

## Welcome to the West High School Counseling

# Class of 2025

## College & Career Planning Launchpad

Below you will find a series of topics you might be wondering about as you plan for next year, with links to help you learn more. As always, please reach out to your counselor to keep us in the loop about your plans and to ask questions!



West High School Counselor Contact Information			Stay updated: Counseling Department Resources
Counselor	Email Address	Phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Join the <a href="#">Class of 2025 ACP/Google Classroom</a></li><li>→ Class code: <b>xrcrj2n</b></li><li>→ Follow <a href="#">@WestHSCounseling</a> on Instagram!</li><li>→ Sign up for Text Reminders: text the class code below to the number <b>81010</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ (Last Name A-M) @REGENT25AM</li><li>◆ (Last Name N-Z) @REGENT25NZ</li></ul></li><li>→ <a href="#">West Counseling Website</a></li><li>→ <a href="#">West Counseling Facebook page</a></li></ul>
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College & Career Topic	Resources
<b>Staying Organized</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Senior Post-High School Planning Tracker</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Whether you are applying to colleges, jobs, apprenticeships, military, or a gap year, use this resource to keep track of tasks to complete, notes about your plans, logins and passwords, and more.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>College Application Process Guides</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">West's Senior College Application Launch Slides (8/20/2024)</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Overview of application process, financial aid, ordering transcripts, <a href="#">personal essays</a>, and more</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ The <a href="#">Fair Opportunity Project Guide</a> - a FREE download that gives a detailed overview of the college application process and financial aid.</li> <li>→ <a href="#">College Board's Big Future</a> site offers a college search engine, and resources about the college application process and financial aid process</li> <li>→ <a href="#">A Beginner's Guide</a>, from College Essay Guy (video)</li> <li>→ 10 Commandments of the college admissions process, from Bierer College Consulting (<a href="#">part 1</a>) and (<a href="#">part 2</a>)</li> <li>→ College Essay Guy's <a href="#">College Application Hub</a></li> </ul>
<b>Researching Colleges, Creating a College List, and College Application Deadlines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Creating a College List and Understanding Application Deadlines <a href="#">Slides</a></li> <li>→ College Search Engine Links <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Xello</a> (access Xello by logging in to Classlink)</li> <li>◆ College Board's <a href="#">Big Future</a> search</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Encourage App</a> - college and scholarship search resource, ACT test prep</li> <li>◆ United Negro College Fund college readiness <a href="#">resources</a></li> <li>◆ The Hundred-Seven HBCU <a href="#">Listing</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>→ College Fairs</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Wisconsin Education Fairs</a> - Sun Prairie and Madison dates</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">NACAC National College Fairs</a> - Milwaukee and Chicago dates</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Alfred Street Baptist Church HBCU fair</a> (virtual option) - Nov 8-9</li> <li>◆ UNCF <a href="#">Empower Me Tour</a> - Milwaukee, October 24, 2024: <a href="#">RSVP</a></li> </ul> <p>→ Attend a College Rep visit in the West College &amp; Career Center (2405)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Rep Visit Calendar</a></li> <li>◆ College rep visits are a great way to learn more about a college you might apply to and to show interest in their program.</li> </ul> <p>→ <a href="#">Midwest Student Exchange Program</a> : Over 50 colleges and universities in the Midwest offer tuition discounts to Wisconsin residents.</p> <p>→ <a href="#">Guide to International Admissions</a> for schools outside of the U.S.</p> <p>→ <a href="#">LGBTQ friendly campuses</a> from CampusPride</p> <p>→ <a href="#">The College Tour</a> - watch students' experiences at many different colleges</p> <p>→ <a href="#">Transferology</a>: See how your college-level classes transfer to over 400 schools across the country.</p>
<b>Sending Transcripts to Postsecondary Programs</b>	<p><i>If you are using the Common Application, counselors will send your initial transcript and midyear transcript to Common App. Students must send transcripts to any other colleges they apply to, and ALL students must send their final transcript to the college they attend. To send transcripts, students must create an account at <a href="#">Parchment.com</a>. Check out these resources for more details:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Transcripts: When and How do I send them? <a href="#">Slides</a></li> <li>→ Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to create a Parchment account. <u>Use a personal (non-MMSD) email address. @icloud, @me, and @mac addresses are not compatible with Parchment.</u></li> <li>→ <b>Wisconsin Guarantee:</b> Students who need a ranked transcript for a UW application MUST apply using the <a href="#">UW application</a> (NOT Common App) and MUST request a</li> </ul>

	<p>transcript via Parchment. Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to create a Parchment account. <a href="#">More info here.</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Do not attach a transcript to your application.</li> <li>◆ Wisconsin Guarantee students applying to UW Madison must apply by the early action deadline of November 1st.</li> </ul> <p>→ Need more help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Ordering your MMSD High School transcript</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Creating a Parchment Account</a> video</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Ordering Transcripts on Parchment</a> video</li> </ul>
<b>Sending Test Scores (ACT &amp; SAT) to Colleges</b>	<p>→ Sending ACT/SAT Test Scores to Colleges <a href="#">Slides</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Check College websites for testing requirements. Over 1600 4-year colleges have test-optional policies for students applying for Fall 2025 admission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">List of Test Optional Colleges</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ If a school requires an official score report, students must order that score report directly from the <a href="#">ACT</a> or <a href="#">SAT</a> website. Counselors do not send scores.</li> <li>◆ The ACT offers students the option of sending a <a href="#">Superscore report</a>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article: <a href="#">The Complete Guide to ACT Superscoring</a></li> <li>• Students can send a score report from 1 test session as well</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>→ <a href="#">West All Things ACT Page</a>: ACT Testing information and Prep Resources</p>
<b>Letters of Recommendation</b>	<p>→ <b>Letters of Recommendation Overview:</b> <a href="#">Slides</a></p> <p>→ Teacher <a href="#">Brag Sheet</a> (ask your teacher before completing this sheet - some teachers have their own)</p> <p>→ Contact your counselor for their own brag sheet if a counselor recommendation is required</p>

<b>Personal Essay Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Personal Essay Writing presentation</a> from UW Madison (presented during West's Senior College App Launch event)</li> <li>→ <a href="#">Writing College Essays</a> presentation from DePaul University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ DePaul also offers <a href="#">Free personal essay editing</a> for seniors</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Get Schooled offers <a href="#">Free personal essay feedback</a></li> <li>→ College Board Blog <a href="#">How to Write a College Application Essay</a></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Essay Writing tips</a> from Purdue (see section on <i>Undergraduate Applications</i>)</li> <li>→ <a href="#">College Essay Guy</a> offers many free articles &amp; exercises on College Essay writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Thoughts</a> on AI generated essays</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <a href="#">The Secret to a Stellar College Application Essay</a> video</li> </ul>
<b>The Common Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Overview of the Common Application Slides</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Creating an account, filling out the application, completing college supplements and adding recommenders</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Common Application 2024-25 <a href="#">Essay Prompts</a></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Common App Questions/Suggestions: Step by Step</a></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Common App AXS Companion</a> - Step by step video resource from Oregon State U</li> </ul>
<b>Universities of Wisconsin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <b>Universities of Wisconsin schools offer <a href="#">3 Paths to Admission</a>: traditional application, <a href="#">Direct Admit</a>, and <a href="#">Wisconsin Guarantee</a></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">UW Admission Portal</a>: houses traditional application &amp; direct admit form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can apply to one or multiple UW schools via this portal.</li> <li>• <a href="#">UW Application walkthrough video</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Direct Admit form walkthrough video</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Admission Requirements</a></li> <li>◆ UW Eau Claire, UW Madison, UW Stout, UW Stevens Point, UW Milwaukee, UW River Falls and UW Whitewater also accept the Common Application.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Wisconsin Guarantee Students who need a ranked transcript for a UW application MUST apply using the <a href="#">UW application</a> (NOT Common App) and MUST request a transcript through Parchment. Do not attach a transcript to your application. <a href="#">More info here.</a></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wisconsin Guarantee students applying to UW Madison must apply by the early action deadline of November 1st.</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <a href="#">Find a Program page</a> allows students to search which UW schools offer my major           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">MyMajors</a> assessment</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Universities of Wisconsin <a href="#">essay prompts</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ All UW schools require 1 common essay; Madison and La Crosse require 1 additional essay prompt</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Universities of Wisconsin <a href="#">Financial Aid</a> info and <a href="#">School Specific Scholarships</a></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Wisconsin Tuition Promise</a> - full tuition scholarships for income-eligible students going to the Universities of Wisconsin           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ UW Madison financial assistance programs: <a href="#">Bucky's Tuition Promise</a>, Tribal Education Promise <a href="#">Program</a>, <a href="#">Bucky's Pell Pathway</a></li> <li>◆ UW Milwaukee <a href="#">Tuition Promise</a></li> <li>◆ UW Parkside <a href="#">Tuition Promise</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Book a 1:1, 15-minute <a href="#">virtual appointment</a> with <b>Go Wisconsin Team</b> to ask application questions</li> <li>→ UW Parkside: the only Emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (<a href="#">HSI</a>)</li> <li>→ UW Stevens Point: Discover Your Purpose <a href="#">quiz</a></li> <li>→ UW Whitewater: #20 in the nation for Disability Friendly campus</li> </ul>
<b>Madison College</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Searchable List</a> of Madison College's programs           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Madison College offers 2 year associate degree programs, certificate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>programs, apprenticeships, and a Liberal Arts Transfer program (for students who want to start at Madison College and transfer to a 4 year program later)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Madison College <a href="#">application</a></li> <li>→ Find out if you qualify for a full tuition scholarship! <a href="#">Scholars of Promise Info &amp; Application</a></li> </ul>
<b>Edgewood College</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Edgewood College <a href="#">application</a></li> <li>→ Edgewood College <a href="#">freshman scholarship opportunities</a></li> </ul>
<b>HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Learn more about <a href="#">HBCUs</a></li> <li>→ United Negro College Fund college readiness <a href="#">resources</a></li> <li>→ Should you go to an HBCU? Check out this <a href="#">video</a></li> <li>→ Check out the short <a href="#">video</a> entitled <i>Black Colleges: Choosing an HBCU</i></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Common Black College Application</a> - allows students to apply to 64 different HBCUs using one \$20 application fee</li> <li>→ No HBCU in your state in-state tuition program: Coppin State and University of Maryland Eastern Shore</li> <li>→ <a href="#">Fidelity Scholars</a></li> </ul>
<b>Financial Aid &amp; Scholarships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Intro to Financial Aid and Scholarships</a> (slides)</li> <li>→ 2024-25 <a href="#">Financial Aid &amp; Scholarships Guide</a> from the West Counseling Dept.</li> <li>→ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) <a href="#">website</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Start Here:</b> <a href="#">FAFSA Resources and Workshops</a> (updated frequently)</li> <li>◆ FAFSA opened Dec. 1st this year due to rollout of revised form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Instructions for how to complete the FAFSA</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Understanding the FAFSA &amp; Financial Aid: Your Guide to Paying for College Download</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">FAFSA workshops</a> at Madison College Goodman South</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">FAFSA workshops</a> with College Goal WI (locations at local high schools)</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">How to create an FSA ID</a></li> <li>◆ FAFSA Updates collected by <a href="#">Higher Education Resource Hub</a> (created by MMSD's AVID/TOPs staff)</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Resource</a> from the WI Department of Public Instruction</li> <li>→ CSS Profile <a href="#">website</a> (only required by some colleges)</li> <li>→ <b>Local scholarship list on Xello</b> - (to access your Xello account, click on the xello icon in classlink. Click on "College Resources" to see the list of local scholarships.)</li> <li>→ <a href="#">Encourage App</a> - college and scholarship search resource</li> <li>→ College Board's <a href="#">Scholarship Search</a></li> <li>→ <b>West Scholarship Application</b> - Seniors will receive a link to the online application via email on January 8th, 2025. <a href="#">Visit this page</a> for more info on West High Scholarships.</li> <li>→ <a href="#">Wisconsin Scholarships</a> listing</li> <li>→ <b>Scholarships for Undocumented Students:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">DREAMer's Roadmap</a> - download their app to search for scholarships</li> <li>◆ Madison College <a href="#">Scholars of Promise</a> is available to undocumented students, as are many of their in-house <a href="#">scholarships</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <b>United Negro College Fund</b> <a href="#">scholarship</a> information for HBCUs</li> <li>→ HBCU Money <a href="#">Guide</a></li> <li>→ College Essay Guy: <a href="#">Paying for College in Four Steps</a></li> </ul>
<b>Athletes / NCAA recruiting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Checklist for College-bound student athletes</a></li> </ul>
<b>Trade Apprenticeships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Trade Apprenticeships Intro <a href="#">Video</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Video <a href="#">Slides</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Websites to learn more about each trade and to explore apprenticeship programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Wisconsin Dept of Workforce Development <a href="#">Apprenticeship Page</a></li> <li>◆ Madison College <a href="#">Apprenticeship Programs</a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Building Trades Council</a> (for Construction Trades)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Check out videos about different trades at WI Build's <a href="#">webpage</a></li> </ul>
<b>Resume Writing &amp; Finding a Job</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">How to Build a Resume Lesson Slides</a></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Resume Templates</a></li> <li>→ <a href="#">Making an Excellent Resume Guide</a> from former West Counselor</li> <li>→ <a href="#">Summer Opportunities for High School Students - 2025</a></li> </ul>
<b>U.S. Military</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">CareerOnestop</a> &amp; <a href="#">Careers in the Military</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sites exploring military branches and career options</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Visit the military branch site you are interested in to learn more &amp; contact a recruiter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">Army</a> / <a href="#">Navy</a> / <a href="#">Coast Guard</a> / <a href="#">Air Force</a> / <a href="#">Marines</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <a href="#">Reserve Officers Training Corps</a> (ROTC) - college program that prepares students to become U.S. Military officers</li> <li>→ ASVAB resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Practice Test: <a href="https://nationalguard.com/practice-asvab">https://nationalguard.com/practice-asvab</a></li> <li>◆ Study Guide and Practice Tests: <a href="https://www.asvabpracticetests.com/asvab-free-online-study-guide/">https://www.asvabpracticetests.com/asvab-free-online-study-guide/</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Gap Years</b>	<p><i>A gap year might include work, volunteering, internships, college courses, travel, or a combination of these activities. Having a specific plan will ensure that you have a positive, productive experience. Many students taking a gap year will apply to colleges in 12th grade and then defer their start date for a semester or year if their college allows them to defer. Some resources include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">Americorps</a> - many work or gap year opportunities (participants receive stipend + education grant that can go towards college tuition)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#">What is AmeriCorps</a> video</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">Schools of Hope</a> Americorps program working w/ MMSD elementary schools</li> <li>→ <a href="#">Volunteeryourtime.org</a> allows students to search for local volunteer opportunities</li> <li>→ Gap Year Association has a <a href="#">Directory</a> of structured Gap Year programs</li> <li>→ Gap Year Solutions* runs a <a href="#">blog</a> and <a href="#">resource page</a> on Gap Years</li> </ul> <p><i>*please note that we have not vetted the private counseling services associated with these organizations.</i></p>
<b>National Honor Society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <a href="#">West's National Honor Society Webpage</a></li> </ul>