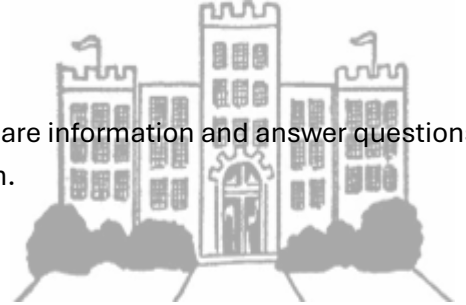


NAVIGATING YOUR SENIOR YEAR

Welcome to your senior year! This is an exciting (and sometimes overwhelming) time, and we're here to support you through the college and post-graduation planning process. Below is an overview of important steps and reminders. Be sure to read the information carefully and follow up with your counselor if you have questions.

College Representative, Trade, Technical and Military Visits

- Throughout the fall, many college representatives will visit our school to share information and answer questions.
- Visits are a great way to learn more about colleges you may be interested in.
- Sign up to attend Rep Visits in the Guidance Office.
- Be sure to check Teams, email, or posted schedules for upcoming visits.



SAT Information

- Register online at www.collegeboard.org
- Deadlines usually fall about 4 weeks before each test date.
- Upcoming SAT dates: 10-3, 11-7, 12-5. & 3-6-27 (GSHS CEEB # 391575)
- Fee waivers (20 per year) are available for eligible students experiencing financial hardship —see your counselor about this.

SAT Prep

- ✓ Use your PSAT results to guide practice.
- ✓ Link your College Board account to Khan Academy for free, personalized SAT prep.



Letters of Recommendation

- Plan ahead! Ask teachers/counselors at least 3–4 weeks (if possible) before you need the letter.
- Complete the Letter of Recommendation Request Form (available on Guidance Teams or paper copies in Guidance)
- Provide your recommender with your recommendation request form or résumé sheet if available.
- Always send a thank-you note afterward!

Applying to College: Common Application vs. Other Applications

- Common App: One application can be used to apply to many colleges. You'll invite recommenders (i.e. teachers and your counselor), upload essays, and track deadlines in one place.
- Other Applications: Some schools require their own applications (state university systems, technical schools, military academies, etc.). Always check each college's admissions website.

College Application Process (General Steps)

1. Research schools and note their deadlines (early action, early decision, regular decision).
2. Complete applications (Common App, state systems, or individual portals).
3. Request recommendations (if required).
4. Send official transcripts (see instructions on other side).
5. Submit test scores (if required, may request official score report from College Board or we can post on transcript).
6. Track emails/portals from each college for updates and missing items.



Transcripts



- You must request your transcript to be sent to colleges (the Common App: counselor receives electronic request) once email address is added. The official request allows us to keep record of date sent and serves as a release giving us permission to send your personal information.
- The electronic transcript request form is on the Greensburg Salem Website under Quicklinks: [Transcript Request Form](#) or a paper version in the Guidance Office is available.
- If you need your *College in HS* credits submitted, you will need to request them from the schools you purchased them through. We do not necessarily have record of these, and it is ultimately the student's responsibility.



Scholarships

- Scholarships may be offered through your school, community, or national organizations.
- Start early and meet deadlines. Most local scholarships do not open until Dec-March.
- Avoid scams—legitimate scholarships never ask for payment.
- Local scholarship postings are available on the Class of 2027 Scholarship Page, in the guidance office, and at: <https://gshs.greensburgsalem.org/counseling/guidance>.



Communications

- Check Teams and school email DAILY for important updates, deadlines, and opportunities.
- Counselors, teachers, and colleges will primarily communicate this way.
- Your parents will ALSO receive updates and information through email and text.

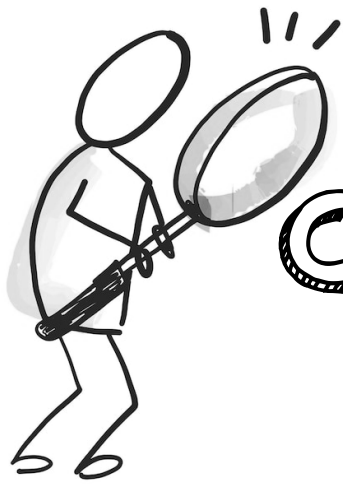
FAFSA & Financial Aid

- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) opens October 1 at www.studentaid.gov.
- Many schools have priority deadlines for FAFSA submission—file as early as possible.
- FAFSA determines eligibility for federal grants, loans, and some scholarships.
- Some colleges may also require the CSS Profile (check college requirements). This is available on Collegeboard.org.
- Families should gather tax information and create FSA IDs before starting. Tip sheets are available outside the Guidance Office. We will also advertise local and virtual workshops for students and parents to attend.

Reminders for Seniors

- ✓ Create a professional email outside of school address to use for applications that you will use to correspond with schools or scholarship committees during the senior year and after graduation.
- ✓ Get in habit of regularly checking your email and Guidance Teams page, VIP information updated almost daily.
- ✓ Most resources can also be found at: <https://gshs.greensburgsalem.org/counseling/guidance>
- ✓ Stay organized by using a calendar (Mark deadlines!)
- ✓ Communicate regularly with your counselor.
- ✓ Continue strong academic performance, colleges DO see senior year grades.
- ✓ Do not get behind on your **Senior Project. Proposals are due Nov. 16th!!**
- ✓ Don't be afraid to ask for help; we're here to guide you!





COLLEGE SEARCH & COMPARISON

- **College Board's BigFuture** (bigfuture.collegeboard.org)
 - Search and compare colleges by location, size, majors, cost, and more.
 - Offers side-by-side comparison charts.
- **U.S. Department of Education – College Scorecard** (collegescorecard.ed.gov)
 - Government tool with data on graduation rates, average costs, student debt, and earnings after graduation.
 - Helpful for looking at return on investment.
- **Niche** (www.niche.com/colleges)
 - Rankings and reviews from current students and alumni.
 - Covers academics, campus life, diversity, and safety.
- **Princeton Review** (www.princetonreview.com/college-rankings)
 - Offers detailed profiles, rankings, and lists like “Best Value” or “Happiest Students.”
- **Cappex** (www.cappex.com)
 - Compare schools, check admissions chances, and track applications.
 - Provides scholarship matches too.
- **College Navigator (National Center for Education Statistics)** (nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)
 - Comprehensive federal data source.
 - Includes admissions, financial aid, enrollment, programs, and campus security