- College Essay assistance
- College Application Boot Camps
- other enrichment opportunities

**Email Mr. O'Hara with any questions or to indicate interest:**

**[johara@mahwah.k12.nj.us](mailto:johara@mahwah.k12.nj.us)**