



Cary High School

Class of 2024 ☺



THINGS TO CONSIDER NOW:

1. **Listen to daily announcements** (also available on the CHS website). Student Services publicizes important information regarding educational programs, college visits, course registration deadlines, scholarship information, summer opportunities, etc. You are responsible for keeping informed of school events and deadlines.
2. **Start planning** for the remainder of your time at CHS.
 - **Review your transcript** to determine which credits you must earn to meet graduation requirements.
 - Schedule a junior conference with your counselor in the spring to review your credits and register for classes
 - **Discuss post-secondary plans** (college, military, employment) with your parent and counselor. Students who plan to attend college should consider taking an academically rigorous schedule (honors and AP courses) in their senior year. Keep in mind that some schools have specific admissions requirements like the number of math, science, fine arts, and/or world language credits.
 - **Build a resume.** Colleges and potential employers will want to know how you spent your time outside of class.
 - Consider what activities (sports, clubs, programs, jobs) interest you and get involved.
 - Create a resume to record activities and accomplishments (leadership positions, awards, honors).
3. **Prepare to take college admissions tests** in the spring. Most four-year colleges and universities require students to take either the **ACT** or the **SAT** for admission. All colleges and universities accept either score. All juniors will take the **ACT** at CHS in the spring (**3/9/23**). This test is free and registration is not needed. The College Board recommends that students take the **SAT** for the first time in the spring of junior year. As of February 2023, the UNC System colleges will remain test optional for students applying for admission through Fall 2024.
 - Check with your colleges of interest to see if they require the ACT Writing Test as part of the admissions process.
 - Fee waivers are available to students who qualify; ask your counselor for more information.
4. Start exploring possibilities for **playing sports at the collegiate level** (if applicable).
 - Talk with your parent and coach; make initial contact with college programs for which you have an interest in playing.
 - Register with the **NCAA Eligibility Center** (www.eligibilitycenter.org) at the end of your junior year.
 - Become familiar with eligibility requirements AND each school's admissions requirements. You must be academically eligible to compete in addition to being admitted to the school.

THINGS TO CONSIDER THIS SPRING:

1. Students enrolled in an AP course this school year should take the **AP exam** (given in May). You may earn college credit for qualifying scores on AP exams. Students can also earn college credit hours by taking classes at Wake Technical Community College through the **Career and College Promise Program**. Students should watch the Wake Tech CCP information session the semester before enrollment in order to take CCP classes. More information can be found at <https://www.waketech.edu/admissions-aid/career-and-college-promise>.
2. **Launch your college search** and decision-making process with your parent (and counselor as needed).
 - Decide what is most important to you (fields of study, location, cost, size, athletics, co-curricular programs).
 - Research schools by exploring college websites, www.cfnc.org, and bigfuture.collegeboard.org.
 - Attend a college fair. Multiple in-person and virtual sessions will be held this year.
 - Consider visiting colleges while students are on campus. Be open to visiting a number of different types of schools (big, small, public, private, urban, rural) to help you determine the best fit.
 - Visit with college representatives when they visit Cary High School and attend College Planning Night (**April 18th**). A CFNC College Planning Night for Spanish-speaking families will be held **Thursday, March 16th**.
3. Discuss **mid-year graduation** and **free periods** with your parent and counselor. In order to graduate in January of your senior year, you must submit a Mid-Year Graduation Form by the beginning of the fall semester in your senior year. In order to be considered for a free period as a senior, you must submit an Early Release/Late Arrival Form.
 - Check with your colleges of interest before you decide upon one of these options. Many colleges strongly discourage early graduation and non-reporting periods except in special circumstances.
4. Students interested in **career exploration, job shadowing, and internships** should contact Mrs. Vickie Ward, Career Development Coordinator, at vward@wcpss.net.
5. Students considering **military academies** or **ROTC** scholarships should contact their school's recruiter before the summer.
 - Begin the application process for a four-year ROTC scholarship during the summer.

THINGS TO CONSIDER THIS SUMMER:

1. Start narrowing your college exploration to a select list and take an in-depth look at your choices.
 - Consider the following guide: 1) one or two “safe” schools (colleges to which you will almost certainly be admitted); 2) some realistic or “probable” schools (colleges where your GPA, test scores, and other features look very similar to those of recent entering classes); and 3) one or two “reach” schools (colleges where you meet the criteria for admission but may not have the stellar qualifications of most first-year students).
 - Create a list of application deadlines. Learn **college admissions terminology** (see below) and about how admissions cycles impact other aspects of your college process, such as standardized test dates and letters of recommendation.
2. Explore opportunities for employment and enrichment.
3. Consider when you will take or retake college admissions tests. Students typically improve their scores on college admissions tests when they take them a second time, and many colleges and universities will **superscore** a student’s standardized test scores (this means that the school will consider a student’s best scores from each SAT or ACT section, even if the scores are from different test dates). Remember UNC System schools will remain test optional through Fall 2024.
4. Continue visiting college campuses and determining best fit.
 - Talk with family members, friends, peers, and alumni about their college experiences, especially if they attended or are attending a school in which you are interested.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND THROUGHOUT YOUR JUNIOR YEAR AND INTO YOUR SENIOR YEAR:

- GPA is important! For your colleges of interest, be cognizant of the average GPA of their incoming freshman class.
 - The UNC system requires students to have a MINIMUM high school GPA of 2.5 (weighted) in order to be considered for admission.
1. Choose your senior year courses very carefully. The rigor of a student’s high school curriculum is the single best predictor of success in college.
 - Colleges look most closely at course selections from 11th and 12th grades. Once you submit college applications, you must notify colleges of ANY schedule changes you hope to make for second semester of senior year.
 2. Be familiar with **college admissions terminology**:
 - Early Decision: Candidates may submit an application early to one college, usually by October 15. Applicants are notified of their status by December. As part of the early decision plan, students may be required to sign an agreement to withdraw other applications if accepted.
 - Early Action: An admissions procedure to notify student of early acceptance to college. Students are not obligated to accept the college’s offer of admission and may file applications at other universities.
 - Regular: Candidates submit credentials from November to February depending on school deadlines. Check the deadlines for each individual school.
 - Rolling: Candidates submit the credentials at their convenience through a certain date, usually late in the year. They usually receive an admissions decision within four to six weeks.
 - On-site: An option in which colleges visit students at the high school and make an admissions determination during a scheduled appointment with the student.
 3. Know what appeals to colleges as they consider your application.
 - Academic achievement, SAT/ACT scores, course rigor, class rank, extracurricular activities, community service, strong essay and recommendation letter(s). You should plan to ask at least one teacher from your junior year (preferably) to write a recommendation letter for you. **Please note – some schools do not require any letters of recommendation.**
 4. Discuss **financial aid** with your parent.
 - The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the form that is needed to apply for aid in the form of grants or loans. Our financial aid counselor is Ms. Waters (swaters@wcpss.net)
 - Some colleges may require you to complete the CSS Profile.
 5. **PLEASE NOTE**: Most community colleges do NOT require students to take the ACT or SAT; however, students who plan to transfer to a 4 year school before earning enough credit hours to be considered a transfer student will likely need to have an ACT/SAT score for consideration.

Future-Ready Core Course and Credit Requirements Checklist

(Entering high school 2020-2021 and later)

ENGLISH:	<input type="checkbox"/> English I	<input type="checkbox"/> English II	<input type="checkbox"/> English III	<input type="checkbox"/> English IV
4 credits				
MATHEMATICS:	<input type="checkbox"/> Math I	<input type="checkbox"/> Math II	<input type="checkbox"/> Math III	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Math
4 credits				
SOCIAL STUDIES:	<input type="checkbox"/> World History	<input type="checkbox"/> Civic Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/> American History	<input type="checkbox"/> Economics & Personal Finance
OR				
	<input type="checkbox"/> World History	<input type="checkbox"/> AP US Govt	<input type="checkbox"/> AP US History	<input type="checkbox"/> Economics & Personal Finance
4 credits				
SCIENCE:	<input type="checkbox"/> Earth/Environmental Science (or APES)	<input type="checkbox"/> Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> (Phys Sci, Physics or Chemistry)	
3 credits				
HEALTH/PE:	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthful Living	OR		<input type="checkbox"/> JROTC/HL I & <input type="checkbox"/> JROTC/HL II
1 credit				
ELECTIVES:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____		<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
2 credits required of any combination of the following: CTE, Arts Education, World Language				
ELECTIVES:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	
10 total credits , with recommendation of 4 credits (concentration) from one of the following: CTE, Arts Education, World Language				
TOTAL CREDITS NEEDED TO EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA: 26				

..... HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Wake County determines official GPA based on cumulative final grades. The GPA is reported on the transcript both weighted and unweighted. Class rank (students ranked from highest to lowest GPA) is determined by cumulative weighted GPA. To calculate an unweighted GPA, use the standard class scale only. Additionally, a seventh semester GPA is calculated for all seniors and used to identify Senior Honors rank. More information can be found in the WCPSS High School Program Planning guide (wcpss.net/high-school)

How to calculate your GPA:

Quality Points Scale			
	Academic (Standard)	Honors	Advanced Placement (AP)
A	4	4.5	5
B	3	3.5	4
C	2	2.5	3
D	1	1.5	2
F	0	0	0

1. Use the scale to assign quality points to each grade / course taken.
2. Add up all of the quality points to get the total.
3. Divide total quality points by the total number of credits attempted. This is your GPA. 😊

Latin Honors: Since 2018-19, WCPSS has designated the following **senior honors** in lieu of naming a Valedictorian or Salutatorian: Distinction of cum laude = 3.75 - 3.99 weighted grade point average; Distinction of magna cum laude = 4.0 - 4.249 weighted grade point average; Distinction of summa cum laude = 4.25 or higher weighted grade point average.

College Admissions Tests, Test Preparation, College Exploration

- **ACT** (www.act.org): Allows students to register for the ACT, a nationally-accepted college admissions test. Test preparation material, college planning resources and other information is also available here.
- **The College Board** (www.collegeboard.org): Allows students to register for the SAT. This website provides info on colleges across the nation, as well as SAT test preparation materials. Through this website one can learn more about Advanced Placement (AP) courses/exams also.
- **College Board – College exploration** (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>)
- **College Foundation of NC** (www.cfnc.org): Provides information on all NC colleges and other post-secondary institutions. Through CFNC students can apply online to NC colleges, research careers, prepare for college admissions tests, and explore scholarship opportunities.

College Applications / Transcripts

- **The Common Application** (www.commonapp.org): Online application service for select colleges/universities.
- **Transcript Requests for out-of-state colleges, certain scholarships, alumni, etc.** (www.wcpss.net/transcripts). Provides instructions for transcript submission.
- **CFNC** (www.cfnc.org) - Use CFNC to send transcripts to ALL in-state colleges and universities.

Career Exploration, Job Trends, Career Inventories

- **Career exploration, information and inventories:** US Department of Labor (<https://www.mynextmove.org/>) and (<https://www.careeronestop.org/>), NC Career Information (<https://nccareers.org/>)
- **ASVAB Career Exploration Program** (www.asvabprogram.com): Provides information about the ASVAB test and offers career planning tools.
- **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (bls.gov/ooh/)

Cary High School

- **Cary High School Website** (<http://caryhs.wcpss.net>): Ongoing announcements / opportunities important to students and parents.
- **CHS Student Services** (<https://sites.google.com/wcpss.net/chsstudentservices/home>): Resource for a variety of information regarding academics, careers, college planning, etc.

Financial Aid

- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid/FAFSA** (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>): For college financial aid. Apply in January of senior year.
- **Scholarship Plus** (www.scholarshipplus.com/wake): Official scholarship listings for WCPSS.
- **College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile** (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>): An online application for nonfederal student financial aid. Required by **some** schools in order to qualify for financial aid, scholarships, etc.

Wake Tech Resources

- **Wake Technical Community College** (www.waketech.edu): Official school website. Students can apply for admission through the online application or via www.cfnc.org.
- **Wake Technical Community College Career and College Promise Information** (<https://www.waketech.edu/admissions-aid/career-and-college-promise>). Eligible students can take college courses tuition free. ***Attend an Information Session.***
- **Wake Tech Community College Transfer Programs** (<https://www.waketech.edu/programs-courses/credit/transfer-choices>): Provides information on transfer programs with a variety of four-year universities, including NCSU, UNC-CH, NCCU, ECU and more!

Education Quick Statistics

- **College Quick-Stats, Scorecards, Statistics, etc.** (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>), (<http://college-insight.org/>), (<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>)
- **US Department of Education Net Cost Calculator Center** (<https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>)