SEACOAST
COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL

FALL 2026

NEWSLETTER

COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELING



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We are excited for another great academic year at Seacoast Collegiate High School! Throughout the year, our College and Career Counseling Newsletter will provide students and families with timely updates, helpful resources, and important information about academic planning, college and career exploration, scholarships, testing, and upcoming opportunities.

Please review each edition carefully and reach out whenever you have questions. The Seacoast Counseling team is here to support you with course planning, college research and applications, scholarships, recommendation letters, résumés, career exploration, and more. Please feel free to stop by our offices or contact us anytime.

CONTACTS:

Donna Armstrong
armstrongd@seasideschools.net

Stacey Greenway
greenway@seasideschools.net

Mindy Larson
larsonm@seasideschools.net



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.

SEACOAST COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL

SENIOR COLLEGE PLANNING: IMPORTANT FALL REMINDERS

Early Action and Early Decision Deadlines

October 15 and November 1 application deadlines are quickly approaching! Seniors should carefully review each college's requirements and allow plenty of time to submit applications.

- Confirm whether you are applying Early Action, Early Decision, or Regular Decision.
- Remember that Early Decision is a binding commitment - you agree to attend if admitted and the financial aid package is affordable.
- Make sure your Common Application and Xello accounts are properly linked.
- Do not wait until the deadline to submit. Technical problems and missing materials can cause unnecessary stress.
- Verify that all required transcripts, test scores, essays, and recommendations have been requested.

Check Your College Portals: After submitting an application, each college will provide access to its own admissions portal. This portal is often the most accurate source for application updates and missing requirements.

Students should:

- Check each admissions portal daily.
- Read all emails from colleges carefully.
- Confirm that the application, transcript, test scores, and other documents have been received.
- Respond promptly to requests for additional information.
- Keep application statuses and college lists updated in Xello.
- Save usernames and passwords in a secure location.



Remember: An application marked "submitted" in Common App is not necessarily complete at the college. Always verify your status through the college's portal.

Thank Your Recommenders:

Teachers and counselors devote considerable time to writing thoughtful recommendation letters. Once your letters have been submitted, remember to express your appreciation.

A handwritten note or sincere email is a meaningful way to thank each person who supported your application. Later in the year, be sure to update your recommenders on your admission decisions and let them know where you plan to attend!

NAVIGATING COLLEGE ADMISSIONS DEADLINES

When applying to universities, students have a variety of options and due dates. It is each student's responsibility to manage deadlines and application requirements. To assist in the application process, seniors are encouraged to attend application workshops and schedule individual meetings with counselors.The following are the types of deadline decisions from which they may choose:



Early Decision (ED): A binding option for students certain about their first-choice school. If admitted with sufficient financial aid, they must enroll and withdraw all other applications. Students may apply ED to only one college but can submit regular decision applications elsewhere. Deadlines are typically mid-October, with decisions by January. While ED can show strong interest, it only helps if the student is already a good fit for the school.

ED II (Early Decision II) is identical to Early Decision but with later deadlines, usually around January 1. Applicants receive decisions in early February instead of waiting until April. Many students choose ED II if they were denied at their first-choice ED school.

Rolling Admission: Student applications are reviewed by the institution as they are received. The sooner the application is completed and submitted, the sooner the admission decision is made and the student is notified. Students have until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of admission.

EA or Early Action: This is a great choice for many students, as they will apply early and find out the admission decision well before the general response date without the commitment. Students may apply to many institutions early action and may also apply to other institutions regular decision. If accepted, the student usually has until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of enrollment.

Regular Decision: Institutions have set dates throughout the application cycle as to when applications must be submitted for review. Students will be notified of the admission decision in a clearly stated period of time. Students may apply to many institutions regular decision. Regular decision is non-binding and the student has until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of admission.

JUNIOR YEAR FOCUS: START BUILDING EARLY

Junior year is the time to begin preparing for college applications. The work students do now-testing, researching colleges, and building their résumés, will make the application process much easier next fall.

Plan Your Testing Timeline

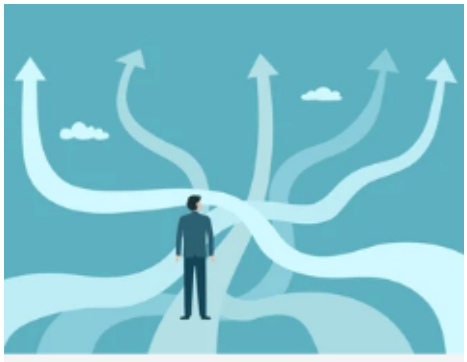
Use your PSAT results to identify areas for improvement and begin preparing for the SAT, ACT, or both. Juniors should plan to complete their first official SAT or ACT by spring, leaving time to retest if needed.

Upcoming SAT Dates

- November 7, 2026 — Register by October 23
- December 5, 2026 — Register by November 20
- March 6, 2027 — Register by February 19

Upcoming ACT Dates

- December 12, 2026 — Register by November 6
- February 27, 2027 — Register by January 22



Registration deadlines arrive quickly, and nearby testing locations may fill early. Students should create College Board and MyACT accounts now and register as soon as they select a test date.

Explore Colleges Strategically

Fall and winter weekends are excellent opportunities to visit college campuses. If an in-person trip is not possible, take advantage of virtual tours, online information sessions, and student panels.

During a visit, look beyond the appearance of the campus. Ask questions such as:

- What academic support is available to first-year students?
- How easy is it to change majors?
- What internship, research, or career-development opportunities are offered?
- How are scholarships and financial aid awarded?
- What do students like most—and least—about attending the college?

After each visit, record your impressions while they are still fresh. These notes will be helpful when creating a balanced college list next year.

Begin Building Your Activities Résumé

Do not wait until senior year to remember everything you have accomplished. Begin keeping a record of:

- Clubs, athletics, fine arts, and school organizations
- Leadership positions and responsibilities
- Community service and volunteer hours
- Part-time jobs, internships, and summer experiences
- Awards, honors, certifications, and special skills
- Meaningful family or community responsibilities

For each activity, include the dates of participation, hours involved, responsibilities, accomplishments, and impact. Continue updating your résumé throughout junior year—it will become an important resource for college applications, scholarships, and recommendation letters.

SEACOAST COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL



TIPS FOR COLLEGE VISITS BY IECA

A campus visit is the best way to evaluate whether a college suits you. Here are our members' top 10 tips for making the most of your college visits.

1. ***Learn about the college before you visit.***
Read materials from the college and check out their website and social media.

2. ***Evaluate the environment of the campus.***
Is the campus too big or too small for you? Do you like the nearby town, or do you feel isolated? Consider how you would get around campus—particularly in the rain or snow—and what transportation you would use to get home.

3. ***Visit the admissions office and participate in the information session.***
Register early for tours and admission information sessions since these fill quickly. This also demonstrates your interest to the college. Ask questions that help you clarify the academic program at the school and the type of student who is most comfortable and successful there. Dress nicely, but not out of character.

4. ***Take the student-led tour of campus.***
Take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions about campus life from a peer. Recognize, however, that tour guides are not necessarily typical of all students since they are often paid to formally represent the school.

5. ***Check out the dorms.***
Find out about the dorm options available, such as all-freshman or coed floors. Arrange in advance to spend the night in a dorm, if possible. Picture yourself living in a dorm. Are you comfortable with where it is located on campus?

6. ***Arrange for campus meetings with department heads in the subject that interests you most.***
Also meet with coaches in sports where you excel, as well as former graduates from your high school. Bring a resume that highlights your experience in your area of expertise. Ask about opportunities based on your skills and interests.

7. ***Sit in on classes and check out the library***.
How is the rapport between students and faculty in the classroom? Look through the books and explore the technology available at the library. Look for group study spaces and quiet places to study.

8. ***Look into life beyond academics.***
Check out the athletic facilities, theater, and student center. Read the notices posted in the dorms or on bulletin boards. Can you see yourself joining in? Pick up the school newspaper for hot topics on campus.

9. ***Eat lunch in the student center and watch student interactions.***
Talk with students all over campus about their impressions of the school. Look at the students themselves. Do you feel comfortable among them?

10. ***Write down your impressions of each college you visit.***
After a while, the visions of different schools start to blur if you don't immediately stop to record your thoughts! Keep a list of pros and cons for comparison. Also consider taking some photos to help you keep track of the campuses you visit.

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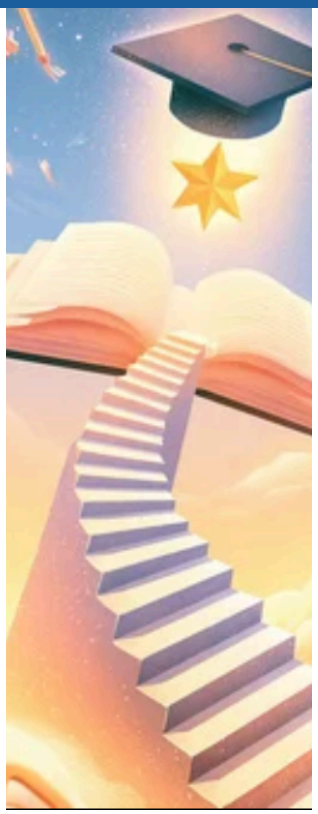

UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS EXAMS

Understanding College Entrance Exams

At Seacoast Collegiate High School, standardized testing is an important part of college planning. The SAT, ACT, and CLT measure skills such as reading, writing, critical thinking, problem-solving, and mathematics.

Colleges may use test scores for admissions, scholarships, and course placement. Although testing policies vary, strong scores can enhance an application and increase financial-aid opportunities. Students should research each college's requirements and decide how testing fits into their overall application strategy.

The ACT®

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FUTURE ACT TEST DATES, CLICK HERE

SAT®

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FUTURE SAT TEST DATES, CLICK HERE

CLT

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FUTURE CLT TEST DATES, CLICK HERE

SEACOAST COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL

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HOW TO AFFORD COLLEGE

FAFSA



Great news - the 2027–28 FAFSA has opened early, ahead of its usual October 1 launch!
Students and families may now complete the FAFSA and submit their information to the colleges and universities they are considering. We encourage you to complete it as soon as possible, as some institutional grants, scholarships, and other financial aid funds are limited or awarded according to priority deadlines**.COMPLETE FAFSA HERE**

We will also host a **"Paying for College" Parent Seminar with Dr. Aimee Watts, Director of Financial Aid at Northwest Florida State College, on October 6.** Dr. Watts will share helpful information about the FAFSA, financial aid, scholarships, and strategies for making college more affordable.
Additional seminar details will be shared soon. In the meantime, families are encouraged to begin the FAFSA process early!

FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

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 College 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.

PARENT & WELLNESS CORNER

Helping Seniors Manage Application Stress

The college application process can feel overwhelming, especially when students are balancing deadlines, academics, activities, and important decisions about their futures. Families can help by creating a calm, supportive environment and keeping college conversations in perspective.

- Set aside a specific time each week to discuss applications rather than bringing them up every day.
- Break large tasks into smaller, manageable steps.
- Encourage sleep, exercise, downtime, and activities unrelated to college.
- Celebrate progress, not just acceptances or completed applications.
- Remind students that one decision does not define their worth or future.

Helpful conversation starters include:

- "What would feel most helpful from me this week?"
- "Is there one application task we can make easier?"
- "Would you like advice, help, or simply someone to listen?"
- "What are you most excited about when you picture college?"

Focus on Fit - not Prestige

The "best" college is not necessarily the most recognizable name - it is the college where a student can thrive academically, socially, personally, and financially. Encourage your student to consider academic programs, campus culture, support services, location, career opportunities, and affordability.

Try to avoid comparing your student's college list or admissions results with those of friends, neighbors, or classmates. Every student's path is different. The goal is not to win the admissions process; it is to find a college that supports your student's goals, values, and sense of purpose.



SEACOAST COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL

PLANNING AHEAD

Important Upcoming Dates

OCTOBER

1 - FAFSA Opens for 2027 - 2028 Application Season
6 - "Paying for College" Parent Presenation at Seacaost
15 - FSU REPRESENTATIVE VISIT AT SEACOAST
Early Action Application for many universities (SEE BELOW)
17 - ACT (Registration Deadline: 9/11)

NOVEMBER

1 - Early Action Application for many universities (SEE BELOW)
7 - SAT (Registration Deadline: 10/23)

DECEMBER

4 - FCLE at Seacoast (students currently taking or have comepleted Government)
5- SAT (Registration Deadline: 11/20)
12 - ACT (Registration Deadline: 11/6)

Application Deadlines and Timelines

University	Early Deadlines	Regular Deadlines
UCF	EA October 15th (Materials by November. 15th)	May 1st
UF	ED October 15th (Materials by October 22nd) EA November 1st (Materials by November. 8th)	January 15th
FSU	ED October 15th (Materials by October 22nd) EA October 15th (Materials by October 22nd)	December 1st
USF	EA November 2nd. (Materials by November 16th)	December 16th
UWF	PD December 1st	April 1st
FGCU	EA November 1st	March 1st
UNF	EA September 2nd PD November 18th	December 16th
University of Alabama	PD December 4th	Rolling
Auburn	EA - R1 September 15th EA - R2 October 15th EA - R3 November 15th EA - R4 December 1st	February 1st
Tulane	ED November 1st EA November 10th	January 15th