

# PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER WA

**WA COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**  
February 5, 2026

# AGENDA

overview of the post-secondary  
planning process

*Junior Timeline*

*Course registration*

*Post-Secondary Options*

College Specific Planning

# JUNIOR BOOK AWARDS

- Juniors who wish to be considered must complete the Book Award nomination form
  - Nomination form is located on the Class of 2027 Google Classroom.
- **Deadline:** Tuesday, February 24 at 12 p.m.
- Awards are announced at the Junior Awards ceremony in the spring.
- Please be sure your activities section or resume is updated in SCOIR.



# JUNIOR TIMELINE:

## *post-secondary programming overview*

①

Counselors visit history classes  
on February 6th, 9th & 10th

②

Junior small group meetings

③

Post-Secondary Video Resources  
on Counseling Website

# HISTORY CLASSES

- Counselors will continue their post-secondary planning presentations in history classes
  - Counselors will visit on February 6th, 9th & 10th
- Topics that will be covered in more detail, will include:
  - College Application Components
  - College Essay
  - Activities List / Resume
  - Career Survey(s)
  - Junior Survey
  - SCOIR

# SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

- Each counselor will be offering 1-hour small group meetings with students and parents/caregivers on specific dates throughout the winter and spring.
- Sessions will be available in person at 8:15am, 10:30am and 1:15pm
- Registration opens on February 6 - link to Sign Up Genius will also be emailed through Friday email
- These are optional for parents/caregivers.
- Only sign up for your counselor's group.

# VIDEO RESOURCE LIBRARY

- Short, informative clips covering topics related to postsecondary planning:
  - College visits
  - Letters of Recommendation
  - Students with Learning Disabilities
  - SCOIR overview
  - Making activities list
  - and more....
- All videos can be found on the Counseling website
  - [“WA Video Library”](#)



# 2026-27 COURSE REGISTRATION

\*Think carefully about balance

\*Review the Program of Studies

*February 11th*

Advisory presentation

*Throughout February*

Meet with your teachers about  
course recommendations

*February 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm*

Course selection opens in PowerSchool

*March 6th at 2:30 pm*

Deadline for courses & override

# CLASS OF 2027 COUNSELOR ASSIGNMENTS

Leah Birnkrant	A- Challa
Susan Lynch	F - Kam & Chan -Char
Brian Doherty	Kan - McM & Chat - Cra
Samantha DeMagistris	McW - Pat & Cro - Dab
Jenna Grossman	Pav - Shan & Dai - Dor
Heidi Hider	Shar - Wh & Dow - Eck
Lauren Clark	Wi - Z & Eg - Ey

# COMMUNICATION IS KEY

*SCHOOL EMAIL*

Check regularly



*INSTAGRAM*

@WA\_Counseling



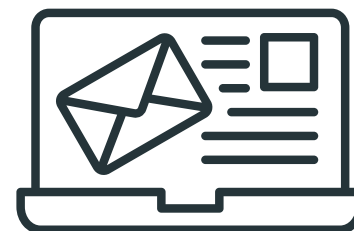
*SCOIR*

Download App  
Enable Push Notifications



*WA COUNSELING  
newsletter*

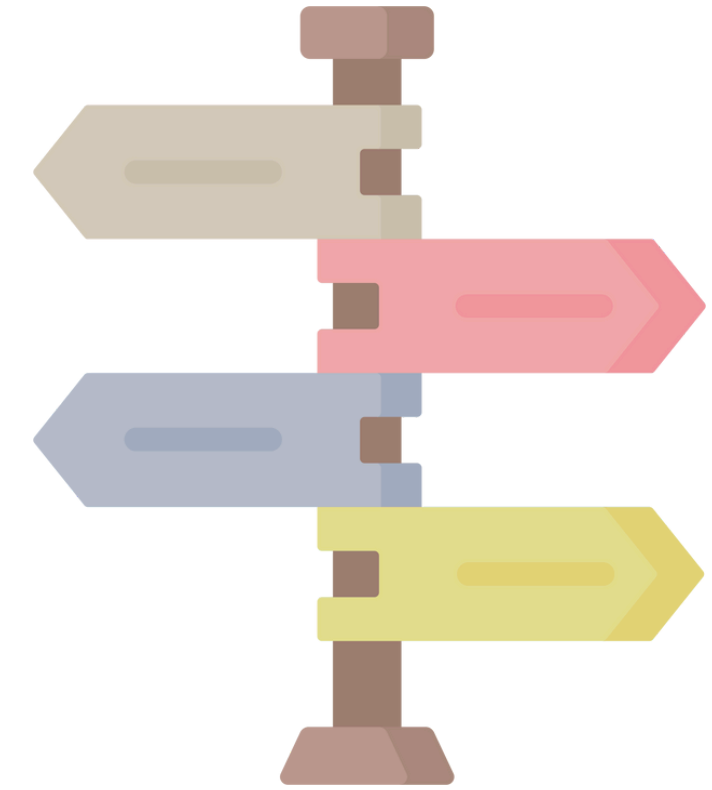
Emailed every month



Class of 2027  
Counseling  
Google Classroom



# POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS



WHAT'S AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?



APPRENTICESHIP



COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE



4-YEAR  
COLLEGE



TRADE  
SCHOOL



MILITARY



GAP YEAR



WORK



Massachusetts Association of  
**Community Colleges**



## What to know

### Community College

- Admission with high school diploma for most programs
- **Free for MA residents**
- Ability to transfer college credits to a 4-year college
- Flexible schedule
- Gradual transition to college life
- 15 Community Colleges in MA

# MASS TRANSFER



Start at a Community College –  
tuition is completely free!



Tuition is completely free!



Earn an associate degree,  
then transfer to a 4-year  
college for the last 2 years.



Automatic acceptance after two  
years to a MA State University -  
including UMass - with a 2.0 GPA

# CAREER CONNECTIONS FAIR

- Wednesday March 18, 2026
- Advisory: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> lunch
- The **goal** of this fair is to connect students to local companies and organizations to learn about career pathways, summer jobs and potential senior capstone internship opportunities.

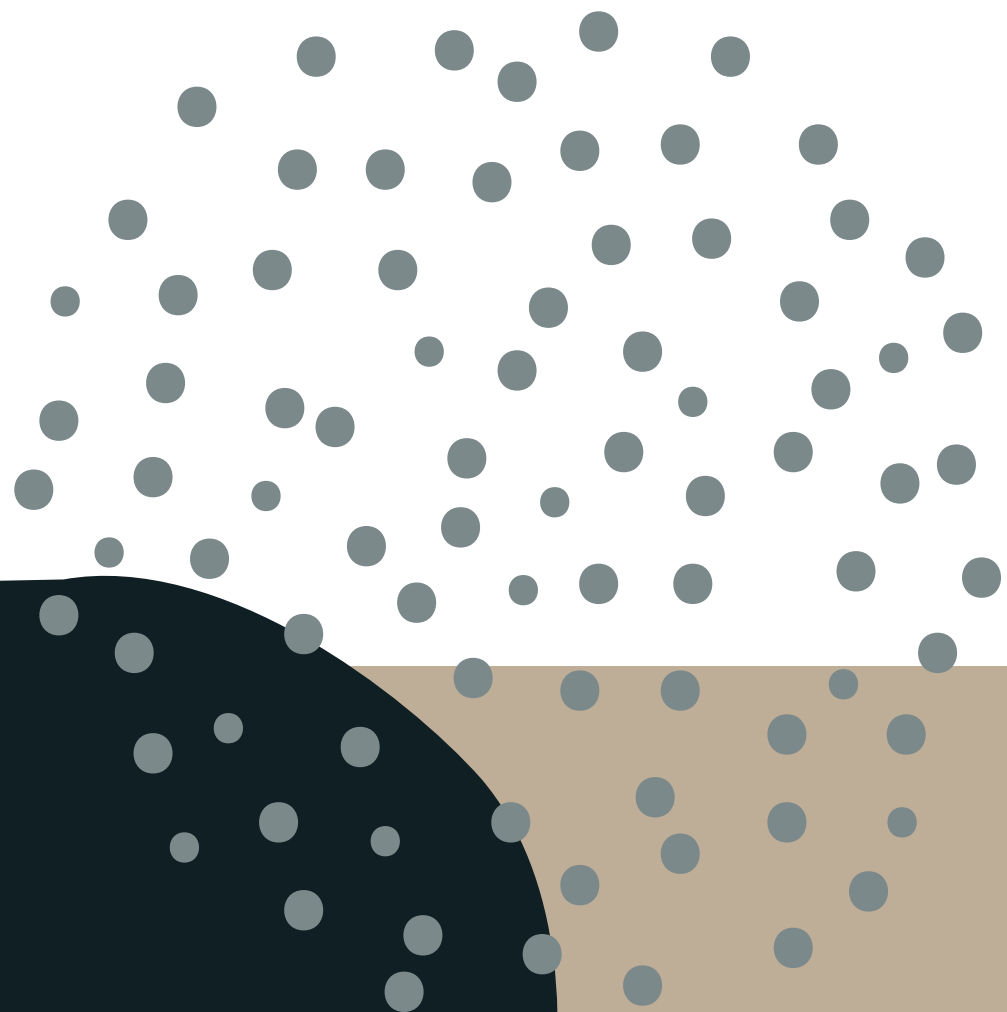


CAREER

# NEXT UP:

## *College deep dive*

- Determining College Fit
- Making the List
- Application Components
- College Admissions Trends
- Next Steps



# FINDING THE BEST FIT

There is no school  
that is best for all  
students

- 
- *Size*
  - *Location*
  - *Programs*
  - *Majors available*
  - *Academic supports*
  - *Cost & Financial aid*
  - *Extracurricular  
Activities*
  - *Student life*
  - *Athletics*

# COLLEGE VISITS



## What to know

- Aim to visit at least **2-3 colleges** before the end of junior year.
- Register online via college website.
- College Visits can help you decide whether or not a campus is a good fit for you.
- Some colleges track demonstrated interest.

**Juniors and seniors are allowed up to 3 excused absences to attend official college tours.**



# COLLEGE SEARCH RESOURCES

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SCOIR



Local College Fairs

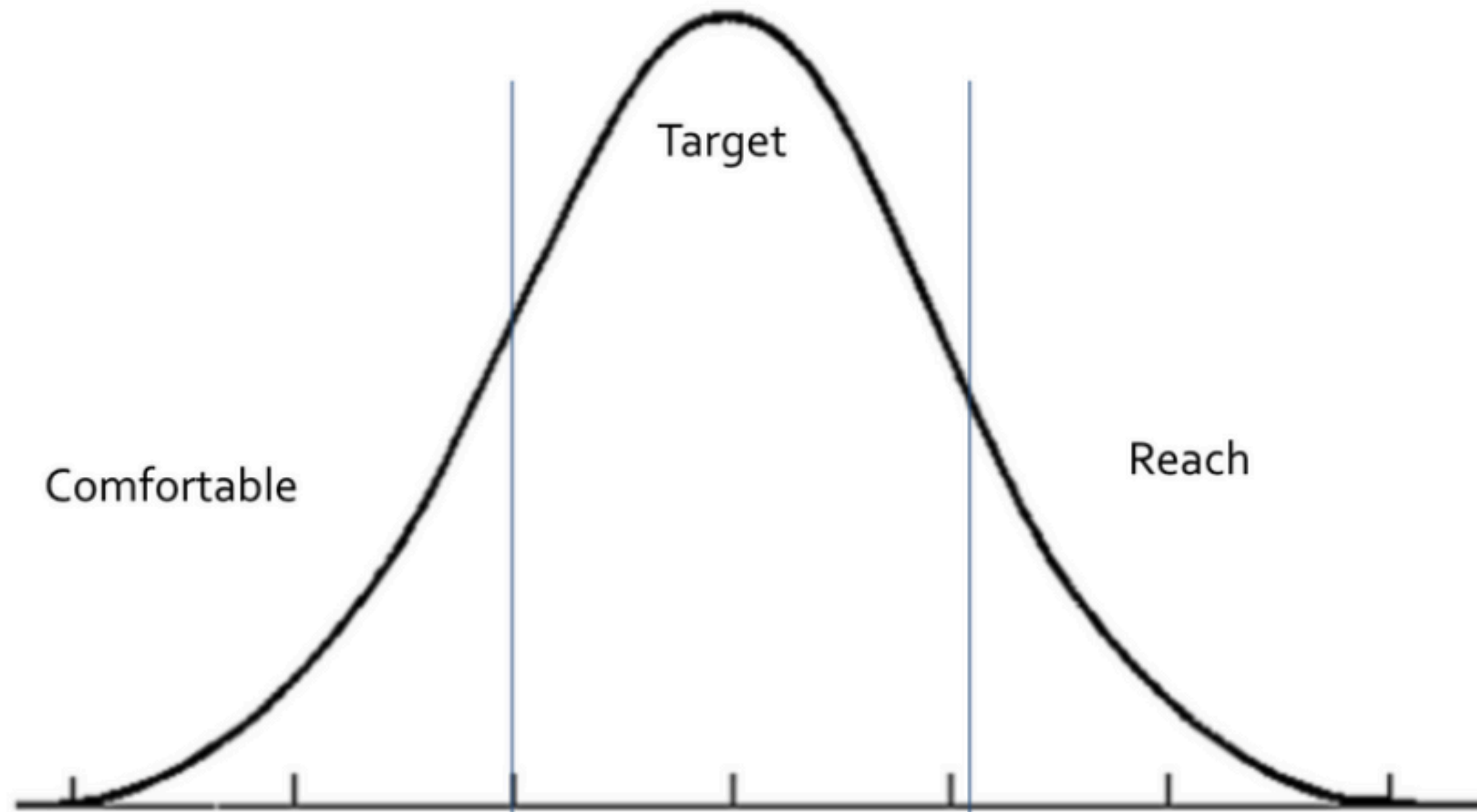


National/Virtual  
College Fairs



College Search  
Engines

# BALANCED COLLEGE LIST



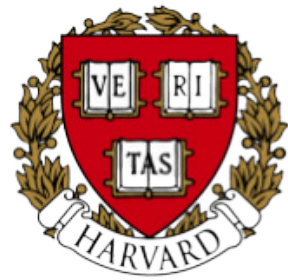
COMFORTABLE

**HIGHER**  
ADMISSION RATE

**TARGET**

REACH  
**LOWER**  
ADMISSION RATE

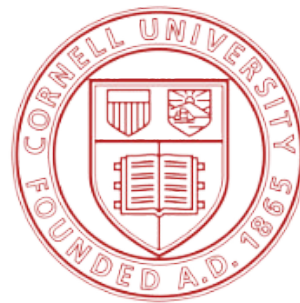
# EVERYONE'S REACH



PRINCETON  
UNIVERSITY

Yale 

DARTMOUTH



 Penn  
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

BROWN

Carnegie Mellon

Stanford

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Georgetown  
University

Ucla

*...and others*

# ALMOST EVERYONE'S REACH

Northeastern  
University

BOSTON  
COLLEGE

BOSTON  
UNIVERSITY



NYU

Georgia  
Tech



Colby

CLEMSON  
UNIVERSITY

*...and others*

# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

01

## *Student Athletes*

Must register for the NCAA Eligibility Center if considering Div. I or II athletics.

02

## *Students with IEP or 504 plans*

Connect with Disability Services to determine support.

03

## *Fee waivers*

See counselor for more info.

04

## *College Interviews*

Please check requirements before applying.

05

## *Social media/online presence*

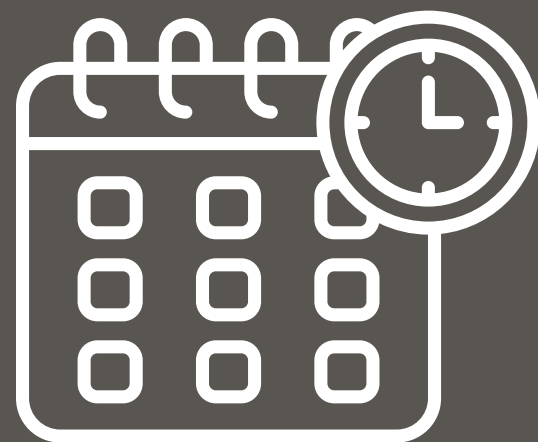
Follow schools and maintain a positive online presence!

06

## *ROTC/Military Academies*

Military scholarship programs.

# APPLICATION PLANS



Early Action

Early Decision

Regular Decision

Rolling

# COLLEGE APPLICATION COMPONENTS



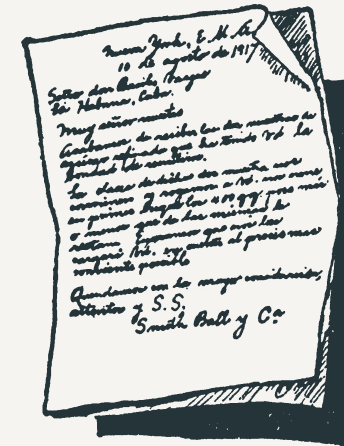
*Application (including essay)*  
*Common Application*  
*College Website*  
*SCOIR*



*Transcript/  
Self-reported  
Transcript*



*Standardized Test  
Scores  
(if applicable)*



*Letters of  
Recommendation*

- *Teacher(s)*
- *Counselor*

# SAT

DIGITAL ONLY

ADAPTIVE - DIFFICULTY  
DEPENDS ON  
PREVIOUS ANSWERS

2 HRS, 14 MIN

98

READING/WRITING AND  
MATH

MULTIPLE CHOICE AND  
FREE RESPONSE (MATH  
ONLY)

400 - 1600 (200 - 800  
PER SECTION)

VS

FORMAT

SECTION DIFFICULTY

TIME TO TEST

NUMBER OF  
QUESTIONS

SECTIONS

QUESTION FORMAT

SCORING

# ACT

DIGITAL OR PAPER

LINEAR (INCREASES  
THROUGHOUT THE  
TEST)

2 HRS, 5 MIN

131

ENGLISH, MATH AND  
READING (OPTIONAL  
SCIENCE & WRITING)

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1 - 36

# UPCOMING SAT / ACT DATES

## SAT

March 14, 2026 test date (held at Westford Academy)

- Deadline for registration 2/27/26 & late registration 3/3/2026

May 2, 2026 test date

- Deadline for registration 4/17/26 & late registration 4/21/26

June 6, 2026 test date

- Deadline for registration 5/22/26 & late registration 5/26/26

## ACT

February 14, 2026 test date

- Deadline closed

April 11, 2026 test date

- Deadline for registration 3/6/26 & late registration 3/24/26



# SAT / ACT - PLANNING TIPS

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- Taking practice tests can help determine which exam is the best fit
- Many students take the SAT or ACT more than once to improve their scores
- Students who may qualify for testing accommodations (e.g., extended time) should contact their school counselor
- Registration is completed through College Board (SAT) or ACT.org (ACT)
- Many colleges have remained test optional. Please review college websites or [fairtest.org](https://www.fairtest.org)

THANK  
YOU!

WA COUNSELING DEPARTMENT