

**College Counseling**  
**JUNIOR ORIENTATION**

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Q: What should I/we be doing to improve my chances of paying for and getting admitted to college?

- We hope you will attend **College Night for Juniors** (Methodist Office Bldg) **Mon., August 27 @ 3:30 pm or 5:30 pm** – choose only one (1) time to attend. In addition, please explore the RCHS college counseling website for **calendar: *next steps in the process for juniors***, scholarship and financial aid information, testing information, and college website links.
- Become familiar with the Naviance program. Remember you can access Naviance from the College Counseling homepage and click on the "Family Connection/Naviance" link. One of the student's favorite features of Naviance is the scattergrams.

The scattergrams help you and your parents determine your chances of admission to a college based on only two of the many factors that colleges use: your own RCHS SAT/ACT and GPA data. This data does not include other important information in addition to test scores and grades which colleges also consider in making their decisions such as **course difficulty, leadership, school and community involvement, diversity, level of motivation, ability to benefit from and ability to contribute to a college education, letters of recommendation, and personal statement/essay.**

- For privacy reasons if there have been fewer than five applications to a college, you will not be able to view RCHS data for that school in the Naviance scattergrams.

- Schedule your individual conference with your college counselor in the SPRING SEMESTER. Stop by to see your counselor in person or email starting in FEBRUARY/MARCH to schedule a convenient time for your conference to begin your college search process. Parents are welcome but not required to attend this session.
- You must complete the personality inventory: ***Do What You Are personality profile***, your ***student*** and ***parent questionnaires*** prior to the meeting with your counselor. Come to the conference with your counselor in the spring prepared to discuss your:
  - list of colleges to which you are planning to apply or still considering
  - updated résumé (bring a copy with you and add it to Naviance) *and*
  - any questions about the admissions, scholarships and financial aid process.

1. Remember last year we discussed how important junior year grades are going to be in your college planning? Now that you are only 1 year away from applying to colleges, the data that will appear on your transcript will be your final year-end grades for grades 9 - 11 and your course selections for next year (senior year). Senior-year performance is critical as well since most colleges request mid-year grades after midterm exams and may rescind an offer of admission if your senior year grades decline. Make those meaningful contributions to your activities so recommenders can highlight them in their letters of rec.

Speak with the admissions representatives or visit the college website or Naviance to determine admission requirements. To improve admission chances to highly competitive colleges, it is best to exceed their minimum requirements to make your application more competitive, e.g., if their minimum requirement is 2 years of foreign language—you may improve your chances at elite institutions by taking more than 2 years of the same foreign language or by taking AP level courses if you are ready for the demands of these difficult courses...it will mean more time spent on homework as well as more in-depth reading and writing—all good things to better prepare you for the demands of college.

2. Beginning in September college representatives from over 80 colleges will visit with our students in the College Counseling conference room. Listen for the morning announcements, visit the RCHS website and Naviance to keep abreast of events.

3. Read the materials in the College Counseling hallway for information about upcoming college visits/events, scholarships, summer camps, workshops and other pertinent information. While attending the representative visits (**teacher permission required**), please be courteous and polite and do not monopolize the session with questions pertaining to your own particular situation. Remember you can always schedule a one-on-one visit or talk with the representative after the session (ask for their business card). Also consider attending the college fair at **NC State University McKimmon Center on Sunday, September 16, 2018 (2:00-4:30 pm)**. There are colleges already scheduled to visit RCHS this year. Be sure to check Naviance for the complete running list.

4. Talk to your counselors! The better we know you, the better we can help you choose the best fit college for you from your list and the better our letter of recommendation will be which we write on your behalf. If you've never sat down to talk with your counselor, what will we have to write about in our letter? We need stories from you about your life.

5. At least three weeks before a recommendation is needed, approach teachers face-to-face (not email) to ask the teachers you want to write for you. When you ask the teacher for a letter, provide a current résumé of your honors, awards, and activities at the time you ask the teacher. There's no need to provide a pre-paid envelope as RCHS will cover the cost of mailing your documents to colleges.

If a teacher or counselor recommendation form is part of the application, be sure you have completed your part of the form, signed the waiver of your right to see the recommendation, and make sure you have **signed** the form where indicated **before** giving to the teacher or your counselor.

6. Keep your Naviance account updated with your current colleges to which you're applying. Indicate if you have applied on-line and who you have asked for recommendations as well as the due date of the application. If you are applying to an in-state school, you must establish an account with CFNC ([www.cfnc.org](http://www.cfnc.org)) and discuss with your counselor how to transmit your own transcript on-line from the CFNC website using the APPLICATION HUB.

WE WILL NO LONGER MAIL TRANSCRIPTS TO IN-STATE

COLLEGES! IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEND YOUR own TRANSCRIPT ELECTRONICALLY TO ANY COLLEGE(S) in North Carolina to which you're applying BY USING YOUR COLLEGE FOUNDATION ACCOUNT and selecting "APPLICATION HUB." Ask your counselor if you need help with this.

7. Pay attention to the morning announcements and poster in the College Counseling hallway and the college counseling page of the RCHS website as well as the Naviance website for information about college visits, workshops and scholarship information. The scholarship bulletin is published 2-3 times during the school year and is posted to the website. If you find a scholarship of interest, please talk with your counselor for advice if you are considering completing an application.

8. Keep your counselor informed of your application status. If you hear from a college that you have been admitted, waitlisted, or denied admission or that materials may be missing from your application, inform your counselor so we can send another copy.

9. Visit college campuses. Fall Break and teacher workdays are good times to visit colleges. Schedule official visits whenever possible, usually by calling the college admissions office or visitor's center or using the Admissions website for each college. See the college counseling website "**College Connections**" link for your copy of a *Campus Visit Information Package* with detailed instructions of what to see and do during your college campus visit.

10. Visit the college counseling resource bookshelves in the College Counseling hallway. There you'll find college information including view books, catalogs and DVDs/videos, SAT/ACT/AP test preparation tips and registration materials, scholarships and financial-aid resource books and college guidebooks to help you compile your list of colleges and find a good match. (Volunteers are needed periodically to organize these incoming resource materials. Please check with us if you can volunteer your time.)

11. Schedule your testing date and register for SAT or ACT testing *online*. College Counselors recommend that you take the SAT and/or the ACT at least twice: May or June of your junior year and again in August or October of your senior year ahead of early deadlines. Test

dates are typically offered SAT: 7 times per year and ACT: 7 times per year.

12. If you have not taken SAT-II subject tests and they are required for the college(s) you are applying to, register now. College websites and Naviance provide college-specific testing requirements. You may access college websites via links from Naviance or the college counseling website.

You must create an account in order to register for these tests, receive/print your admission ticket to a testing site, take practice tests, get test study tips and view and send your own SAT and/or ACT scores to college(s) of your choice. Remember, **you need photo ID to be admitted to a testing site.**

**You are urged to send your scores to up to four colleges at the time you take the test. Sending scores to the first four colleges is free. If you send scores *after the registration period*, there is an \$12.00 fee per college. Colleges will receive your entire score history anyway and will search for your highest-ever ACT composite and section scores or SAT EBRW + math scores from all tests taken. PSAT scores are NOT used by the colleges as part of their consideration of your admissibility.**

**Again, you must send your own test scores to colleges through your College Board account (this includes AP scores if you so desire though these are not generally required for college applications).**

To register, you will need the RCHS School Code: **343230**.

<b>SAT-I and SAT-II</b>	<b>Test Dates</b>	<b>Register By</b>	<b>Send Scores to Colleges</b>
\$47.50 - \$64.50	August	July	
	October	September	\$12.00
	November	October	Use 4 Free Score Sends
	December	November	
	March	February	

Register and see specific test dates online at: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

<b>ACT*</b>	<b>Test Dates</b>	<b>Register By</b>	<b>Send Scores to Colleges</b>
*FREE @	September	August	\$13.00
RCHS-Feb	October	September	
\$50.50-	December	November	
\$67.00	February	January	

Register and see specific test dates online: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

**REGISTER FOR THE PSAT BY early OCTOBER.**

THE PSAT WILL BE GIVEN AT RCHS on **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10.**  
PAY MRS. WALL IN THE MAIN OFFICE \$16.00 TO REGISTER (payable to **RCHS** include student's name on memo line)! That's it! No forms to complete!  
You're registered once you pay your fee.

Q: Why should I take the PSAT?

A: There are several reasons to consider taking the test:

- Best way to practice for the real SAT
- Low risk opportunity for practice: colleges do not use or see your PSAT scores for admission; they may request names/addresses of students who scored between 800-1100, etc. so they can send you recruitment mail, but not for admission purposes.
- Very inexpensive way to get feedback on your test-taking strategies—you'll receive a report from College Board about the approach you took to answering questions and suggestions on areas in which you may want to seek additional practice to improve your skills in those areas
- Junior year is the only entry point for being eligible for the National Merit scholarship competition...you cannot qualify at any other time during high school
- Good opportunity to experience the rigors and flow of standardized testing while in the comfort of RCHS before taking the real SAT at an actual test center
- What else would you do on that Wednesday? If you're not taking the PSAT then you'll be assigned to study hall for 3 hours.