



Deerfield-Windsor School College Counseling Guidebook 2023-2024



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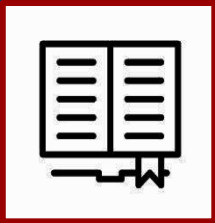
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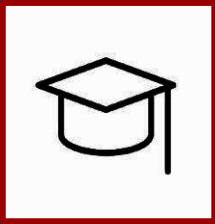
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COLLEGE COUNSELOR'S MESSAGE

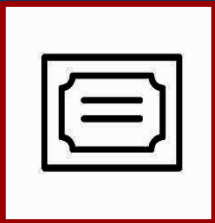
Deerfield-Windsor School is a proud college preparatory school that strives to ensure that each and every one of our students is thoroughly prepared for a college education. While our teachers begin preparing students for this goal at the elementary level, the most intensive preparation occurs at the high school level.



As Deerfield-Windsor's college counselor, I aim to help each student and their family navigate the college admissions process. In this process students often ask themselves "What do I want to study? Which college is right for me? How do I enhance my application? How will I afford it?" I am here to help you find the answers to these questions and so much more.

Deerfield-Windsor's College Counseling Office is a department that:

- maintains an open door policy for every DWS student
- holds regular class meetings throughout high school to to prepare students for college, the admissions process, and beyond
- hosts admissions representatives from across the Southeast
- meets individually with upperclassmen and their families to craft a unique admissions plan for every student
- provides feedback and support on college essays, applications, college interviews, and application credentials
- communicates regularly about scholarships and opportunities to enhance student resumes
- advises on strategies for SAT/ACT test preparation
- shares information on the most current college admission trends

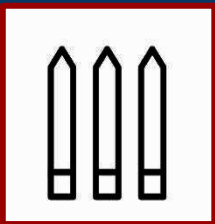


Throughout this process, know that I am here for you and your family. Please reach out at any time with any questions.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Wilschetz".

Anna Wilschetz
College Counselor
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PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

DEERFIELD-WINDSOR SCHOOL

COLLEGE COUNSELING PHILOSOPHY

I. Each student is unique.

Therefore, we strive to help each student find the college or university that meets his or her needs and allows the individual student to be most successful.

II. The college search process should be student-driven.

We want our students to become successful and competent adults in college and beyond. Therefore, we feel it is important for students to lead their own college searches in which parents and the counselor remain in supporting roles.

III. Parents are our partners.

While the college search should be student-driven, we recognize that parents serve essential roles in our students' lives and are crucial throughout this process. Therefore, we hope to support our parents and answer any of their questions and concerns.

IV. We support all students and all families.

Deerfield-Windsor School is proud to serve a wide range of students and families with varying aspirations and financial needs. Therefore, we provide abundant resources to support families as they navigate competitive admissions processes, discover unique scholarship opportunities, and comprehend complex financial aid information.



DUAL ENROLLMENT

Deerfield-Windsor School is proud to offer Dual Enrollment through Georgia Southwestern State University. This allows qualified Deerfield-Windsor seniors to begin earning college credit while still in high school.

ELIGIBILITY

Deerfield-Windsor seniors are eligible if they meet the following criteria established by GAFutures and GSW:

- minimum GPA of 3.0 (academic courses only)
- For non-STEM courses: minimum SAT 480 in ERW or minimum ACT 17 in English*
- For STEM courses: minimum SAT 440 in Math or minimum ACT 17 in Math*

**The University System of Georgia has waived testing requirements for the 2023-2024 school year. These scores are simply here to reflect what may be expected again in future years.*

In addition, GSW requires students to maintain a minimum 2.00 GPA in dual enrollment courses and a 67% Satisfactory Academic Progress. However, DWS students are not generally advised to enroll in Dual Enrollment if they cannot maintain an “A” due to its impact on a student’s college GPA and HOPE eligibility.

COST

There is little to no cost for students who participate in Dual Enrollment. In fact, GSW will loan textbooks to

students, and the student will only be charged if they fail to return the book at the end of the semester. However, non-mandatory fees or supplemental instruction materials are not covered by the dual enrollment program.

COURSES OFFERED

Course offerings are listed in [GAFutures’ Dual Enrollment Course Directory](#). Students should explore available online courses and discuss their plans with the college counselor. However, please note that DE cannot replace a required course for graduation at DWS, nor can they duplicate a course offered at DWS without the prior approval of administration. If you have questions, please, contact the college counselor.

CREDIT

Most dual enrollment courses will not appear on your DWS transcript. Instead, these dual enrollment courses will solely appear on a GSW college transcript.

However, DWS does offer select DWS courses for dual enrollment credit. These classes would appear on both a DWS and GSW transcript.

These courses include:

- AP Biology
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Literature and Composition
- AP Spanish Language and Culture

Please note that DWS students can only register for Dual Enrollment in these particular AP classes during spring semester and students should consult with the college counselor to determine if Dual Enrollment would be beneficial for their individual circumstances. Although this means students can earn college credit regardless of their performance on the AP Exam, it also means their DWS class average will impact their college GPA.

REGISTRATION

The steps below outline the process for enrolling in dual enrollment classes. While this gives you an overview, please note that the college counselor will guide you through each step in the process and that deadlines vary for summer, fall, and spring enrollment.

1. Notify the DWS College Counselor.

If you intend to enroll in Dual Enrollment, complete the Google Form emailed to you from the DWS College Counseling Office before class registration each semester.

2. Choose A Dual Enrollment Course

Next you should select a dual enrollment course. You can find a list of potential courses in the GAFutures' [Dual Enrollment Course Directory](#). However, please plan to meet with the college counselor for additional help selecting a dual enrollment course.

3. Meet with the GSW Dual Enrollment Coordinator

The GSW Dual Enrollment Coordinator will come to campus prior to class registration. Students should plan to meet with the coordinator to begin enrollment.

4. Submit Your GSW DE Application

Next, you will complete your [GSW application online](#). When doing so, please make sure to select Dual Enrollment for "Application Type."

The \$25 application fee is waived for dual enrollment students.

You can review what information is needed and what documents have been received by [checking your status online](#). And be sure to check your email frequently for registration information.

3. Complete the GAFutures Dual Enrollment Funding Application

Once you are accepted to GSW's Dual Enrollment program you can complete the GAFutures [Dual Enrollment Funding Application](#) and have a parent complete the [Parent Participation Agreement](#).

4. Check your email frequently.

The DWS college counselor and GSW Dual Enrollment Coordinator will communicate with you about any other required materials such as test scores, transcripts, and/or GSW's eCore introduction quiz.

5. Approval and Confirmation

Finally, the DWS college counselor must approve your dual enrollment registration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition students and guardians should note the following information and requirements:

- Males above the age of 18 must meet federal Selective Service registration requirements, per Georgia state law.
- All dual enrollment students must submit immunization records. While online only students must still complete this process, there is an exemption option for online students.
- A student may not repeat or retake a course.
- A student is no longer eligible for Dual Enrollment after withdrawing from dual enrollment course(s) two times.
- Eligible dual enrollment coursework must be completed prior to high school graduation to be considered for dual enrollment credit.
- Students may not exceed 30 semester hours of dual enrollment credit.



HIGH SCHOOL TIMELINES

While the application process traditionally begins when students enter their senior year, students should be working towards this goal throughout their school experience. Therefore, the Deerfield-Windsor College Counseling office has worked to provide the following timelines to guide students and their families from ninth-grade through graduation.

RATIONALE

Please keep in mind that no two students are identical and, likewise, the college admissions is never the same for any two students. Therefore, do not expect to perfectly follow any of the timelines below. Instead, use them as guidance. Each timeline is a mixture of things all students should do and some things that can be beneficial for particular students.

If you have specific questions about what you can do to increase your admissions chances at a particular institution, ask the college counselor. She is here to help you determine your own individual timeline for your own individual admissions process.

USE

Each year students and their parents will be given the timeline corresponding to the student's current grade level. Please reference this timeline throughout the year and see if you and your student are staying on track. All timelines are also provided on the pages that follow for interested families to explore what is to come in the college search process.

QUOTE OF THE YEAR

FRESHMAN YEAR:

"Adventure is out there!" –Up

SOPHOMORE YEAR:

"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom." –Aristotle

JUNIOR YEAR:

*"There is no substitute for hard work."
–Thomas Edison*

SENIOR YEAR:

"Starting strong is good. Finishing strong is epic." –Robin Sharma, author



College Counseling

NINTH GRADE

Welcome to high school! This year you will learn more about yourself and it is important to find new strategies to face new challenges.

What do you do when you don't understand something? How do you study best? What long term goals do you have? What do you need to do today to help you prepare for tomorrow?

Begin exploring these questions and learn to use all the resources provided to you!

TO-DO LIST:

- ❑ Explore your unique interests. Discover your passions and find ways to pursue them.
- ❑ Seek academic excellence! Your GPA begins now.
- ❑ Use office hours to get to know your teachers and college counselor. (One day you may need them to write you a letter of recommendation!)
- ❑ Create a resume. Keep a list of activities, honors, special projects, etc.
- ❑ Begin navigating SCOIR to explore schools and compare your test scores and GPA to college requirements.

- ❑ Take the PSAT. This is a Deerfield-Windsor requirement for all freshmen, and it can help show your academic strengths and weaknesses.

SUMMER:

- ❑ Rest and recharge! Take a break and reward a year of hard work.
- ❑ Do something meaningful to you. Get a job; work at a summer camp; connect and volunteer with an organization; play sports; work on art or writing. Do what you are passionate about!
- ❑ Read some books! Reading for fun has been shown to be one of the best ways to boost standardized test scores

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- ❑ Run the Net Price Calculators for a few different colleges to get a sense of how much college might cost. (These are available on their websites.)
- ❑ If you haven't already done so, start saving for college. Even a small amount every month, compounded, will help.
- ❑ Encourage your child to explore their passions and interests. See if there are unique opportunities they can pursue to foster their passions.



College Counseling

TENTH GRADE

While college is still on the distant horizon, you can begin to think about where you would like to go and what you would like to do. Continue to work on building a strong academic foundation. Hard work in the classroom will help you achieve your college goals later.

TO-DO LIST:

- ❑ Continue to try new things but begin to focus on things that are the most important to you.
- ❑ Re-evaluate how you study. Is it still effective? Sometimes new challenges require new approaches. If you don't know how to make those changes, meet with your teachers and counselors to ask for help.
- ❑ Take a look at your PSAT score and identify areas of strength and weakness.
- ❑ Ask the college counselor for help creating a SAT/ACT test prep plan if your score is below your individualized target.
- ❑ Use SCOIR to explore colleges. You can also use it to compare your GPA and test scores to those of previously admitted students.
- ❑ Maintain your resume. Be sure to update it

with any new activities, honors, special projects, etc.

SUMMER:

- ❑ Relax, read a book, and focus on your health and wellness!
- ❑ Continue exploring your passions. Is there a way to build upon what you did last year? Colleges want to see your commitment and what makes you unique.
- ❑ Consider trying something new. Get a new job, travel to a new place, volunteer with a new organization, etc.

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- ❑ January 1st of your child's sophomore year (spring semester) begins the base year that colleges use to calculate a student's financial aid need for their first year of college. This base year runs from January of the student's sophomore year to December of their junior year.
- ❑ Encourage your student to stay focused on their academics and GPA.
- ❑ Continue supporting your students' interests and extracurriculars. Students should focus on depth rather than width by seeking intentional ways to develop their unique passions.



College Counseling

ELEVENTH GRADE

Junior year is a transitional year. It is the time when the college search process kicks into gear with meetings with the college counselor, standardized testing, college visits, etc. Grades matter and should be the primary focus of your time and energy.

However, this is also the fun time of the college process--exploring colleges, doing research, taking initial visits. Enjoy this time as you begin thinking about all the different possibilities and paths available.

TO-DO LIST:

AUG-OCT

- ❑ Academics! This is your last full year of grades before college applications. Make them count!
- ❑ Think about two academic teachers who might write you a letter of recommendation. Then nurture those relationships.
- ❑ Meet with college representatives who come to campus. Demonstrate interest in a particular college or university by coming to interest meetings, getting on the mailing list, and establishing a personal relationship with our local admissions representative.
- ❑ Consider a college tour. Waiting till

spring can be tough due to the chaos of second semester and summer visits can be too quiet. Many find fall to be just right!

NOV-DEC

- ❑ Take the PrinciplesYou career interest assessment on SCOIR. This is a great self-assessment tool to help you think about what you might want to study.
- ❑ Either add to or begin making a list of potential colleges on SCOIR.
- ❑ Sign up to take both the SAT and the ACT at least once each before your senior year. You can do this on campus or at another testing site in the community.

JAN-MAR

- ❑ Schedule an individualized college counseling meeting. This is a time in which you, your parents, and your college counselor will meet to make a plan for your college application process.
- ❑ After your meeting, verify that you have an appropriate list of potential colleges on SCOIR. This list should include Reach Schools (schools that might be tougher to get into), Target Schools (schools that your grades and test scores align with), and Likely Schools (schools that you should easily be accepted into).

APR-MAY

- ❑ Refocus on academics and finish strong! Your grades should be your primary focus.
- ❑ Plan your schedule for senior year and consider Dual Enrollment. Follow enrollment deadlines and instructions.
- ❑ Study for any AP exams! Don't waste the opportunity to earn college credit. This can save you time and money in college, allowing you to avoid taking boring required classes, graduate early, and/or add a minor/double major.

SUMMER

- ❑ Take a breath and take a break. Enjoy some relaxation!
- ❑ Continue doing what you love. Consider leadership opportunities to demonstrate growth as you pursue these passions.
- ❑ Begin making your game plan for college applications. Which colleges will you apply to? Which ones do you still need to visit? When are the deadlines for applications/scholarships etc.?
- ❑ Consider visiting a college campus or two. Just be aware that campus is quieter in the summer so it won't tell you everything about campus life.
- ❑ Plan to retake the SAT and/or the ACT.
- ❑ If you are interested in pursuing college athletics, be sure to keep your coach and the college counselor informed. Then contact college coaches, identify yourself as a potential athlete, and request information.

ONLINE RESOURCES

SCOIR.com... *College Management Software*

This tool will be used throughout your high school career to help you explore and discover potential colleges and track your applications throughout the admissions process.

Niche.com... *College Rankings Website*

This website provides in-depth profiles on colleges across America with reviews and ratings. In addition, it provides powerful search and data tools, helping you find the right college for you.

CampusTours.com... *Virtual College Tours*

This resource gives you the opportunity to explore college campuses across the country from your computer. Simply search for a school and explore campus through a virtual tour. Many include audio guides and more!

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- ❑ Begin the conversation with your teen about what you are willing/able to spend on college.
- ❑ Attend your child's individualized college counseling meeting. Connect with your child's college counselor and reach out with any questions you have.
- ❑ Consider taking your student on a college tour or two. This will help you lead discussions with your teen on what they're wanting from the college experience.
- ❑ Remind your student to register for the SAT or the ACT in the spring.
- ❑ Communicate with the college counselor about any of your questions or concerns.



College Counseling

TWELFTH GRADE

You made it! Now it's time to get to work applying to schools and finally deciding where you want to go.

Know that everyone's path is different and your college counselor is here to support you on your unique journey. Feeling overwhelmed? Talk to your college counselor. Have a question? Talk to your college counselor. Just want to chat? Talk to your college counselor. Your needs come first and your counselor is here to support you and your family as you make this decision.

TO-DO LIST:

AUG-SEP

- ❑ Research schools and finalize your application list. Consider college visits and meet with admission representatives on campus.
- ❑ Finalize decisions about the timing of applications (Early Decision/Early Action/Rolling Admissions/Scholarship deadlines). Note all deadlines for submissions and plan accordingly.
- ❑ Register for Common App and take a look at the application requirements for any schools you are interested in.
- ❑ Explore the essay prompts for any applications you are considering. Begin to brainstorm and draft your ideas.

Reach out to your college counselor and/or English teachers for help, edits, and advice.

- ❑ Consider retaking either the SAT or the ACT. Remember that scores are important for both admittance and scholarships.
- ❑ Request transcripts and teacher/counselor recommendations. Remember that a three week notice is required for all letter of recommendation requests.
- ❑ Complete any Early Action or Early Decision applications before their deadlines.

OCT-DEC

- ❑ Complete any remaining applications. Ask for help as needed.
- ❑ Complete the FAFSA application when it opens in December 2023.
- ❑ Explore scholarship opportunities. Ask your college counselor for help and register for FastWeb's online scholarship database.

JAN-MAR

- ❑ Remember that second semester grades can still impact your application, admittance, and/or financial aid opportunities. While you can breathe a little easier, stay on track!

- ❑ Demonstrate interest by maintaining contact with the admissions office of any universities you are considering closely.
- ❑ Schedule college interviews (if relevant for the schools you applied to) and request a mock interview through the college counselor so that you will be prepared.
- ❑ Keep checking portals, emails, and mailboxes for admission decisions. Financial aid packages will be sent thereafter.

APR-MAY

- ❑ Evaluate your financial aid offer and continue to pursue scholarships and other aid opportunities. Feel free to reach out to your college counselor for help or questions. Appeals are possible under certain circumstances.
- ❑ Look at schools again and make college visits to any finalists you are considering.
- ❑ See the Final Decision Worksheet or meet with the college counselor to discuss your options.
- ❑ Decide whether to stay on any waitlist(s), if offered.
- ❑ May 1st is National College Decision Day for regular admissions. If you have not already done so, submit your deposit and confirm your place in the freshman class. Reach out to your college counselor if you need help processing this decision!

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- ❑ Follow up with your student and make sure they are staying on track of their to-do list. Please note any deadlines and provide reminders.
- ❑ Begin the financial aid application process when the FAFSA is made available in December 2023.
- ❑ Examine financial aid packages. Call the financial aid offices for answers about specific packages. The college counselor can help you navigate this process.
- ❑ Provide emotional support as needed and know that the college counselor is here to support you all as well.

YOU DID IT!



THE COLLEGE SEARCH

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

DISTANCE

How far are you willing to go?

How will you get home?

COST

How much is tuition?
Housing? Travel home?

Do they offer scholarships?

Will you need loans?
How much debt will you incur?

ENVIRONMENT

City or rural?
Coed or single sex?
Big school or small school?
How is the campus atmosphere?

PROGRAM

What do you want to study?

How can they help prepare you for your career?

ACTIVITIES

Do they offer what you are looking for?

Greek life? Division I sports?
Religious organizations? Arts?
Intramurals? ROTC? Study Abroad?



SCOIR

All Deerfield-Windsor high school students have access to Scoir, a college counseling platform. This resource will be used throughout the college search process as it allows students and their parents to explore various colleges, examine admissions requirements, and manage essential admissions paperwork.

ACCESS TO SCOIR

Each high school student will be registered for a Scoir account beginning in ninth grade. Parents can also register for a Parent Account so that they can explore all the tools and resources Scoir offers. It will be used throughout a student's high school career, though it will be used most frequently during the application process.

COLLEGE SEARCH

Scoir allows students to easily search and discover colleges that match their preferences. For example, students can take the Find Your College Match quiz to be matched with colleges for their unique interests.

Students can also add any colleges they are considering to their My Colleges page. On this page they can also see colleges recommended to them by their parents and the college counselor.

As students explore colleges, they can sort colleges from "Suggested" to "Following" and to "Applied." This allows students to keep track of colleges and deadlines and easily communicate their plans.

PrinciplesYou

Scoir has partnered with PrinciplesYou to offer students a free personality and career assessment. The entire assessment takes about 30 to 40 minutes and provides an analysis of students' thinking styles, tendencies and talents. In addition, the assessment helps students consider how these characteristics might benefit a future career.

While a career assessment like this is more helpful to some students than others, all juniors will complete the PrinciplesYou assessment to help them consider potential majors and programs to aid their college search.

APPLICATION MANAGEMENT

The college counselor will also use Scoir with students to track their admissions journey. Students will update Scoir periodically and necessary admissions paperwork will be submitted through the Scoir portal. While students can apply directly through Scoir for some colleges, students should discuss how they intend to apply with the college counselor to increase their admissions chances.



COLLEGE VISITS

College visits are a critical component of the college search process. While you may choose to apply to a college you haven't seen yet, it is quite risky to choose to attend a college without first visiting their campus. Go, visit, and try to picture yourself there.

WHEN TO VISIT

Deerfield-Windsor School gives juniors and seniors two excused absences for college visits each year. Please note that unused days do NOT roll over to the following year so plan to use both during each year. You can use these visits for colleges you are considering or you can use these visits for college events after you've been admitted.

In addition, you want to think about the day of the week and the time of year that you would like to visit a college. When is the easiest time for you to get there? What do you hope to see/do on campus? When will campus feel alive and active?

Summer: Summers are a great time to plan longer trips to multiple colleges or to visit colleges far away. You won't miss school and you can make these trips a part of your vacation. However, you won't get the best idea of the campus atmosphere since many students are off-campus and college campuses generally feel "sleepier." These trips can still introduce you to schools you are considering and you can always plan to visit them again during fall or spring term.

Fall: Spirits are high during fall semester as campuses are filled with new freshman classes and events. If you visit then you might get a taste of the campus spirit as students to hustle to class or catch a football game.

Spring: Like fall, spring semester is active on campus and can give you a good feel for that college's unique atmosphere. However, be aware that spring semester can be a difficult time to miss class at DWS since students already miss so many days for spring sports and extracurriculars. For whatever reason spring is far more chaotic and it is easier to fall behind even if it is an excused absence.

PLANNING YOUR VISIT

A college's website is the best place to start. Just click on "admission" or "prospective students" and look for campus visit information. The college should provide information on tours, admission office hours, and even directions to campus. Some include names of nearby hotels which may offer a discount to the college's visitors. They will likely have you register in advance so that you can reserve a tour and they can plan for your arrival.

In addition you should think about what else you would like to do while you are on campus. Want to sit in on a class, attend a sports event, or conduct an admissions interview? If so, reach out to the admissions office beforehand.

DWS COLLEGE CONNECTION PROGRAM

This program is designed to connect current juniors and seniors to DWS alumni who are eager to talk about their college experiences. You can ask the college counselor if a particular school currently has any DWS alumni connections through our DWS College Connection Program. If so, you might be able to meet up with them while you are on campus. This is an opportunity to connect with someone who understands the DWS experience and can give you insight into the college you are considering.

BEFORE YOU GO

First, notify the college counseling office of your planned visit at least ONE WEEK in advance. If you visit during the school year and plan to miss class, you are required to get paperwork from the college counseling office beforehand. This paperwork includes an **advance homework request sheet** that you will need all your teachers to complete at least 3 days in advance and a **college visit form** due when you return to campus. Please note that failure to complete and submit this form on your first day back at school will result in an unexcused absence and class penalties.

DURING YOUR TOUR

Be sure to take your college visit form with you on your college visit. You are required to have a college representative complete part of the form. This form also has some tips on how to maximize your visit and the form has a section for you to complete. This is designed to help you reflect on what you did and did not like about your experience. This information is critical for you and helps the college counselor best understand what you are looking for.

AFTER YOUR TOUR

When you return to campus you should immediately return your college visit form to the college counselor. This is required for you to have your absence excused. In addition, you can choose to meet with the college counselor to process your experience and discuss any next steps in the college search or application process.

DID YOU KNOW?

Visiting a college campus is one way that students can **demonstrate interest** in a college or university. Some colleges (though not all) will consider demonstrated interest as they evaluate an application. Therefore, taking a campus tour can potentially strengthen your chances of admission!

OTHER WAYS TO DEMONSTRATE INTEREST:

- Meet with college representatives when they visit DWS.
- Talk with a college representative at a college fair.
- Write a thank-you email after speaking with an admissions representative.
- Participate in an alumni interview if it is offered.
- Email your regional college admissions officer with specific questions about the school. Don't overdo this one, but an email or two can be helpful.
- Open emails from the school. Many email systems track whether applicants have opened emails sent by the college.
- Apply early. This shows you are serious and passionate about the opportunity.
- If there are financial restraints or other reasons why you cannot visit a college, feel free to reach out and explain these to a college representative so they know you are still very interested.



College Counseling

COLLEGE VISIT FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please take this form with you on your tour. At the start of your tour please complete the table below and have an admissions representative sign it. After you have their signature, you can then complete the rest of this form with your honest thoughts and reflections.

Student Name: _____ Date of Visit: _____

College/University: _____

---THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY AN ADMISSIONS REPRESENTATIVE---

I can verify that the student listed above visited this college/university on the date above.

Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____

Title/Role at College/University: _____

---THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT AFTER THE TOUR---

Optional TO-DO CHECKLIST:

- Tour campus
- Talk to someone in the admissions office
- Eat in the cafeteria
- Pick up a copy of the campus newspaper
- Sit in a class
- Talk to professors
- Talk to students
- Visit student housing
- Explore the area around campus
- Eat at an off-campus hangout

Please rate your experience: 1=Low / 5=High

Campus Life:	1 2 3 4 5	Surrounding Area:	1 2 3 4 5
Classes:	1 2 3 4 5	Facilities:	1 2 3 4 5
People:	1 2 3 4 5	Campus Food:	1 2 3 4 5

What do you like about campus or what you have learned/seen?

What have been your least favorite parts of your visit? Why?

ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- ❑ Take the time to wander around on your own.
- ❑ Get physical copies of a course catalog, a campus map, and any literature about the academic programs or campus activities that interest you.
- ❑ Write down the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of anyone you might want to contact again.
- ❑ Take pictures! They can help you remember what you saw.

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

FOR STUDENTS:

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What's it like to go from high school to college?
- What do you do in your free time? On the weekends?
- What do you love about this college?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What is it like to live here?
- How safe do you feel on campus?

FOR THE ADMISSIONS REPRESENTATIVES:

- How are freshmen advised?
- What academic support services are available?
- How difficult is it to get the classes I want to take?
- Do most students graduate in four years?
- What are housing options? (Single-sex, coed, theme housing, substance free, etc.)
- What are the strongest academic programs?
- What percentages of students get jobs upon graduation?
- Is there an honors program? If so, how do I apply for the program?
- How accessible is the faculty to students?

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

WHAT DO COLLEGES LOOK FOR?

MOST IMPORTANT

HIGH

GRADES

All colleges want to see your academic performance. They may account for growth over time or class rigor, but they want to see how you handled the challenges in front of you.

HIGH

CLASS RIGOR

Colleges want to see if you pushed yourself. However, this is a careful balancing act. After all, you want to take challenging classes but not beyond your current abilities. Maintain those grades!

INFLUENTIAL

MID

SAT/ACT SCORE

While many schools are going test-optional, many universities still recognize SAT/ACT scores as a useful way to compare students from different schools.

MID

EXTRACURRICULAR COMMITMENT

What are your passions? Have you pursued them? How long did you commit to something? Have you shown leadership? This includes work experience, volunteering, and school-related activities.

MID

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

These often tell an admissions officer what others think about you. Are you well-respected? Hard working? Personal and relatable?

MID

ESSAY

This is your opportunity to show more of your unique personality! It is important that you stand out and are memorable for the right reasons.

MID

PERSONAL QUALITIES

Some colleges look for signs of the following characteristics: curiosity, persistence, risk-taking, compassion, open-mindedness, social consciousness, creativity, collaboration, and cultural intelligence.

SOMETIMES RELEVANT

LOW

DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

Some colleges want to see that you are passionate about their university. You can show this by taking a college visit, talking with admission officers, applying early decision, etc.

LOW

LEGACY

While many colleges no longer consider legacy, some still do in an effort to encourage alumni donations. In addition, many recognize that legacy students are often highly enthusiastic about the university.



THE APPLICATION

When it comes time to apply to college, it can seem overwhelming. There seem to be countless terms and deadlines and every college seems to do things differently. Just know that the College Counseling Office is here to help you sift through it all. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out!

APPLICATION TYPES

Rolling Admissions: Rolling admissions programs read applications and make admission decisions in the order that they are received. Therefore, it is a good idea to apply early before too many spots are filled.

Early Action (EA): Early action programs allow students to apply mid-Fall and receive a decision as early as October (though exact deadlines/dates vary). However, admitted students are NOT required to attend and admitted students will have until May 1 to make a decision about enrollment. Students are also free to submit applications to other colleges and may apply to multiple Early Action, Rolling Admissions, or Regular Decision colleges.

Sometimes it can be helpful to apply Early Action if you are passionate about a particular college. Some colleges use it to gauge demonstrated interest which can increase your admissions chances. However, not all colleges use it this way so it can be worth talking to a college counselor for the most up-to-date guidance.

Students who apply Early Action can be admitted, denied, or deferred. A **deferral** means the college is still considering its final decision on your file. You were not chosen as part of the Early Action pool of applicants but you will still be considered alongside Regular Decision applicants. Perhaps the college wants to see your first semester senior year grades and/or to reassess your candidacy in the context of their entire applicant pool.

Regular Decision (RD): This is the standard application for most colleges. If you are applying regular decision, the deadline typically falls sometime between early December and late February. Students will typically receive decisions in March/April and will have until May 1st to respond.

Early Decision (ED): Early Decision programs are for students with serious interest in one particular college. If you choose this option you can only apply to ONE college for Early Decision. Early Decision deadlines generally fall in November, and decisions are typically released in December.

If admitted Early Decision, you agree to enroll at that institution and you must withdraw any applications submitted to any other institutions. You and your parents will be asked to sign a statement of intent that states you will attend that college/university regardless of the financial aid award. As mentioned, you cannot apply to multiple Early Decision colleges because they share their list of applicants with one another.

However, like Early Action, if you are deferred, your application will be reconsidered with Regular Decision applicants.

In addition, some colleges have created a second Early Decision II deadline later in the application cycle. Typically, these later Early Decision II application deadlines are not until January and decisions are released about a month later. If accepted Early Decision II, you are also obliged to attend and pay, regardless of the financial aid offer.

Applying Early Decision is a big commitment and should not be taken lightly. Applying early decision can increase your admission chances as it is the strongest way to show demonstrated interest. However, you can also lose the ability to weigh other opportunities.

Restrictive Early Action: This is sometimes referred to as Single Choice Early Action and it is an early application process used by some Ivy League universities. These applications require students apply by mid-November and students receive a decision by mid-December. While students are NOT allowed to apply to other Early Decision or Early Admissions programs, they can apply to other colleges through Regular Decision programs and students are not required to notify the college of their enrollment decision until May 1.

DECISION TYPES

Admitted: Congratulations! You have been accepted to that college or university for the term you applied.

Denied: You were not accepted and they are no longer considering your application for that term.

Deferred: You applied Early Decision or Early Action and were not accepted during that round. However, your application will now be considered as part of Regular Decision admissions.

Waitlisted: You were not accepted with the first round of Regular Decision in March/April. However, you have been placed on a waiting list in case an opening becomes available. Colleges often maintain a waitlist in the event that they do not enroll enough students in their first-year class.

Usually a college that has not met its enrollment goals after May 1 will offer admission to students on its waitlist. However, by mid-June most colleges will officially deny any students remaining on their waitlists, although some may continue to admit students later in the summer. Keep in mind that being waitlisted is not a denial. Some colleges intentionally under-admit and plan to admit from their waitlists every year as an enrollment strategy.

COMMON APP

The Common Application (informally known as the Common App) is an undergraduate college admission application accepted by nearly 700 member colleges and universities in 48 states and the District of Columbia, as well as Canada, China, and many European countries. Member colleges and universities that accept the Common App include over 100 public universities and over 250 institutions that do not require an application fee.

The Common App form can save students hours of work. You can complete the information on the form and submit it to any of the colleges or universities that accept the Common App. However, some colleges require an additional supplementary information consisting of school-specific questions and/or essays.

Given the number of colleges that use Common App, all DWS students will be expected to create a Common App account during the spring semester of their junior year. Students will then be able to complete their Common App profile over the summer.

However, students should NOT begin college specific portions of the Common App until the fall as these parts are reset over the summer. Once applications open (typically August 1st), students can begin exploring the requirements for individual colleges. However, students should consult with the college counselor before deciding how to submit an application. While Common App provides convenience, there are occasionally benefits to submitting through a college's application portal.

COLLEGE ESSAYS

If your application requests any written components then you should take the time and energy to prepare them appropriately. Please see the “College Essays” section of this guide for additional advice.

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT

When a student applies to college, the college counselor will submit his or her official high school transcript on the student’s behalf. This transcript includes all high school courses taken, the semester/year-end grades earned in each course, a student’s cumulative weighted GPA and all documented volunteer hours. However, your DWS transcript will not report class rank nor test scores.

When colleges look at your transcript, they are looking at both GPA and course selection. While colleges want to see if you chose rigorous courses that challenged you, they also want to see that you were able to handle these challenges with strong grades. For these reasons it is important to be intentional about course selection throughout high school. The best advice is to look for ways to pursue rigor in the areas where you have both interest and aptitude without stretching yourself too thin. Don’t rush into classes you aren’t ready for. Colleges also love to see growth in grades and rigor over time so choose classes that will appropriately challenge you at the appropriate times in your high school career. Meet with the college counselor if you have questions about course selection at any point in high school.

In addition, it is important to note that many colleges recalculate a student’s GPA by subtracting or adding weight according to their own guidelines. This allows them to compare students fairly from different high schools. They realize an “A” at some schools is more easily attainable and they want to fairly acknowledge the rigor and challenge of the institution.

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

Students are responsible for submitting their own test scores directly from Collegeboard or the ACT. Please see the “SAT/ACT” section of this guide for more advice.

OTHER DOCUMENTATION

To help admissions officers better understand a student’s transcript, most colleges and universities also require a secondary school report. This report is

provided by the college counselor and includes a school profile that provides context for our school curriculum, course offerings, and community. For example, it informs schools how many AC/AP classes are offered so they can put your course selection and course rigor in perspective.

In addition, the college counselor will submit any other requested documentation, like letters of recommendation, etc.

INTERVIEWS

Some highly competitive universities request an interview as part of your application. In general, if a college offers you the opportunity to interview, you should make every effort to do so.

These interviews are usually conducted by an admission counselor or a trained alumni of the institution. Regardless of who conducts the interview, your answers in the interview provide an impression of you, and you should prepare adequately. Do not attempt to “wing it.” It will be obvious if you are underprepared and it will not help your admissions chances.

If you are serious about the university, it is important that you take the time to thoroughly prepare for the interview. Do extensive research on the university and plan your responses for anticipated questions. The college counselor can point you towards preparation resources and can also arrange a mock interview for you to practice. Please reach out to the college counselor if a college or university has requested an interview.



COLLEGE ESSAY

While every application doesn't require an essay, many do. If your application does, use it as an opportunity to show off your best qualities and make an impact. After all, college essays offer something that grades, test scores, and lists of activities cannot show: your personality.

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

If prompted, you should plan to draft a well-written personal statement that shows the college who you are and what you have to offer. Avoid cliché topics and edit your essay thoroughly. In fact, it is a good idea to pitch essay topics to the college counselor before you begin writing so that you can choose a topic that is genuinely unique and compelling. After all, a topic you think is unique could actually be extremely common to an admissions officer.

Once you have a topic planned, you can begin drafting your essay. Again, it is a good idea to consult with the college counselor as you work through this process. However, you can also consult your favorite English teacher or check out CollegeEssayGuy.com. Just be sure someone edits your essay before you submit!

SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAYS

Many applications will also ask you to write supplemental essays addressing some of the following questions: Why this college? Why this major? What is a community you are a part of? What extracurricular has been the most impactful for you?

And occasionally there is a prompt designed to show the university a unique side of you. For example, the UGA 2023 supplemental essay asked:

"The college admissions process can create anxiety. In an attempt to make it less stressful, please tell us an interesting or amusing story about yourself from your high school years that you have not already shared in your application."

Keep in mind that these supplemental essays should not repeat the main content of anything you have already written about in your personal statement. They are designed to show your personality and explore your passions in another unique way. And if an essay is marked as optional? DO IT ANYWAYS. This shows your commitment to the school and your desire to be admitted.

While an essay cannot get you into a college that your grades/test scores do not qualify you for, it can help push a borderline applicant into the acceptance pile. Don't underestimate these opportunities and use the resources you have!



LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Recommendations show something that grades and test scores cannot. They show colleges what other people think about you and give insight into your personality and strengths. Therefore, they can be critical in the admissions process.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Like essays, not all colleges will require a letter of recommendation and the number of required recommendations can vary from application to application. Therefore, be sure you verify how many letters of recommendation you need before you ask someone to spend their time and energy writing you one!

WHO TO ASK: You should work with the college counselor to determine the exact number of teacher recommendations you will need for the colleges you are planning to apply to. However, once you have this information you can begin considering which teachers to ask. Think about which teacher is best suited to speak to your strengths as a student. Who has seen you grow? Who has cheered you on? Who have you connected with? Who has sparked your curiosity? The college counselor can help you decide who would write the best letter for you. After all, not everyone is comfortable writing a letter and you want one that will make you shine.

HOW TO ASK: Once you and the college counselor have determined who to ask, it is time to ask! You

should plan to do so at the end of your junior year or at the start of your senior year. You will need to get a **Teacher Recommendation Request Form** from the college counselor so that you can ask the teacher in-person. In addition, you should provide the teacher with a copy of your resume.

Keep in mind that teachers are asked by numerous students for recommendations and many limit the number of recommendations they agree to write. Therefore, if you really want a recommendation from a particular teacher, do not delay! All recommenders should be asked at LEAST three weeks before any application deadline.

HOW TO FOLLOW UP: While you will not be able to read these letters of recommendation, you will be able to track their completion through Scoir. If a teacher takes longer than two weeks to complete a letter, you can send a polite email reminder or ask the college counselor for advice. Once a teacher has written you a letter, you should also follow up with a handwritten thank-you note. The college counselor will provide you with stationary to do so.

COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION

Many colleges and universities also require or request a counselor recommendation letter. While a teacher recommendation letter typically highlights your academic strengths, work ethic, and classroom participation, the counselor recommendation letter usually focuses on your personal qualities, character, and overall preparedness for college. This might include information about your extracurricular activities, leadership abilities, and community service or it could provide context about your background or circumstances that may have influenced their academic performance or personal development.

Before writing this letter, the college counselor will ask both you and your parents to complete a **Brag Sheet Survey**. This is designed to provide the college counselor with helpful information to highlight in the letter.

In addition, you can ask important people in your life to complete a **Supplemental Rec Form (Green Sheet)**. This form is great for anyone who knows you really well but might not be writing you a letter of recommendation. This allows those closest to you to supply details or stories that would be fantastic in a letter of recommendation. Then the college counselor can reference those details and stories in her own letter.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

While most colleges limit the number of recommendations they will accept, (usually one counselor recommendation and either one or two teacher recommendations) others allow an additional recommendation or two.

If your application does allow for additional letters of recommendation, you should consult with the college counselor for advice on who else to ask. This could be another teacher, a coach, a guidance counselor, a school administrator, a pastor, or a boss who knows you in another context. If you have someone in mind, discuss your plan with the college counselor to ensure the best course of action.

Occasionally recommendations from family or friends who are alumni or donors for particular institutions can positively impact your admissions chances. However, you should discuss this possibility with the college counselor before pursuing this option. In reality, this

strategy is less effective in admissions today as colleges strive to judge applicants on the merits of their application, not who they know.

FERPA WAIVER

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulates the privacy of student education records and gives you the right to review confidential letters of recommendation provided as part of that application. However, it is recommended that all students waive this right by completing the FERPA waiver.

This waiver gives up your right to read your letters of recommendation. This waiver is highly recommended by admissions professionals as it assures colleges that your letters are genuine and a true reflection of you. Colleges expect truthful letters of recommendation and are less likely to trust letters if they know you have read them and potentially influenced their writing. Instead of expecting to read these letters, just choose a recommender you trust to write you a good letter.

Please note that refusal to complete the FERPA waiver could prevent recommenders from writing for you and could also negatively impact your admissions chances at the colleges you apply to. (Colleges may wonder if you are attempting to influence your letters of recommendation.) For these reasons, it is recommended that you complete the waiver.



SAT/ACT

While many colleges and universities are going test-optional, SAT and ACT scores are still highly utilized by the vast majority of American colleges and universities for both college admissions and scholarship opportunities. In fact, a point or two could mean thousands of dollars in tuition, so take these tests seriously!

PSAT/NMSQT

The new digital Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a 2 hour test that evaluates students in two scores: math and evidence-based reading and writing (ERW). At DWS all students in grades 9-11 take the test each October.

The PSAT is considered a practice test for the SAT and it can also be used for course placement in AC and AP courses at DWS. For juniors, the PSAT scores are also used to determine eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Program. However, colleges do not see PSAT scores as part of a college application.

THE ACT

The American College Testing (ACT) exam is still a paper exam and consists of 4 tests (English, Math, Reading, Science) and an optional Writing test (essay). The test takes 2 hours 55 minutes without the essay or 3 hours 35 minutes with the essay. While very few colleges require the writing component, you can check each college's website for guidance in registering for writing. For more information and to register for the test, go to www.act.org.

THE SAT

The new digital Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) will now be a 2 hour test that, like the PSAT, evaluates students in two scores: math and evidence-based reading and writing (ERW). For more information and to register, go to the College Board website www.collegeboard.org.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Both the ACT and the College Board offer testing accommodations to students with demonstrated learning differences and/or medical conditions. However, the process for being approved for testing accommodations is different than the process for receiving learning support services at DWS. Anyone interested in testing accommodations for these admissions tests must first be approved by the ACT's Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA) or College Board's Services for Students with Disabilities.

Because the process can be lengthy and require additional documentation, you should plan to meet with the DWS Learning Support Center specialist as early as possible.

WHEN TO TEST

Most colleges still require SAT or ACT scores for admission. Therefore, it is recommended that each student take both the SAT and the ACT for the first time during their junior year. Once students have tried each test, they can determine which they are better at and can plan to focus their efforts on improving that score if needed. Some students may only take a given test twice. However, others may choose to test more in an effort to achieve a particular score. The college counselor can advise you on the best strategy for your individual circumstances.

SUBMITTING TEST SCORES

Students should note that Deerfield-Windsor School does NOT submit standardized test scores on behalf of the student. Instead, it is the student's responsibility to request any relevant test scores from Collegeboard and/or the ACT and have them sent to the college directly. However, the college counselor can guide students through this process.

TEST-OPTIONAL

There is a growing movement to diminish the importance of standardized testing in the admission process. As part of this movement, many universities are going "test-optional" and no longer require all applicants to submit their test scores. In fact, a complete list of colleges that are test-optional can be found at [Fairtest.org](https://www.fairtest.org).

However, going test-optional is not recommended for all students. While it can benefit some students at some colleges, it can hinder other students applying to other colleges. Reach out to the college counselor if you want to consider submitting an application test-optional and the college counselor can advise you on whether or not that is the best decision for your admissions process.

Regardless of whether or not you intend to apply test-optional, it is a good idea to apply yourself and get the best possible test score to enhance your admissions chances.

WHERE TO TEST

Deerfield-Windsor School is proud to offer multiple testing opportunities on campus each year. Some students find it beneficial to test in a familiar environment and this is a great option for many.

However, some students score higher testing off campus or may need to test at another location due to scheduling conflicts. And still others desire more frequent testing opportunities to increase their score. In these cases students can register to test at another location in the community. The college counselor can help a student find additional testing opportunities and register.

ON-CAMPUS TESTING OPPORTUNITIES

SAT TESTING DATE

October 11, 2023

ACT TESTING DATES

October 17, 2023 (SENIORS ONLY)

March 12, 2024

OFF-CAMPUS TESTING OPPORTUNITIES

SAT TESTING DATES

August 26, 2023

October 7, 2023

November 4, 2023

December 2, 2023

March 9, 2024

May 4, 2024

June 1, 2024

ACT TESTING DATES

September 9, 2023

October 28, 2023

December 9, 2023

February 10, 2024

April 13, 2024

June 8, 2024

July 13, 2024

FINANCIAL AID



TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

College can be expensive and many families rely on financial aid to help cover the costs. However, there are many different types of aid ranging from grants to loans. Some aid is offered to meet a family's financial need, while other aid is awarded on the basis of merit. Therefore, it is important to look into all of your options to see which aid you qualify for.

FAFSA

All students and their families should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form if they plan to apply for any type of financial aid. The 2024-2025 FAFSA will be released in **December 2023** and should be completed shortly thereafter with tax information from the 2022 tax year. Please note that this form must be completed by students AND their parents/legal guardians, regardless of who will be paying for college. If you have additional questions, you can reach out to the college counselor who can help you navigate this process.

After completing the FAFSA, it is a good idea to reach out to the financial aid offices at the schools you are considering. After all, completing the FAFSA is not always enough to receive a student aid offer. At many institutions you will also need to complete the college's financial aid application requirements. Then the college will evaluate your FAFSA information and provide a student aid offer. This offer will detail the costs of attending the college for an academic year and it will include any grants, scholarships, work-study funds, or loans you're eligible to receive.

GRANTS

Grants are one form of financial aid that does not have to be paid back. They are usually need-based, which means that they are awarded to students who demonstrate financial need. The most common grants are the Federal Pell Grant and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) and each one could provide up to several thousand dollars in educational funding each year.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are another form of financial aid that does not have to be paid back. They are usually merit-based, which means that they are awarded to students who demonstrate academic or athletic excellence, leadership, or other special talents. Scholarships can be awarded by colleges, private organizations, and corporations.

LOANS

Loans are financial aid that must be paid back with interest. There are two types of loans: federal and private.

Federal loans are offered by the federal government and have lower interest rates and often offer more flexible repayment options than private loans. In fact, some repayment plans can adjust the monthly repayment amount based on an individual's income level. However, It's important to note that not all federal loans are eligible for all repayment plans, so it's important to check with your loan servicer to see which plans you qualify for.

Private loans, on the other hand, are offered by banks, credit unions, and other lenders. They can have fixed or variable interest rates, which are set by the lender based on the borrower's creditworthiness. However, private loans may have higher loan limits.

Overall, federal loans are generally a better option for most students, as they offer more flexible repayment options, lower interest rates, and better borrower protections than private loans. However, if you have exhausted all of your federal loan options and still need additional funding, private loans can be a viable alternative.

WORK-STUDY

The Federal Work-study program provide part-time employment for students to help pay for their education. Students can work on campus or off campus and earn money to pay for their educational expenses. The amount of funding you receive depends on your financial need (as determined by the FAFSA), the amount of funding your school receives, and when you apply.

Once you've been awarded work-study funding, you can search for a job on or off-campus through your school's financial aid office. Jobs are typically part-time and can include work in the library, administrative offices, or community service organizations. You'll earn an hourly wage that is at least equal to the federal minimum wage. However, the total amount you can earn is determined by your work-study award, the number of hours you work, and your hourly wage. You can use this money to pay for college expenses such as tuition, fees, books, and living expenses.





HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

The state of Georgia provides a generous scholarship program for Georgia residents. This program helps many Georgia students avoid student loans and graduate debt-free if they attend a college or university in the state of Georgia.

The HOPE Scholarship is a program in Georgia that provides financial assistance to students who attend an eligible college or university in the state.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the HOPE Scholarship, students must meet the following requirements:

- Be a legal resident of Georgia
- Have graduated from an eligible high school with a minimum 3.0 GPA
- Have completed the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or the GSFAPPS (Georgia Student Finance Application and Promissory Note System)
- Be enrolled in an eligible college or university in Georgia
- Maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in college

The HOPE Scholarship is a valuable resource for students in Georgia, as it can significantly reduce the cost of attending college. However, it is important for eligible students to apply for the scholarship and maintain the required GPA to continue receiving the award each year.

HOPE GPA

A student's high school HOPE GPA is not the same as his or her high school GPA. HOPE calculates GPA on a 4.0 scale and does not account for plus (+) or minus (-). For example, a "B-" equals 3.0. In addition, only certain core classes are used to calculate a student's HOPE GPA. In addition, students can track their HOPE GPA [online](#) starting in the 10th grade.

AWARD AMOUNT

The HOPE Scholarship covers tuition, mandatory fees, and provides a book allowance at public colleges and universities in Georgia. At private colleges and universities in Georgia, the scholarship covers a portion of tuition and fees, with the exact amount determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

It is also worth noting that the 2023 state budget has increased the amount of award money offered to HOPE scholars. Now, all high school graduates with a minimum 3.0 HOPE GPA, will qualify for full tuition coverage at eligible public universities in the state of Georgia.



WHERE TO FIND SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships can be a great way to help pay for the rising costs of college. There are many scholarships available, and students should take advantage of all the resources available to them to find them.

SEARCH ENGINES

You can begin your search by using scholarship search engines. There are many scholarship search engines available online, such as [Fastweb](#), [Scholarships.com](#), and [Cappex](#). These websites allow students to create a profile and search for scholarships that match their qualifications and interests.

While these databases generally connect students to a wide range of scholarships, this ease of access also means that many students will be applying for the same scholarships, increasing the level of competition. Regardless, many students find success starting with a general database of scholarships from across the nation.

LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Listen up for local scholarships in the community. The college counselor will regularly inform students of many of these opportunities. However, if students stumble across an opportunity on their own, they should inform the college counselor so that it can be shared with other DWS students in the future.

After all, many local organizations such as community foundations, civic groups, and businesses offer scholarships that our students have found great success with in the past. These scholarships may generally be smaller in amount, but they can add up and help reduce the overall cost of college.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Once you have been accepted into a college or university, you can also reach out to their financial aid office. Many colleges and universities have scholarships available specifically for their students. These scholarships may be based on academic performance, financial need, or other criteria.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU WIN A SCHOLARSHIP

Congratulations! Celebrate this accomplishment and make sure you complete any necessary follow up paperwork to ensure you receive your scholarship. And be sure to notify the college counselor so that this information can be accurately logged in school records tracking award amounts and accomplishments. And this could help future students learn about the opportunity

MAKING A DECISION



THE WAITLIST

When you finally hear back from a college's admissions office, you often expect a definitive answer: acceptance or rejection. However, some students are informed that they are in the in-between: the waitlist. Getting waitlisted from a college can be a stressful experience, but it's important to remember that it's not the end of the road.

First of all, remember that being waitlisted from a college does not mean you are not qualified or deserving of admission. It simply means that the college has more qualified applicants than they have space for at the moment. If fewer students accept their offers than the college planned for, the admissions department will begin sending out acceptances to students on their waitlist.

By following these steps and staying positive, you can increase your chances of being admitted off the waitlist or finding success at another college.

STEP 1: ACCEPT A SPOT ON THE WAITLIST

If you are interested in attending the college, you should formally accept a spot on the waitlist as soon as possible. This will ensure that you remain in consideration for admission.

STEP 2: EVALUATE YOUR OPTIONS

Be aware that the waitlist is unpredictable and do not count on an acceptance. If you are waitlisted from your first choice, you need to decide on your

second-choice option from the schools you have been accepted to. And if you haven't heard back from the waitlist college by May 1st, you will need to go ahead and submit a deposit to your backup school to secure your spot. This will ensure that you have a college to attend if you are not admitted off the waitlist.

STEP 3: FOLLOW UP

Reach out to the admissions office to express your continued interest in attending the college and ask about the waitlist process. You can also ask about the likelihood of being admitted off the waitlist and what the timeline for that process looks like.

You may be able to submit additional materials to strengthen your application, such as an updated transcript or resume, additional test scores, or a letter of continued interest. Check with the admissions office to see if this is an option and what materials they would like to see. Keep your college counselor informed so that she can help you gather any additional paperwork and help you navigate this process.

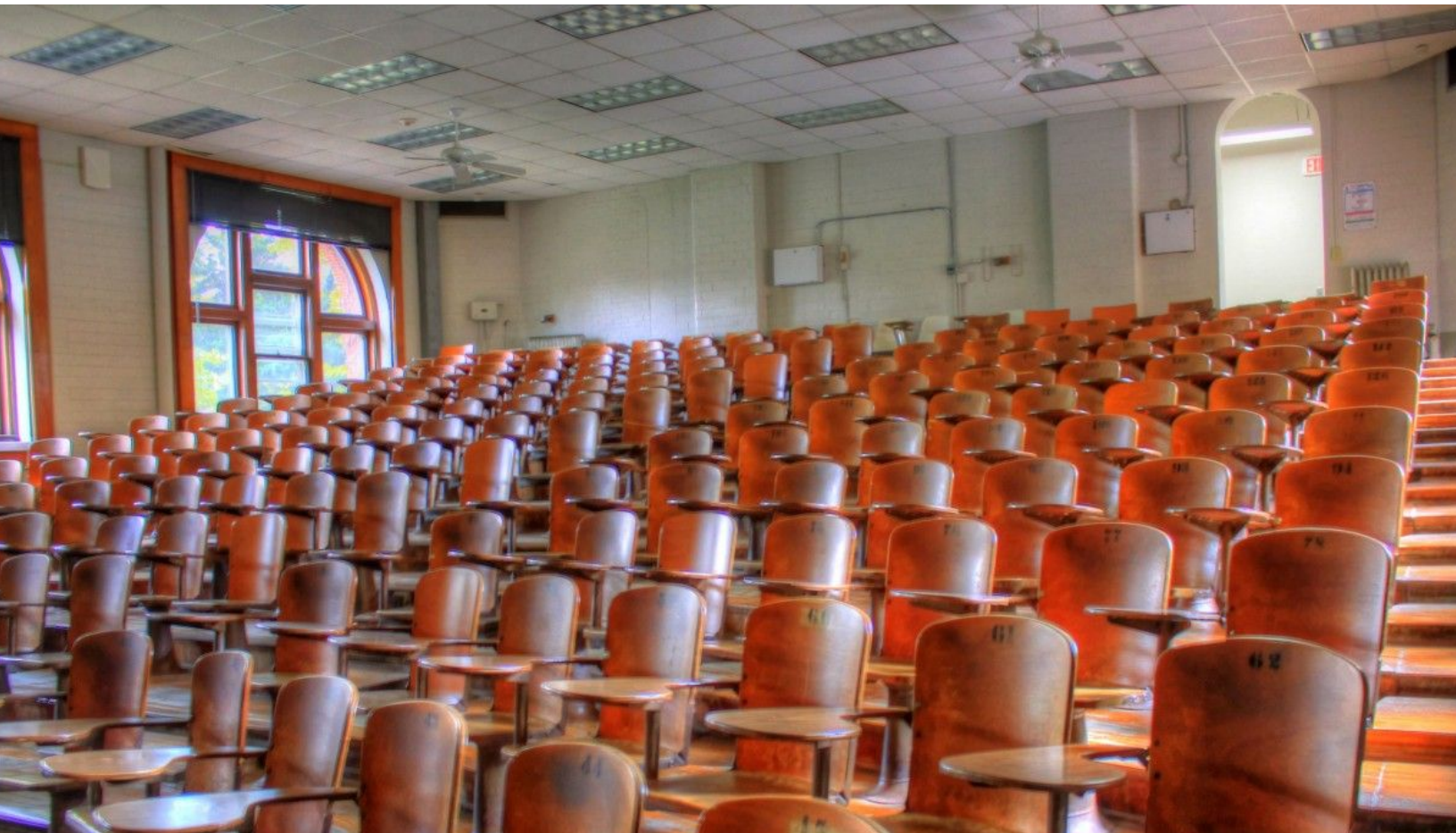
STEP 5: WAIT PATIENTLY

Be patient while waiting for a decision from the college. Admissions offices may not know how many spots will open up on the waitlist until AFTER the May 1st decision deadline and some students don't hear a definitive answer until July. In the meantime, focus on finishing your senior year strong and preparing for college, regardless of where you end up attending.

STEP 6: MAKE YOUR DECISION

You may have to decide if your second choice school will be a better option than staying on the waitlist as long as possible. Some schools will notify you in May or June if your application has ultimately been rejected while others may not finish notifying waitlisted candidates until July.

Would you rather hold out hope of getting accepted? Or would you rather move forward with the school that accepted you? Then you can solidify your housing, find a roommate, attend orientation, and get excited about another great option. The choice is yours! Know that the college counselor is here to support you as you navigate these choices.





TIPS ON MAKING A FINAL DECISION

Once you know where you have been accepted, it becomes time to commit. Students are generally expected to commit by May 1st though some schools offer priority housing to students who commit sooner. However, this is a big decision and you can only commit to one school. Therefore, it is important that you take your time and are certain!

First of all, know there is no one single “right” answer. This is not a test. This is a choice and the right answer will vary from person-to-person depending on each person’s priorities.

However, it is a good idea to make sure you have considered all the factors that go into this decision. When you take a campus tour, you may “fall in love” with a university but, this feeling or emotion shouldn’t be the only factor you consider. View your choice in college like a relationship. You don’t just want to “love” it. You also need to make sure your college is a going to be a healthy fit for you.

As you assess all of your options, you should consider the following criteria:

ACADEMIC

Does this school offer the program you are interested in? Will it adequately prepare you for your future career path? Will this academic program allow you to graduate in 4 years or less? Will they accept your AP credit or dual enrollment credit? Can you add a minor

or double major if you choose? Do they have other equally compelling programs if you choose to change your major later? If you don’t know what you want to study, do they have resources to help you explore potential career paths? If you need learning support resources, will they work with you? Do they have adequate networking opportunities to help you find a job when you graduate?

Remember that the primary purpose of college is to prepare you for a future career so make sure your choice in school can check that box!

CAMPUS CULTURE

Does this school offer the social opportunities that will help you plug in and connect? Will you find personal satisfaction in this community?

Think about what these social opportunities might look like for you. Do you want Greek Life? Religious organizations? Close-knit learning communities? Division I athletics? Intramural sports? Other specialized interest groups?

Also think about other aspects of college culture like size and location. Will you get overwhelmed being just a number on a large campus or one of many in a giant lecture hall? Will a small school have enough social opportunities for you to find your niche? Will the surrounding area provide more opportunities for you (be it a big city with entertainment or a rural area with hikes and nature)? If your university connected you with a job after graduation, would you be satisfied staying in that area?

FINANCES

This is one of the largest financial decisions of your life. Will you graduate debt-free? If not, how long will it take you to pay off any debt? If you do take on debt, will your future career provide a substantial salary that will allow you to pay off this debt quickly? Will you have to get a masters or doctorate for your field of study? And if so, how much more debt will this incur?

As much as we might not want finances to limit our opportunities, this is an important consideration. If you go into major debt for a 4-year experience, how will it affect the rest of your life? That said, be sure you have explored all possible ways to reduce any debt to free up your options.

COMMITTING

Once you have evaluated all of these factors, you can come to a decision! This should be your final decision so make sure you have made up your mind. (Withdrawing a deposit after the fact negatively impacts our school's reputation with a university and could make it harder for future students to gain admittance.)

So once you have decided you will submit your enrollment deposit, notify the college counselor, and begin preparing for your future!

