

# PATHFINDER

## West Chester B. Reed Henderson High School Counseling Department Newsletter

March 2020

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## GENERAL NEWS

Our college-bound seniors have received admissions decisions from most of the colleges and universities to which they had applied. May 1st is considered the “candidate’s reply date.” This is a national deadline for when a student must commit to one college or university, and solidify their decision as to where they will be heading next fall! Please keep in mind that before graduation, all seniors must complete a senior survey, as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the West Chester Area School District. The survey is available in Naviance online in May (on the left side under the “About Me” tab) and must be completed by May 8th in order to receive a diploma. On this survey, students will indicate the college that they plan to attend in the fall so that a final transcript can be mailed by July 1st. If plans change and a student decides to attend a different college or university from the original school indicated on the survey, they must notify the Counseling Office, and another final transcript will be sent.

The course selection process for grades 9-11 is entering its last phase during which changes must be made through your student’s counselor. All changes must be submitted by students to counselors by March 24th. The Elective Course GPA Inclusion Form deadline is April 13th. For more information on elective course GPA inclusion, see the 4th page of the course selection booklet: <https://content.yudu.com/web/3xxru/0A43u23/20-21-HS-Course-Sel/html/index.html?page=6&origin=reader> Careful course selection plays a key role in preparing all students for a wide range of post-high school options, and particularly in preparing Juniors for a challenging and fulfilling senior year. Juniors especially, should check their Naviance homepage and Naviance email for news and announcements pertinent to post-high school planning.

...general news continued from page 1

Additionally, we have been working with our freshmen this semester to help them begin their foundation for future planning. They are being re-introduced to Naviance (our online career and college planning and research platform for grades 8-12) and guided in setting individual academic, personal, and career goals, as well as a four year graduation plan. As a department, we try to convey the importance of starting early to build a strong permanent record for post-secondary planning. The next paragraph describes the Individual Freshman Conference in greater detail.

### **INDIVIDUAL FRESHMAN CONFERENCES**

Through the end of this school year, counselors will continue to meet individually with freshmen to follow up on the orientation conducted in October. During the Individual Freshman Conference, your student and their counselor discuss the keys to success: grades, credits, promotion requirements, attendance, self-discipline, course selection, GPA, extracurricular activities, and support services. Together, they will develop an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) that includes graduation requirements; and course selection related to academic and career goals. Parent involvement in their student's IGP is crucial to their student's success. In addition to receiving copies of the conference notes and IGP that their student will bring home, parents are invited to participate in their student's IGP by attending their child's conference or by contacting their child's counselor for an electronic copy of the IGP.

### **INDIVIDUAL JUNIOR CONFERENCES**

In December, counselors conducted a large group presentation for all juniors to provide information regarding PSAT Results, review the college search process, SAT/ACT's, and resources and guides available in the Counseling Office. A question and answer session wrapped up the presentation.

In addition, counselors are meeting individually with juniors throughout the second and third marking periods for more in-depth guidance and review of their transcript and senior year course selections. Your student and their counselor have been discussing post-secondary plans and tools and resources to make the process a smooth one. Students are learning how to research post-secondary colleges, universities, or trade/technical schools using Naviance (an online career and college guidance system) and are given resources to make a smooth transition into the workforce from high school. Parents are invited to use Naviance with their junior by going to <http://connection.naviance.com/henderson>. All students are able to use their network username and password to access Naviance both from school and at home.

**SAT I:** Juniors who are planning to apply to **ROTC Programs** or **Military Academies**, or for **early action or early decision**, or to **Penn State Main Campus** (priority deadline for admission is Nov. 30) are advised to take the SAT I (or ACT—see below) twice before they apply.

**ACT:** This assessment includes four curriculum-based tests that measure students' educational development in English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. Mid-western and southern Colleges and Universities often require this test, and **all** colleges accept and evaluate ACT scores. It is also an option to offset low SAT scores.

**SAT II:** SAT II subject tests cover special academic areas (e.g. Mathematics, English, and more) and are scored on the same 200-800 scale as the SAT I. Students considering applying to highly competitive schools that require SAT II testing for admission, should take them for the *first* time this spring and again in the early fall of their senior year. Students considering applying to colleges that require SAT IIs for placement only, should plan on taking their SAT IIs in the fall (by December) of their senior year. Contact the specific college admissions offices for up-to-date information on the tests that each school requires.

Students do not register for SAT and ACT tests at Henderson, they are required to register online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). In addition, the Counseling Office has resources available for students to use for exam preparation. Deadlines shown on the previous page are strictly enforced by the testing organizations

The remaining test dates for the 2019-20 school year and summer are listed on the next page.

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Tests</u>	<u>Regular Reg. Deadline</u>
May 2, 2020	SAT & Subject Tests	April 3, 2020
June 6, 2020	SAT & Subject Tests	May 8, 2020
June 13, 2020	ACT	May 8, 2020
July 18, 2020	ACT	June 19, 2020
Aug 29, 2020	SAT & Subject Tests	TBD (mid-July)

### SOPHOMORE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

In early March, counselors met with sophomores in class size groups (English classes) to continue the development of their personal, academic, and career goals in Naviance (an online career and college guidance system), with the focus on career assessments and researching occupations and colleges. Each student took the Career Cluster Finder Assessment, watched the 21st Century Job Skills Video and took a Career Research Project quiz based on the video. The Career Cluster Finder produces career clusters which students are able to explore more in-depth on their own. Parents are invited to view and discuss this information with their student by going to <http://connection.naviance.com/henderson> and using the About Me tab (specifically the Assessments and Surveys).

### COURSE SELECTION PROCESS

Students' course selection for 2020-2021 school year can still be viewed on the Parent Portal, and course requests will be converted to individual schedules over the summer. Changes to these course requests will be final on March 24th unless a student is waiting for more teacher feedback on a level decision. Please contact your child's counselor if you have any questions or concerns about their 2020-2021 course selection. Parent input is important, and we would like you to keep in mind that the academic rigor of courses is an important factor in college admissions.

One of the top criteria used by colleges and universities considered to be "most competitive" or "highly competitive" is the *rigor* of course loads taken by each student. Rigor refers to the difficulty level of the curriculum based on the leveling of the course (Career/College Prep, Honors, Accelerated Honors, AP). Colleges review the course work that a student has taken in the past, **beginning as early as freshman year**, and what they are currently taking as a senior, and use this as a major part of their determination of acceptance.

Students who have taken higher level courses, and are successful, have a better chance of gaining admission with all other admissions requirements (GPA, SAT/ACT scores, extracurriculars, etc.) being equal to those taking lower level courses. **"Is a 'B' in an AH/AP level class better or worse than an 'A' in an Honors or CCP level class?"** Based on our research, it appears that the 'B' in a more challenging class might be more competitive than earning the 'A' in a lower level class. However, students and parents must make that decision based on their own individual and academic needs and take into account the information provided by each college.

Teachers have recommended levels for students, not only based on performance this school year, but also based on the students' potential and motivation. All Accelerated Honors (AH) and Advanced Placement classes should have a strong teacher recommendation. In the absence of a teacher recommendation, please contact your child's teacher and counselor to discuss their final placement as soon as possible, or Mr. Andrew Gear, Asst. Principal ([agrear@wcasd.net](mailto:agrear@wcasd.net)) after June 15th.

## COURSE SELECTION CONT....

If a teacher has re-evaluated your son/daughter's course level placement for next year during the last marking period, changes will be honored until the end of the school year. Final schedules with an Error Form will be sent home in August. If there is a clerical error on your son/daughter's schedule, the Error Form must be completed and returned to the Counseling Office as soon as possible to make the required corrections. Requests for changes in electives—including World Language - will not be considered.

## BULLYING AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Two years ago we hosted Rachel's Challenge for our student body. Rachel's Challenge programs provide a sustainable, evidence-based framework for positive climate and culture in our schools. Fully implemented, partner schools achieve statistically significant gains in community engagement, faculty/student relationships, leadership potential, and school climate; along with reductions in bullying, alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. Our students have continued Rachel's Mission this year through the Kindness Klub. Henderson hosted "Kindness Week" in February. It was a great opportunity for everyone to feel appreciated through random acts of kindness.



Positive messages posted on lockers

## DESTRUCTIVE DECISIONS PREVENTION

On Wednesday morning April 29th (rain date April 30), the Henderson student parking lot will be the scene of a staged reenactment of an accident involving two cars, young drivers, and their passengers, all of whom suffer injuries from a crash caused by an impaired teenager. Eleventh grade students watch their classmates along with adult actors from the Media Theatre play the roles of drivers, passengers, and parents. Throughout the "mock crash," students will witness everything from real emergency vehicles arriving on the scene to fellow students being cut out of the cars and being loaded into awaiting ambulances.

After witnessing the "mock crash," students will return to the building to attend an assembly organized by Bryn Mawr Rehab's *Cruisin Not Boozin'* program. There will be a young adult guest speaker who will give a first hand account of their experience of having been in a similar accident. Another speaker from State Farm will speak to students about the risks of driving "Intexticated" and distracted driving in general.

This event produced by Henderson High School in collaboration with State Farm Insurance Co., Main Line Health, and Paoli Hospital. We are also grateful to both the West Chester Borough and West Goshen Township Police Departments and Good Fellowship Ambulance for their participation in this event. We couldn't do this without the support of our all-volunteer fire departments in West Chester! This event is designed to leave a lasting impression on students and to help them better understand how dangerous reckless and impaired driving can be. As in past years, the event is timed for prom season.

## **YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN CHARGE (YMWIC)**

The mission of YMWIC Foundation, Inc. is to increase the number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) leaders who are economically disadvantaged or historically underrepresented in these careers through academic tutoring, mentoring and financial assistance programs. YMWIC accomplished this mission through partnerships and alliances with K-12 school districts, universities, corporations and the dedicated commitment of their volunteer community. Their goal is to provide scholars from 5th through 12th grade with mentoring and academic support through seminars, summer enrichment, community services, leadership and entrepreneurial programs. The Foundation is:

- Increasing the number of scholars that enroll in four year colleges and universities to major in STEM disciplines
- Increasing their committed partners and community of volunteers
- Providing scholarships to scholars upon graduation who have satisfied the requirements of the Foundation

See or contact Dr. Korey Bell, Counselor, in the counseling suite or email Dr. Bell at [kbell1@wcasd.net](mailto:kbell1@wcasd.net) for information on applying to the YMWIC program. You can visit the website for additional information at: <http://ymicfoundation.org/>

## **NCAA CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

NCAA is an organization that establishes rules for eligibility, recruitment and scholarships for Division I and II sports at the college level. Students who wish to participate in Division III sports should contact the coaches and colleges regarding their policies on athletic participation. Students who wish to participate in the NCAA Clearinghouse application process should begin the process during the spring of their junior year. Although eligibility requirements have recently changed they continue to include the successful completion of a college prep curriculum in all courses taken at an academic or higher level, minimum grade point averages and minimum SAT or ACT scores. Students can log onto [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net) to find out more specific information regarding their high school requirements. It is the student's responsibility to provide NCAA Clearinghouse with the following items:

- a completed and signed student release form and application fee—both done online.
- an official high school transcript (from all high schools attended) including junior year grades (available in July)
- any SAT or ACT scores sent directly to NCAA Clearinghouse (by writing the code # 999 on the SAT/ACT registration form)
- A final transcript upon graduation

If you have questions and want to contact NCAA directly, their toll free number is (877) 262-1492 or you can visit them on the web at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).

## **FOURTH MARKING PERIOD (March 27th- June 12th, 2020) look ahead to:**

- Scholarships for all seniors: continue to check Naviance for new scholarships. See Dr. Bell ([kbell1@wcasd.net](mailto:kbell1@wcasd.net)) for specific minority scholarships.
- April 29th: Mock Crash, 11th Grade – 8:00-10:30 AM – Auditorium & Parking Lot
- Individual Freshman Conferences (continued).

## SUMMERTIME SUGGESTIONS

Summer time is a great opportunity to start planning ahead and gathering information. Below are just a few ideas for college bound sophomores and juniors to help them get a head start on the college search process.

- Make a list of colleges that you are interested in including safety schools, target schools and reach schools.
- Research the colleges on line (e.g. <http://connection.naviance.com/henderson>, [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) or [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) and request a catalog from the college or university's admissions office.
- It is also a good idea to plan a fall or spring break trip to the top college choices while the campus is in session. Inservice days are also an ideal time to visit colleges.
- Explore careers and college majors through part time jobs, internships, job shadowing, or volunteering.
- Develop a plan for the fall:
  - Decide on which sports, activities and clubs you will join during the upcoming school year.
  - Write a resume which includes extracurricular activities (in and out of school), work history and awards. **You can use the Resume feature in Naviance ("About Me" tab) to do this.**
  - Start gathering information about the colleges you will apply to and organize necessary application materials such as recommendation letters, essays, scholarships and other special requirements such as audition tapes, portfolios, etc.
  - Begin gradually filling out college applications online in August of senior year and save your work for final submission in the fall.

## SUMMER SCHOOL

Specific summer school information for 2020 is posted on the WCASD website. Although the offerings are subject to budget constraints, several original credit summer classes are offered in both the traditional classroom format for grades 9 - 12 as well as some online. Original course offerings are advertised here: <https://www.wcasd.net/cms/lib/PA02203541/Centricity/Domain/6031/Summer%20Offerings%20Flier%20-%202020.pdf>

In addition, credit recovery (makeup) courses and some original credit courses are offered online through Educere again. Most courses will take place during the month of July through the first week of August. Students must have earned a 60% or better in a previously failed course in order to be eligible to take a makeup summer class. Information on make-up courses are available via this link: <https://www.wcasd.net/Domain/6031>