Warren Township High School
District #121

Post High School Planning Guide 2023-2024

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."

Introduction

This booklet has been designed by the Warren Township High School Guidance and Counseling Department to assist Warren Township High School students and their parents in the post high school planning process. There are numerous options to choose from, and knowing yourself well is the key to making appropriate choices. Therefore, throughout this guide, you will find out not only the answers to many of your questions regarding post high school planning, but also tools that will help you gain further insight into what path after high school is best for you. Also, keep in mind career activities you have completed in the past, which provided you with ideas for future careers, educational paths and information regarding your abilities and interests. Consider what you have learned about yourself in your classes, high school activities, jobs, etc. From experiences like these, you have gained knowledge regarding your strengths and weaknesses, as well as your likes and dislikes. All of this valuable data about yourself will help you make appropriate choices for your future.

Now is definitely the time to begin studying the options available to you and putting the plan in place that will allow you to attain your goals. Your counselor is prepared to help you in this process. Although your counselor cannot make any decisions for you, he or she can help you find more information, answer your questions, and assist you in sorting through your options. In addition, spend some time in the College and Career Center researching careers and schools. Our college counselors and secretaries are eager to help you find what you need. The planning process can seem overwhelming; however, people are available to assist you along the way—please utilize them!

What becomes of your future is up to you! For most young people, this is the first opportunity you have to make significant decisions that can have great impact on the rest of your life. Take advantage of the information in this booklet, visit the College and Career Center, meet with your counselor, and get excited about the next great adventure in your life. We wish you a fulfilling and prosperous life beyond WTHS!

~WTHS Counselors

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"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition."
- Steve Jobs

Cover quote:

Abraham Lincoln

Post High School Options

"Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives—choice, not chance, determines your destiny."

—Aristotle

There are many options for students after high school. The possibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A four-year college or university (either public or private)
- A two-year college (either public or private)
- A technical college (either public or private)
- A specialty school
- The military (regular enlistment, ROTC, or a service academy)
- Employment
- An apprenticeship
- A post-high school graduate program (a "gap" year)

Four-year colleges are located in every state and are either public (which means they are partly supported by taxes and are therefore generally less expensive than private colleges) or private (which are not supported by taxes). Both public and private college offer a wide variety of programs and vary in size from very small to very large. There are more than 3,000 four-year colleges in the United States to choose from . Examples of four-year colleges in Illinois are:

- The University of Illinois (campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Springfield and Chicago)
- State University System (Chicago State in Chicago, Eastern Illinois in Charleston, Governors State in Chicago, Illinois State in Normal, Northeastern Illinois in Chicago, Northern Illinois in DeKalb, Southern Illinois in Carbondale and Edwardsville, Western Illinois in Macomb)

Two-year colleges can also be either private or public and are located throughout the United States. The most common two-year college is the public community college, which is usually the least expensive and most convenient option for students wanting to pursue a college education. Students who desire to earn a four-year degree can complete their last two years by transferring their community college credits to a four-year school that agrees to accept them. Examples of community colleges near WTHS are:

- College of Lake County, Grayslake
- Harper College, Palatine
- McHenry Community College, McHenry
- Oakton Community College, Des Plaines
- College of DuPage County, Glen Ellyn

Post High School Options continued

Technical colleges and specialty schools are somewhat different from two and four-year colleges in that they offer training for a specific occupation and usually do not offer general coursework such as English, Social Studies, the Humanities, etc. (this can vary somewhat by school). Lengths of programs vary but most can be completed in one or two years. The student is then ready to enter the job market. Technical colleges or specialty schools can be either public or private. Examples of technical colleges and special schools in Illinois are:

- DeVry University (Technology/Electrical)
- Mario Tricoci University of Beauty Culture (Cosmetology)
- The Salon Professional Academy of Kenosha (Cosmetology)
- WyoTech (Automotive)
- Even College of Lake County has many career programs!

The military offers a variety of training opportunities and requires a service commitment in return. In addition to regular enlistment, students who want to pursue a college degree before they complete their service commitment can apply for a ROTC program or a service academy. ROTC scholarships allow students to complete their education at a civilian college at the same time they are training to become a commissioned officer in a branch of the armed services. Many college campuses offer ROTC programs. Names and phone numbers of military contacts can be obtained in the WTHS College and Career Center or from your counselor. WTHS offers the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery at least once per school year. Contact Student Services for the scheduled career aptitude test.

The service academies, which require a fairly extensive application process, include the following:

- **United States Air Force Academy**
  www.usafa.af.mil
  Colorado Springs, Colorado 80840
  (800) 443-9266
- **United States Coast Guard Academy**
  www.cga.edu
  New London, Connecticut 06320
  (800) 883-8724
- **United States Merchant Marine Academy**
  www.usmma.edu
  Kings Point, New York 11024
  (866) 546-4778
- **United States Military Academy**
  www.usma.edu
  West Point, New York 10996
  (845) 938-4041
- **United States Naval Academy**
  www.usna.edu
  Annapolis, Maryland 21402
  (410) 293-4361

Click for a list of our WTHS assigned military recruiters.

Employment immediately after high school is an option chosen by students who know that they wish to be involved with an occupation which requires no additional training beyond high school or who want to delay formalized post-high school training. Sometimes companies have their own training programs. Students wishing to pursue the employment option should talk with their counselor about resources.

The following websites provide information on career planning and researching jobs:

https://www.bls.gov/ooh/

www.indeed.com

https://illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov/ada/r/job_seeker

Job Center of Lake County: https://www.lakecountyil.gov/167/Job-Center-of-Lake-County

Apprenticeship programs are another way to get training for a particular occupation. Programs are available in skilled trades in Illinois (i.e. bricklayer, electrician, carpentry, construction, painter, pipe fitter, plumber, roofer). Information can be obtained from:

Apprenticeship Program List of Contacts

College of Lake County Apprenticeship Programs

Illinois Department of Employment Security

http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Pages/Apprenticeship.aspx

Job Center of Lake County (https://www.lakecountyil.gov/167/Job-Center-of-Lake-County)

The post high school options are many.

Which one is right for you?

Perhaps the most important step in the post-high school planning process is that of self-reflection. Read on to learn how to get started in the process.

Self-Reflection

Who are you? Finding the right plan for you requires an understanding of your values, skills and interests. One factor you should consider is how your learning style matches the educational institutions that you are considering attending. If you prefer courses that relate directly to a particular career, and/or a more hands-on approach to education, you may want to consider beginning your education at a community college or technical school. Or, you might decide that you want to begin college coursework, however you do not want to move away from home or attend a four-year institution quite yet. Community colleges can help ease the transition from high school to college. Of course, the decision of whether to attend a two-year college or four-year college is not this simple. We want to remind you of the importance of considering *who you are* when you are deciding on what type of institution to attend.

The following questions may help consider your readiness for attending a four-year college. If you are not able to answer yes to most or all of the questions, this does not mean you cannot go to college. It may help you to determine which skills to improve on to be prepared for success at college.

Ask Yourself!

1. Are your academic record and/or your college admissions test scores better than average?
2. Do you have effective study skills?
3. Do you enjoy doing academic work?
4. Do you read well?
5. Do you write well?

6. Why are you pursuing college?
   a. Your chosen career requires college training.
   b. You like school and want to further your education.
   c. Attending college is an important family value or tradition.
   d. You're not sure what the alternative is.
   e. All of your friends are.

7. How have you prepared for college academic work?
   a. Studying and working in high school.
   b. Taking the most academically challenging coursework available.
   c. Making reading a daily habit.
   d. Pursuing opportunities outside school such as mentorships, camps, and other academic opportunities.

8. How do you know that you are ready to live independently?
   a. You manage your own checkbook.
   b. You do your homework without parent supervision.
   C. You have independent living skills (i.e. laundry, waking with an alarm clock, etc.)
   D. You have spent time away from home before.

*Adapted from *A Step-by-Step Guide to Life after VAHS.*

Self-Reflection (continued)

Once you decide what type of institution you would like to attend, you must consider what school criteria is most important to you. This will allow you to narrow your list of schools to those that match your needs best. You may be living on campus for four years, so don't forget the importance of comparing campus life, diversity of the student body, living arrangements, etc. The following factors may be helpful to consider:

- Size of the school
- Location of the school
- Availability of your major
- Size of the classes
- Quality of the faculty
- Flexibility and availability of interdepartmental study or transfer
- Availability of courses through registration
- Availability of faculty and facilities to undergraduate students
- Success of graduates pursuing graduate studies and/or employment opportunities
- Instructional facilities and equipment
- Academic structure and core requirements
- Type of sports programs available
- Advising programs
- Programs to meet special needs
- Cost of the institution

Once you complete your self-reflection, we recommend the Character assessments and University Search in Maia Learning.

www.maialearning.com

Click Log-In

Click Sign-In with Google

- Composition and interrelationships of the student body
- Availability of extracurricular activities
- Selectivity and admissions requirements
- Living arrangements and facilities
- Availability of financial aid and scholarships
- Kind of school (i.e. public, private, church-affiliated, liberal, conservative, etc.)
- Campus/community safety and security
- Relationship of the school and the community
- Climate and geographical considerations
- Visual appeal of the school
- Prestige and name recognition
- School calendar

Click to explore our Virtual Career Fair!

Timeline

Freshman Year

- Meet with your counselor to review your four-year plan.
- Access your account in Maia Learning. Complete the Interest Profiler or one other "Character" Assessment to begin exploring career and educational options.
- Visit the College and Career Center in Lab 258 at O'Plaine or meet with Ms. Hartley and get acquainted with resources and think about what appeals to you.
- Sign-up to attend a College and Career Center presentation or career workshop. Sign-up to meet with college admission representatives during their visit to our O'Plaine Campus. See the complete list of college visits and upcoming workshops with the link in your WTHS email.
- Document your accomplishments/activities on Maia Learning's Resume in the "Portfolio" section.
- Attend Exploring Your Options Night on February 15 and/or Camino a College on February 1.
- Take the PSAT-9 in April. Create your College Board account and link your PSAT scores to Khan Academy for personalized, free SAT test prep.

Sophomore Year

- Meet with your counselor to review your four-year plan making adjustments to coincide with your post-high school plans.
- Attend Sophomore College Planning Night on January 25 and/or Camino a College on February 1.
- Visit the College and Career Center. Sign-up to meet with college admission representatives during their visit to our O'Plaine Campus. See the complete list of college visits and upcoming workshops with the link in your WTHS email.
- Sign-up to attend a presentation or career workshop.
- Find a community service or volunteer activity that suits you.
- Re-visit the Career Interest results to assess which career reflects your interests.
- Understand what your grades and classes are on your transcript and how to calculate your GPA.
- Take the PSAT in April and utilize Khan Academy with the College Board to improve your skills for the SAT your junior year.
- Explore summer program opportunities at colleges or universities to enrich your experiences.
- Take opportunities for early college visits—either formally or informally.

Junior Year

FALL

- Meet with your counselor to review your four-year plan making adjustments to coincide with your post-high school plans.
- Sign-up in Maia Learning to meet with college admission representatives during their visit to WTHS. See schedule of college visits on Maia Learning under the Events section.
- Take the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test on Wednesday, October 11th. This is strongly encouraged for all college bound juniors and necessary for anyone wishing National Merit recognition.
- Attend the IACAC Illinois Regional College Fair at College of Lake County on October 12 and attend the NACAC Chicago College Fair or in Milwaukee either virtually or in-person (TBD).
- Sign into Maia Learning and add colleges to "Considering List" in the Universities section.
- Visit colleges in person when you are able.
- Attend Junior College Planning Night on Thursday, November 2 and Junior Seminars.

WINTER

- Start your post-high school planning in earnest. A good first step is to **meet with your counselor** and review your strengths and interests, your academic plan, and your current record.
- Register carefully for your senior year courses, making sure that you will have the necessary college admission requirements for colleges you are interested in.
- Research college using Maia Learning, the College and Career Center, talking with college representatives, and asking colleges to send you information.

SPRING

- Discuss college costs with your family to begin to research financial aid and scholarship opportunities.
- In the spring, take the SAT Test in April. Consider taking the ACT and possibly SAT again. If you are considering ROTC or a service academy, contact the appropriate persons so that you are doing the preliminary parts of the application.
- Attend your junior spring seminar about the college search, SAT test and building your holistic application.
- Utilize Maia Learning to search and build a list of colleges that meet your criteria and pique your interest. Note their application deadlines and testing requirements.
- Register for the NCAA Eligibility Center and submit your ACT or SAT scores to code 9999 if you plan to participate in a Division I or II sport in college. Visit colleges you are interested in the spring or summer.

Timeline (continued)

Senior Year

FALL

- Attend the College Application Kick-Off presentation on August 24 to learn about the application process with your parents, if possible.
- Re-take the ACT or SAT if necessary. If required, request test scores to be sent to the colleges you are applying to.
- Sign-up in Maia Learning to meet with college admission representatives during their visit to WTHS. See schedule of college visits in Maia Learning under the Events section.
- **Make an appointment to see your counselor.** Review your credits, college entrance requirements, and college choices. Talk about the application process and the counselor and/or teacher recommendations. If needed, complete the letter or recommendation form and submit copies to your counselor and requested teachers.
- If needed, contact teachers, coaches, or advisors directly about letters or recommendations.
- Sign-up in Maia Learning under Events to attend helpful, senior specific workshops in the College and Career Center.
- Attend the IACAC Illinois Regional College Fair at College of Lake County on October 13. Firm up your alternatives.
- Attend the NACAC Performing Arts College Fair at the UIC Forum with your parents, if possible.
- Attend the NACAC Chicago National College Fair or the Milwaukee National College Fair either virtually or in-person (TBD) with your parents, if possible.
- Come to the College & Career Center to get help with your applications, if needed.
- On Thursday, November 9th at 7:00 p.m., attend the Financing Your College Education at WTHS O'Plaine Auditorium.
- In December, fill out the FAFSA if you plan to apply for need-based financial aid.
- Attend the FAFSA Completion Evening Workshops for parents & students, if needed in December or January.
- Check out scholarship opportunities in Maia Learning under the Universities tab (Scholarships).
- Complete applications and essays. See your counselor or post-secondary counselor about any questions you have about the application process.

- **Check application deadlines** and meet those deadlines. Remember that most college applications are submitted prior to winter break, and that counselors need requests for recommendations at **least two weeks before the application deadline**. The University of Illinois priority deadline is in November 1st. Many other colleges have early deadlines as well.
- Request transcripts be sent to the college you are applying to. Click here for a link to the directions of how to request your transcripts through Maia Learning.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

- Complete the CSS Profile (financial aid) **if your college choices require it.**
- Submit the final applications. Notify your counselor of all college responses in Maia Learning (accepted, not accepted, wait listed, withdrawn and final decision) and all scholarship offers.
- Request mid-year reports be sent to the colleges that require them. Stay in constant communication with your counselor and keep them updated with documents you need.
- Stay focused on your academic work while you wait for acceptance letters.
- Attend the Local Scholarship Workshop for Seniors on February 9.
- Pay attention and if qualified, apply for the numerous local, state and national scholarship opportunities through Maia Learning or in the CCC.

MARCH-JUNE

- Make final campus visits if needed.
- Send in confirmation and the housing deposit to the college you decide to attend.
- Notify colleges of your decision to attend or not attend. Note: the National Candidate Reply date is May 1.
- Notify your counselor of your plans and complete the graduation survey through Maia Learning.
- Request your final transcript in Maia Learning to the college you plan to enroll at.
- Print or download a copy of your Resume from Maia Learning before you graduate.

AFTER GRADUATION

- If you need an additional transcript to be sent to a transfer college after your high school graduation, you will need to create a Parchment account to request one. For additional information about this process, click here. Questions? Contact our Registrar at jsalmi@wths.net or 847-548-6740.
- Your Maia Learning account will not be accessible by students after graduation.

Researching Schools

Researching schools thoroughly can be the difference between a satisfying post high school experience and one that is not quite so satisfying. There are so many aspects to the research process; let's begin to clarify.

Preparation Requirements

Knowing what **preparation** is needed in high school is important. Most four-year colleges have specific coursework they want students to have completed before entering their college. These **preparation requirements** can vary from college to college. The minimum preparation requirements for the majority of four-year colleges are: four years of English; three or more years of social studies; three years of laboratory science; three years of math (starting with algebra); two years of foreign language; and one year of the arts. However, students wishing to apply to a very competitive college (or a specialized program, such as engineering) will most likely need to take more math, science, and/or foreign language. **It is always best to check directly with the colleges to which you are applying** for information about admissions criteria. (See Appendix for information about some of the admission requirements or recommendations from colleges or universities in the Midwest).

Admission Criteria

In addition to the coursework requirements, colleges have **admission criteria** that vary from college to college. Admission criteria most commonly refer to minimum grade point averages and/or standardized test scores needed for admission. These items are looked at carefully by college admission staff. Many colleges also consider the rigor of coursework taken in high school. It is best to check with the individual college to find out how much consideration is given to level of coursework taken. It is certainly educationally sound to be taking coursework that is appropriately challenging for you. College require that you have a copy of your high school record (called a transcript) sent to them so that they can see what kind of academic work you did in high school. Most commonly, admissions offices of public college rely heavily on the transcript and test scores for making admission decisions. Most private colleges will also give the transcript and test scores primary consideration, but will also look at special talents as well. Colleges may want to know what activities you were involved with while in high school, how your teachers viewed you (via the teacher recommendation), and what you are like as a person (via the personal essay and sometimes an interview). Keep in mind that the academic record is of primary importance. Service academies have their own special criteria. **It is always best to check directly with the colleges to which you are applying** for the information about admissions criteria.

Admissions Test Requirements

Taking a college admissions test is a good idea for students considering attending a four-year college. Most four-year colleges require that you take either the ACT or the SAT and have those test scores sent directly to the college from that testing agency. It is generally recommended that the ACT or SAT be taken no later than spring of the junior year. (It is possible to re-take either test in the summer of junior year or the fall of the senior year.) These tests can be taken more than once. For details, visit the following websites. You can register for the ACT at **www.actstudent.org** and for the SAT at **www.collegeboard.org.**

With the COVID-19 Pandemic, many institutions moved to either test-optional, test-blind or test-flexible for college admissions, thus creating more flexibility and decisions for students whether they would like to submit a test score as part of the admission review process. Ultimately, if the student is able to test and feels their test score accurately represents their academic ability, then plan to submit a test score for admission review. For a growing list of institutions with test-optional admission for each year, visit www.fairtest.org.

For additional information about test-optional, super scoring, score choice and ACT/SAT testing in general, please click HERE.

It is common practice for colleges to consider your highest ACT or SAT score when reviewing an application for admission. Try the best you can on each assessment you take!

Researching Schools (continued)

ACT

ACT Test Dates	Registration Deadline
September 9, 2023	August 4, 2023
October 28, 2023	September 22, 2023
December 9, 2023	November 3, 2023
February 10, 2024	January 5, 2024
April 13, 2024	March 8, 2024
June 8, 2024	May 3, 2024
July 13, 2024	June 7, 2024

SAT

SAT Test Dates	Registration Deadline
August 26, 2023	July 28, 2023
October 7, 2023	September 7, 2023
November 4, 2023	October 5, 2023
December 2, 2023	November 2, 2023
March 9, 2024 (Digital)	February 23, 2024
May 4, 2024 (Digital)	April 19, 2024
June 1, 2024 (Digital)	May 17, 2024

NCAA Eligibility Requirements

Student who intend to play a varsity sport in college at a Division I or Division II school must meet the **NCAA's eligibility requirements** and abide by their recruiting guidelines. Eligibility requirements include successful completion of a core curriculum of at least 16 specified academic courses (called "core courses") and meeting admission test score requirements. Specific information on NCAA eligibility requirements, as well as the NCAA form to request a transcript be sent to the NCAA at the end of your junior year, can be obtained at http://eligibilitycenter.org

For student-athletes interested in playing a varsity sport at a NCAA Division III, NAIA, or Junior College, you do not have to register with the NCAA eligibility center. However, you must meet the college or university's admission criteria to participate in athletics at the campus.

Considering Personal Preferences

When researching and comparing colleges, you will want to **consider your personal preferences** such as selectivity, type of school (public or private), majors offered, size, location, activities available, faculty-to-student ratio, composition of the student body, facilities, special programs available, and cost. It is a good idea to have in mind what is most important to you before you begin exploring schools. Many students benefit from using a comparison worksheet like the one included in this booklet (see Appendix).

Resources Available

There are many **resources** available to you as you research colleges. In addition to your **parents** and your **school counselor**, a primary resource is the Warren Township High School **College and Career Center** at each campus. The CCC is located adjacent to the Guidance Office at the Almond Campus and in Lab 258 at the O'Plaine Campus. College and Career Counselors are available to assist you during posted open lab times or by appointment. In the College and Career Center you will find college major resource guides, college catalogs, and many print resources about college and other options. Many **college representatives** visit the WTHS Almond and O'Plaine College and Career Center every year. These visits are available for junior or senior students at Almond and freshmen and sophomore students at O'Plaine to sign-up and attend three times per semester.

Another good method to access information about colleges is through the Illinois Regional College Fair at CLC or NACAC National College Fair, which is held in the fall and spring. Representatives from colleges across the country are available in one place to visit with students (and parents) and provide information.

Numerous web resources are available for researching colleges. Here are examples of web resources:

College Search Sites and Guides:

Maia Learning: www.maialearning.com

www.collegeboard.org

www.petersons.com

www.cappex.com

www.princetonreview.com

Researching Schools (continued)

"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception; it is a prevailing attitude."

—General Colin Powell

Decision Day—May 1

Each year on May 1, WTHS Seniors are invited to the College & Career Center to celebrate Decision Day. Seniors wear a shirt that represents their post-high school plans, fill out a paper graduation cap to place on the school's banner in the hallway outside the gym and eat cake to celebrate their next steps!

The College Visit

An excellent way to research a college is to participate in a **college visit**. You should contact the admissions office of the college you wish to visit and arrange a specific date and time. Most colleges conduct tours on a regular basis and some have special event days or weekends, which are designed especially for prospective students. It is a good idea to look at the bulletin boards in the hallway outside of the Almond Gym and the College and Career Centers for upcoming events and visit opportunities.

When participating in a college visit, you will most likely meet with an admission counselor and take a campus tour. Come with a list of your questions and talk with students and faculty as well as admissions representatives. Ask to see a dorm room and perhaps attend a class or classes. You will want to further investigate the academic programs that interest you. When you call to arrange your visit, tell the admissions representative what your special interest are so that any special appointments can be set up ahead of time. A campus visit can be well worth the time and energy expended. For more information, tips, and upcoming college fairs, visit the College Application & College Visit webpage on the College -Career website under Student Services.

Putting It Together

A comparison worksheet, like the one on page 18 of this booklet, can be very helpful once you have researched several schools. You will want to personalize it to include the categories most important to you. It is a way to see "at a glance" how the schools compare in those areas of greatest interest to you. It is also a handy way to access admissions requirements, testing and deadlines.

Application Process

The application process begins early in the senior year; therefore it is important to have completed most of your research during your junior year. Every year, the counselors introduce juniors to resources available for researching colleges. This can be a very time consuming and stressful experience, but with some planning and organization, it can be productive and more enjoyable.

Once you have determined your final list of schools to which you are applying, you will need to be very aware of deadlines and application requirements. Sometimes it is helpful to create a chart that includes valuable information about your final list of colleges. On your chart, you should list the factors that are important to you in choosing a college (listed in the Self-Assessment section) as well as the important application information such as deadlines, school profile information, and what components are required in the application package. A sample is available on page 18 of this booklet. The application process often varies from school to school, some requiring several steps and others requiring a more simple process.

Applications

A number of colleges use the *Common Application*, which allows you to apply to numerous schools with one application form. To submit the application electronically, go to www.commonapp.org. Pay close attention to unique requirements; for example, some college may ask for letters of recommendation and others may not. By accessing the *Common Application* website, you will be able to see the list of schools that accept it and what specific requirements they each have.

In using the *Common Application*, you will need to fill out the FERPA release form in the "My Colleges" section in the Common App. You will also invite your counselor and teachers (if required) to submit their letters of recommendation and supporting documents through your Common Application under Recommenders and FERPA. **Inform you counselor immediately that you are using the Common App so they can help submit all the required documentation.**

When applying to public colleges and universities, you will find that the application are fairly simple to complete. Usually, you will be asked to provide an official transcript, a list of your senior classes, your ACT or SAT scores and answers to other basic kinds of questions. Therefore, applications to the University of Illinois campuses or to any schools within the State University System are not quite as time consuming as the Common App.

If you are applying to any smaller, private colleges, you will find that, in general, most of these schools have applications that require you to share more information about yourself. You may want to develop a resume including activities, involvements, honors, and experiences that will help give a strong picture of your interests and accomplishments. This will allow you to be more efficient as you complete applications. If you have other applications that do not ask for this information, you may still want to include your resume so the college gets a broader perspective of who you are.

Click here to visit the College Application webpage for the College and Career Center.

Transcript Release

Many college applications require an official copy of your high school transcript. However, more and more institutions are moving to self-reported grades and test scores. If your college requires a transcript, your transcript includes your completed classes since freshmen year, currently enrolled in senior courses, final grades and cumulative, weighted grade point average. For it to be official, it must be sent directly from WTHS. To request your transcript, log into Maia Learning and complete the request. To access step-by-step directions of how to request a transcript click here or stop by Student Services to pick up a paper copy of the directions.

Allow a minimum of two weeks for processing your transcript request.

Application Process (continued)

When you are asking for a counselor or teacher recommendation to be submitted, please complete the Student Questionnaire Form and have your parents complete the Parent Questionnaire Form. Your counselor and/or will be able to write a more effective letter with this information. **You must allow two weeks for your counselor or teacher to complete your letter of recommendation**: do not leave this this until the last minute! Please see your counselor or teacher personally to ask him or her about writing a letter of recommendation for you. More extensive application packages usually involve some combination of the following components:

Recommendations

Many colleges require or encourage that your application package includes two to three school-related recommendations. Often, you are asked to include two letters from academic teachers and a letter from your counselor. Occasionally, you may want to include a special recommendation for a coach, activity advisor, or non-academic teacher who can provide an exceptional view of a particular area of interest or strength.

To be sure that your recommendations are effective and timely, you should complete the Questionnaires as noted above. This information can be accessible by your counselor and requested teachers. Give teachers and your counselor at least three weeks to write the evaluation. Your teachers and counselors may also appreciate a copy of your resume to assist them in writing a thorough letter. Finally, a thank-you note is greatly appreciated for your teacher's and/or counselor's effort.

The Essay

Don't let the essay paralyze you with fear! The admission representatives simply want to know you better and discover your unique qualities. Ask yourself the question, "what else would I like other to know about me that I feel is an important part of the *person* they may ultimately select?" When writing an essay or personal statement, a short and original essay is desirable. If a choice of topics is given: choose a topic, make a list of ideas to be covered in the essay, develop an outline, and write a first draft.

Be certain the personal statement is broken into paragraphs. One long paragraph does not look good in a personal essay.

Vary the structure and length of your sentences to provide interest. Use intelligent sentences and common sense. Use your own style and write in a direct, conversational manner. Make certain you have a smooth transition from one idea to another rand from one paragraph to another, and be absolutely sure to check your spelling. Ask someone to proofread your work; often your English teacher or the English Resource Room teachers are wiling to review it for you. For additional essay writing tips, click here for a PowerPoint compiled by the English teachers.

The Interview

A handful of colleges and universities require you to interview with one of their admission representatives. Other schools may give you the option of having an interview. If you do participate in an interview, go prepared. You should have some basic knowledge of the school, and a list of questions that you intend to ask. Remember, the interview is as much an opportunity for you to find out about the school, as for the school to find out about you. Appearance, mannerisms and first impressions are important. Mostly, **be yourself**! Be sure to send a thank-you note to your interviewer. Click here for additional tips and sample questions.

Financing Your Education

Most financial aid is based on evidence of financial need, but there are also scholarships available that are merit-based. Financial aid packages that college offer students may include a combination of grant money, student loans, and/or work-study programs. Grants and scholarships are forms of *gift aid*, or forms of *self-help aid*, or money that is repaid or earned through job opportunities.

The WTHS College and Career Center has a great deal of information regarding financial aid, and Student Services uploads scholarship information in Maia Learning that you should check throughout your senior year. The financial aid office of the college you are interested in is an important resource for you. Be sure to contact them for scholarships specific to the college, and for any questions you have regarding financial aid forms they require. The financial aid representatives at the colleges you are applying to are experts who want to assist you, so feel free to call them. Finally, be cautious about eliminating a college from consideration based on cost until you have applied for assistance and have been told what support you will be receiving.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

All colleges and universities nationwide require that you file the FAFSA if you wish to apply for a financial aid package. The FAFSA is a federal form that asks for information about your family circumstances and financial status. After you have submitted your FAFSA, you will receive a SAR (student aid report) that will inform you of your SAI (student aid index). This is the student's approximate financial resources that the student can contribute to their education. If the cost of the college is more than your SAI, you have financial need and should be eligible for some type of financial aid. This information will be provided to the colleges that you are applying to, and they each, in turn, will offer you a financial aid package to consider.

Interactive web version of the

Free Application for Federal Student Aid:

www.fafsa.gov

For the Class of 2024, the FAFSA may be submitted online once it is available after December, 2023. Submit the form as soon as possible after this date, ideally by January 15th. Be sure to print a copy of your completed FAFSA for your records. There will be several FAFSA completion evening workshops available for parents to attend in December, January or February. Click here for additional information and financial aid resources on our Paying for College webpage.

Profile

The CSS Profile is a financial aid form used by some colleges and scholarship programs. Check with the colleges and scholarship programs to which you are applying to determine what forms are required:

http://student.collegeboard.org/CSS-financial-aid-profile

Scholarships

Regardless of whether or not you apply for financial aid, you should consider applying for scholarships. Check the local, state, and federal scholarship listings in Maia Learning. Several local organizational distribute scholarships to Warren seniors, so continue to visit Maia Learning and apply for these scholarships! We will host a scholarship workshop for seniors on February 9th to discuss the application process.

Also, be sure to ask the college financial aid representatives for any scholarships offered by the college that are applicable for you, and you should consider other private sources, such as employers of your parents, your place of worship, local foundations, and civic groups.

Finally, be sure to search for scholarship information on the Web. There are a number of free sources such as:

www.fastweb.com **www.cappex.com**

www.scholarships.com

www.goingmerry.com **www.chegg.com/scholarships**

Financial Aid Information

www.finaid.org **www.studentaid.ed.gov**

www.isac.org

Financing Your Education (continued)

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), in Washington, D.C., has a special enforcement and education campaign called "Project $cholar$cam" to prevent fraudulent scholarship search services from operating, and to increase awareness among students and parents of warning signs if you are contacted by an agency.

Six warning signs of a scam:

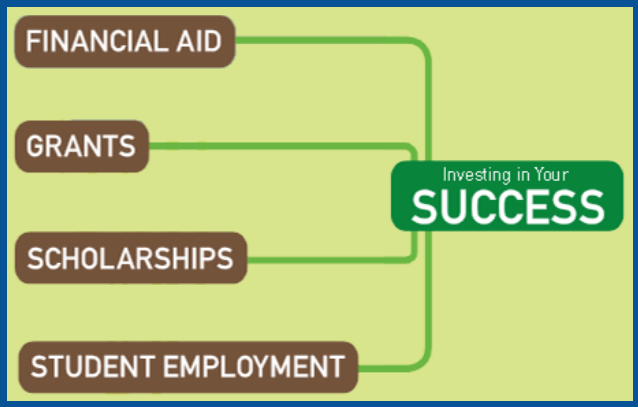
1. *"This scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."* No service can guarantee that it will get you a grant or scholarship.
2. *"The scholarship service will do all the work."* Unfortunately, nobody else can fill out the personal information forms, write the essays, and supply the references that many scholarships may require.
3. *"The scholarship will cost some money."* Before you send money to apply for a scholarship, investigate the sponsor.
4. *" You can't get this information anywhere else."* Scholarship directories are available in any large bookstore, public library, or in the WTHS College and Career Center. You can also do extensive searches on the Web.
5. *"You are a finalist—in a contest you never entered,"* or *"You have been selected by a national foundation to receive a scholarship."* Most legitimate scholarship programs do not seek out particular applicants. Before you send any money, investigate the program to be sure it is legitimate.
6. *"The scholarship service need your credit card or checking account number in advance."* Get information in writing first.

For assistance in recognizing a scam, check out this scholarship scam alert:

www.finaid.org/scholarships/scams.phtml

To report and stop a scholarship scam, contact the Federal Trade Commission at P.O. Box 996, Washington, D.C. 20580. On the Web, go to www.ftc.gov.

*Information in this section was obtained from *Peterson's Guide to College Planning and Career Exploration.*



"Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today."

- Malcolm X

WTHS Counselors

"It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen. "

—John Wooden

WTHS Post-Secondary Counselors

*Special thanks to Mr. Phil Trout, Minnetonka High School's College Counselor, for resources provided in this booklet.

Glossary

(for Post High School Planning)

Associate Degree — A two-year community college degree (i.e. Associate of Arts; Associate of Science).

Bachelor Degree — A four-year college degree (i.e. Bachelor of Arts; Bachelor of Science).

CEEB Number — The individual code that has been assigned to your high school. The CEEB Number for Warren Township High School is 142-175.

Early Action — An admission plan used primarily in highly selective colleges. Under Early Action, you follow an accelerated application process and usually apply by November 1. You will be notified of a decision by mid-December, but, if you are accepted, you do not have to let the institution know of your decision until May 1.

Early Decision — An admission plan well-qualified applicants who are definitely committed to their choice of college. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance or refusal in December. Acceptance under Early Decision requires you to withdraw applications at other colleges.

Impacted Program or Major — An overcrowded program or major in which there are many more applications than available spaces; supplementary admissions criteria must be met for consideration.

Liberal Arts College —A college in which the emphasis is on a program of philosophy, literature, history, languages, and basic sciences.

Naviance/Family Connection — A Web-based program which helps students organize their college search and applications.

Open Admission — An admission policy that accepts students without regard to the criteria of grade point average and/or test scores.

Private College/University—A school that is not supported by state taxes.

Public College/University—A school that is supported by state taxes.

Regular Admission — The application process that requires application materials to be submitted no later than the specified deadline date printed in the college catalog, website, or application. Admission responses are usually received in March.

Rolling Admission — The admission plan in which a completed application is acted on as soon as it is received. Students are admitted on a continuing basis.

Secondary School Reports — Often called a Counselor Recommendation, many private colleges and universities require these to be submitted from your high school counselor. Well in advance of the application deadline (allow at least two weeks), you must complete the Senior Questionnaire on Naviance/Family Connection.

College Comparison Worksheet

There are many possible ways to organize your college information. These are some ideas developed by ACT.

College Name			
Location -Distance from home			
Size -Enrollment			
Environment -Type of school (2 or 4 year) -School setting (urban, rural) -Location & size of nearest city -Co-ed, male, female -Religious affiliation			
Admission Requirements -Application deadline -Tests required -Average test scores, GPA -Special requirements			
Academics -Your major offered -Percent accepted -Student-faculty ratio -Typical class size			
College Expenses -Tuition, room & board -Estimated total budget -Net price calculator -Application fee, deposits			
Financial Aid -Deadline -Required forms -Percentage receiving aid -Scholarships			
Room & Board -Types and sizes -Food plan			
Facilities -Academic -Recreational -Other			
Activities -Clubs, organizations -Greek life -Athletics, intramurals -Other			
Campus Visits -When			

THIS CHART IS BASED ON THE BEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO OUR DISTRICT. DIRECT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS.

Minimum Required Courses*	WTHS	Community Colleges	Most State Universities & Private Colleges	Highly Selective Institutions	University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign www.illinois.edu	Carthage College (WI) www.carthage.edu	College of Lake County www.clcillinois.edu
English	4 years	4 years	4 years	4 years	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)
Social Studies	3 years	2 years	3 years	3-4 years	4 years (REC)	3 years (REC)	3 years (REC)
Mathematics**	3 years	2 years	3-4 years	4 years	4 years (REC)	3 years (REC)	3 years (REC)
Science	2 years	1-2 years	3 years	3-4 years	4 years (REC)	2 years (REC)	3 years (REC)
Foreign Language***	None	None	2 years	2-4 years	4 years (REC)	2 years (REC)	2 years (REC)
Specific College Prep Electives	1 year of Practical or Fine Arts + 4 years PE/ Health + 1.5 elective credits	None	Depends on school	Depends on school	2 years of one foreign language are required; and 2 years of flexible units are accepted	2 years of electives recommended	2 years of electives from art, business, music, vocational education or foreign language
Total Specified Required Credits	18.5 credits (.5 credit = 1 semester)	10-12 units	15-16 units (1 unit of study = 1 year of high	18-20 units	16 units (REQ), 24 units (REC)	16 units (REC)	15 units (REQ)

*Colleges expect students to enroll in at least four academic subjects each semester. These areas include English, World Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The units required for admission to a college or university varies greatly. Highly selective institutions require greater numbers of these core academics.

This chart is intended only as a general guide. Some schools state exact requirements (indicated with a **REQ**) while others strongly suggest a recommended program of study (indicated with a **REC**). **Even for schools that list only what is required, the standards typically represent the minimum levels of preparation and achievement necessary to be considered for admission. Most admitted students exceed these standards.**

**Many public state institutions will require students to complete Algebra I & II , Geometry, and Trigonometry for math admission requirements. Verify with the individual school for specific admission criteria.

***Foreign language may be recommended or required.

Please verify requirements with individual colleges. There may have been changes since this document was created.

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Minimum Required Courses*	WTHS	Illinois State University www.ilstu.edu	DePaul University www.depaul.edu	University of Iowa www.uiowa.edu	Marquette University www.marquette . edu	Northern Illinois University www.niu.edu	University of Illinois at Chicago www.uic.edu
English	4 years	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)	4 years (REQ)
Social Studies	3 years	3 years (REC)	2 years (REC)	3 years (REQ)	3 years (REC)	3 years (REQ)	3 years (REQ)
Mathematics**	3 years	3 years (REC)	2 years (REC)	4 years (REC)	4 years (REC)	4 years (REC)	4 years (REC)
Science	2 years	3 years (REC)	2 years (REQ)	3 years (REQ)	2 years (REC)	3 years (REQ)	3 years (REQ)
Foreign Language***	None	2 years (REQ)	2 years (REC)	4 years (REC)	2 years (REC)	2 years (REC)	2 years (REC)
Specific College Prep Electives	1 year of Practical or Fine Arts + 4 years PE/ Health + 5.5 elective credits	2 years of one foreign language or fine arts and 2 years of electives are required	4 years of electives and 2 years of science needs a lab component (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc..)	2 years in one foreign language is required, or 2 years in two languages or 4 years in one language is recommend-ed	2 to 5 years in additional electives	2 years in electives (one year in foreign language, art, or music) + two years of science must be in the physical or biological sciences. One unit must be a lab	2 years of foreign language; 1 year of an elective + science lab courses in biology, chemistry or physics are preferred.
Total Specified Required Credits (1 unit = 1 year of high school work)	22.5 credits (.5 credit = 1 semester)	15 units (REQ), 19 units (REC)	16 units (REQ), 18 units (REC)	15 units (REQ), 19 units (REC)	11 units (REQ), 20 units (REC)	15 units (REQ), 20 units (REC)	16 units (REQ),

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