

Newsletter for Parents & Guardians of WSHS Seniors

September 2015



Key dates:

- December 4th: Deadline for college applications to be sent from WSHS.
- January 21st WSHS Financial Aid Night and FAFSA in the lab—
SNOW DATE Jan 28th

A note from the Guidance Department

Dear Parent/Guardian of a senior student:

Welcome to an exciting year as a parent of a senior student at Waterville Senior High School. We hope that this year will be the most successful and enjoyable one for you and your son or daughter.

Enclosed in this mailing is a Parent Response Form, requesting input from you to assist counselors with letters of recommendation for your child's post-secondary plans. You may reply by mail or email. Counselors will be visiting senior English classes to review aspects of the college application process later in September, and each senior will receive a purple folder complete with forms and details to assist students in navigating the process. If your student is planning on applying to college with an Early Application deadline in October or November, please encourage him/her to see his/her counselor during the month of September. Seniors can begin scheduling appointments with their counselor to discuss college plans anytime, but we will be scheduling the majority of our meetings during late September and October.

Although we cannot include all information in one document, we wanted to provide some general information and deadlines to help jump-start the process of figuring out "What is my son/daughter going to do after graduation from Waterville Senior High School?"

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When do college applications need to be sent?

As a general guideline, college applications should be mailed between December 1st and February 1st. Most colleges want to see the first quarter grades. However, students need to pay attention to each college's specific application deadline. Early action and early decision deadlines are usually in November.

What if I want to send out applications before Christmas break?

If students wish to have their transcripts, letters of recommendations and other supporting materials sent to colleges prior to the Christmas break, they need to have their transcript request forms to the guidance office, no later than **Friday, December 4th**. Otherwise, all requests will be sent after vacation. We set December 6th as the deadline in order to insure that counselor recommendations are thoroughly completed, along with the transcript.

Counselors are not available during the December break. Students who have January 1st deadlines need to complete all college forms by the December 4th deadline.

What is Early Action and Early Decision?

Some colleges offer Early Decision and/or Early Action admission programs. Early decision generally means that if the student is accepted at that college, then s/he is obligated to attend. Early decision candidates are notified of acceptance during the "first round"; generally in late December, though different colleges have different deadlines. Early Action, on the other hand, is a somewhat more flexible policy. Students are still notified early (again, generally in late December), but if they are accepted they are not *obligated* to attend.

If a student wants to attend a college and applies ED or EA, then they should **ONLY** apply to one college ED or EA, and it should be their top choice institution. They can and should apply to other colleges as well as meet the regular admission deadlines. Generally speaking, students should consider applying to 2-5 colleges for admission.



Many outstanding students apply for the regular admission deadline. Any student, regardless of their academic background, should apply to the college and admission program that best meets their individual needs. If, however, a student has their heart set on a one particular institution, applying EA or ED may indicate their preference to that particular college, and they will know their status earlier in the winter. In addition to regular admissions deadlines, Colby, Bates, Bowdoin Colleges have ED programs and UMaine has an EA program.

The College Board defines early action and early decision as follows:

Early Action: A program in which the student receives a decision earlier than the standard response date but is not required to accept the admissions offer or to make a deposit before May 1st.

Early Decision: A program that commits participating students to enroll at the college if admitted and offered a satisfactory financial aid package. Application deadlines are usually in November or December, with a mid-to-late December notification date. Some colleges have two rounds of Early Decision.

TEST DATES: The SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject tests:

THE SAT AND SAT Subject Tests:	
<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
October 3*	September 3
November 7*	October 9
December 5*	November 5
January 23	December 28
March 5	February 5
May 7*	April 8
June 4*	May 5

ACT DATES:	
<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Date</u>
October 24	September 18
December 12	Novemebr 18
February 6	January 8
April 9	March 4
June 11	May 6

*indicates that Waterville Senior High School is a test center location for test date.

Registration and study information for both exams can be found in the Guidance Office or online.

SAT & SAT Subject Tests: www.collegeboard.org

ACT: www.actstudent.org

Don't let the cost of taking the SAT prevent your student from taking the exam. Ask a guidance counselor for financial assistance if needed.

What do I need to know about the SAT or ACT?

Carefully check the admissions testing requirements for the schools to which your student may apply. For example, certain schools may accept either the SAT or the ACT or they will state which one they require. Some schools require specific SAT Subject Tests and some schools allow the students to choose the ones that they want to take. Test requirements should be checked as soon as possible to ensure that seniors take the appropriate tests this fall. Testing requirements can be found at the College's website under "Admissions" or "future students". Or, just ask your son/daughter to make an appointment with their guidance counselor, and we can help locate the correct information. SAT and ACT scores are not sent from the Guidance Office. Colleges prefer that scores are sent directly from the testing company. Students can choose colleges to receive test scores as a part of the initial registration process. After the fact, students can elect to have additional scores sent, usually for a fee set by the testing company.

SAT or ACT....what's the difference? (re-printed from the Princeton Review)

SAT—What is the test structure?

10-section exam: 3 critical reading, 3 math, 3 writing & one experimental section.

Math: up to 9th grade basic geometry and Algebra 2

Critical Reading: Sentence completion, short and long critical reading passages, reading comprehension.

Writing: an essay and questions testing grammar, word choice.

How is the test scored?

200-800 per section, added together for a combined score—a 2400 is the highest possible combined score.

ACT—What is the test structure?

5-section exam: English, Math, Reading, Science, and Writing (optional).

What is the test content?

Math: Up to trigonometry

Science: Charts, experiments

Reading: four passages, one each of prose fiction, social usage and science, humanities, and natural science.

English: stresses grammar

Writing: an essay

How is the test scored? 1-36 for each subject, averaged together for a composite score. 36 is the highest possible composite score.



Do I have to do anything special if my son/daughter wants to play sports in college?

Students who plan on competing in the college athletics at the Division I and II levels need to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. The NCAA Clearinghouse requests that the registration be completed on line.

The address is: www.naaclearinghouse.net

There should be a page for students to also print that they bring to the guidance office, which authorizes us to send their transcript to the clearinghouse.



Mark your calendars—

Financial Aid night is
January 21st at 6pm.

How can I learn about financial aid?

Our financial aid night for parents is scheduled for Thursday, January 21st. A representative from FAME (Finance Authority of Maine) will be here to review the process, explain the FAFSA, CSS Profile and answer other questions you may have. We will also assist students and parents in completing the FAFSA that evening.

Although you cannot file the application for the Federal Student Aid Form (FAFSA) until after January 1st, many private schools require an additional supplemental form, the CSS Profile, which can be filed this fall, starting in September. This form is also available in the guidance office or you can complete online at www.collegeboard.com. Be sure to check to see if your student's school(s) requires this form. Public colleges in Maine do not require the CSS, but many private colleges do require the form.. You can request a PIN # for both you and your student now.

Did you know.....

The most recent figures, published in National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), indicate that a college degree holder earns \$1.2 million more over their lifetime than a high school graduate. Graduates earning a master's degree earn an average of \$1.8 million more over their lifetime, while graduates with doctoral degree earn an average of \$2.91 million more over their lifetime than a high school graduate.

Here are some helpful financial aid websites:

www.fafsa.ed.gov/

www.famemaine.com/

www.finaid.org/

www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/index.html





College Fairs are great resources for students who are still working on their college application list.

Check out specific college/university websites for when their open houses are taking place. Or check out the bulletin board outside of the guidance office.

What about scholarships?

Seniors are strongly encouraged to check the scholarship files in the guidance office weekly. A few scholarships start arriving in the fall and sometimes the deadlines go by before students start getting in the habit coming in to check the files.

Some students will be nominated for various scholarships through WSHS faculty, coaches and staff. However, the vast majority of students will have to SEARCH for scholarships. Some helpful websites for scholarship searches are:

- www.fastweb.com
- www.famemaine.com/education/scholarshipsearch.asp
- www.finaid.org/
- http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp
- <http://kaarme.com/kscholarships/search>

Do college representatives visit WSHS?

Admissions representatives from colleges and universities throughout Maine and New England, as well as from Maine's Community Colleges and military recruiters visit Waterville Senior High School each year. The visitation schedule is posted on the bulletin board outside of the guidance office and on homeroom announcements. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about a particular school or about the admission process in general.

Current visits:

Stop by the guidance office to sign up.

<u>School</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Purple / White</u>
Maine National Guard	9/15/15	10:30	Purple
University of Southern Maine	9/22/15	8:30	White
Bowdoin College	9/24/15	9:00	White
Husson College	9/24/15	10:45	White
University of Maine Presque Isle	9/24/15	1:00	White
U Mass Amherst	9/28/15	8:00	White
University of Southern Maine	9/29/15	9:00	White
Thomas College	9/30/15	1:00	Purple
St Anslem	9/28/15	10:00	White
MA College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences	9/29/15	1:35	Purple
Springfield College	9/29/15	1:00	Purple
U Conn	9/29/15	1:00	Purple
University of Maine Fort Kent	10/1/15	9:30	Purple
N E School Of Comm @ Husson	10/5/15	11:30	Purple
UMO	10/16/15	9:00	White
Stonehill College	10/19/15	9:30	Purple
Wheaton College	10/20/15	10:30	White

College Visits continued on next page

Current visits Continued:

Stop by the guidance office to sign up.

<u>School</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Purple / White</u>
University of New Hampshire	10/28/15	9:30	White
University of Maine Farmington	11/4/15	10:00	Purple
Air Force	11/10/15	1:00	Purple
Unity College	10/15/15	9:30	Purple
Washington County Com. College	9/15/15	9:30	Purple

**Waterville SHS
Guidance Office**

One Brooklyn Ave.
Waterville, ME 04901

Phone: 207-873-2751
Fax: 207-873-7058

**More questions?
Please call!!**

Who's Who in the Guidance Office?

Counselor's Caseload:

A-F:

Carol Laqualia Email claqualia@aos92.org

G-M:

Brenda Holt Email bholt@aos92.org

N-Z:

Angela Frame Email aframe@aos92.org

Secretary:

Cecile Veilleux Email cveilleux@aos92.org

Registrar:

Joann Bouchard Email jbouchard@aos92.org