# Creekview High School

# Senior Year Essentials – Class of 2026

***Creekview High School Counseling Department***

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**Welcome from the Creekview Counseling Team**

Dear Seniors,

Congratulations on reaching your final year of high school! This is an exciting time filled with choices, challenges, and new opportunities. The decisions you make this year—both big and small—will help shape your future path. Whether you plan to attend college, begin a career, join the military, or explore other options, we are here to support you every step of the way.

This guide was created to help you stay organized, informed, and confident throughout your senior year. Inside, you'll find important information about graduation requirements, college and career planning, testing, financial aid, and life after high school. Use it as a reference whenever you need direction or reminders of key steps.

Remember, you're not alone in this process. Your counselors, teachers, and administrators are all here to help you reach your goals. Don't hesitate to ask questions, seek advice, or share your successes along the way.

We are proud of how far you've come and can't wait to see the incredible things you'll do next.

**With Mustang Pride,**
**The Creekview High School Counseling Team**

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## Academic Success

### Attendance Requirements

State and federal guidelines require that students attend **at least 90%** of their class meetings to earn credit. This means you can have **no more than 4 absences per class period** and still receive credit.

Students will be notified when credit has been denied due to attendance issues — but don't wait for that notice! If you know you've missed more than 4 classes, reach out to **Ms. Flores in Student Services** at **floreali@cfbisd.edu** to discuss **tutorials and opportunities to make up time**. Staying on top of your attendance now can save you from losing credit later.

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### Surviving Senioritis

Yes, it's real — and it can (and probably will) happen to you!

Your senior year is **especially important** to colleges. Most college applications, including the **Common App**, require you to list your senior courses with details about levels and credit hours. Admission officers can easily see if you've decided to "take the year off."

Many acceptance letters include language such as:

> "Your admission and/or scholarship offer is contingent upon your continued successful academic performance."

That means colleges **can and do revoke** admission or scholarship offers if senior-year grades drop or if you drop rigorous classes listed on your application.

We get it — it's hard, it's weird, and you just want it to be over. But do your best to finish strong. Set yourself up for success by learning solid study habits, managing your time well, and showing everyone you're ready for the next step.

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## Testing and Graduation Requirements

**Credit by Exam (CBE)**

CFBISD students may earn high school credit by taking a **Credit by Exam (CBE)** if certain **extenuating circumstances** apply.

- The **AVANT Foreign Language Test** allows students to earn up to **four years of foreign language credit** based on their proficiency level.
- All CBE tests are **free** and offered **only according to the district testing schedule**, which you can get from your counselor.
- Please note: **Credit by Exam does *not* meet NCAA clearinghouse requirements** for student-athletes.

If you think a CBE might apply to your situation, talk with your counselor for more details and registration deadlines.

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**STAAR End-of-Course (EOC) Exams**

STAAR EOC tests are **required state assessments** in Texas. Students take these exams **after completing** the following courses:

- English I
- English II
- Algebra I
- Biology
- U.S. History

With very few exceptions, **passing all five EOC exams is required for graduation**.

- **Re-test opportunities** are available in **summer, winter, and spring**.
- Students who need to retest will receive communication about testing dates and support options.

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**SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test)**

The **SAT** is a college entrance exam accepted by nearly all U.S. colleges and universities.

- **When:** Offered **at Creekview each October** and also available on **national Saturday test dates** throughout the year.
- **Score Scale:** 1600-point scale (800 Math + 800 Evidence-Based Reading and Writing). The optional essay is scored separately and not required by most colleges.
- **Deadlines:** Colleges must **receive your scores by the application deadline**, so plan your test dates accordingly.

**Upcoming SAT Test Dates:** https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/

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**ACT (American College Test)**

The **ACT** is another widely accepted college entrance exam.

- **When:** Can be taken throughout high school, including senior year.
- **Score Scale:** 1–36 composite score; the national average is typically **20–21**.
- **Note:** Each college sets its own standards for competitive scores, so research the ranges typical for your target schools.
- **Deadlines:** Test scores must also be **received by your college's application deadline**.

**Upcoming ACT Test Dates:** https://www.act.org/content/act/en-texas.html

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**TSIA2 (Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0)**

The **TSIA2** measures **college readiness** and is **required for all students enrolling in a Texas public college or university** (examples: Austin Community College, Texas A&M, Texas State, Texas Tech, UT Austin, etc.).

- **Requirement:** Must be completed **before college enrollment.**
- **English Language Arts & Reading (ELAR):**
  - A CRC (College Readiness Classification) score of 945 or higher AND an essay score of 5 or more.
  - OR a CRC score *below* 945, but a Diagnostic level of 5 or 6, and an essay score of 5 or more.
- **Mathematics:**
  - A CRC score of 950 or higher.
  - OR a CRC score *below* 950, but a Diagnostic level of 6.

**Exemptions:** You are exempt from taking the TSIA2 if you meet one of the following:

- **ACT:** Composite **23+** *and* at least **19** on both English and Math subtests
- **SAT (taken March 2016 or later):** Math **530+** and Evidence-Based Reading & Writing (EBRW) **480+**

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**ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)**

The **ASVAB** is an **optional, free career exploration test** offered on every high school campus. This assessment helps you identify your **strengths, interests, and potential career paths**, whether you plan to enter the workforce, attend college, or explore military options.

- **Why Take It:** The ASVAB provides valuable insight into your skills and helps clarify what types of careers

may fit you best.

- **When:** It will be offered **at Creekview in the spring**.
- **Next Test Date: TBD**
- **Where to Register:** See **your counselor** for registration details or additional information.

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**SAT/ACT Fee Waivers**

Fee waivers are available to help students cover the cost of college entrance exams.

**Who Qualifies:**
Students who participate in the **free or reduced lunch program** usually qualify automatically, but there are other ways to qualify based on family income or financial hardship. If you're unsure, check with **your counselor** for help confirming eligibility.

**What's Covered:**

- **SAT Fee Waiver:** Up to **two SAT tests** (with or without essay).
- **ACT Fee Waiver:** Up to **two ACT tests.**
- Students who use a test fee waiver automatically receive **four college application fee waivers**, saving even more on application costs.

**How to Use a Fee Waiver:**

1. Ask **your counselor** for your waiver code or form.
2. Check each college's website for instructions on how to submit the form or code (procedures vary by institution).
3. Your counselor can help with submitting or faxing forms, but it's your responsibility to follow your college's instructions.

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## College Planning

Planning for college takes time and attention to detail, but breaking it into steps can make the process manageable. Whether you are planning to attend a community college, university, or transfer later, the more informed you are, the smoother your experience will be.

**Choosing the Right College**

There is no single "best" college for everyone. The right school depends on your goals, interests, finances, and personal preferences. When researching schools, consider:

- Location and campus size

- Majors and programs offered
- Admission requirements
- Tuition and financial aid availability
- Campus culture, housing, and extracurricular opportunities

Visit campuses (in person or virtually) and talk with current students to learn more about the environment and expectations.

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**College Visits**

Visiting college campuses is one of the best ways to decide which school feels like the right fit for you. Seeing classrooms, dorms, and student life firsthand helps you picture yourself there and make an informed decision about your future.

**Senior College Visit Days**

Seniors are allowed **two excused absences** for official college visits each year. These absences **do not count against exam exemptions** if you follow the proper procedure:

1. Inform your teachers **before** your visit.
2. During your visit, obtain a **letter from the college** (on official letterhead) confirming that you were on campus during a school day.
3. Submit that letter to the **Attendance Office** as soon as you return to school.

Make sure to plan ahead and communicate with your teachers so you don't fall behind on classwork.

**Planning Your Visit**

Colleges often host **"Preview Days" or "Welcome Weekends"** to showcase their programs, student life, and campus culture. These events are a great way to experience the atmosphere and ask questions about majors, housing, and financial aid.

You can also visit campuses at other times—such as during family vacations or long weekends. If in-person tours are limited, most colleges now offer **virtual tours or meetings** with admissions counselors who are happy to answer questions online.

Before your visit:

- Explore the college's website and learn about the surrounding city.
- Contact the **Admissions Office** to schedule a tour.
- Ask to meet with an **admissions counselor** and **financial aid representative**.
- Bring an **unofficial transcript** and a list of questions about your intended major, campus resources, and

housing options.

**During the Visit**

- Tour classrooms, residence halls, libraries, and recreation centers.
- Eat in the dining hall if possible—it gives you a sense of campus life.
- Talk to current students about what they enjoy most and what they would change.
- Sit in on a class in your intended major if available.
- Take notes on what stands out to you—both positive and negative.

**After the Visit**

Review your notes and reflect on whether the college felt like a good match for your academic goals, personality, and comfort level. Trust your instincts—finding the right environment makes a big difference in your college experience.

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**NCAA Eligibility Steps**

If you plan to play a sport at an NCAA Division I, II, or III college or university, you must complete the **NCAA Eligibility process**. This process ensures that student-athletes meet academic and amateurism standards to compete in college athletics.

**Academic Requirements**

The NCAA requires that student-athletes complete **rigorous, four-year college preparatory courses**.

- **Online, credit recovery, or distance learning courses** are **not accepted** by the NCAA.
- **Credit-by-exam courses** also do **not meet** core course requirements.
- All courses must be **NCAA-approved** and comparable in content and quality to those offered in traditional classrooms.

Work with your school counselor to ensure your schedule includes NCAA-approved courses each year. Maintaining a challenging and balanced academic plan will help prepare you for both college-level academics and athletic eligibility.

**NCAA Information**

If you're interested in playing college sports, start the process early and stay organized.

**1. Learn About the NCAA**
Visit www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports to explore NCAA divisions, scholarships, and eligibility rules.

**2. Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center**

- Go to https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/ and create an account during your **sophomore year** if you plan to play Division I or II sports.
- Division III athletes do not need to register but should still familiarize themselves with academic standards.

**3. Send Transcripts**

- After **six semesters**, send official transcripts from **all high schools attended** to the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- When you graduate, send a **final transcript with proof of graduation**.
- Confirm that all courses on your transcript appear on your school's **NCAA-approved 48-H list** (your counselor can verify this).

**4. Submit Test Scores**
When registering for the **SAT or ACT**, request that your scores be sent directly to the NCAA using the code **9999**.

**5. Complete the Amateurism Questionnaire**

- Log in to your NCAA Eligibility Center account to complete the **amateurism questionnaire** and **sign the final authorization** on or after **April 1** of your senior year if you plan to enroll that fall.

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**Dallas County Promise**

The **Dallas County Promise** is a scholarship and mentoring program that helps graduating seniors from participating high schools—like **Creekview High School**—attend college **tuition-free** at partner colleges. The Promise is not based on grades or income; it's based on your **commitment to college and completion of a few important steps**.

**What the Dallas County Promise Covers**

- **Tuition at participating colleges** after other grants and scholarships are applied.
- **Support and coaching** to help you transition to college and stay on track to graduate.
- **Connections** to local universities and employers for transfer and career opportunities.

Partner schools include **Dallas College**, **UNT Dallas**, **Texas A&M–Commerce**, and several others that offer transfer scholarships to Promise students.

**How to Become a Dallas County Promise Scholar**

**1. Take the Pledge**

- Go to www.dallascountypromise.org and complete the **Promise Pledge**.
- The pledge usually opens in **October** of senior year and must be completed by the **deadline in February**.

- The pledge is *not* binding—it simply reserves your eligibility for the scholarship.

**2. Apply to Dallas College**

- Complete your **Dallas College admission application** through **ApplyTexas.org** or directly on the **Dallas College** website.
- Use your **legal name** and **personal (not school) email** that you will continue to use after graduation.

**3. Submit the FAFSA or TASFA**

- Complete your **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or **TASFA** (for eligible Texas residents).
- Add **Dallas College** and any partner universities to your application so your information is shared automatically.
- The FAFSA/TASFA deadline is usually in **March**—submit early for priority aid consideration.

**4. Register for Classes**

- After completing your Dallas College admissions steps, meet with an advisor and register for classes.
- Promise Scholars must enroll **full-time (at least 12 hours)** the fall after graduation to remain eligible.

**Additional Benefits**

- Transfer scholarships are available for Promise students who complete an associate degree and move on to a partner university.
- Promise Scholars receive **personal success coaching** to help with study skills, time management, and financial planning.
- Many partner colleges offer **career mentoring and paid internships** through the Promise program.

**Important Tips**

- Use your **personal email** for all applications—college, FAFSA, and Dallas County Promise.
- Keep copies of your confirmation emails and deadlines in one folder.
- Check your email regularly for updates from Dallas County Promise and Dallas College.
- Ask your counselor if you're unsure whether you've completed all required steps.

**Key Dates (Typical Timeline)**

| Step | Approximate Deadline |
|---|---|
| Dallas County Promise Pledge | October–February |
| Dallas College Application | By February |
| FAFSA/TASFA Submission | By March |
| Dallas College Registration | April–June |

**Questions or Help**

Contact your **Creekview Counselor** or visit **www.dallascountypromise.org** for detailed instructions, deadlines, and participating colleges. You can also speak with our **Dallas College Outreach Advisor** when they visit campus during the fall semester.

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**Definitions of Admission Options**

(Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling – www.nacacnet.org)

**Non-Restrictive Application Plans** – Students are not limited to applying to other institutions and have until **May 1** to consider their options and confirm enrollment.

- **Regular Decision** – Students apply by a specific deadline and receive an admission decision within a stated timeframe. *(Commitment: Non-binding)*
- **Rolling Admission** – Applications are reviewed as they are submitted, and decisions are sent throughout the year. *(Commitment: Non-binding)*
- **Early Action (EA)** – Students apply early and receive an early decision, but are not required to commit until May 1. *(Commitment: Non-binding)*

**Restrictive Application Plans** – Students must understand each college's policies and follow any restrictions.

- **Early Decision (ED)** – Students apply to one first-choice institution and commit to enroll if admitted. Application and decision deadlines occur early. *(Commitment: Binding)*
- **Restrictive Early Action (REA)** – Students apply early to one preferred institution and receive a decision early, but cannot apply ED/EA/REA to other institutions. Enrollment confirmation is due by May 1. *(Commitment: Non-binding)*

**The College Application Process**

The application process varies from one institution to another, but most require:

- A completed application form
- High school transcript
- SAT/ACT or other exam scores (if required)
- Application fee

You can apply in several ways:

- Through **www.applytexas.org** (Texas colleges and universities)
- Through **www.commonapp.org** (national and private colleges)
- Directly on the college's website
- Through a college representative or recruiter

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**Frequently Used Applications**

**ApplyTexas Application (www.applytexas.org)**
Used by over 100 public and private colleges and technical schools in Texas. Some private institutions, such as Baylor, TCU, and SMU, also use ApplyTexas. All applications must be submitted online.

**The Common Application (www.commonapp.org)**
Accepted by nearly 300 colleges nationwide, including Rice, Southwestern, and Trinity in Texas.

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**Completing the Application**

- Follow all directions carefully and review requirements for each school.
- Some colleges require supplemental materials submitted online or by mail.
- Application fees vary by institution; fee waivers may be available if you qualify.
- Read each question carefully and do not leave blanks. Use "N/A" if something doesn't apply.
- Spend time crafting your essays. Ask your English teacher or counselor to review them.
- Always provide truthful, accurate information. Do not exaggerate achievements.
- Submit counselor or teacher forms at least **two weeks before the deadline.**

- Keep copies of all completed forms and logins in a dedicated folder.
- Request official transcripts from the Registrar. Transcripts must be sealed or sent electronically to be considered official.

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## Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation give colleges, scholarship committees, or employers a more personal look at who you are—beyond grades and test scores. They highlight your character, work ethic, and potential for success.

### Do You Need a Letter of Recommendation?

Not all colleges or programs require letters, but you may need one in the following situations:

- The **college or university specifically requests** a recommendation letter.
- You **do not meet the stated admissions guidelines** and want to strengthen your application.
- You are **applying for a scholarship** that asks for a reference.

Always check each college or scholarship application carefully to see if recommendations are required.

### How to Request a Letter of Recommendation

If you need a letter from your counselor or teacher, complete the online **Request for Letter of Recommendation Google Form** (link provided by your counselor).

Your counselor will upload your letter directly to the application portal or mail it to the college.

- If the letter must be **mailed through USPS**, provide your counselor with a **stamped, addressed envelope** to the college or university.
- If the letter is submitted **electronically**, your counselor will receive a notification from the application system and upload it directly—no paper copy is needed.

### If the College Provides a Form

Some colleges or scholarships include a specific recommendation form.

- Be sure to fill out **your portion completely** (name, address, and any required fields) before giving it to your recommender.
- Many forms ask whether you "**waive your right to view**" the letter. It's usually best to check **"Yes"**—this tells colleges that your recommender could speak honestly and freely about you.

### Important Reminders

- **Plan ahead:** Request your letter **at least two weeks (10 school days)** before it's due.
- **Provide details:** Include your **college list, intended major, and updated résumé** so your recommender can highlight your strengths.
- **Be respectful:** Teachers and counselors write many letters—ask in person (when possible), and thank them afterward.
- **Use a professional email address** for all communications.
- **Students must make the request themselves**—parents may not request letters on a student's behalf.
- **Plan for breaks:** If your deadline is in **January**, you must request your letter **before December 1**, since schools are closed during winter break.

### Final Tip

Letters of recommendation can make a strong impact when written by people who know you well. Choose teachers, coaches, or counselors who can speak to your growth, perseverance, and contributions inside and outside the classroom. Give them time, trust the process, and always follow up with a thank-you note.

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## Preparing Your College Admissions Essay

Your college essay is your opportunity to show who you are beyond your grades, test scores, and activities. It's a personal statement that helps admissions officers understand your personality, values, and the experiences that have shaped you. A strong essay can make a lasting impression and set you apart from other applicants.

### Purpose of the Essay

Colleges use essays to learn more about you as a person—your character, perspective, and goals. They want to see how you think, what you care about, and how you express yourself in writing. It's not about being perfect; it's about being authentic.

### Choosing a Topic

When selecting a topic, focus on something meaningful to you rather than what you think colleges "want to hear." Consider writing about:

- A challenge you've faced and what you learned from it
- A person, event, or experience that changed your perspective
- A passion, interest, or talent that has shaped who you are
- A time when you demonstrated leadership, creativity, or resilience

Avoid topics that feel overly rehearsed or controversial. Choose a subject that allows you to reflect honestly and

highlight your growth.

**Planning and Writing**

1. **Brainstorm ideas** before you start writing. Think about experiences that reveal your strengths, challenges, and unique qualities.
2. **Create an outline** to organize your thoughts and ensure your essay has a clear beginning, middle, and end.
3. **Start strong.** Your first few sentences should grab the reader's attention and make them want to keep reading.
4. **Be specific.** Use real examples, details, and personal reflection instead of general statements.
5. **Show, don't just tell.** Rather than saying "I'm determined," describe a moment that demonstrates your determination.
6. **Be authentic.** Use your natural voice and be honest about your experiences. Admissions officers can tell when writing sounds forced or exaggerated.

**Editing and Revising**

- Write multiple drafts. Good essays are rewritten, not just written once.
- Ask someone you trust—a teacher, counselor, or English teacher—to review your essay for feedback.
- Read it aloud to catch awkward phrasing or missing words.
- Check grammar, punctuation, and word choice carefully.
- Keep it within the required word count (usually 500–650 words for most applications).

**Common Mistakes to Avoid**

- Repeating information already found in your application
- Using quotes or clichés instead of your own voice
- Trying to impress instead of being genuine
- Submitting without proofreading
- Waiting until the last minute

**Final Tips**

- Start early—your best ideas often come after a few drafts.
- Save your essay in multiple locations (Google Drive, flash drive, etc.).
- Keep copies of your essays; many scholarship or college prompts are similar and can be adapted.

- Remember, your story matters. There is no "right" topic—only *your* perspective, told honestly and thoughtfully.

**Final Thought**

College is an exciting step toward your future. Stay organized, meet deadlines, and reach out to your counselor whenever you need help. You're building the foundation for the next chapter of your life—one thoughtful decision at a time.

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**Requesting Transcripts**

Transcripts are an official record of your high school coursework and grades, and almost all colleges and scholarship programs will require them. Plan ahead—transcript requests should be made **at least two weeks in advance** of any deadline.

**How to Request a Transcript:**

- **Texas colleges/universities:** If the college participates in the **TREx system**, you can request an **electronic transcript** at **no cost.**
- **Out-of-state or non-TREx schools:** Use www.parchment.com to order and send your transcript. (Parchment charges a small fee per request.)
- **Official vs. Unofficial:**
    - *Official transcripts* have a school seal and are either sent directly to the college or provided to you in a **sealed envelope**. Do **not open** the envelope if you plan to mail it yourself.
    - *Unofficial transcripts* can be emailed to you for free and are for personal review only—they cannot be used for applications.
- Some colleges will require a **final transcript** after graduation that includes your second-semester grades.

For transcript questions, see **Ms. Mora** in the Registrar's Office.

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**Financial Aid and Scholarships**

Paying for college can be more manageable with proper planning.

- **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid):** Opens in Fall (Oct-Dec) each year. Submit early for best results.
- **Scholarships:** Search through your school's counseling website, **College Board BigFuture**, and local organizations.
- **Grants and Work-Study:** Based on financial need and do not require repayment.

For details, visit **www.studentaid.gov** or **www.collegeforalltexans.com**.

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**Testing and Preparation**

- Register for the **SAT** at www.sat.collegeboard.org
- Register for the **ACT** at www.actstudent.org
- Use **www.khanacademy.org** for free test preparation resources

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**Dual Credit and Advanced Placement**

If you've taken **Dual Credit** or **AP (Advanced Placement)** courses, you may already have college credit.

- **Dual Credit:** Courses completed through Dallas College or another partner institution appear on your college transcript.
- **AP:** Colleges award credit for qualifying exam scores (typically a 3 or higher).

Send official transcripts and test scores to your future college to ensure credit is applied.

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**After Acceptance**

Once you receive your college admissions offers:

- Compare financial aid packages carefully.
- Accept your offer and pay your enrollment deposit by the college's deadline.
- Register for new student orientation.
- Set up your college email and check it frequently.
- Apply for on-campus housing and submit health or immunization forms as required.
- Keep copies of all confirmation and deposit receipts for your records.

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**Scholarship and Financial Aid Reminders**

- **Local Scholarships:** Complete the **CFB Local Scholarship Package** when it opens in the Fall**.** It allows you to apply for multiple scholarships with one application. For help, contact **Mrs. Warren** at **warrenc@cfbisd.edu.**
- **FAFSA/TASFA:** Opens in **December**. Submit early to maximize aid opportunities. Visit www.studentaid.gov

or www.collegeforalltexans.com.

- **Renewals:** If your scholarship or aid is renewable, check requirements for GPA or credit hours each year and complete any renewal paperwork promptly.

For updates on scholarships and testing:

- **Twitter:** @crkvcounseling
- **Instagram:** @creekview_counseling
- **Creekview Counseling Website:** Scholarship and Financial Aid Resources

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**Great Sites to Explore**

**College Search:**
www.collegeview.com
www.collegeboard.org
www.universities.com
www.mymajors.com

**Scholarships & Financial Aid:**
https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa
http://www.collegeforalltexans.com/
www.finaid.org
https://comptroller.texas.gov/programs/education/

**Test Registration and Prep:**
www.actstudent.org
www.sat.collegeboard.org
www.khanacademy.org

**College Applications:**
www.applytexas.org
www.commonapp.org

**Athletics:**
www.ncaa.org

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## Career Planning

There are many alternatives after high school if you have determined that a four-year college program is not for you. Success looks different for everyone, and there are many great ways to build a rewarding career.

**Apprenticeships**

An apprenticeship allows you to learn a skill by combining classroom instruction with on-the-job training. Most apprenticeship programs are offered through labor unions or businesses and can be completed in two to six years. Apprentices earn while they learn under the supervision of skilled professionals. Carpenters, machinists,

bricklayers, and electricians are some of the workers who may be trained through an apprenticeship program.

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**On-the-Job Training**

Some jobs provide training while you work, especially those that require shorter learning periods. Workers who may be trained on the job include grocery store clerks, servers, sales associates, and repair technicians. This type of training allows you to build skills quickly and start earning income right away.

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**Community, Junior, and Technical Colleges**

These two-year colleges offer a wide range of programs designed to prepare students for many different careers, often at a much lower cost than a four-year university. Programs train students in fields such as automotive technology, computer programming, commercial art, medical assisting, and nursing. A high school diploma or equivalent is typically required for admission. Many students begin at a two-year college and then transfer to a university later.

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**Business, Trade, and Technical Schools**

These schools provide specialized training for specific careers and usually offer shorter programs ranging from a few months to two years. Students can train for careers such as secretary, bookkeeper, welder, or cosmetologist. These programs focus on developing practical, job-ready skills.

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**Finding Your Path**

Many students aren't sure what they want to do after graduation—and that's okay. Most people do not stay in the same job they start right after high school. Being open to learning, exploring, and gaining experience will help you discover what works best for you.

If you're not sure where to begin, try exploring these free career planning resources:

- www.onetonline.org
- www.texasrealitycheck.com
- www.mynextmove.org

You can also take the ASVAB here at Creekview. It's not just for students interested in the military—it identifies your strengths and suggests possible career options you might not have considered.

Remember, you don't have to be in love with your first job. Choose something that interests you, that you can be good at, and that meets your financial needs. You can always change direction as you gain experience and refine your goals.

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## Military Options

The United States Armed Forces offer a wide range of opportunities for students interested in serving their country while gaining valuable education, training, and leadership experience. Whether you plan to attend a military academy, join ROTC, or enlist directly after high school, there are multiple paths to consider.

### Service Academies and Military Colleges

If you're considering a **service academy or military college**, it's important to start preparing early. These institutions provide a world-class education combined with leadership development and military training. In exchange, graduates commit to a period of service in their chosen branch of the military.

**Service Academies:**

- **United States Military Academy (West Point)** – https://www.westpoint.edu/admissions
- **United States Naval Academy** – https://www.usna.edu/
- **United States Air Force Academy** – https://www.usafa.edu/
- **United States Coast Guard Academy** – https://www.uscga.edu/
- **United States Merchant Marine Academy** – https://www.usmma.edu/

**What to Know:**

- Admission is highly competitive and requires **strong academics, physical fitness, leadership experience, and a nomination** (usually from a U.S. senator, representative, or the vice president).
- Apply for nominations during the **spring of your junior year**.
- Students receive a full scholarship covering tuition, housing, and expenses.
- After graduation, you are commissioned as an officer and must serve a minimum number of years in your branch.

**ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps):**
Many universities offer **ROTC programs** that allow you to attend a civilian college while training for a future leadership role in the military. ROTC scholarships can cover full or partial tuition and include a post-graduation service commitment.

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### Enlistment and the ASVAB

If you're considering **enlisting** in the military after graduation, you'll begin your career with **basic training** followed by advanced individual training in a specific career field. Each branch offers unique benefits and career opportunities, from technical specialties to healthcare, aviation, logistics, and more.

**Branches of the U.S. Military:**

- Army

- Navy
- Air Force
- Marine Corps
- Coast Guard
- Space Force

**Steps to Enlist:**

1. **Meet with a recruiter** to discuss eligibility, benefits, and available career paths.
2. **Take the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)**, which helps identify the jobs you qualify for based on your skills and interests.
    - The ASVAB is offered **free of charge at Creekview in the spring**
3. **Choose a branch and career field** based on your ASVAB results and personal goals.
4. **Complete a physical examination** and background screening.
5. **Sign your enlistment contract** and prepare for basic training after graduation.

**Benefits of Military Service**

- **Education:** Earn college tuition assistance through the GI Bill and other programs.
- **Career Training:** Receive specialized technical and leadership training that transfers to civilian careers.
- **Pay and Benefits:** Steady income, healthcare, housing, and retirement options.
- **Travel and Experience:** Opportunities to serve around the world while gaining lifelong skills.
- **Service and Pride:** The chance to make a difference and serve your country with honor.

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**Finding the Right Fit**

Before making any decisions, research all available options and talk to:

- A **school counselor** for guidance and recruiter contacts.
- **Current service members or veterans** to hear about real experiences.
- **Recruiters** from multiple branches to compare opportunities, training, and benefits.

Take your time to make an informed decision that aligns with your long-term goals.

**Helpful Resources**

- **Military Career Exploration:** https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/military-jobs
- **U.S. Armed Forces Overview:** https://www.usa.gov/join-military
- **ROTC Information:** https://www.todaysmilitary.com/training/rotc-programs
- **ASVAB Information:** https://www.asvabprogram.com/

**Military vs. Civilian Path Comparison**

Choosing between military service and a civilian path after high school is a personal decision that depends on your goals, interests, and readiness for independence. Use this chart to compare both options and think about what fits best for you.

| Category | Military Path | Civilian Path (College/Workforce) |
|---|---|---|
| **Education Costs** | Tuition, housing, and books are often covered through programs such as the **GI Bill**, ROTC scholarships, or tuition assistance. | Students are responsible for paying tuition and fees, though **FAFSA**, **grants**, **scholarships**, and **loans** may help cover costs. |
| **Training and Skills** | Receive hands-on, specialized training in technical, medical, or leadership fields that can transfer to civilian careers. | Choose your own field of study or job training; may require additional certifications or internships. |
| **Pay and Benefits** | Earn a steady salary while training, plus benefits like housing, healthcare, and retirement savings. | Income varies by job and field; benefits depend on employer and position. |
| **Career Opportunities** | Over 150 career options across branches. Opportunities to advance rank and leadership responsibilities with experience. | Wide range of career fields available; advancement depends on education, experience, and employer. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Education Opportunities** | Eligible for college tuition reimbursement or full scholarships through the GI Bill and other programs. | May pursue college full-time or part-time while working; must apply for financial aid or scholarships. |
| **Lifestyle** | Structured, disciplined, and mobile—service members may relocate or deploy. | Flexible lifestyle with control over where to live and work, but often with fewer built-in supports. |
| **Commitment** | Typically requires a service contract of **4–8 years** depending on branch and role. | No required length of service; flexibility to change jobs, return to school, or relocate. |
| **Travel and Experience** | Opportunities to see the world, serve overseas, and gain cultural experience. | Travel depends on career or personal choice; not typically part of the job. |
| **Personal Growth** | Develops leadership, teamwork, discipline, and resilience through daily structure and responsibility. | Builds independence, time management, and decision-making through self-direction and diverse experiences. |
| **Post-Service Opportunities** | Eligible for veteran benefits, career placement programs, and lifelong support networks. | May build career networks through internships, alumni connections, or job experience. |

**Final Thoughts**

Both the military and civilian paths offer valuable opportunities for learning, growth, and success. Consider your personal goals, lifestyle preferences, and readiness for responsibility when deciding. Talk to your **counselor**, **family**, and **recruiters** or **college advisors** to explore all your options before making a final choice.

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## Life After Graduation Checklist

Graduation is an exciting milestone, but it also comes with important steps to prepare for life beyond high school. Whether you're headed to college, joining the military, starting a career, or exploring other opportunities, use this checklist to stay organized and ready.

**Before Graduation**

- **Confirm your credits:** Make sure all academic and testing requirements for graduation are complete.
- **Check your attendance:** Address any credit loss due to absences by completing make-up time if needed.
- **Submit college applications:** Ensure all applications, essays, and recommendation letters have been sent.
- **Apply for financial aid:** Complete the FAFSA as soon as it opens to maximize aid opportunities.
- **Apply for scholarships:** Continue checking your school counseling website for local and national scholarships.
- **Request transcripts:** Make sure your counselor and/or Records knows where to send your final transcript after graduation.
- **Take required exams:** Finish any necessary STAAR EOC, TSI, SAT, ACT, or ASVAB tests.

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**After Acceptance (College-Bound Students)**

- **Compare financial aid offers:** Review the cost of attendance, grants, and scholarship packages from each school.
- **Accept your offer:** Submit your enrollment deposit by the college's deadline.
- **Register for orientation:** Most colleges require new-student orientation before you can register for classes.
- **Set up your college email:** Check it regularly for important updates about housing, classes, and billing.
- **Complete housing forms:** Apply for on-campus housing if needed and pay any required deposits.
- **Submit health records:** Provide proof of immunizations and any medical forms your college requires.

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**If You're Joining the Workforce**

- **Create a resume:** Include your skills, part-time jobs, volunteer work, and certifications.
- **Gather references:** Ask teachers, coaches, or supervisors who can vouch for your work ethic.
- **Practice interview skills:** Prepare answers about your strengths, experiences, and goals.
- **Research job openings:** Use websites like Indeed, Workforce Solutions, or company career pages.
- **Stay professional:** Create a professional email address and check it daily for communication.

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**If You're Enlisting in the Military**

- **Meet with a recruiter:** Confirm your enlistment timeline and job training path.
- **Take or review your ASVAB results:** Work with your recruiter to choose the right career area.
- **Prepare physically:** Follow any pre-basic training fitness guidelines.
- **Complete all paperwork:** Make sure you understand your service commitment and benefits.

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**General Life Readiness**

- **Set up a bank account:** Choose one with low fees and online access.
- **Learn basic budgeting:** Track your expenses and plan for essentials like food, transportation, and housing.
- **Keep important documents safe:** Birth certificate, Social Security card, and ID should be stored securely.
- **Stay connected:** Keep in touch with teachers, counselors, and mentors who can help with future opportunities.
- **Celebrate your success:** You've worked hard—take time to enjoy your achievement!

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# Final Notes & Resources

As you wrap up your senior year, remember that you are not alone in this journey. Your counselors, teachers, and the entire Creekview High School team are here to help you reach your goals. Whether you are headed to college, joining the military, starting a career, or still exploring your options — we're here to guide you every step of the way.

## Staying Connected with Your Counselors

Your counselors can assist with academic planning, college and career preparation, scholarship opportunities, and personal support. Be sure to:

- Check your **school email** and **Canvas announcements** regularly for important updates.
- Visit the **Creekview Counseling website** for deadlines, forms, and scholarship postings.
- Follow us on social media for reminders, events, and opportunities:
    - **Twitter:** @crkvcounseling
    - **Instagram:** @creekview_counseling
- Stop by the Counseling Office with questions — we're always happy to help!

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## Important Creekview Contacts

- **Creekview High School Counseling Office** – (972) 968-4800
- **Registrar: Ms. Mora** – Transcripts, enrollment records
- **Scholarship Coordinator: Mrs. Warren** – Local scholarship package
- **Attendance Office: Ms. Flores** - Submit college visit documentation and absence notes

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## Helpful Websites & Resources

**College Planning:**

- www.applytexas.org – Texas college applications
- www.commonapp.org – National college applications
- www.collegeboard.org – SAT, AP, and BigFuture college search
- www.actstudent.org – ACT registration and prep
- www.khanacademy.org – Free SAT prep and study tools

**Financial Aid & Scholarships:**

- www.studentaid.gov – FAFSA application and information
- www.collegeforalltexans.com – TASFA and Texas aid information
- www.fastweb.com – National scholarship search
- www.bigfuture.org – College and scholarship planning
- www.dallascountypromise.org – Dallas County Promise information

**Career & Military Planning:**

- www.onetonline.org – Career exploration and job outlooks
- www.mynextmove.org – Skills and career matches
- www.military.com – Military career information
- www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports – NCAA eligibility and college athletics

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## A Final Message

Senior year is full of milestones, choices, and growth. Take time to celebrate your achievements, ask questions when you need help, and keep moving forward with confidence. Each deadline met and decision made brings you closer to your next chapter.

Remember: you've worked hard to get here, and you have everything it takes to succeed beyond high school.

**Congratulations, Class of 2026 — we're proud of you!**
**— The Creekview High School Counseling Team**