SEACOAST COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL

MARCH 2026

Newsletter

COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELING

Spring Into Your Future

At Seacoast, college planning is about discovering what matters most to you and finding the right path where you will thrive. Whether you're exploring careers, building your college list, or preparing for testing, this is the season to take meaningful steps forward.

As we move into spring, this is a critical time for students to take meaningful steps toward their college and career goals. The work done now sets the stage for a confident and successful senior year later down the road.

For Juniors:

- Finalize your college list
- Continue preparing for SAT/ACT/ testing
- Attend Junior Seminars and stay on track for August application readiness

For Sophomores:

- Explore careers and interests
- Continue building a strong academic profile
- Get involved in extracurriculars that align with your interests

For Freshmen:

- Focus on building strong study habits and GPA
- Begin exploring strengths and interests
- Get involved and try new activities

Real-World Connection

Programs like Careers on Campus give students the opportunity to connect learning with real-world pathways - from aviation to AI and beyond - helping them make informed decisions about their future.



PLANNING YOUR FUTURE

The Seacoast Collegiate High School counselors support students and families through High School and dual enrollment at Northwest Florida State College by fostering academic growth, leadership, and meaningful engagement in school opportunities.

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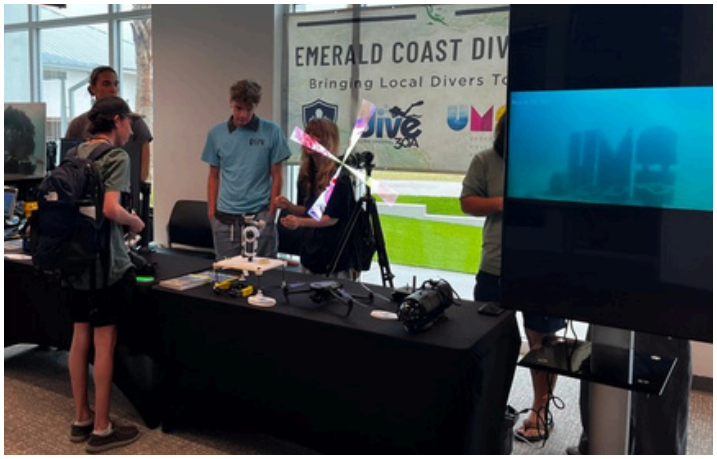
February/March Careers on Campus

Seacoast Collegiate High School hosted an engaging Careers on Campus event on February 27th, welcoming a dynamic panel of professionals in underwater ROV technology, robotics, and environmental science. Representatives from organizations including Emerald Coast Dive Club, Poseidon Robotics, SWARA, Deep Trekker, Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, Florida Panhandle Marine Institute, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and Icarus Ecological Services shared their career journeys, insights, and advice with students.



February
ROVs and Marine Science



The event provided students with a unique opportunity to explore these innovative fields firsthand. Following the panel presentations, students connected with professionals during interactive booths where they experienced live demonstrations, examined ROV equipment, and asked questions about college pathways and future careers.

March
Aviation: Pilots/Flight Instructors

On March 27th, Seacoast welcomed a panel of commercial airline and military pilots who shared their career journeys, training pathways, and insights into the aviation industry. Students had the opportunity to learn about flight school and college options, explore both civilian and military routes to becoming a pilot, and gain a firsthand look at the day-to-day life of aviation professionals while connecting with experts in this exciting, high-flying career field.



College Counseling

Your Seacoast Collegiate High School
College Counseling: A Four-Year Journey

College planning is about discovering what matters most to you and finding the right place where you will thrive. At Seacoast Collegiate High School, students are supported through a structured, personalized four-year college counseling program designed to build confidence, clarity, and direction. From 9th through 12th grade, students benefit from individualized annual course selection meetings, one-on-one advising, and tools like Xello and Big Future to explore their strengths, interests, and future pathways.

9th & 10th Grade: Building the Foundation
Students are introduced to college and career planning early, learning how academic choices, testing, and personal interests shape future opportunities. Through SDS sessions, PSAT testing, and career exploration tools, students begin to understand themselves as learners. Sophomore year deepens this work with career surveys and college exposure.

11th Grade: Launching the College Process
Junior year is the cornerstone of college planning. Students officially begin the admissions process through our Junior College Counseling Seminar Series, individualized meetings, and family programs. They build a balanced college list, prepare for ACT/SAT testing, visit campuses, and begin developing their personal narrative through essay workshops and guided reflection.

12th Grade: Taking the Next Step
Senior year focuses on execution and decision-making. With continued one-on-one support, students finalize college lists, complete applications, and navigate financial aid and scholarship opportunities. This year culminates in confident college decisions and a smooth transition to life after graduation. Beyond college admissions, we support students exploring career training pathways, and connect them with local organizations offering mentorship, internships, and scholarships.

At Seacoast, this journey is about more than college acceptance - it's about self-discovery, goal setting, and preparing students for meaningful futures. The more engaged students are, the more empowered they become.

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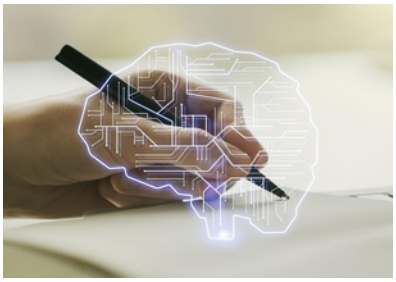

AI AND THE COLLEGE ESSAY
Using it the Right Way

As students begin their college essay writing process, its important to understand how they can responsibly use AI tools—while still telling their authentic story.

A New Tool in the College Prep Process

Artificial Intelligence is quickly becoming part of the college application journey. Tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Google Gemini can help students brainstorm ideas, improve organization, and polish their writing. As these tools become more common, students and families are asking an important question: Is it okay to use AI when writing a college essay?
The answer is yes - when used thoughtfully and ethically.

What AI Can (and Can't) Do

AI can be a helpful starting point in the writing process. It works well for:

- Generating ideas to get started
- Organizing thoughts into a basic structure
- Improving grammar, clarity, and flow

However, there are important limitations. AI cannot:

- Capture your unique voice or personality
- Tell your personal story with authenticity
- Provide meaningful self-reflection

And that's exactly what colleges care about most. Admissions officers are not looking for "perfect" essays - they're looking for real students with honest, thoughtful stories.

What Colleges Are Saying

Colleges are well aware that students are using AI tools—and in most cases, they are comfortable with it when used appropriately.
Concerns arise when:

- Students submit fully AI-generated essays
- The writing does not reflect the student's true voice or abilities
- AI is used as a shortcut instead of a support tool

Recent feedback from admissions professionals emphasizes that authenticity and ownership matter far more than whether AI was used at all.

How to Use AI Ethically

Students can absolutely benefit from AI - as long as they remain in control of their story. Here are a few best practices:

- Use AI to spark ideas, not write your essay
- Ask for feedback on clarity or structure, then revise in your own words
- Use grammar tools to polish - not replace your writing

HOW TO AFFORD COLLEGE



Read More

Florida Bright Future Scholarship

We help students apply for the Bright Futures Scholarship during the fall of their senior year. While SCHS does not require service hours for graduation, we encourage students to acquire at least 100 service hours or 100 work hours to meet the FLBF requirements. Students may begin accumulating service hours beginning the summer before ninth grade. They must complete the Community Service Report Form and submit it to the Counseling Office. Students are encouraged to keep a copy at home. All hours must be completed and submitted by the graduation date to count. Click here to view all Bright Futures Academic requirements.

Paying for College: 6 Smart Strategies Families Should Know

Paying for college typically involves a combination of strategies that reduce costs and limit debt.

- Families can Save with a 529 Plan: Tax-advantaged savings account for education with minimal impact on financial aid.
- Complete the FAFSA: Unlocks federal loans, grants, and work-study opportunities - always start here.
- Apply for Scholarships & Grants: Free money that doesn't need to be repaid - apply early and often.
- Use Savings & Family Income: Combine personal savings and current income to cover expenses.
- Work During School: Part-time and summer jobs can help pay for books, housing, and other costs.
- Consider Private Loans Last: Use only if needed after all other options - borrow responsibly.



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Computer Science: High Demand...But a Changing Reality

What students should know about today's tech job market

https://www.newsweek.com/popular-college-majors-with-highest-unemployment-rates-11583815

The Big Picture

Computer science remains one of the most popular college majors - but recent data reveals a surprising trend:

- 6.1% unemployment rate for recent CS graduates
- Ranked 7th highest unemployment among majors

Computer engineering: 7.5% unemployment

The lowest unemployment majors:

- Civil Engineering
- Construction Services
- Nutrition Sciences

(0.4%-1% unemployment)

Bigger Trend:

- Graduate unemployment rising (4.6% → 5.8%)
- Gen Z unemployment claims up 32%

Why Is This Happening?

- The "guaranteed job" perception is shifting.
- Tech layoffs (Amazon, Google, etc.)
- Oversupply of graduates
- Higher skill expectations from employers
- Outsourcing + automation

→ More degrees ≠ more job opportunities

What Employers Want Now

A degree alone is no longer enough.

- Internship or real-world experience
- Strong portfolio (GitHub/projects)
- Problem-solving skills
- Adaptability in a changing field

→ Entry-level roles are becoming more competitive - and fewer.

What This Means for Students

Computer science is still valuable - but requires strategy:

Gain hands-on experience early

Build a project portfolio

Pursue internships & certifications

Explore related fields:

- Data Analytics
- Cybersecurity
- Engineering

Bottom Line

Choosing a major isn't just about popularity - it's about skills, experience, and adaptability.

Success = What you can do, not just what you study

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IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

APRIL

6 - NWFSC Registration opens for any online and not South Walton campus
7 - SNS 8th grade (incoming SCHS 9th grade) Parent Meeting at SCHS
8 - NWFSC Awards Ceremony
10 - ACT at SCHS ($40 fee and open to 11th and 12th grade students)
14 - NHS Induction for new inductees 4:00PM CST
21 - Incoming New Student (Grades 9 and 10) OPEN HOUSE
24 - JUNIOR College Planning Seminar #5: Activities Resume and Essay Workshop
24 - Careers on Campus - LAW/PSYCHOLOGY/CIVICS

MAY

1 - FCLE at SCHS (any students currently taking government)
2 - SAT (Registration Deadline: April 17th)
4 - AP Human Geography Exam
7 - AP Statistics Exam
8 - AP US History Exam
8 - NWFSC Graduation
13 - SENIORS - Honors Day Program and Graduation Practice
14 - SCHS Graduation at Seacoast Campus
15 - AP Environmental Science Exam
22 - JUNIOR College Planning Seminar #6: Paying for College
22 - Careers on Campus - ENGINEERING

JUNE

6 - SAT (Registration Deadline: May 22nd)
13 - ACT (Registration Deadline: May 8th)

JULY

11 - ACT (Registration Deadline: June 5th)
31 - SENIOR COLLEGE APPLICATION BOOTCAMP