

Junior Parent/Student Presentation 2021



PRESENTED BY THE WHS SCHOOL COUNSELORS



School Counseling Staff



- **Kristen Bates** (Last Names A-C & T-Z)
- **Christie Sales** (Last Names D-J)
- **Meghan Robinson**(Last Names K-P)
- **Megan Chunis; *School Counseling Coordinator***
(Last Names Q-S)

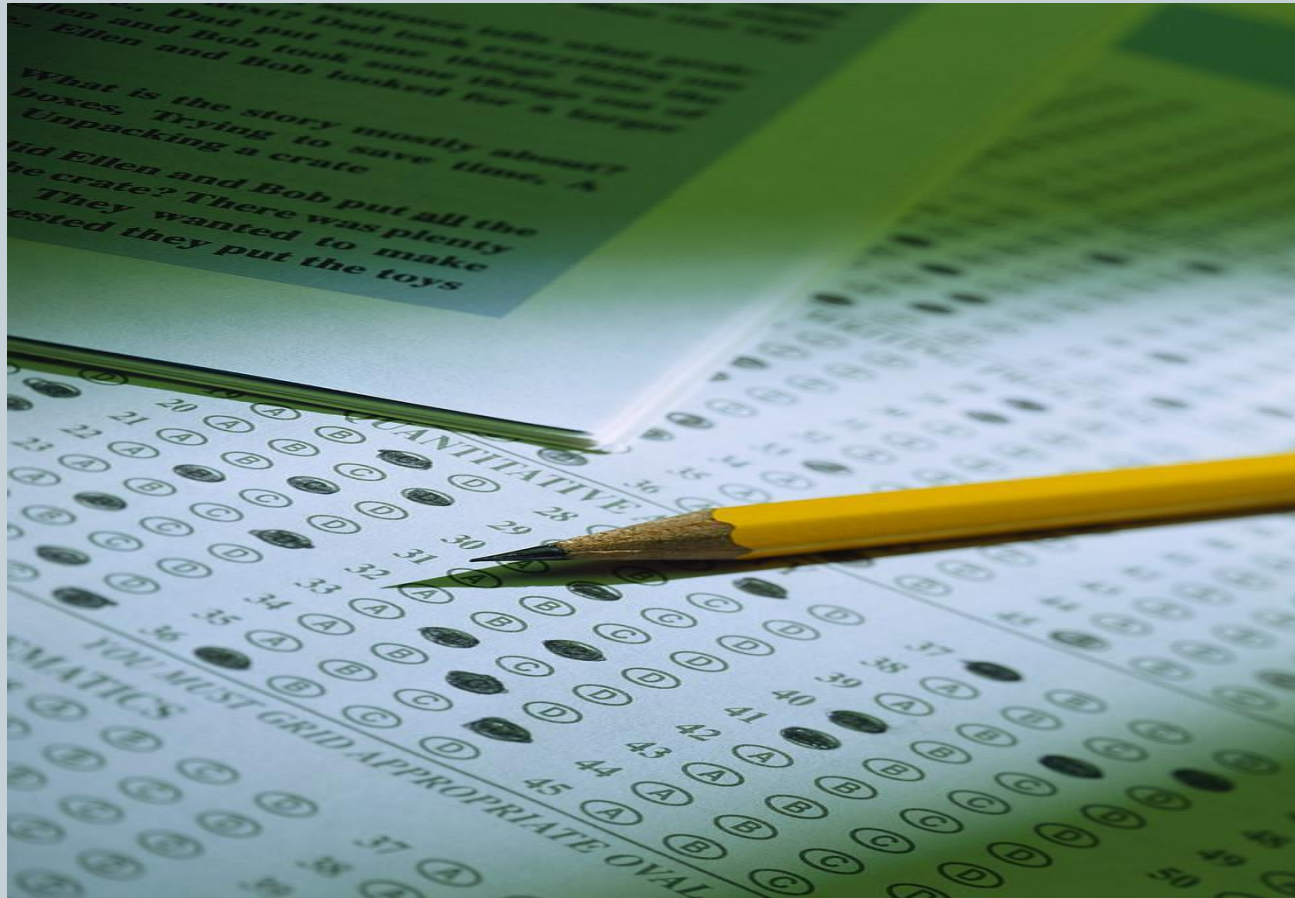
- **The power-point presentation will be available on
the counseling website for your reference**

Graduation Requirements



- **English-** 4.0 Credits
 - **Math-** 4.0 Credits
 - **Social Studies-** 3.5 Credits
 - **Science-** 3 Credits (to include 1 year of Physical Science and 1 year of Biology)
 - **Physical Education-** 1 Credit
 - **Health -** .5 Credits
 - **World Language -** 2 Credit
 - **Capstone –** 1 Credit
 - **Personal Finance –** .5 Credit
 - **Counselor Workshop -** .5 Credit (through SSP)
 - **Electives-** 6 Credits
 - **26 Credits Total**
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- Most schools look for (or require) at least 2-3 consecutive years of a world language and at least two lab sciences. Make sure to check your prospective college's course requirements as you plan your senior year.
 - Reminder - community service requirement can be reached through completing 20 or more hours of community service. Students can pick up community service forms in the counseling office.

Standardized Testing Information



PSAT



- All Juniors took the PSAT in October. Sign into College Board to view your results.
- The scoring is as follows:
 - Two sections
 - **Evidenced Based Reading and Writing (EBRW)-**
120-720
 - **Math-** 120-720
 - *Total Score-* 240-1440

SAT



- All juniors will be taking the SAT School Day test on March 24, 2021
 - 2 sections- Math and Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
 - No essay for the school day testing
 - Scores ranging from 400-1600
 - No penalty for guessing
- Recommend taking at least once again in the spring of your junior year and then at least once again in the fall of your senior year. Next test dates are in March, May, and June (all offered at WHS)
- Register online at www.collegeboard.org. Contact CollegeBoard if you need your username and password. Remember you can sign up for four free score report submissions to colleges of your choice.
- If your child receives free or reduced lunch, he or she will be eligible for a fee waiver. See your counselor for details.
- College and Career Readiness Benchmarks
 - 480- English
 - 530- Math

SAT DATES



SAT Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline*
March 13, 2021	February 12, 2021	March 2, 2021
May 8, 2021	April 8, 2021	April 27, 2021
June 5, 2021	May 6, 2021	May 26, 2021

ACT



- Curriculum based test designed to measure students' college readiness and academic achievement in four skill areas: English, Math, Reading, and Science (an additional section that is not tested on the SAT)
- The writing portion of the ACT is optional
- Most schools will accept either the ACT or the SAT
- Scale score is 1-36 on each section
- Register and prepare online at [ACTstudent.org](https://actstudent.org)
- If your child receives free or reduced lunch, he or she will be eligible for a fee waiver.
- WHS will offer the ACT in June and October

ACT Dates



ACT Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
April 17, 2021 (not offered at WHS)	March 12, 2021	March 26, 2021
June 12, 2021	May 7, 2021	May 21, 2021
July 17, 2021 (not offered at WHS)	June 18, 2021	June 25, 2021
Offered in October at WHS - Date to be announced		

How do I send my standardized test scores to the schools I am applying to??



- It is the student's responsibility to send scores directly through the testing agency.
- When a student signs up for the SAT, they are allowed to enter four schools free of charge to have their scores directly sent to. Even if they are unsure of schools they will be applying to, they should definitely take advantage of this. After a student takes the SAT, they only have 9 days to enter schools free of charge and after that you must pay a fee to send scores (just thought I would enter in this little money saving tip- seems fitting with the cost of college these days!)
- Sending AP Scores to the school you plan to attend

More tests....



- **SAT Subject Tests**

- College Board is no longer offering subject tests.

- **AP Exams**

- Taken in May by students enrolled in Advanced Placement Classes. Some colleges will accept a certain score on an AP exam as a college credit.

- **ASVAB**

- A military placement exam, but also an interest inventory that all students can take to help determine career choice. Given at WHS a couple times per year (April 2021` - TBD). See Mrs. Robinson to sign up.

NCAA - college athletics



- If playing a Division 1 or Division 2 sport is top on your list:
 - It is absolutely mandatory that you sign up with the NCAA Clearinghouse at http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html
 - We recommend you complete this process during junior year so you will be all set going into senior year
 - Students will create an account and provide information about courses, grades, athletic history, etc.
 - Touch base with your coach about your future plans
 - Ask your counselor if you need more information

NAVIANCE



How do I access Naviance?



- Website:
<https://connection.naviance.com/watertownhs>
- The link is also on the main page of the Watertown High School Webpage
- Username: last name followed by first two initials of first name - ex. Megan Chunis : chunisme
- Passwords: Students should have updated passwords, email your counselor if you can't log in

What does Naviance have to offer?



- **College Research**
 - College Search
 - College Lookup
 - College Match
 - Scattergrams/Acceptance History
- **My Colleges**
 - Colleges I'm Thinking About
 - Colleges I'm Applying to
 - Upcoming College Visits at WHS
- **Scholarships**
 - Scholarship List

How to choose a plan that is right for you



Evaluate your Education Options



- Decide on your post-secondary plan
 - Decide what type of school/program you want to pursue...
 - Four year (Bachelor Degree)
 - Two Year (Associate Degree)
 - Vocational/technical (Certificate Program)
 - Specialized Program (ie. music, art)
 - Military

Think about your most important criteria and weigh your options



- Admission selectivity
- Size
- Location: Urban, Suburban, Rural?
- Distance from home
- Cost
- Academics
- Majors
- Special programs
- Student diversity
- Campus Housing
- Admission requirements
- Extracurricular offerings
- Study Abroad
- Service learning opportunities
- Sports/Intramurals

Things to think about when choosing a school



- **Start with who you are now and where you would like to be in the future**
 - You need to examine yourself and your reasons for going to college before you begin your search.
- **You can afford to go to college**
 - If you make the assumption that you cannot afford a college based on the sticker price of tuition, you will miss out.
 - There are always many opportunities for scholarships, grants, and financial aid. (many times applications are automatically reviewed for potential scholarship and grant awards without the applicant filling out any additional paperwork)

More things to think about...



- **A name brand college does not guarantee your success**

- Think about the people who are happy and successful in your life and ask where they went to college
- You will most likely find that success in life has a lot less to do with the choice of the college than with the experiences and opportunities you encountered while you were there. It truly is what you make of it!
- Employers and graduate schools look more at your outstanding skills and experience, and less at the college you attended.

Last Words of Advice...



- **The most important factor in choosing a college is *fit***
 - Choosing a college because your friends are going there or because of where it ranks on a list does not take into account who you are and who you want to become.
 - Check the school's website to find out the admissions officer that is assigned to your region. Send them an email to ask about getting in touch with students from your area or identifying a few with interests similar to yours
 - Visit schools of interest.

College Planning Timeline



WHS College Planning Timeline



● Winter/Spring of Junior Year

- Juniors are meeting with counselors through SSP and individual junior meetings
- Take the SAT at least once and consider taking the ACT.
- Start thinking about who you will ask for letters of recommendation (should ask teachers at the very beginning of senior year)
- Begin attending information sessions and college tours at any schools of interest. See college websites for more information.
- Attend local college fairs; Hartford National College Fair Field Trip in the spring - (Virtual- see Google Classroom for More information)
- Visit colleges – April break can be a great time!!- Check the schools website for virtual tours
- Research admissions criteria, tuition estimates, and academic requirements.
- Get organized! Create a college file, excel spreadsheet, and/or a college calendar to write down deadlines. Naviance is a great tool for this.

College Planning Timeline Continued



- **Summer before senior year**
 - Get involved in a summer internship, enrichment program, volunteer, or work a part-time job
 - Mark your calendar for important dates and deadlines. Be aware of early action/early decision deadlines- some fall as early as October.
 - Continue to visit college campuses
 - Continue to narrow down your list of colleges
 - Review college application requirements and essay prompts
 - The more you can do before senior year, the easier things will be!

College Planning Timeline Continued



● Fall of Senior Year

- Meet with your counselor to finalize plans (Schedule a senior meeting with your counselor in September/October- parents are welcome to attend)
- Take the SAT and/or ACT again
- Sign up through Naviance to meet with college representatives at WHS
- Continue to attend college tours and information sessions
- Secure teachers who will be writing recommendation letters (both in person and through Naviance)
- Finalize college essay
- APPLY!
- Start to think about scholarships and financial aid

The College Application Process



Where do I begin??



- Organize yourself! Create a folder or file with all pertinent information. Naviance is a very helpful organization tool.
- Decide on a variety of schools that you want to apply to
 - We suggest at least 2 **target** schools (typically better than a 50/50 chance of being accepted)
 - At least 2 **safety** schools (schools you are somewhat overqualified for and have a very good chance of being admitted)
 - At least 2 **reach** schools (Schools that you are somewhat under-qualified for and will be difficult to get into)

Applying Basics



- **The Common Application**
 - First, check www.commonapp.org or Naviance to see if the schools you are applying to are Common App members. Many schools are members and this is an easy way to complete one application for all schools you plan on applying to. The Common Application is an easy and streamlined way of organizing your college applications.
 - If a school uses The Common Application, we highly recommend you use this form to apply.
- If one or more of your schools do not accept the Common Application, check their individual websites for requirements. The website will typically have an online link to their application.

What materials are typically included in an application packet??



- All schools will have different requirements, but these are typically the basics...
- **Application**
- **Application Fee**
- **Transcript**
- **Standardized Test Scores** (these are sent by the student through the testing agency)
- **Essay** (essay question(s) can be found on the application)
- **Letters of Recommendation** (typically 2-3)
- **Some programs may require additional materials** (shadowing requirements, portfolios etc.)

Early Action Vs. Early Decision



- Many schools will offer one or both of these options. It is important to check these deadlines, as many of them fall very early in senior year.
 - *Early Action:* Recommended for schools you are very interested in. You can apply early action to as many schools as you wish. This is a non-binding contract and if you are accepted you do not have to attend the school.
 - *Early Decision:* Typically not recommended unless you are absolutely positive of the school you want to attend. You can only apply early decision to one school. This is a binding contract and if you are accepted you must attend regardless of financial aid, scholarships, etc. This should only be used for your TOP CHOICE school.

The College Essay



- Your essay is about YOU- not a generic high school senior. Be creative!
- Pretend you are meeting with an admissions representative- what do you want them to walk away knowing about you?
- Follow the directions: adhere to page requirements, minimum word requirements, not required=not required
- Make sure you proofread! It is often helpful to have your high school english teacher and/or your counselor review your essay.
- Visit the writing center, the college and career center, or have your english teacher and/or counselor review your essay

The College Interview



- If a college offers an interview as an option, you should take advantage of it especially if you are unable to visit the campus in person.
- Colleges often offer alumni interviews in the area if you are unable to travel to the campus.
- This is a great time to “sell yourself” to an admissions counselor, especially if it is your top choice school.
- If a college does not offer interviews, go above and beyond to show your demonstrated interest (emails, phone calls, campus visits, college fairs, personal thank-you notes to admissions reps, etc.) A little outreach can go a long way!

Okay...I applied...now how do I pay???



Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)



- Complete the FAFSA (free application for federal student aid) anytime after October 1st of senior year. You can apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov
- WHS hosts a financial aid night in the fall to help you with this process.
- College Goal Sunday- Offered every fall in the area. This is a program designed to help families fill out the FAFSA. Be listening for information on this- we strongly encourage you to attend.
- Keep in mind that some schools will also require the CSS Profile - check College Board to see whether your schools use the CSS Profile

Scholarship Information



- Scholarships start to become available in the counseling office their senior year. Seniors can apply for as many as they wish.
- Seniors will receive the Local Scholarship Booklet in February of senior year, which includes MANY scholarship opportunities
- Online websites such as www.fastweb.com www.finaid.org and www.collegeboard.org are helpful scholarship search sites.
- Be very careful of online scholarship websites other than these- there are many that are SCAMS! As a general rule, any site that asks you to pay to apply for scholarships is not legitimate.
- The Counseling Office offers a series of Scholarship Workshops throughout the winter/spring of senior year to help support students in the scholarship search and application process.

Partnership Programs



WHS has partnership programs with Naugatuck Valley Community College and Northwestern Community College

- Opportunity for students to take college level classes as high school student
- Classes are free - however, you may be responsible for book fees
- Transportation is not provided
- Classes cannot be taken during the school day (7:40 to 2:10)
- See Mrs. Robinson if you have questions

Take a breather...



- It is really not as stressful as it sounds- we promise! Counselors will be on hand to help you and your child through the entire process. Please do not hesitate to ask us any questions you might have!

Counselor Emails



If you would like to attend your students' Junior Meeting please email their counselor:

- **Kristen Bates** (Last Names A-C & T-Z)
 - Bateskr@watertownps.org
- **Christie Sales** (Last Names D-J)
 - Salesch@watertownps.org
- **Meghan Robinson** (Last Names K-P)
 - Robinsonme@watertownps.org
- **Megan Chunis; School Counseling Coordinator** (Last Names Q-S)
 - Chunisme@watertownps.org