

PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER WA

WA COUNSELING DEPARTMENT
February 5, 2026

parent/caregiver night presentation

AGENDA

overview of the post-
secondary planning process

Junior Timeline

Course Registration

Post-Secondary Options

College Specific Planning

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
 - 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 at 8:15am, 10:30am and 1:15pm, in person.
- 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
 - Making activities list
 - SCOIR overview
 - 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 26th 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



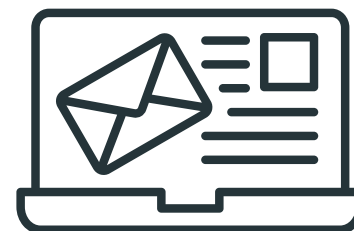
SCOIR

Download App
Enable Push Notifications



*WA COUNSELING
newsletter*

Emailed every month



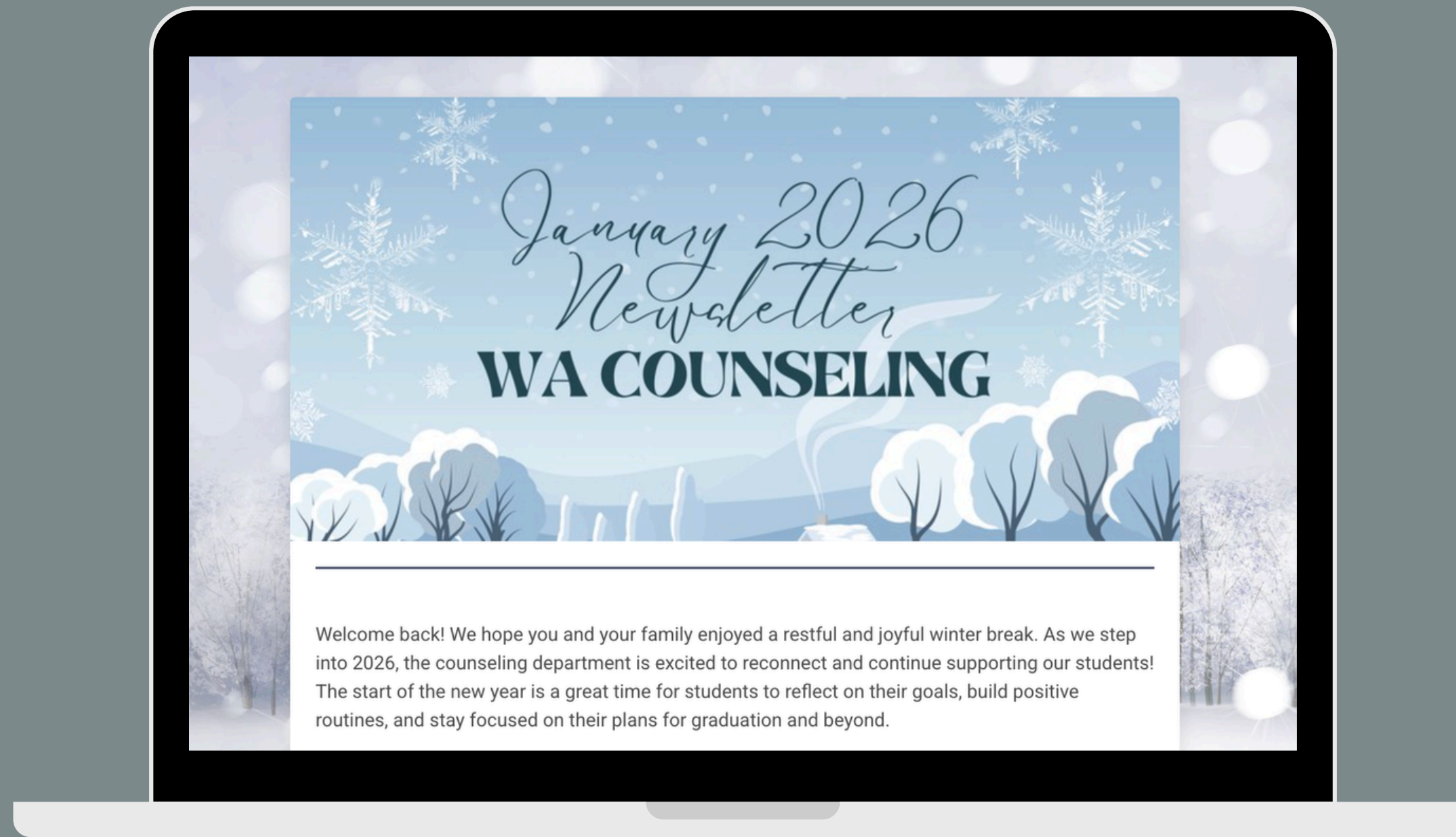
Class of 2027
Counseling
Google Classroom



WA COUNSELING NEWSLETTER

EMAILED THROUGH SCOIR

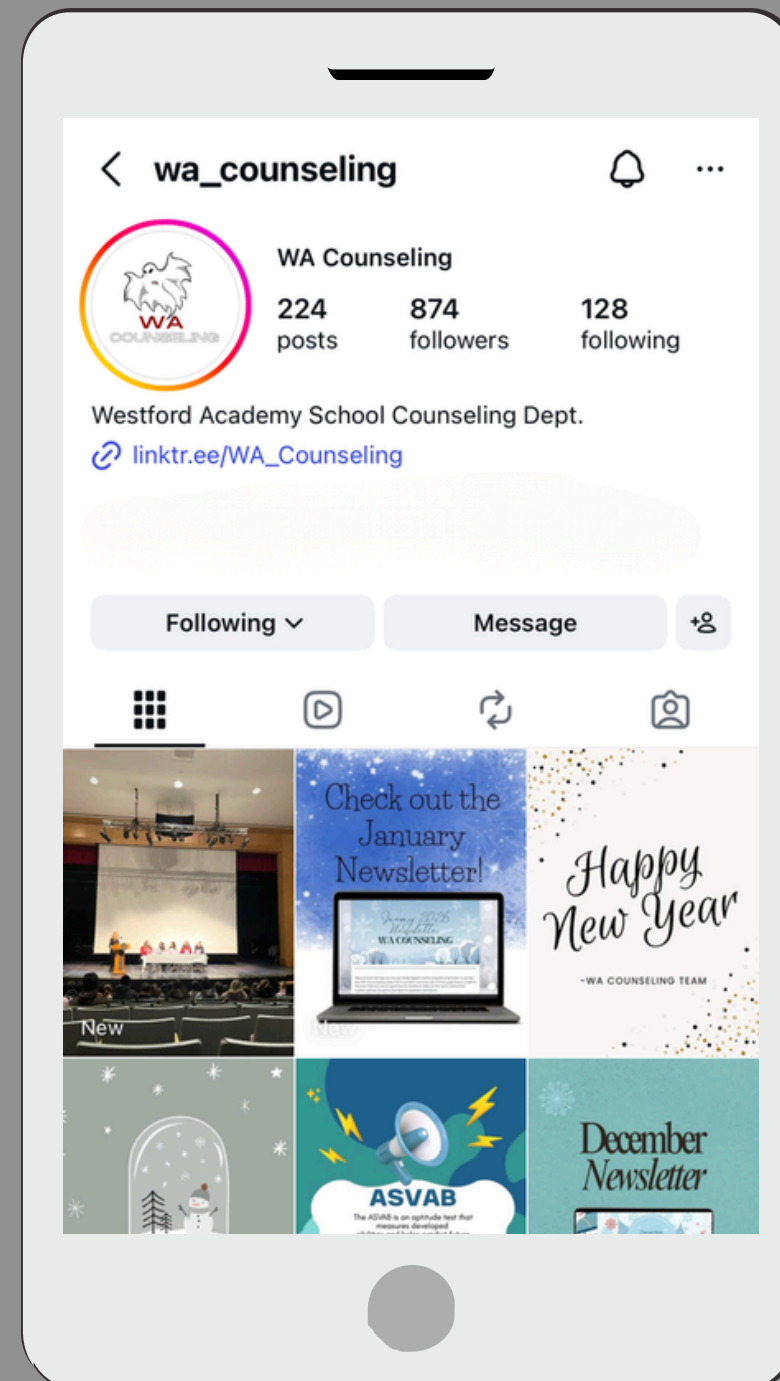
Also on the WA Counseling website [here](#)



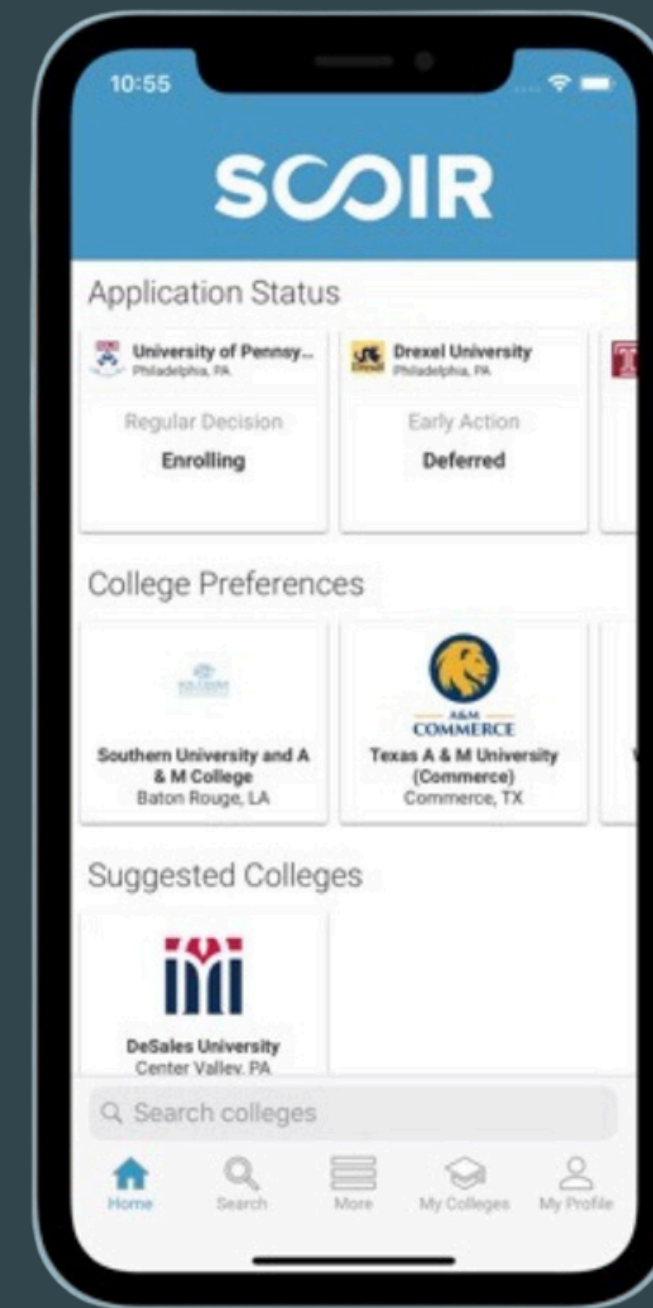
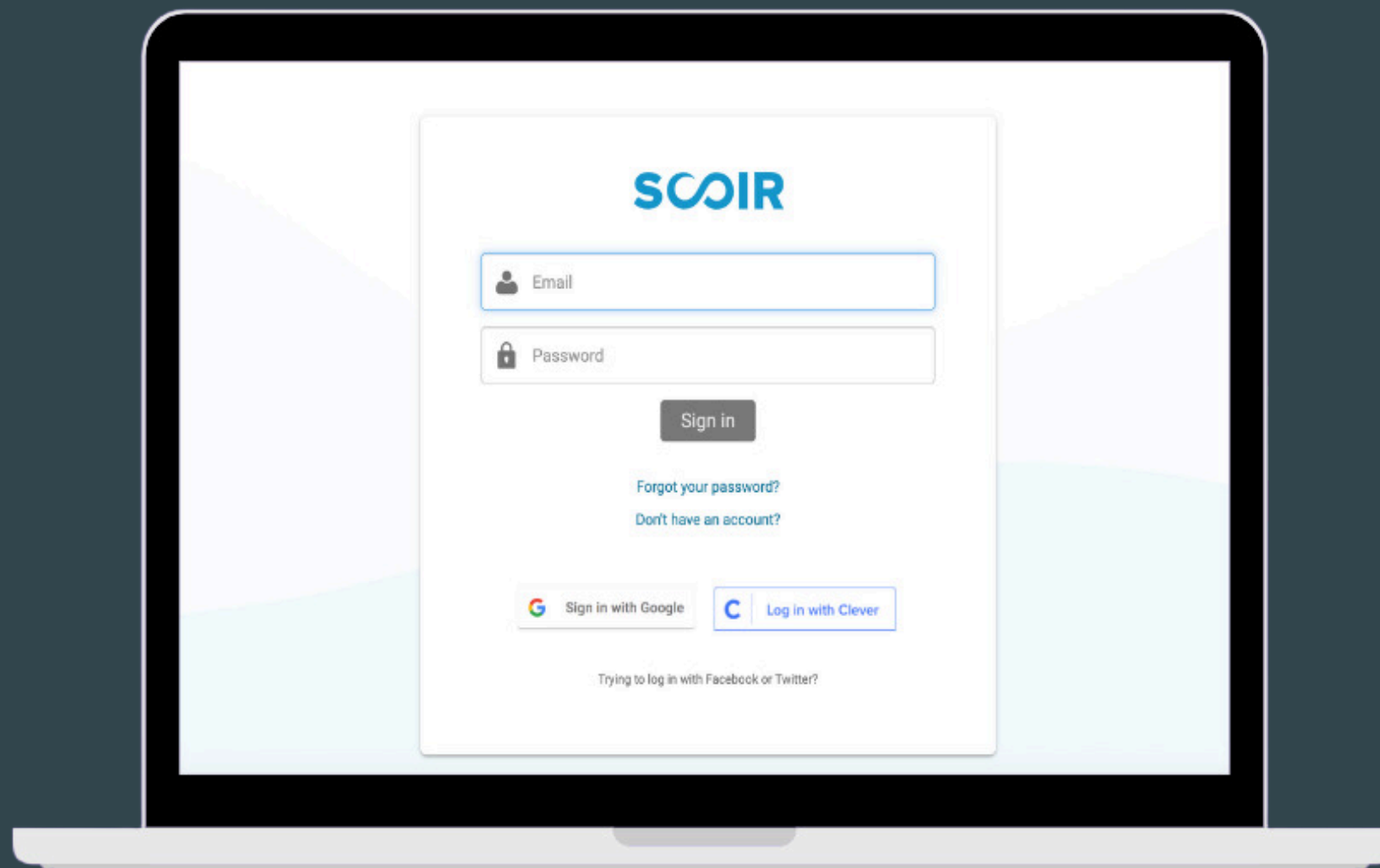
Welcome back! We hope you and your family enjoyed a restful and joyful winter break. As we step into 2026, the counseling department is excited to reconnect and continue supporting our students! The start of the new year is a great time for students to reflect on their goals, build positive routines, and stay focused on their plans for graduation and beyond.

WA COUNSELING INSTAGRAM

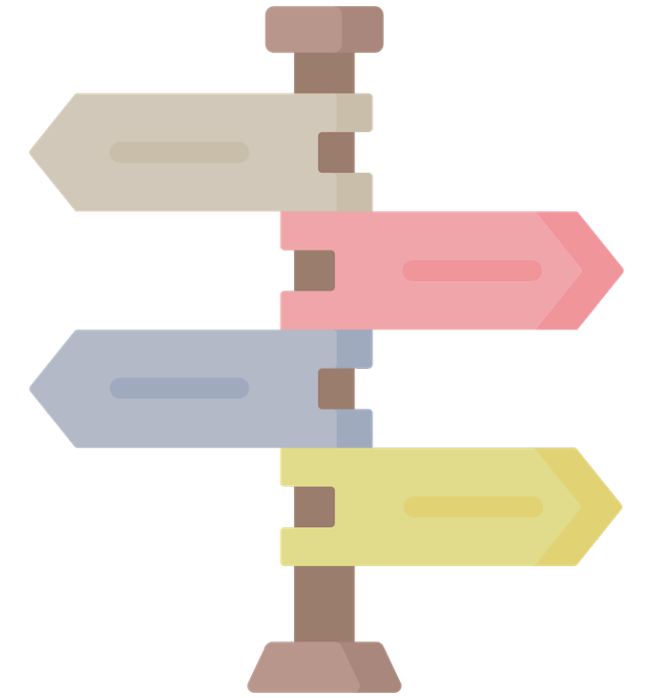
@WA_COUNSELING



SCOIR DESKTOP AND MOBILE APP



POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS



WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS 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.

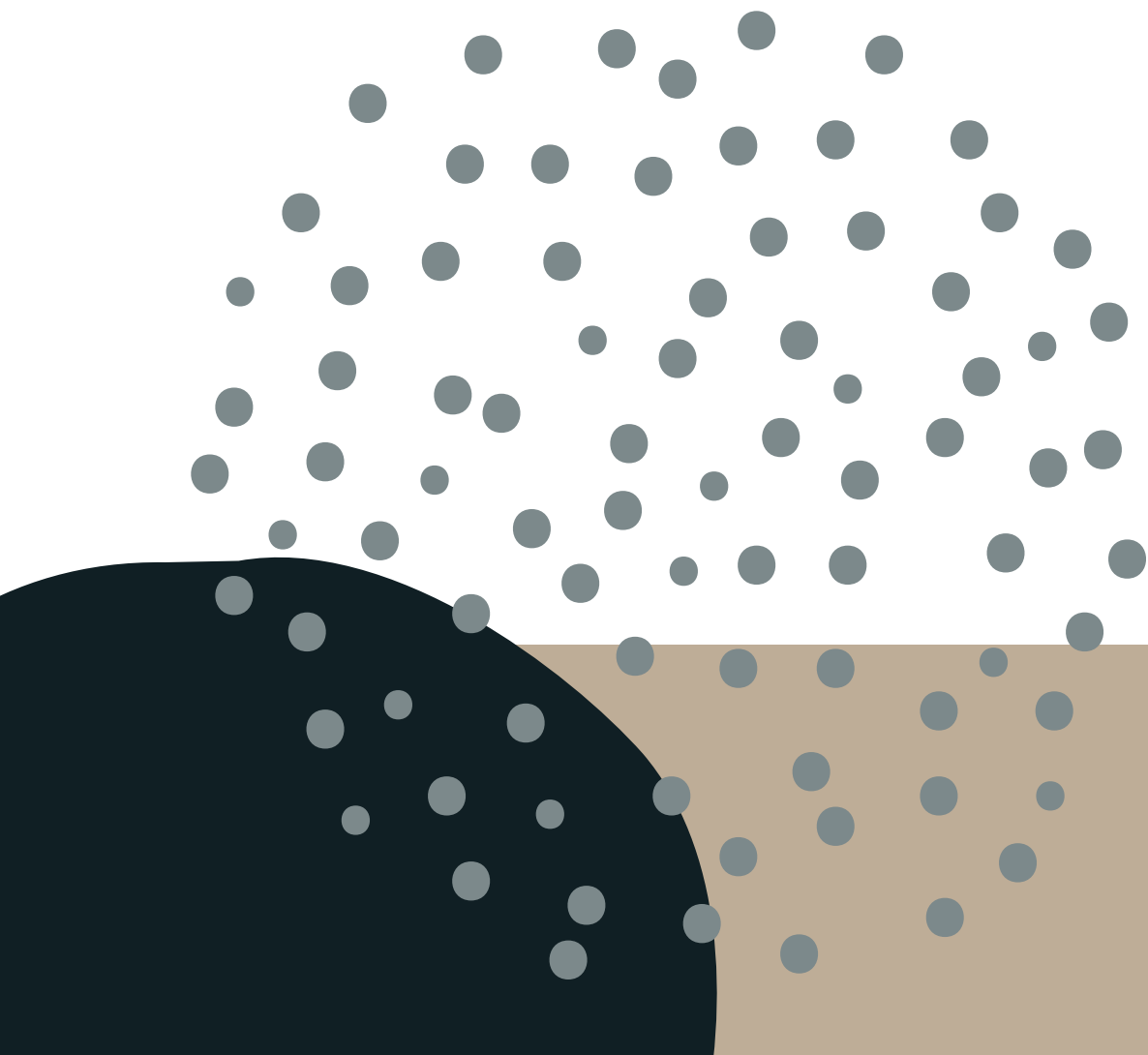


Automatic acceptance after two
years to a MA State University –
including UMass – with a 2.0 GPA

NEXT UP:

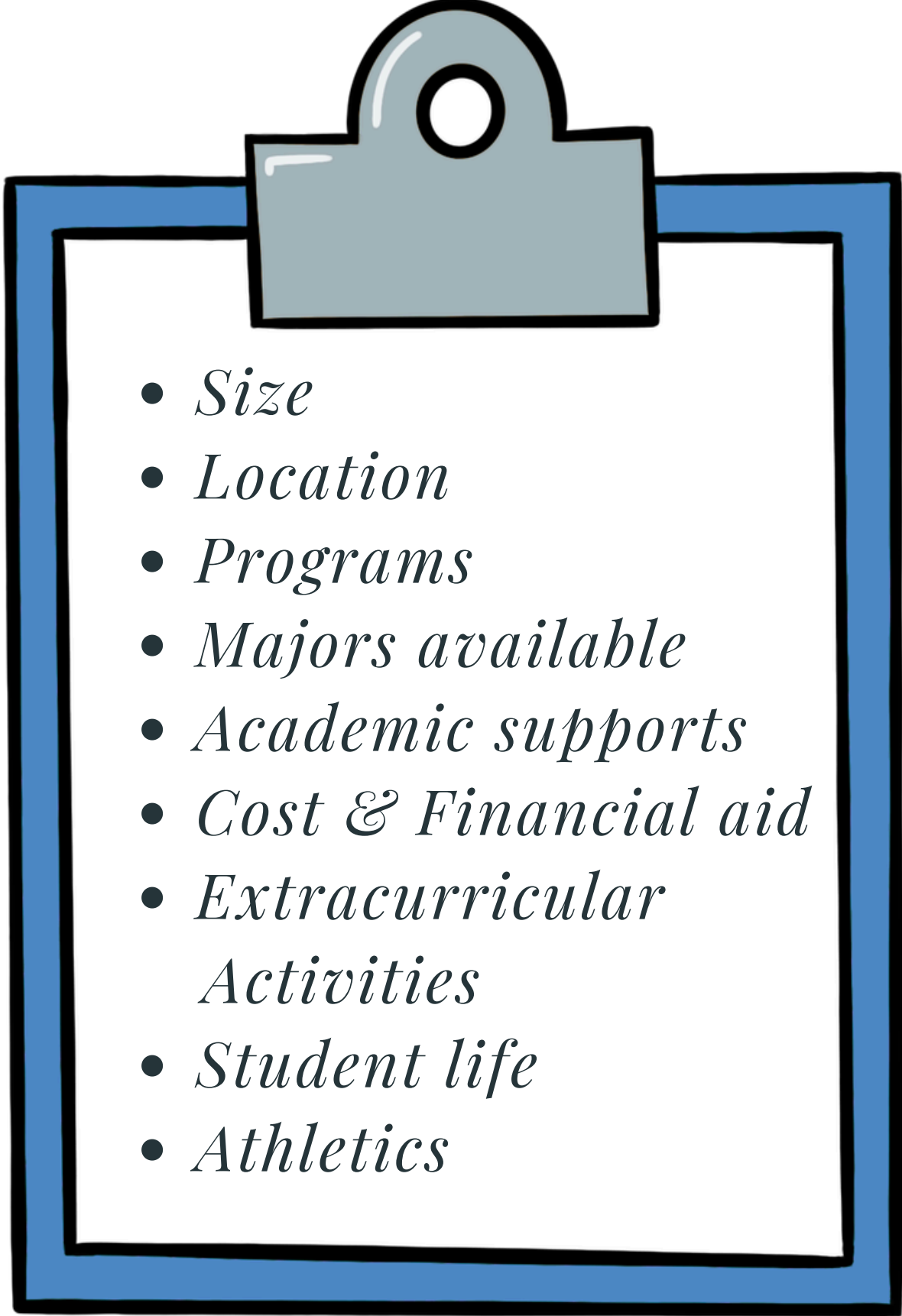
College deep dive

- 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

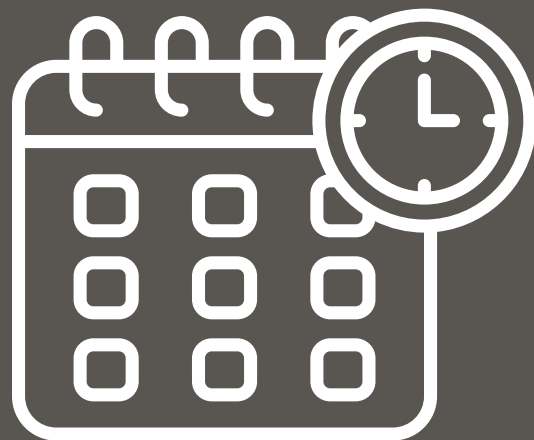


What to know

- A college tour and info session often last around 90 minutes.
- Register online via college website.
- College Visits can help students decide whether or not a campus is a good fit for them.
- Some colleges track demonstrated interest.

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

APPLICATION PLANS



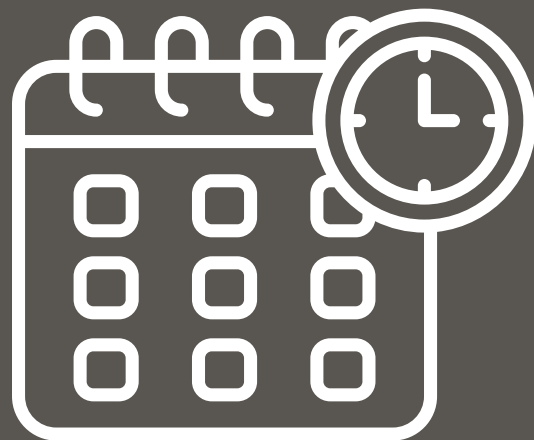
Early Action

Early Decision

Regular Decision

Rolling

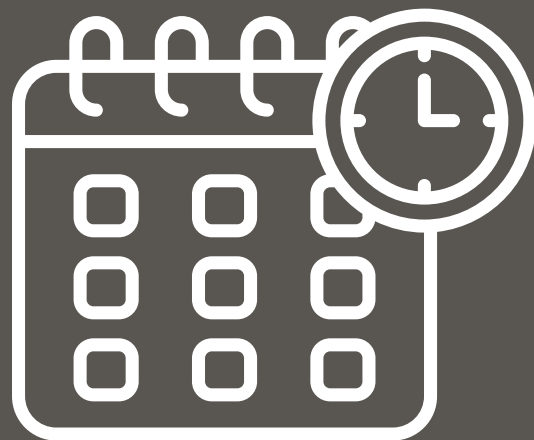
APPLICATION PLANS



Early Action

- Early Action (EA) lets students apply earlier (e.g. Oct 15th, Nov 1st, Nov 5th are all common EA deadlines).
- Students will hear back sooner (Dec/Jan) with a **non-binding** decision, giving students time to compare offers until May 1st.
- EA is a great option if the college is considered a comfortable or target school. Typically, only grades through end of junior year are considered.

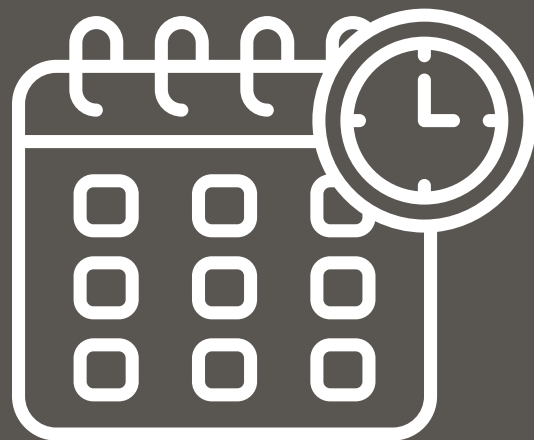
APPLICATION PLANS



Early Decision

- Early Decision (ED) is a **binding** contract, which means the student must commit to the college if accepted.
- Apply to **one** Early Decision school only. If accepted, the student must enroll.
- Restrictive Early Action (REA) is **non-binding** but restricts you to applying early to only **one private** institution (e.g. Harvard, etc.).

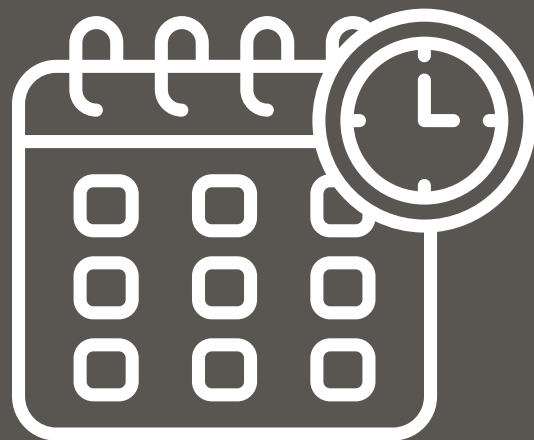
APPLICATION PLANS



Regular Decision

- Regular Decision (RD) lets students apply later (e.g. January/February).
- Students will hear back later (Mar/April) with a **non-binding** decision.
- Regular decision is a great choice for students who need more time to finish their applications and would like their mid-year grades to be included in the admissions review process.

APPLICATION PLANS



Rolling

- Rolling admissions reviews applications as they arrive, often starting early (Sept), continuing until spots fill up. Applying **early** is key to maximize chances for admission, scholarships, etc.
- Applications are reviewed as they are received, rather than after a fixed deadline. Students typically receive a **non-binding** decision within a few weeks of applying.
- Colleges with rolling deadlines: UPitt, Penn State, ASU, etc.

COLLEGE APPLICATION COMPONENTS



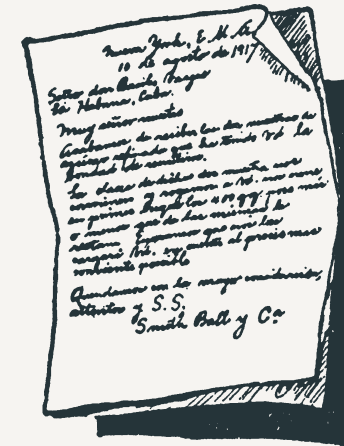
Application (including essay)
Common Application
College Website
SCOIR



*Transcript/
Self-reported
Transcript*



*Standardized Test
Scores
(if applicable)*



*Letters of
Recommendation*

- *Teacher(s)*
- *Counselor*

Westford Academy
30 Patten Road
Westford, MA 01886

Official Transcript for:

Academic Term: Q1

Last Name Last name	First Name First name	Middle Name Middle name	Gender F	Student ID# 1234
Home Address Address	City Westford	State MA	Zip 01886	Home Telephone 978-692-5570
Parent/ Caregiver Parent/caregiver name	Status	Total Earned Credits 70.00	Date of Birth 01/01/2009	Anticipated Graduation 2027
GPA GPA 3.9042	Based on Based on 4 Semesters			

Course	Final	Credits	Course	Q1	Final	Credits
Grade 9			Grade 11			
23-24			25-26			
001 English 9 CP	95	5.00	040 English 11 H	97		
105 French III H	98	5.00	108 French Language & Culture AP	98		
200 World History II CP	97	5.00	210 US History II H	95		
308 Algebra 1 CP	95	5.00	335 Trig and Pre Calc CP	87		
351 Exploring Comp Sci pt A CP	94	2.50	362 Computer Sci A- AP	90		
410 Biology CP	97	5.00	452 Chemistry AP	90		
700 Foundations of Art	100	2.50	705 Drawing	100		
883 Basics of Kin. in Phy. Ed.	100	2.50				
887 Health Education	98	2.50				
Grade 10			Grade 12			
24-25						
039 English 10 H	93	5.00				
107 French IV H	94	5.00				
206 US History I H	93	5.00				
321 Geometry CP	91	5.00				
331 Algebra II CP	95	5.00				
358 Java Programming H	88	2.50				
422 Chemistry H	92	5.00				
885 Kin. of Individual/Dual Games	100	2.50				
			Junior Year Courses			
			040 English 11 H			
			108 French Language & Culture AP			
			210 US History II H			
			335 Trig and Pre Calc CP			
			362 Computer Sci A- AP			
			452 Chemistry AP			
			705 Drawing			
			886 Kin. of Fitness and Outdoor Pursuits			

WESTFORD
ACADEMY
TRANSCRIPT

SAT

VS

ACT

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)

FORMAT

SECTION DIFFICULTY

TIME TO TEST

NUMBER OF
QUESTIONS

SECTIONS

QUESTION FORMAT

SCORING

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

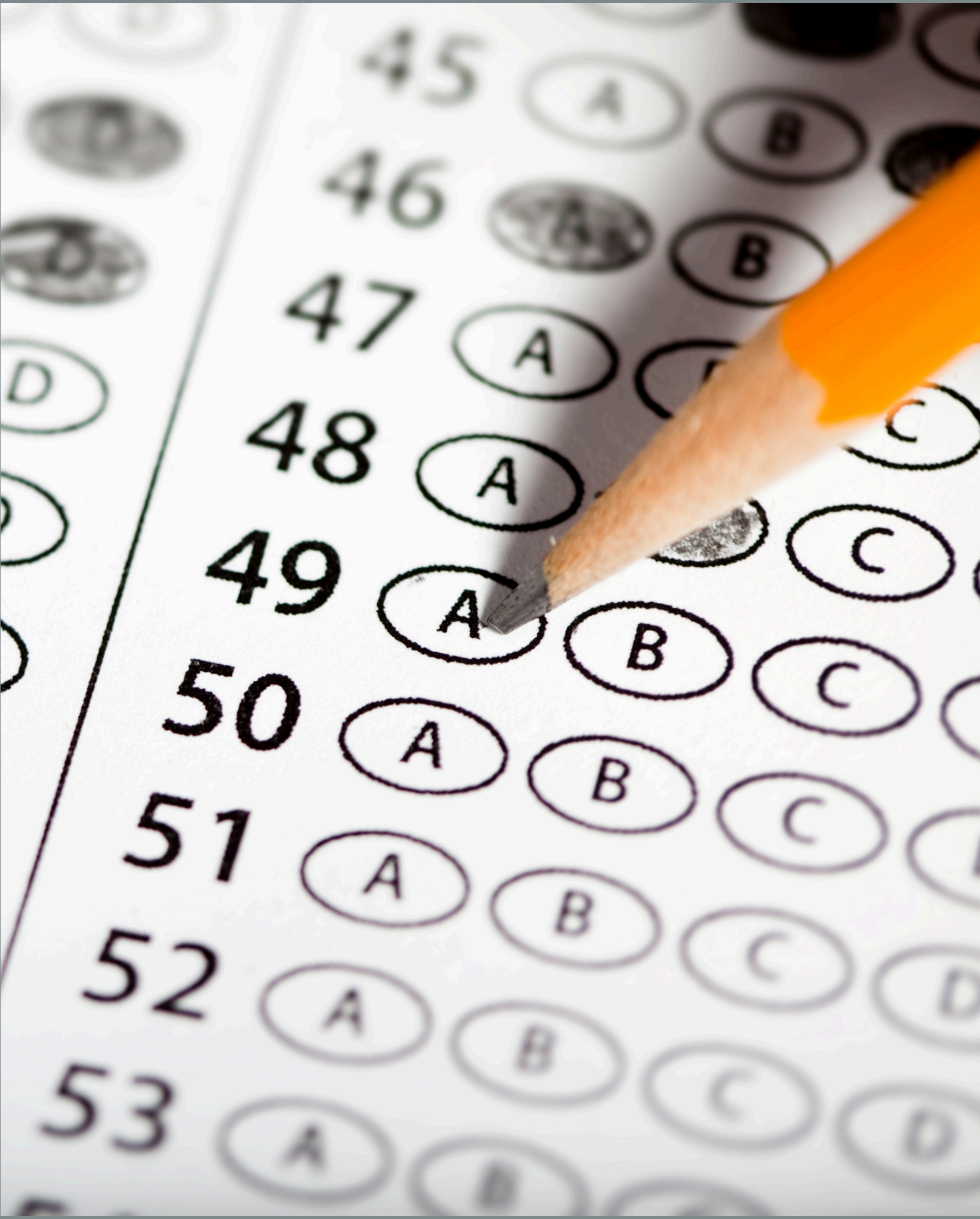
ACT

February 14, 2026 test date

- Deadline for registration 1/9/27 & late registration 1/23/26

April 11, 2026 test date

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



SAT / ACT - PLANNING TIPS

- 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)

Resources to Help Build College List



WA Counseling Website

College resources
and more!

[Link here](#)



Local College Fairs

Billerica Memorial High

3/10/26 at 6 PM

Littleton High School

3/18/26 at 6 PM



National & Virtual College Fairs

Upcoming:

April 27 & 28, 2026

Hynes Convention Center

900 Boylston St

Boston MA 02115

[Register Here](#)



College Search Engines

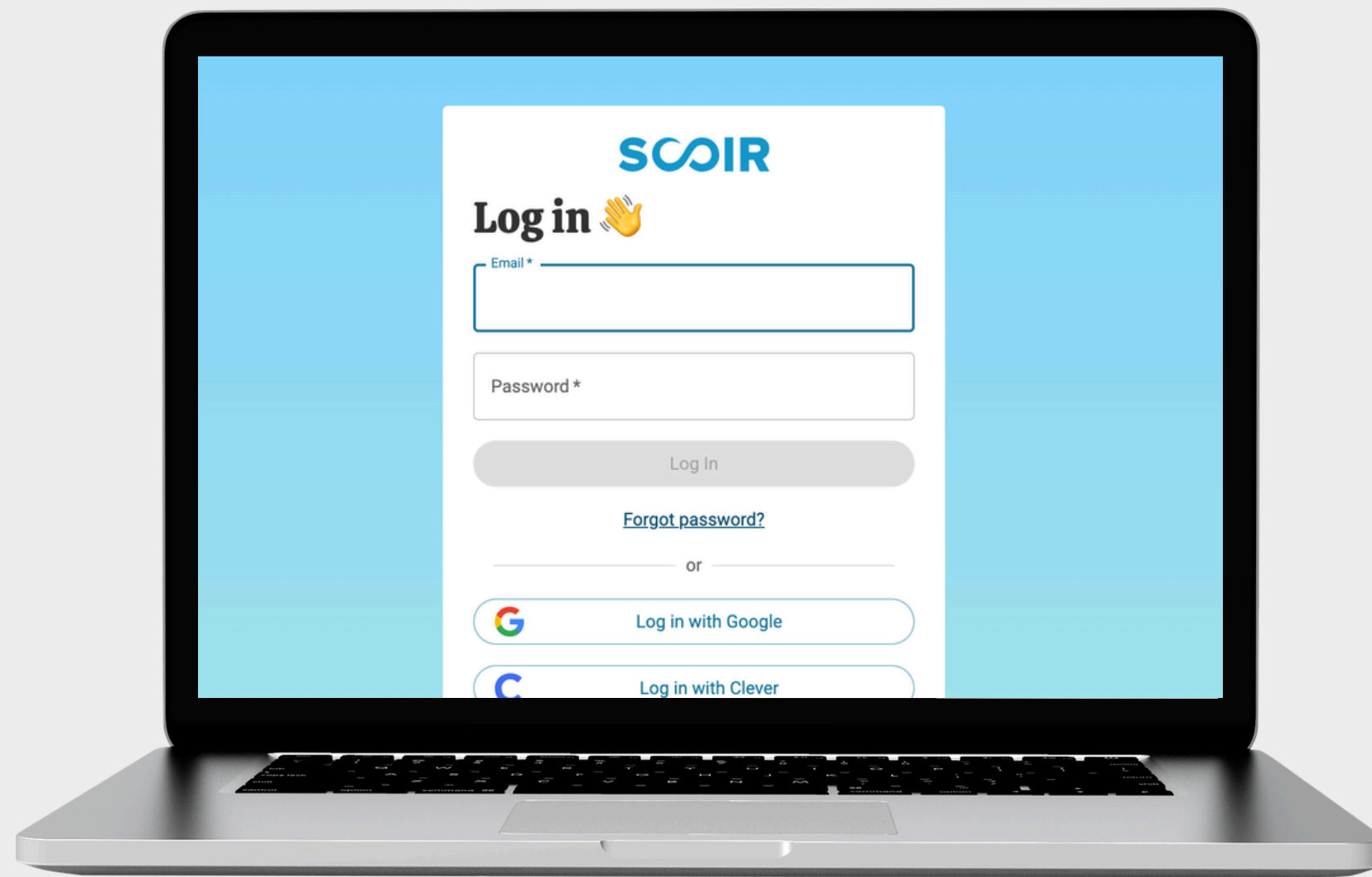
SCOIR

[Collegexpress.com](#)

[CollegeBoard](#)

...and more!

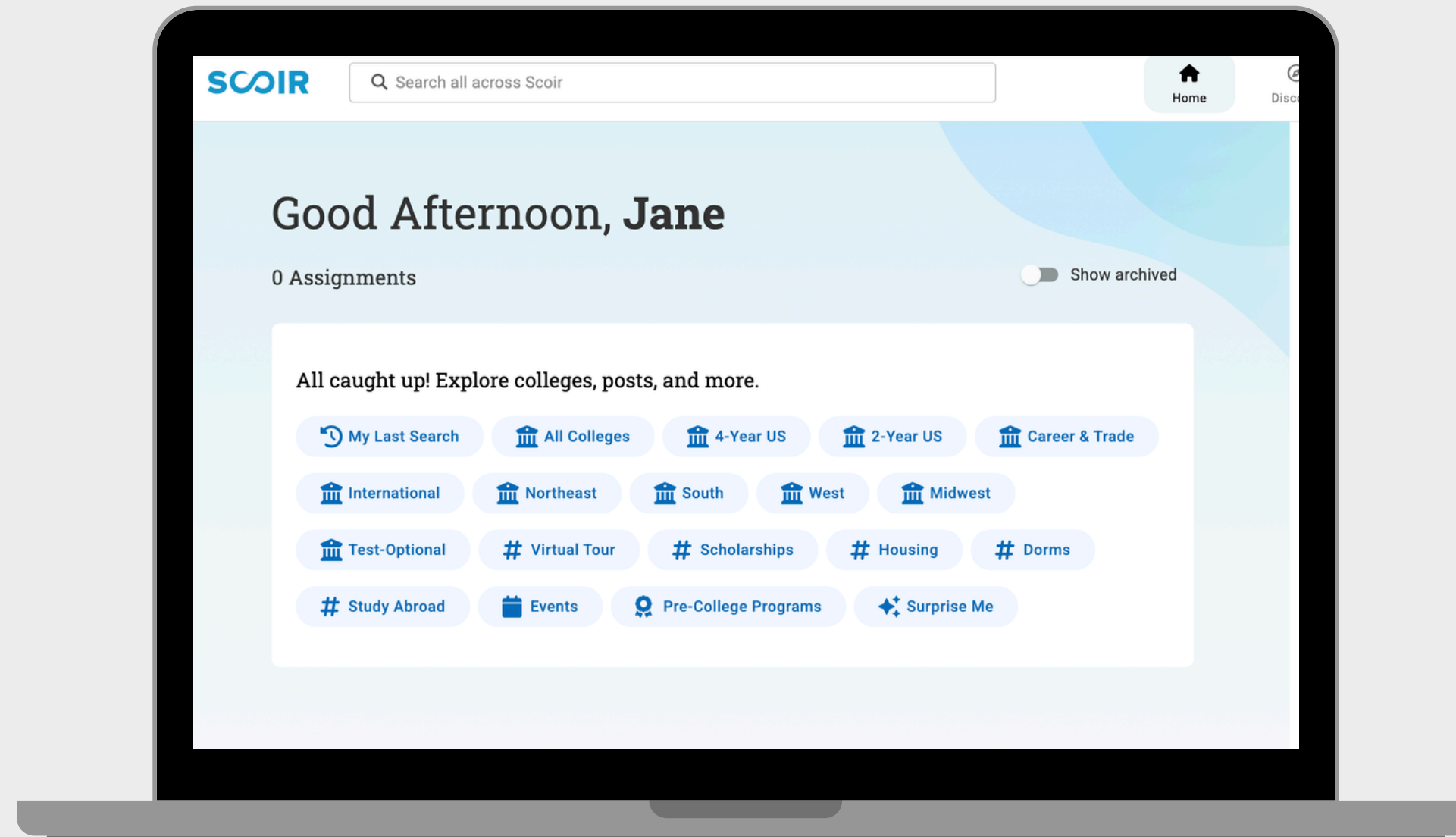
SCOIR OVERVIEW



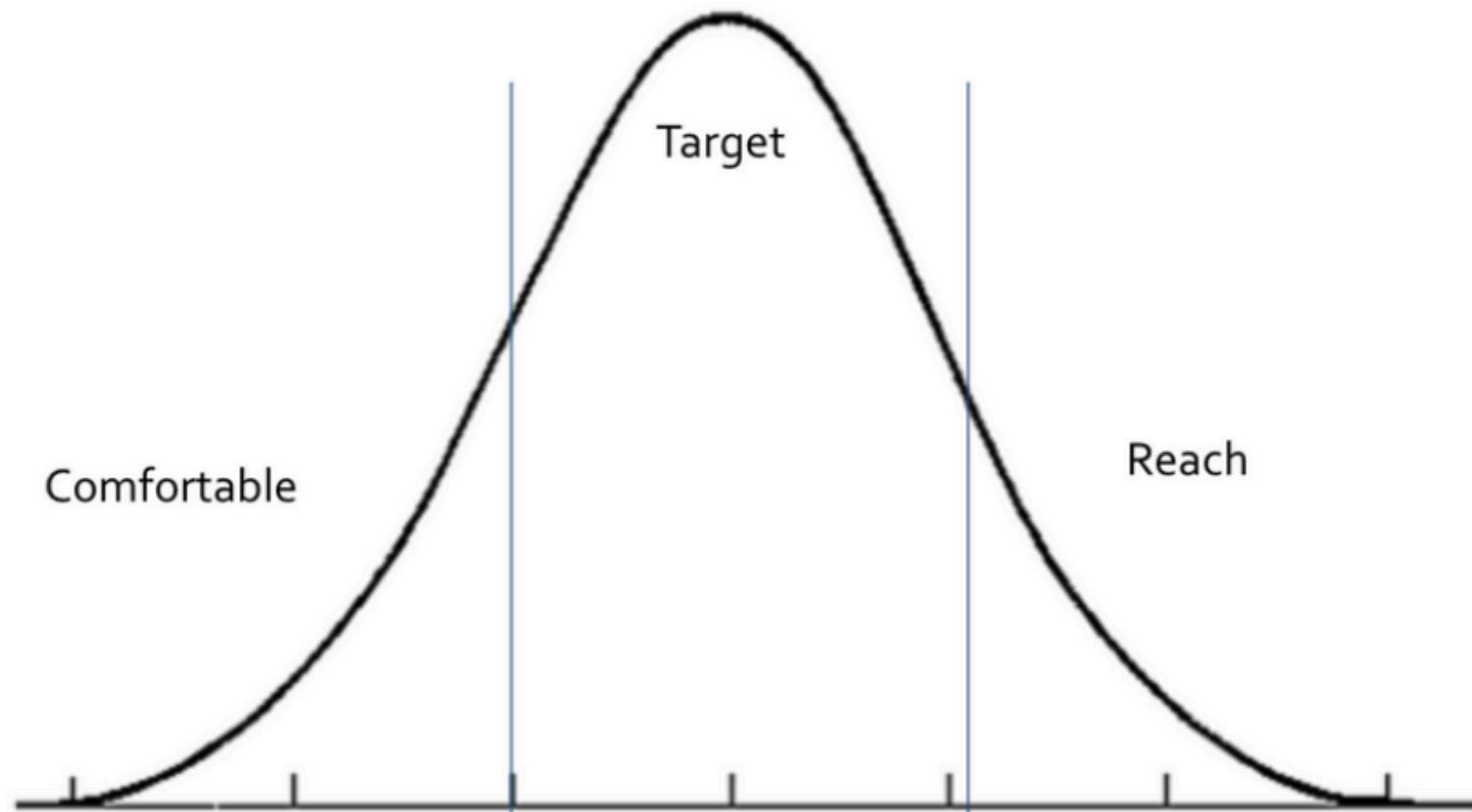
- Scoir (pronounced “SCORE”) is an online system that provides students with college and career planning tools to use during their time at Westford Academy.
- Scoir offers admission intelligence tools that are designed to:
 - Help students balance and refine their college lists
 - Predict acceptance chances in addition to scattergrams

SCOIR DEMO

[PARENT DASHBOARD - LOGIN HERE](#)



BALANCED COLLEGE LIST



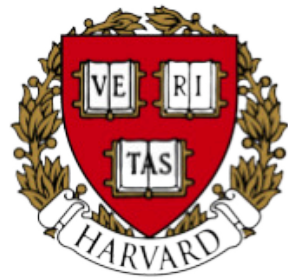
COMFORTABLE

HIGHER
ADMISSION RATE

TARGET

REACH
LOWER
ADMISSION RATE

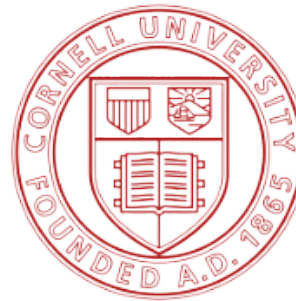
EVERYONE'S REACH



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

Waive college application & SAT/ACT costs for eligible students. See counselor for more info.

04

College Interviews

Please check requirements before applying.

05

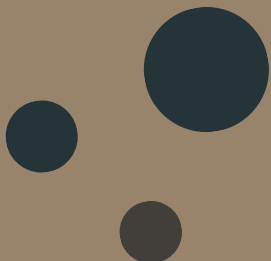
Social media/online presence

Follow schools and maintain a positive online presence!

06

ROTC/Military Academies

Military scholarship programs.



HOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

**MERIT
SCHOLARSHIPS**

**PRIVATE STUDENT
LOANS/PARENT
PLUS LOANS**

**PRIVATE
SCHOLARSHIPS**

**FINANCIAL AID:
FAFSA & CSS
PROFILE**

529 PLAN

**OTHER WAYS:
BECOME A RESIDENT
ASSISTANT,
ROTC, ETC.**



A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization built to help families reduce the cost of college, minimize debt and increase higher education choices.

- Personalized Support
- Virtual Meetings
- Unlimited access to email/calls/texts
- Free & Confidential
- Webinars
- Tutorials
- Answers from financial aid professional
- Calculators & Tools

Register Here



Call or Text: 781-343-1941

Financialaid@collegeaffordable.org

www.collegeaffordable.org/westfordacademy

THANK YOU!

