

November, 2004

Dear Junior Students and Parents,

We hope that you are all doing well and are involved in your studies and in the wonderful array of co-curricular activities that can be found at SKA. Amazingly, it is already November and before you know it, we will be meeting about college issues.

There are some things that we would like to bring to your attention at this time.

### **I. Important Information about the New Sat I and Sat II Exams**

- As you know, the new SAT exam will be implemented in March, 2005; many of you took the sample test last spring. The test is now divided into three parts: Critical Reading, Math, and Writing, with a total score of 2400. The Writing section consists of multiple choice questions and an essay. Students will be given a sample essay to write in English classes to help them prepare for this new component of the test. The Critical Reading section contains short and long passages and sentence completion questions, but eliminates analogies. The Math section adds content from third year Math but eliminates quantitative comparisons. More information about the new SAT is available at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and brochures are available in the College Guidance Office.
- *The PSAT exam that you took in October is a practice SAT and should be seen as such.* The results will be used to guide you in how to prepare for the SAT I exam. You should be aware, however, that colleges not only look at test results but also at averages, course selection, co-curricular activities, recommendations and the student's personal essay. All of these are important in the ultimate admission process.
- **The SAT exams will be given at SKA in March and in June and at DRS in May and the following October.**
- All juniors should take the SAT I exam in March, May or June. You can decide when to take the exam based on your own needs. For example, if you are taking AP exams, do not take the SAT I exam in May since that is when the AP exams are given. If you are taking SAT II exams in specific subject areas in June, then give yourselves some "space" and take the SAT I exam in March.
- SAT II exams (achievement tests in specific subject areas) should be taken by students who plan to apply to Ivy League and other colleges including Barnard, or who plan to apply for scholarships such as the Queens Scholars Program. Because the new SAT I contains a Writing section, the Writing SAT II will no longer be offered, and as a result, many colleges will only require two SAT II's, though others still require three. Always check with the College Guidance Office and with your college website to get up to date information on requirements.

Students who are applying to schools that require or recommend SAT II exams should take them by the end of the junior year. They can be taken in January, May and June, and more tests can be taken in the fall, if necessary. **Please note that the Hebrew SAT II is given only in June.** We can discuss which tests to take at the individual meetings with the juniors which will take place from December through February. But please feel free to come in earlier if you would like to discuss this and to pick up the SAT II Registration Booklet and "Shabbos letter" for Sunday testing, **especially if you want to take any tests in January.** The registration deadlines are posted in the College Guidance Office.
- **There is no longer an option of "Score Choice." All SAT I and SAT II exam scores become part of the student's record and are sent as a package to the colleges and scholarship programs of your choice.**
- **If you already know which colleges you will be applying to, be sure to put the code for these schools (found in the registration booklet) on the registration form. Your scores will then be sent to them at no extra charge.**

- There are different ways to prepare for the SAT I exams. There are courses, preparation books, preparation CDs, and tutors. As we have in the past, we will once again host the Kaplan course. Please see details below. An online SAT tutorial has also come to our attention: Log on to [www.newsatontheweb.com](http://www.newsatontheweb.com). One free sample lesson is offered; for a fee of \$15.00, you can access the user-friendly site for 15 hours of SAT Math lessons, practice problems, and solutions.

## II. Upcoming Events for Juniors and Parents:

- **Kaplan Course at SKA:** There will be an introductory meeting with the Kaplan SAT Course representatives on November 17 at 7:00 PM. At that time, they will describe the course and answer any questions that you might have. The course will prepare the students for the new SAT I exam and will cost \$624. The students have already received information about the course, a schedule of classes and registration form. Information about the course is also included at the end of this update.
- **College Financial Planning Night** for SKA and DRS parents at DRS on Monday, December 6, 2004, at 7:30 PM. Mr. Robert Friedman, Director of Student Finances at Yeshiva University, will speak to parents about the intricacies of financial aid and how to plan ahead. Please join us for this very informative and important evening.
- **Junior grade meeting** in school on February 7, 2005.
- **Junior parents' meeting** on February 7, 2005. Details to follow.
- **College Night** on May 16, 2005. Details to follow.
- **Individual meetings for juniors** beginning in December: We will be meeting with each junior individually. In order for these meetings to be most productive, they will take place after the PSAT results have been received by the school in December. **There will be a "sign-up sheet" outside the College Guidance Office and every junior must schedule a time when we can sit and discuss preparation for the SAT I tests, SAT II tests (if applicable), preliminary ideas about college, co-curricular activities, etc.** If there is anyone who feels she must speak to us sooner, please come in at your convenience.
- **Individual meetings with juniors and their parents** beginning in March and continuing through June: If parents have questions that they would like to discuss before that time, please do not hesitate to call. If we are not available when you call, we will return your call as soon as possible.

## III. Additional Important Information:

**1. Vocational Testing:** For anyone who is interested in vocational testing, which attempts to match students' interests and abilities with the best career or educational route for them, we can schedule an appointment for you at the Board of Jewish Education on March 22, 2005 at 8:30 AM at a reduced rate of \$50.00. Dr. Paul Levitz will then visit our school in the spring to meet individually with the students who took the test. Please bring your check made out to the BJE to the College Guidance Office to register. For students who prefer to wait until next year, it is possible that Dr. Levitz will offer the testing at SKA if enough students register for it.

**2. The Discover Card Tribute Award Program** is a scholarship program for high school juniors. The criteria include a GPA of at least 2.75, a description of future career plans, and demonstrated accomplishment in the following areas:

- Special Talents
- Leadership
- Obstacles Overcome
- Community Service

Candidates must display initiative and creativity resulting in outstanding achievements, demonstrate that they have made the most of opportunities available in their communities and that they have succeeded in developing their talents, leadership, and community service despite personal challenge in their lives. The program includes state and national scholarships. Nine \$2500 scholarships are available in each state, and selected winners compete for nine \$25,000 national award. The application must be received by January 7, 2005. However, since there is work to be done in

arranging the application and transcript, the school deadline will be December 14, 2004. For an application, visit [www.aasa.org/discover.htm](http://www.aasa.org/discover.htm) or come to the College Guidance Office, and we will assist you in completing the forms.

**3. Summer Possibilities:** There are several options for you to consider regarding summer opportunities.

- You can spend the summer in camp, which is always very refreshing and which will continue to reinforce the learning and the *derech* that you have acquired at SKA. Camp is a wonderful environment and one that should not be overlooked. If you can secure a job in a specialized camp such as HASC or Camp Simcha, *tavo aleichem b'racha*. JOLT and *Yachad* also present unique opportunities for students over the summer.
- Alternatively, you can spend the summer at a college high school program. Many top colleges have these programs and are already advertising them. Columbia, Barnard, and University of Pennsylvania are three colleges that have these programs.
- Mrs. Isseroff supervises summer science programs for our students. Please speak to her about these or other programs if you are interested in the sciences and want to work in a laboratory:

1. The New York Academy of Sciences sponsors a summer **Science Research Training Program**. Applications for the 2005 program will be available in late November or early December in the College Guidance Office and are due mid-February. Applications for that program should be brought in next month. Selection to the program is through a competitive application process which includes a written application and a personal interview. For more information, contact Jeanette Kim at (212) 838-0230, ext. 422 or send an e-mail requesting information about Science Research Training Program to [education@nyas.org](mailto:education@nyas.org).

2. There is a summer internship at the **Stony Brook Laboratories**. Dr. Rafailovich, who is a former SKA parent and is involved with the Stony Brook labs, has often invited our students to participate in the research there. As you know, our former students have had tremendous success in this area, including 4 national Siemens Westinghouse winners as well as regional winners in Siemens and Intel.

- Finally, if you have a specific interest, there are often possibilities of internships or jobs in those areas. For example, we have had students who have had internships at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Jewish Museum and The Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Others have worked or interned in law offices, for newspapers and in hospitals, etc.

We will keep our eyes and ears open for other possibilities and will try to help you explore them. In addition, use your family and friend contacts to find out what is available. The summer may seem very far off, but it is never too soon to start thinking about some of the options.

We look forward to meeting with you in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tzipora Meier  
Associate Principal

Mrs. Gail Elsan  
College Guidance Counselor

**Please continue to the next page for a copy of the letter about the Kaplan Course at SKA.**

# STELLA K. ABRAHAM HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## THE KAPLAN COURSE at SKA

As admission to college becomes more competitive, SKA is constantly searching for ways to help the students prepare for their college applications. The college evaluation of a candidate's application relies upon five criteria: a student's grade point average, extracurricular activities, the personal essay, recommendations and standardized test scores.

According to a recent study by the College Board, standardized test scores can be improved by preparing for the exam. There are different methods of preparation. Each student should decide with her parents and the College Guidance Office, which preparation method is best for her. Some students will opt for a preparation course, some will study on their own and others will turn to tutors.

In order to make the "course option" more convenient for SKA student body, we will once again be hosting the Kaplan SAT course. While we do not endorse this method of preparation over any other method, we are offering Kaplan the use of our facilities.

Taking the course at SKA will benefit the students in several ways. First, the course will be held for SKA students only and will be held here on our campus. Second, we will work with Kaplan to coordinate the meeting dates with our own calendar. There will be twelve sessions, held on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings for the convenience of our students. Test sessions will be four hours and class sessions will run two and a half hours. And finally, the fee for a Kaplan course is \$999. The reduced cost to SKA students will be \$624.

There will be an orientation evening for interested students and parents on Wednesday, November 17, 2004 from 7:00PM to 7:45PM at SKA.

**Enclosed is a schedule of 12 sessions which will run from January- March 2005 in preparation for the new March SAT. If there are enough students to divide into 2 sections, then there is a possibility of extending one of those classes to run through May in preparation for the May SAT. (There will still be 12 sessions, but they will be spread out from January- April.) This will be determined at our orientation meeting.**

All questions about the course will be addressed at that time. If you would like to learn more about this course, please be sure to attend the meeting. Please note that we do need a minimum of ten students in order to make this happen.

You can enroll by mailing the enclosed application, by calling 1-800-KAP-TEST, or by bringing the enrollment application and payment to our orientation evening.

