



MOVING ON

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High School Principal

The last year of High School represents a year of change and transition probably unequaled by any other period during a lifetime, if only because it is the very first time in our lives that the need for independence becomes so obvious. The senior year is one of transition, of tremendous growth, of excitement and of a measure of anxiety. The Advisory program and the guidance office at St. John's seek to address these themes and aid the teenager in taking on these challenges. College applications, planning a gap year, or even seeking first-time employment, are themes highlighted in the Advisory program. The guidance department offers all the practical information necessary to complete the process and provides advice and strategies for coping with change.

Looking forward also involves rethinking our values and the ethic we wish to pursue. Newfound independence will bring with it new responsibilities such as establishing a valid sexual ethic or learning to cope with paperwork and practical chores. There are the temptations of college life, such as binge drinking, to face. Whereas time management in High School is still relatively dependent on parents and teachers, it becomes the entire responsibility of the new graduate to structure his or her time according to the demands of reality. Another change is that of status. In High School, the senior is the "top dog" whereas in university the student starts again at the bottom rung. Relationships with the professors will furthermore be more distant than those with High School teachers at St. John's. In all of these areas, the student will do well when values and strategies are firmly established beforehand.

The senior year is, therefore, also a time of reflection and self-examination. When facing a major step in personal growth, it is crucial to affirm family ties and the traditions that were passed on within the nurturing environment of the home. The teenager needs to know that parents and siblings will miss them terribly but that they support their step of growth into the future. The senior year is also a year in which consolidating friendships and discussion with peers plays a major role. Sustaining the relationships at home and with friends is crucial in dealing with separation anxiety.

Fortunately, the senior has access to many resources to complete the entire "moving on" process successfully. Family and friends, the guidance office, the grade coordinator, the advisor and the teachers are all available to offer assistance and encouragement.

The seniors have begun their last lap towards graduation. We wish our fine group of seniors every success!