

CAREER AND COLLEGE PLANNING AND PREPARATION



Contact your Guidance Counselor throughout the year via Email, Google Meet, or in person (if possible) with any questions and concerns and keep them posted on your college application process.

Senior Year:

WTA Grade 12 Counselor Outreach Program by Marking Period

By the Close of Marking Period 1 (Approximately Friday, November 6, 2020)

- One-to-One Meeting with every Grade 12 Student to
 - Review transcripts to ensure they are meeting all course requirements and discuss graduation progress and if course recovery is needed.
 - Discuss post-graduation plans and provide resources to assist with planning.
 - Create plans with students about next steps in the planning process.
 - Address specific student concerns:
 - *For students who plan to go directly into to the workforce:*
 - Discuss importance of connecting with their shop teachers.
 - Create a resume.
 - Obtain the necessary industry-recognized credentials and certifications.
 - Review opportunities for experience (e.g. internships, co-op, and part-time employment).
 - *For students who plan to enter military service:*
 - Discuss the importance of connecting with a recruiter and not signing anything until they are 100% certain of their decision.
 - Share resources about the requirements for each branch.
 - Review ASVAB resources/prep materials.
 - Reviewing scholarship opportunities.
 - *For students who plan to apply to two-year colleges or technical schools:*
 - Review the application process.
 - Discuss the importance of adhering to deadlines.
 - Obtain transcript requests in writing.
 - Review the financial aid/FAFSA process.
 - Discuss the Accuplacer (i.e. "What is it?" and "How do I prepare for it?").
 - Discuss specific requirements based on program.
 - Review any dual-enrollment possibilities for the spring semester.
 - Review any articulation agreements with local colleges and universities.

- Review and discuss current scholarship opportunities.
- *For students who plan to apply to four-year colleges and universities:*
 - Review the application process, with emphasis on the various types of decisions (e.g. early decision, rolling admissions, etc.);
 - Review the Common App and its process.
 - Discuss application essays and provide resources for completion.
 - Discuss the importance of adhering to deadlines.
 - Review any dual-enrollment possibilities for the spring semester.
 - Obtain transcript requests in writing.
 - Give references ample time to write recommendation letters.
 - Discuss testing requirements for admission i.e. “Are SATs or ACTs required?”, “How do I sign up?”, “What is test optional?”, “Are there any test prep opportunities?”, “Is there a fee waiver process?”)
 - Discuss specific requirements based on program.
 - Review and discuss current scholarship opportunities
- Group Meetings with Students in Shops and/or English Classes to
 - Present on post high school planning and answer questions/generate conversation (see attached resources).

By the Close of Marking Period 2 (Approximately Friday, January 22, 2021)

- One-to-One Meeting with every Grade 12 Student to
 - Follow up with students on their progress with their plans and to document any changes since Marking period 1.
 - Follow up on students’ progress with applications to ensure that Guidance is aware of status of applications, standardized tests, financial aid, and scholarships.
 - Remind students interested in dual enrollment that deadlines are typically around January 1, so applications need to be completed.
 - Discuss current progress toward completing graduation requirements.

By the Close of Marking Period 3 (Approximately Friday, April 2, 2021)

- One-to-One Meeting with every Grade 12 Student to
 - Follow up with students on their progress with their plans and to document any changes since Marking period 2.
 - Follow up on students’ progress with applications to ensure that Guidance is aware of current status of applications, standardized tests, financial aid, and scholarships.
 - Discuss current progress toward completing graduation requirements.
- Group Meetings with Students in Shops to

- Begin post high school transition planning.
- Discuss specific scholarships.
- Review the application process for local scholarships.

By the Close Marking Period 4 (*Approximately Friday, May 21, 2021*)

- One-to-One Meeting with every Grade 12 Student to
 - Follow up with students on their progress with their plans and to document any changes since Marking Period 2.
 - Follow up on students' progress with applications to ensure that Guidance is aware of status of applications, standardized tests, financial aid, and scholarships.
 - Discuss current progress toward completing graduation requirements.
 - Finalize transition planning:
 - Assist with job applications.
 - Update resumes.
 - Assist students with securing employment.
 - Assist with Accuplacer.
 - Monitor student notifications to colleges regarding their decisions and assist in admissions completing paperwork.
 - Identify resources for next steps (e.g. special departments and programs at specific colleges that may be useful for individual students based on program and need);
 - Finalize transcripts and send to colleges, technical schools, and recruiting officers as needed.

MONTH BY MONTH

SEPTEMBER:

- ❖ Register for SAT
- ❖ If you have not already done so, review your transcript and report any concerns to your counselor.
- ❖ Get college applications for colleges you are considering.
- ❖ Begin drafts of any essays required for applications.
- ❖ Attend as many college fairs as possible.

OCTOBER:

- ❖ Review and take SAT.
- ❖ Begin filling out applications and stay on top of application deadlines. Be sure to fill out transcript request forms in advance!
- ❖ Obtain a letter of recommendation from counselor, teachers, employers etc.
GIVE PEOPLE ADVANCE NOTICE SO THEY HAVE TIME TO WRITE A RECOMMENDATION FOR YOU.
- ❖ Continue to work on your essays and ask an English teacher for assistance as needed.

NOVEMBER:

- ❖ Continue filling out applications and writing essays.
- ❖ Work hard to keep your grades up. Admissions committees will closely review your work during your senior year.
- ❖ Start looking into scholarships.

DECEMBER:

- ❖ Continue filling out applications and stay ahead of deadlines.
- ❖ Check for scholarships that are posted.
- ❖ Start looking into filling out the FAFSA for financial aid.

JANUARY:

- ❖ Check application deadlines.
- ❖ Continue checking scholarship information.
- ❖ If you are applying for financial aid, complete the FAFSA and any other required financial aid forms. FAFSA can be completed anytime after January 1st.
- ❖ Check with your references to be sure they have sent your recommendations.

FEBRUARY/MARCH:

- ❖ Continue checking on scholarship information in the Guidance Office.
- ❖ Complete FAFSA application and submit.
- ❖ Keep your grades up.

APRIL:

- ❖ Continue checking scholarship information in the Guidance Office.
- ❖ Notify colleges of your choice and pay your deposit.
- ❖ Notify your counselor of your choice.
- ❖ Write thank you notes to individuals who wrote references on your behalf.

MAY:

- ❖ Notify schools you will NOT be attending. (There are students on waiting lists who are anxious to know their fate too.)
- ❖ Apply for local scholarships.

JUNE:

- ❖ Be sure your guidance counselor knows your final choice. Your final transcript and verification of graduation must be mailed to the school to secure your acceptance.

GENERAL COLLEGE INFORMATION:

Important terms:

Associates Degree: a degree earned by completing at least two, but less than four years of study, often in a special or technical area, typically at community colleges.

Bachelor's Degree: (Bachelor of Science aka BS) (Bachelor of Arts aka BA) This is a degree earned after completing courses and earning a degree at a 4-year college or university.

CEEB Code: Code requested for SAT registration, college applications and scholarships. **222-330** is WTA's code.

Official Transcript: A record of your courses, final grades, class rank, test scores, and cumulative average from 9-12th grade. They are stamped with the principal's signature and the official school seal. The envelope is sealed and stamped on the outside as well.

Rolling Admissions: College that make their admission decision and notify the student soon after receiving the application. In contrast, some colleges have specific dates- usually second semester when they notify all students of admissions decisions, regardless of when they applied.

IDENTIFYING AND EXPLORING HIGHER EDUCATION:

- **Read about school in the Career Center, libraries, and online.**
- **Speak to people with knowledge of schools: counselors, teachers, parents, alumni**
- **Visit college fairs and gather information**
- **Visit campuses of potential colleges/universities**

Questions to Ask at a College Fair

When attending a college fair, it is important to gather the information that will help you evaluate your college options. Be sure to ask the college representatives the following types of questions:

Admissions Questions

- What type of high school background is generally required for your school?
- What is the average GPA of entering freshmen?
- Are there different admissions requirements for specific colleges or programs?
- What are the housing options/requirements and parking rules?
- What types of extracurricular activities are available?
- Does your college offer study abroad options?
- Does your college provide access to internship options?
- Does your college provide academic services such as tutoring or career counseling?
- Does your college have job placement services?
- What are the characteristics of your student body (age, gender, race/ethnicity, etc.)?
- What percentage of first-year students return the following year?
- What percentage of graduates are employed within one year?
- How do I apply, and which forms do I fill out?
- What are the admissions deadlines?
- Will my family's ability to pay for college be a factor in the admissions process?
- Can credits be earned online or transferred from other colleges?
- How safe is your campus?
- Which association has given your college accreditation?
- How do I arrange a campus visit?

Financial Aid Questions

- How much does it cost to attend your college (including tuition, room and board, fees, etc.)?
- What financial aid options are available?
- Does the school participate in federal and state aid programs? (Not all schools are eligible.)
- What percentage of undergraduates receive aid? How much do they receive on average?
- Which financial aid forms do I need to fill out and what are the deadlines?
- Does the college offer scholarships? Who is most likely to receive them? How do I apply?
- Will private/non-government scholarships reduce the amount of need-based aid I receive?

Campus Visits:



- ***Visit campuses during the junior year if possible and while students are in attendance.***
- ***Research the college before visiting.***
- ***Know the basics about the college.***
- ***Explore the campus on your own But DON'T leave a campus tour without informing the tour guide***
- ***Eat on campus, interact with current students.***
- ***Ask questions.***
- ***Be observant!***
- ***Check out the surrounding community.***
- ***Introduce yourself to important people: coaches, admissions counselors etc. but DON'T monopolize their time. (Make appointments to meet with these people, in advance and be on time.)***
- ***Send a thank-you email if they are genuinely interested in the school.***

Class of 2021!
Class of 2021!

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW: THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW:



If an interview is recommended or if you feel like it would be beneficial, arrange for one early. Make an appointment by getting in touch with the Admissions Office.

Why Interview?

- Making the time to interview demonstrates a sincere interest in the institution.
- It gives you an opportunity for you to learn first hand from someone about the school's academic philosophy and admissions policy.
- It is an opportunity for you to present yourself in a very personal way. This is especially true if you are someone who makes a very strong first impression.

When you interview:

- Be prompt. (early is better)
- Be Neat. Appropriate clothes/appearance are important.
- Be well prepared. Know about the school before you go. Ask questions.
- Answer questions. Answer questions to the best of your ability but don't be afraid to admit if you don't know something.
- Be ready to volunteer information. Know your grades, test scores, and what courses you have taken. Share appropriate personal information so they can get a sense of who you are outside of academics. (Ex. Your interests, jobs, hobbies)
- Relax!
- When you get home, write the interviewer a thank you note and send it ASAP!

COLLEGE ATHLETICS



If you are planning on participating in Division 1 or 2 Athletics, you should register with the NCAA Clearinghouse (NCAA) at the beginning of senior year. It is not necessary to register if you are attending a Division 3 college.

Register at: www.ncaaclearinghouse.net to pay by credit card or www.ncaa.org to pay by check.

Make sure you print out 2 release forms no matter how you register. One must be sent with your preliminary records and the 2nd with your final transcript.

Division 3 athletes should contact coaches at colleges of interest- they can be useful in the admissions and application process!

College Application Process!

During the admissions process, colleges and universities consider the following:

- Application forms
- Essays
- Test scores
- Your academic record (official transcript)
- Recommendations
- Non-academic accomplishments and activities

Completing Applications:

- Read the application and instructions carefully before completing any forms.
- Make a copy of the application form.
- Pay attention to details.
- Be neat, legible(if you are filling out a paper application) and watch spelling.
- Type or print application. (Use black ink)
- Pay attention to deadline dates.
- If you have questions, see your counselor.
- Complete and sign application.
- Mail application and check to the college. (Or apply online and submit necessary supporting documents.)

College Essay:

The purpose of the essay is to supplement your academic information and make you “come alive” to the admissions committee. Because it is a student’s personal statement, no single piece of admissions evidence gets as much attention. The essay is an opportunity to take charge of the information the college receives about you, and provide information that does not appear in grades, test scores and other materials.

Admissions staff will evaluate your essay on: GRAMMAR, CONTENT, and CREATIVITY!

Essay Writing Tips:

- Follow directions.
- Choose a topic you care about.
- Be positive.
- Don’t experiment with a writing style you’ve never tried.
- Write a draft, read it aloud, and proofread!
- Have someone else read your essay and give you feedback.
- Complete your essay on time and send it as directed.

ACADEMIC RECORD:

The most significant factor in college admissions is your academic record (transcript). As soon as you have an opportunity, review your transcript. Colleges care not only about your grades and class rank, but also what courses you have taken to achieve these grades. Remember that although consistently good performance is ideal, improvement in grades can also be a positive factor, even during your senior year. Other factors that are important include personal qualities, work experience, and extra-curricular activities.

TRANSCRIPTS:

- Obtain transcript request form from guidance or the WVTA website.
- Complete the request form for EACH school you are applying to.
- Submit the form to the Guidance Secretary, along with an addressed, stamped envelope (2 stamps) with each request.
- Carefully review each college application to be sure any relevant forms along with your transcript request.
- You must allow 2 weeks to process the transcript request. School vacations do not count b/c requests will no be processed during vacation time.

COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Refer to individual college applications or scholarship application to determine if a counselor recommendation is required.
- Carefully review the application to see if there is a specific form to be completed by your counselor. These instructions vary.
- Give your counselor ADVANCE notice, to allow time for the recommendation to be completed.
- Write a thank you to your counselor after the recommendation has been completed.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Refer to individual college applications or scholarship application to determine if a teacher recommendation is required.
- Carefully review the application to see if there is a specific form to be completed by your teacher. These instructions vary.
- Give your teacher ADVANCE notice, to allow time for the recommendation to be completed.
- Write a thank you to your teacher(s) after the recommendation has been completed.

NOTE: It is important to stay in contact with the college/universities you have applied to, in order to confirm that your application is complete and has been received.

CLASS OF 2021

Contact Information – (413)-572-6533 extension 60009

Guidance Counselors

Andrea Arvanites – a.arvanites@schoolsofwestfield.org

Carol Groom – c.groom@schoolsofwestfield.org

Guidance Secretary

Sue Osowski – s.osowski@schoolsofwestfield.org

Early College/Dual Enrollment Counselor

Tara Bean – t.bean@schoolsofwestfield.org

Cooperative Education

Peter Taloumis – p.taloumis@schoolsofwestfield.org

**Class of
2021**