

Junior Night Frequently Asked Questions

Which grades go on transcripts? All? Just midyear and final? Just final?

The transcript that is sent to colleges always includes the most up-to-date grades from courses completed and in progress. Final grades (not quarter or exam grades) for classes completed through junior year are always included. First quarter grades and/or first semester grades from senior year are also included when available. For students who transferred to WHS after attending another high school, we also include copies of transcripts provided by the students from the former high school(s).

Can you take the SAT and SAT II's (Subject Tests) on the same day?

No. The SAT and SAT Subject Tests (formerly SAT II's) are offered at the same time on the same days, prohibiting a student from taking both. Students can take up to three SAT Subject Tests in the same day, however, as these exams are only an hour long each.

Do schools look at all SAT scores or can you just choose the best to send to them?

Most colleges employ what is called "super scoring," where they review all SAT section scores but only consider the highest individual sections, even if they were taken on separate test dates. It is possible to send SAT scores from an individual SAT, rather than sending all scores. This option is called "Score Choice" and can also be used to send individual SAT Subject Test scores. However, students can not send individual section scores from different SAT dates. Because colleges so often "super score" using the Score Choice option is rarely advantageous.

The admissions graph on Naviance shows four years of information. Have things changed recently? More difficult now?

The college admissions data shown in Naviance Scattergrams includes the last three complete years plus the current school year. When the Class of 2017 reaches senior year, the earliest data they will see in Naviance will be from the WHS class of 2014. The information is kept as current as possible while also providing students with enough information to make informed decisions on which schools may be targets, reaches and safeties. While it is possible that an individual school may have significant variations in admissions statistics from three years ago, the vast majority of data will be very consistent from year to year.

Will the counselor meeting include the parents as well?

Can the parents request to meet the counselor?

Will there be an in-person discussion between the counselor, student and parent?

Would the counselor meet the parent as well?

It is important and beneficial to the students to have one-on-one meetings with their counselor, where they can take ownership of the college application process for themselves. As well, we welcome and encourage communication between parents and their child's counselor in whichever way best helps the student, including in person-meetings. We hope you will reach out to us whenever you have questions. Often the quickest way to answer parent questions and bounce ideas around is on the phone or through email.

How would the counselor get to know the students?

I understand the counselor will write a recommendation letter for each student. How could the counselor get to know the child better?

Counselors each employ a variety of ways to get to know their students and the most common way is through individual interactions over time. Unlike teachers who see students on a daily basis, our opportunities to get to know each student in our caseload are limited. To help in this process, we strongly encourage students to be proactive in seeking us out, as this will further support our getting to know them. Informal conversations in the hallway, stopping by our office to share some good news, or emailing us to ask a question or give an update are all examples of ways students can help us learn more about them. When answered thoroughly, the Junior Student and Parent Questionnaires can also give the counselor incredible insight into who the student is. Ultimately, a good recommendation is the product of a strong partnership between the student and counselor.

If a student is undecided on a major, how should:

A. the student approach college selection

B. the student approach presenting their choices in the application

C. the parents do to advise the students

It is unnecessary to have a major in mind while going through the college research and application process. In most cases the student is never locked into anything when an application asks for an intended major, and the vast majority of schools allow students to simply apply “undecided.”

As for approaching the process, know that availability of majors is but one of many factors to consider. And just as someone can build a great list of schools without having a preference between a large or small school, it will not inhibit the college search if a student does not have a preference for a major either. Put more focus on the other things that may make a particular college a good fit for the student. After identifying schools that could be a good personal fit, students should make sure to find out about their policies on declaring and changing majors before they decide to apply.

How many college visits are enough to get an idea?

There is no minimum or maximum number of college visits that would necessarily be considered “enough.” Since visiting campuses is one of the best ways to know if a school will be a good fit, we encourage students to visit any school they are considering. Ideally this will occur before they decide to apply, but even if they can’t, students should definitely visit before they decide to ATTEND. Students may have up to three absences excused during both junior AND senior year to visit colleges (documentation from a parent and the college is required to excuse the absence). Many colleges also offer “virtual tours” on their websites, and these can be helpful for schools you can’t get to ahead of time.

***What will differ in the application process for applying internationally (Canada)?
What advice can you give students who are interested in studying abroad (e.g. Germany, Canada, Britain)?***

Things that likely will be different for American students studying abroad may be: financial aid policies, visa requirements, entrance exams, language proficiency policies, etc. To learn more about the differences in procedures, explore the specific country's government-education websites, websites of specific colleges in the country, or other reputable websites through internet searches. If you are not sure if the websites you are reviewing are reputable, send the link to your counselor to review. The application process may not be much different. Some international colleges even use the Common Application. To get you started, visit these websites for information on Canada (<http://www.universitystudy.ca/>) Britain (<https://www.ucas.com/>) and Germany (<https://www.daad.de/deutschland/nach-deutschland/angebote/en/6002-finding-a-university/>)

Is the FAFSA form hard to fill out? Is it worth hiring someone to do it for you?

The FAFSA is not hard to fill out and free quality help is available to help you with it.

Much of the specific financial information needed for the FAFSA can be imported directly from your tax returns. And even though you won't be filling out the FAFSA yet, you can create an account at www.fafsa.gov ahead of time to see what the application is like. The online application also allows you to skip questions that do not apply to you. If you are interested in working with someone to help you complete the FAFSA, we recommend attending FAFSA Day, an annual program where students and families can get free help. For more information on this program, visit www.fafsaday.org.

How can a student get into an SAT prep course?

SAT prep courses are offered at WHS through the Westborough Community Education office. The courses is run by the Princeton Review, a reputable test prep company. For more information, visit http://www.westboroughk12.org/student_services/community_education/sat_preparation_-_princeton_review/ or contact Princeton Review directly at 866-TPR-PREP.

For the schools that the student wants to apply, would counselor give their opinions if these schools are suitable for the kid?

Yes. We work with students to help them determine which schools may be targets, reaches, or safeties based on their individual academic record, and also share opinions based on the desired characteristics that the student expresses.