



# ORRHS Guidance Newsletter

## Current Guidance Happenings

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### National Black History Month

February is National Black History Month, a time for us to recognize, honor, and celebrate the many contributions and achievements of Black Americans throughout history and in our world today. Black history is an essential part of American history, and this month provides an important opportunity to learn, reflect, and continue building our understanding of the experiences, voices, and leadership that have shaped our country. We encourage each of you to take time this month to engage in learning, through reading, conversation, and participation in school activities, and to carry that awareness forward throughout the year.

### February: Kindness, Leadership, and Community

Coincidentally, as we move into February, a month when we take time to celebrate the love we have for our families and the people closest to us, we also recently came together for a school-wide assembly on addressing hate. Our hope is that all students take away how important it is to treat one another with kindness, to offer smiling faces, and to lead by example each day. Each of us has influence, and by making thoughtful choices, we show that we are all leaders and that what we do truly matters.

### February Kindness Challenge

This month, we challenge all students to lead with kindness each day.

- Offer a smile or kind word to someone new
- Include others and stand up for what's right
- Speak up or ask for help when something doesn't feel right

Small actions add up, let's make February a month where everyone feels seen, supported, and valued.

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### Reminder: Delayed Start this Thursday

Please remember that we will have a delayed start this Thursday. Students plan accordingly and arrive on time so the day can begin smoothly. Thank you for helping us start the day on time.

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### School Counselor Appreciation Month – Shout-Out

A big thank you to our Guidance Counselors: Dr. Janicki, Ms. McPhee, and Ms. Shields and our School Adjustment Counselors: Ms. Dowdall and Ms. Williams. These adults are here every day to listen, support, guide, and advocate for each of you. We encourage you to take a moment this month to say thank you, write a note, or simply stop by with a smile to let them know how much their support means.

## Course Selection for the 2026–2027 School Year

Guidance counselors will begin working with students on course selection for next year in the coming weeks. Students and families are encouraged to review the Guidance Course Selection Presentation, which provides important information about the process, graduation requirements, and course offerings.

### Important Dates to Know:

- February 3–6: Students will receive course selection cards
- February 4: AP Parent Information Night
- February 10: Mandatory AP Meeting for students interested in taking an AP course next year  
(Held during Bulldog Block)
- February 13: Last day for students to return completed course selection cards to Guidance  
(Parent/guardian signature required)

Please reach out to your student's guidance counselor with any questions or to schedule additional support.

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## Attention Sophomores

Starting the week of January 20th, counselors will be meeting with groups of sophomores to discuss Career Exploration. Meetings will take place in the guidance conference room during study halls and will last approximately 50 minutes. Please bring a writing utensil and a chromebook as students will be completing a Personality/Career Interest Inventory. Students should continually check e-hallpass for meeting times.

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## Governor's Youth Summit – February 9

Youth ages 16–20 are invited to attend Governor Healey's second annual Youth Summit on Monday, February 9 at 3:00 PM in the Great Hall at the Massachusetts State House. This event brings together young leaders from across the Commonwealth to discuss important topics such as mental health, education, and healthcare, hear from guest speakers, and connect with other civically engaged youth.

Registration deadline: February 2 at 5:00 PM

Register here: [Youth Advisory Council Youth Summit Registration](#)

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## Seniors — Quick Reminder!

Please remember to bring a copy of your college decision letters to the Guidance Office as you receive them. Thank you for helping us keep your records up to date!

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## Senior To Do List

Seniors, it's time to make sure that your **Naviance Senior Questionnaires** and **Resumes** are complete. Please take the time to complete those if you haven't already. Reach out to your guidance counselor if you have any questions! Here is a quick [link](#) to our website and a snapshot of our [Senior Curriculum](#) for your review!

## **Seniors: Waitlist or Deferred - Now What?**

You've sent out all of your applications and are waiting patiently for answers. You have your top choice and can see yourself on campus. You open your mail and see that you have been deferred or placed on the waitlist. Now what?

### **Deferred:**

If you are "deferred" it is typically, when applying early action. This is done when an application is close, but the admissions office may want to compare with the larger regular decision pool. If this happens to you, and the school is a strong interest of yours, be sure to follow all instructions. Each school may have a different process, but the situation is the same; confirm your interest following their instructions, keep focused on all grades, and submit any additional material supporting your application (this may be an additional letter of recommendation, a letter of appeal from you, or a picture of you painting your room in their school colors). When the admissions process is complete after the regular admissions process, applicants are notified as before whether admitted or denied. This will be the final answer.

### **Waitlist:**

Applicants can be "waitlisted" when all decisions have been released. The school will admit their incoming class and look to see how many of those turn into actual students. This can be somewhat of a numbers game. Knowing that not every admitted student will attend; for example they will admit 2000 students building an actual class of 1500 anticipating 500 do not submit deposits. Schools refer to this process as "melt." If, let's say 700 students decide to go elsewhere (instead of the 500 anticipated), admissions would utilize the waitlist to rebound back to 1500 from 1300 (2000 minus 700). Typically waitlists are not prioritized or ranked. If you are put on the waitlist and it is a school you are interested in, again, follow their instructions. However, you will not need or be able to submit additional material. The decision has been made, the process for admitted students has to play out. At this point, unfortunately do not plan on the waitlist working in your favor. Be sure you move forward with your own college plan, and if the waitlist school comes back to you, then consider. Also, be aware that any financial aid or scholarships will be limited.

**If you are deferred or waitlisted, let your guidance counselor know. We can sit and talk through the different scenarios and make a plan that works for you.**

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## **WPI Frontiers Summer Program Opportunity**

Frontiers is a two-week residential summer program at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) that gives students a firsthand college experience. Participants explore a STEM or business major alongside a humanities, arts, or business minor while living on campus and engaging in extracurricular activities with peers from around the world.

Virtual information sessions will be held

- Friday, February 6, 2026 at 12pm

Sessions run July 5–17 or July 19–31, 2026, and applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Interested students should apply by April 30.

Link to Register: [WPI Frontiers Summer Program Opportunity Grades 10-12](#)

## Interested in Marine Trades & Design?

Founded in 1978, The Landing School is a nonprofit, accredited marine trades school offering hands-on programs in Yacht Design, Wooden Boatbuilding, Composite Boatbuilding, and Marine Systems. Students can be career-ready in just 9 months, with diploma and associate degree options available. Financial aid and veterans benefits are available for those who qualify.

Learn more, explore programs, and view upcoming Open House dates using the link below:

<https://www.landingschool.edu>

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## SAT Information

Are you planning on taking the SAT? Here are some important deadlines to remember:

- Feb 27th is the deadline to register for the March 14th test
- April 17th is the deadline to register for the May 2nd test
- May 22nd is the deadline to register for the June 6th test

Students register using their College Board accounts at [SAT College Board Registration](#). **Reminder: Fee waivers are available in guidance for eligible students - please see your counselor to learn more!**

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## Scholarships

You can find **AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIPS** on the [Guidance](#) website. Scholarships are updated often, so check back regularly.

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## FAFSA Information

Seniors are able to start applying for financial aid as early as October 1st at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov)

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## Horatio Alger Scholarship — Opens December 1, 2025

The Horatio Alger Association Scholarship supports students who have demonstrated perseverance in overcoming adversity and plan to pursue a bachelor's degree.

**Eligibility:** Open to juniors and seniors with financial need (household income \$100,000 or less), minimum GPA 2.0, U.S. citizenship, and involvement in school or community activities.

**Deadlines:** Seniors: February 15, 2026 and Juniors: March 1, 2026

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## Ongoing Virtual Opportunities to Learn from MEFA





*Webinar series, Financial Aid 101, starting on 9/17.*

Participating in the webinar will provide you with an overview of the financial aid process, including: financial aid applications and eligibility, types of financial aid, and how colleges determine financial aid offers.

The Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority is here to help. Register for live sessions by visiting [www.mefa.org/events](https://www.mefa.org/events).

## Men's College Scholarship Opportunity

Male graduating seniors planning to enroll in a four-year undergraduate college in Fall 2026 are encouraged to apply for the Men's College Scholarship.

-  Awards range from \$500–\$1,000
-  No essay required — application can be completed in about 30 minutes
-  Funds are sent directly to students via ACH and may be used as needed
-  Open to students who demonstrate strength in academics, extracurriculars, and community involvement

Since 2022, \$188,000 has been awarded to support young men pursuing higher education, with scholarships continuing through 2026.

 Apply here: <https://givagrnt.com/register/5b47752f-3fcf-4b44-92b1-bb21bbdf97dc>

 Application Deadline: April 1 at 11:59 PM ET

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## St. Anne's Credit Union Scholarship

St. Anne's Credit Union is offering fifteen \$2,000 scholarships to graduating seniors who will attend an accredited 2- or 4-year college or technical school in Fall 2026. Applicant or parent/guardian must be a St. Anne's Credit Union member, and students must live in the Credit Union's MA/RI service area.

How to Apply:

Applications and details are available at <https://www.stannes.com/Scholarships>. A completed application, official transcript, (college/tech acceptance if available), one teacher recommendation, and a short narrative are required.

**Deadline:** Applications must be received by February 20, 2026 and mailed to:

*St. Anne's Credit Union*

Attn: Paula Carvalho

829 S. Main St.

Fall River, MA 02724

# CAREER OF THE WEEK

Atmospheric Scientists,  
Including Meteorologists



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

## WHAT DO THEY DO?

- MEASURE WEATHER CONDITIONS LIKE TEMPERATURE, HUMIDITY, AND WIND
- USE COMPUTER MODELS AND DATA TO STUDY THE ATMOSPHERE
- WRITE AND USE COMPUTER PROGRAMS TO ANALYZE WEATHER PATTERNS
- RESEARCH WEATHER EVENTS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW THEY FORM
- CREATE WEATHER MAPS AND GRAPHICS
- REPORT CURRENT WEATHER CONDITIONS
- DEVELOP SHORT- AND LONG-TERM WEATHER FORECASTS
- EDUCATE THE PUBLIC THROUGH OUTREACH PROGRAMS
- ISSUE WARNINGS TO HELP PROTECT PEOPLE AND PROPERTY DURING SEVERE WEATHER

## HOW TO BECOME ONE

- MOST ATMOSPHERIC SCIENTISTS NEED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN METEOROLOGY OR A RELATED FIELD
- HELPFUL COURSEWORK INCLUDES MATH, PHYSICS, AND COMPUTER PROGRAMMING
- RESEARCH POSITIONS USUALLY REQUIRE A MASTER'S DEGREE OR PH.D.
- DEGREES IN PHYSICS, MATH, OR ENGINEERING CAN ALSO LEAD TO GRADUATE STUDY IN ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCE
- INTERNSHIPS OR VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE DURING COLLEGE ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
- SOME JOBS REQUIRE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING, ESPECIALLY IN ROLES LIKE THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

## JOB OUTLOOK & SALARY

**PROJECTED TO DECREASE 1% BETWEEN 2024-2034**

**MEDIAN SALARY: \$97,450**

## Health & Wellness Spotlight:

### Take Care of Your Mental Health

#### Why it matters:

Shorter days, colder weather, and academic pressure can affect mood and motivation. Mental health is just as important as physical health.

#### Helpful tips:

- Take short breaks when studying or feeling overwhelmed.
- Get outside during daylight when possible.
- Talk to a trusted adult, friend, counselor, or nurse if you're struggling.
- Remember, asking for help is a sign of strength.

## **SEL Tip**

### **Practice Self-Compassion & Resilience**

**CASEL Focus:**  Self-Awareness |  Responsible Decision-Making

#### **Why it matters:**

Learning to respond to setbacks with compassion helps build resilience and growth.

#### **Helpful tips:**

- Talk to yourself the way you would talk to a friend.
- Learn from mistakes instead of dwelling on them.
- Recognize effort and growth, not just outcomes.