

# Senior Planning Document

Welcome to your senior year! This can be both an exciting and stressful time in your life. The counseling team has developed the following resource to support you in your transition to life after high school. Some important items to note:

- 1) As a senior, **YOU** should be creating all your accounts and completing all applications (CFNC, Common App, College Applications, Scholarships, etc.) and not your parent/guardians.
- 2) Please make sure you are reading all communication from school (Canvas announcements, Dr. Monell's weekly SMORE message, etc.) You will receive a lot of important information. **You are responsible for reading all communication from the school.**
- 3) Please make sure you are checking the email address that you provide on applications frequently. You don't want to miss out on an opportunity because you did not see an email. (It is best to use one email for all school related content.)

## Counseling Team Contact Information:

This document will be posted on the Senior Canvas page. Always look for information on this page prior to reaching out to your counselor (remember, you are responsible for reading all communication 😊).

Ms. Bowman (Grades 10-12; Alpha A-D) [bowmant@gcsnc.com](mailto:bowmant@gcsnc.com)

Ms. Moore (Grades 10-12; Alpha E-L) [moored@gcsnc.com](mailto:moored@gcsnc.com)

Ms. Williamson (Grades 10-12; Alpha M-R) [willias16@gcsnc.com](mailto:willias16@gcsnc.com)

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Counseling Secretary, Ms. Powell [powellb@gcsnc.com](mailto:powellb@gcsnc.com)

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Career Development Coordinator, Ms. Cook [cookm@gcsnc.com](mailto:cookm@gcsnc.com)

Graduation Coach, Mr. Anderson [andersd3@gcsnc.com](mailto:andersd3@gcsnc.com)

School Social Work, Mr. Pemberton [pemberk@gcsnc.com](mailto:pemberk@gcsnc.com)

**Accept your invitation to SWHS Seniors on Canvas. All items for Class of 2024 will be posted on this Canvas course. Parents can observe the course to receive the information. Read all announcements for updated information and scholarships opportunities.**

## Important Dates:

FAFSA (receive grants, scholarships, and/or loans from school): Opens in December (Do this early!!!)

CFNC Free College Application Week for select NC schools: October 16th-20th

Senior Meeting During School Day: TBD (Please Check Canvas)

Senior Parent Information Night: October 11<sup>th</sup> 6pm-7:30pm

Graduation: Saturday, June 8, 4:00pm Greensboro Coliseum

## Post-Secondary Plans

After high school, you might choose a 2-year college, 4-year college/university, military, or work. The right path is different for each student. Please use the information on the following pages to help guide you on that path.

### College Bound To-Do List:

- Order a SWGHS transcript to help you complete college applications and see your GPA/class rank at <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/55780> (Links to an external site.) and a GTCC transcript if you attended classes there during your junior year at <https://www.gtcc.edu/student-life/records-and-transcripts/requesting-transcripts.php> (Links to an external site.)
- Research colleges and visit the ones you are interested in attending. Search NC at <https://www2.cfnc.org/college-search> (Links to an external site.) As part of this research, determine if your school is test required, test optional, test blind.
- Begin college applications and understand how to apply at <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/36570> (Links to an external site.)
- Complete your Residency Determination <https://ncresidency.cfnc.org/residencyInfo/>
- Research and apply for scholarships. Scholarships are posted on the [SWHS Scholarship Website](#). Please submit verification of all scholarships/grants awarded to your counselor even if you don't plan on accepting it.
- Once you apply to college send your SWGHS transcript to each college either by CFNC or the GCS online records request form <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/55780>
- (FAFSA) Remind parents/guardians to prepare tax information for your financial aid application which you can do starting in December.

### Career/Work Bound To-Do List

- Order a SWGHS transcript to help you complete college applications and see your GPA/class rank at <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/55780> (Links to an external site.) and a GTCC transcript if you attended classes there during your junior year at <https://www.gtcc.edu/student-life/records-and-transcripts/requesting-transcripts.php> (Links to an external site.)
- Complete a career interest inventory. <https://nccareers.org/>
- Begin researching career opportunities. You may also reach out to our Career Development Coordinator, **Mrs. Cook** if you need some additional guidance, resources, and support.
- Begin applying to career opportunities no later than April/May.
- Interested in participating in the GAP program? See page 3 for details.

### Military Bound To-Do List

- Order a SWGHS transcript to help you complete college applications and see your GPA/class rank at <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/55780> (Links to an external site.) and a GTCC transcript if you attended classes there during your junior year at <https://www.gtcc.edu/student-life/records-and-transcripts/requesting-transcripts.php> (Links to an external site.)
- Research the different branches of the military including entrance requirements. <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/80483>
- Schedule meetings with recruiters of the branches of interest.
- Interested in taking ASVAB – reach out to **Mr. Anderson**.



### **Guilford Apprenticeship Partners (GAP Program)**

Guilford Apprenticeship Partners: Apprentices can earn money on the job as soon as they start the apprenticeship program while also taking college classes at no cost. In fact, students get paid for time spent in class. See how you can get a jump start on a promising career, a college degree, and financial stability.

**GAP Program Website:** <https://gapnc.org/>

- Get paid for 8,000 hours of one-the-job and classroom training during the 4-year program
- Earn an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) from Guilford Technical Community College
- All tuition, books, and fees for the associate degree program are covered, so you graduate debt free
- Have the option after apprenticeship graduation to transfer degree credits to most state four-year universities to earn a bachelor's degree
- Obtain specialized certification and experience that is recognized and sought by employers
- Many employers offer health insurance, retirement, and paid-time-off benefits to apprentices

## Directions to View and Send Transcript on CFNC

It is important for you to know how to view your transcript as you will need to know your GPA and class rank for college applications and many scholarships. School counselors are not allowed to email your transcript and GPA. The fastest and easiest way to view your transcript is through CFNC. Org.

- Go to CFNC.org
- Log into your CFNC account. For juniors and seniors, your username may be your student number/lunch number and your password may be your birthdate MMDDYYYY (01102002). If it doesn't work, try to reset your username or password. If that still doesn't work, please create a new account.
  - If you do not have an account, please create one. Make sure you record your username and password in a location that you will remember as you will need to keep this. Many students use a notes app on their phone to track passwords.
- Click on Application Hub
- Click on Request a High School Transcript
- Select a school to send your transcript to. If you are a senior, send to a school that you are not applying to as schools will not pull your transcript until you have applied. If you are applying to school, send to schools for which you are applying. 9-11<sup>th</sup> graders, you may choose any school.
- Send your transcript
- You will see the school listed on your screen with "tasks" under it. Wait a few minutes and refresh the page.
- You should see under "transcripts" a button that says, "view transcript". If you don't see it, wait a few more minutes and click refresh again. Click on view transcript and your transcript will pop up. Scroll down to see your GPA and class rank.

Video to view the process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVLGcUPAjvY>

Website with frequently asked questions (received an error message, etc.) <https://www.cfnc.org/apply-to-college/nc-countdown-to-college/nc-countdown-to-college-faqs/transcripts-faqs/>

**FAFSA: STEPS IN THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS: The application opens in DECEMBER.** *The earlier you apply, the more money that is available to you!!*

1. Narrow down your list of colleges early through carefully considering what institution is the right college for you as an individual.
2. Completing the FAFSA is the first step, not only for federal financial aid, but state and institutional (university/college) aid as well.
  - The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is one of the most important forms a student should complete during senior year if they plan on going to college. Every year the federal government awards more than \$150 billion in financial aid for students who want to attend college
  - When you fill out a FAFSA form, you are applying not only for federal aid, but state and college financial aid as well. Schools and states often use FAFSA information to award non-federal aid, so completing the FAFSA is a crucial first step in securing the full possible financial aid package to college.

3. Gather the necessary information now:

- Your FSA ID, which is a username and password you can create on the official FAFSA website (<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>) even before the FAFSA opens. Be sure to create this FSA ID yourself. Your parents may also need to create their own FSA ID.
- Your Social Security Number (SSN) OR your Alien Registration Number (if you are not a US Citizen)
- Your driver's license number. If you don't have a driver's license, you can skip this step!
- Your (and your parents') Federal Income Tax Returns, W-2 Forms, and any other relevant records of money earned from the previous year. (You can make this step a little bit easier through using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT), which will import your tax information.)
- Bank statements (checking and savings) and records of investments/assets.

Here's a tip—people commonly misreport the value of their investments on the FAFSA. Check online to see what you can and can't list.

<https://fafsa.ed.gov/fotw1718/help/fotw33c.htm>

- Records of untaxed income, if you have any. Check the official FAFSA website for specifics, but examples include:  Child support received  Interest Income  Veterans noneducation benefits
- A list of colleges where you'll be applying. Just like your SAT/ACT scores, your information will automatically be submitted to 10 colleges that you list upon completion of the application. It's a good idea to list all ten even if you might not apply to a few of them, in order to maximize your financial aid award.

You can list more than ten schools after you receive your Student Aid Report (SAR). Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center and provide the DRN from your SAR—they'll add the colleges for you. ○ Some states require you to list your schools in order to receive aid. Check to see if your state has this requirement on the Federal Student Aid website (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>).

4. Submit your FAFSA when it opens in December to be eligible for ALL types of aid available (Some aid is distributed on a first come/first served basis)
  - The FAFSA opens in December and as a senior, you must fill this out as early as possible to maximize the amount of financial aid you will receive. Deadlines for submission can vary by state—find out when you need to complete the application at this url: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/deadlines.htm>
5. You'll need to complete the FAFSA every year that you plan to attend college.

### **HOW TO FILL OUT THE FAFSA:**

Follow the following steps to fill out the FAFSA:

1. Go to the official FAFSA website (<http://fafsa.gov>), click the start button, enter in your FSA ID, and then log in. After, select the FAFSA form that corresponds with the current academic year.

**Pro-tip:** Create a save key and share it with a parent or guardian if you want to come back to the form later.

2. Enter your information in the “Student Demographics” section.
  3. List the colleges to which you want to have your FAFSA sent. You can work off of any lists you've created while researching colleges to-date!
  4. Answer questions about your dependency status. This will indicate whether your parents need to complete the rest.
  5. Pass it to your parents. They'll have to fill out the “parent demographics” information themselves. If they need some help, have them look at the following website for some helpful tips: a. <https://blog.ed.gov/2017/09/the-parents-guide-to-filling-out-the-fafsa-form/>
  6. Fill out your financial information. Remember, the IRS Data Retrieval Tool will allow you to quickly fill out your tax information if you've already completed your taxes from two years prior!
  7. Sign your FAFSA form (or have your parents sign if you're a dependent student) and submit it.
- CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'RE ALMOST DONE...

## **AFTER YOU SUBMIT THE FAFSA**

- 1.** You should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) three days to three weeks after submitting your FAFSA. Once you have it, check it over to make sure you did not make a mistake in your application. If you did, be sure to make the necessary corrections.
- 2.** While you won't know exactly how much aid you will receive from a school, the SAR will calculate how much you are potentially eligible for and send you an award letter.
- 3.** If you're worried about how you'll receive your money, contact the financial aid office of the institution where you plan to enroll. They will let you next steps.

## **COMMON MISTAKES IN FILLING OUT THE FAFSA**

- 1.** Not completing the FAFSA. Even if it seems difficult, you need to get it done because it will reduce your costs for college in the long run.
- 2.** Filling out the FAFSA late or missing deadlines. The earlier you apply, the more likely it is that you will receive a larger amount of financial aid. If you can get the FAFSA done within a few days of it opening in December, you'll have saved yourself a headache in the future.
- 3.** Ignoring the details. The FAFSA requires you to gather very specific information. Many people don't create an FSA ID early, visit the incorrect website, provide inaccurate details, and don't read the instructions carefully when attempting to fill out their FAFSA. Don't be that person!
- 4.** Not listing all the colleges, you intend to apply to (or listing them in the incorrect order). Even if you don't apply to all ten colleges on your list, you should still include them on your FAFSA because the information will be shared with all their financial aid offices.

## Helpful Definitions

Letters of Recommendations – You may need to submit letters of recommendation for college/work applications, scholarships etc. It is important to think of a teacher and/or staff member who knows you the best when asking for a letter of recommendation. Please email the teacher/staff member no less than **2 weeks prior** to the due date to request a recommendation. In your email, include the following: Your name, why you need the letter (scholarship, college application, etc.), date you need the letter by and how it is submitted (to you or to another organization, etc.). Also include in this email your resume to help the staff member in writing your letter.

Resume – A resume is a summary of your qualifications. As a high school student, you are detailing the following experiences: work, athletics, awards, service learning/community service, leadership, etc. [Resume template](#)

Fee Waiver – Students who qualify for a fee waiver completed the Free/Reduced Lunch Form and received verification letter from district. To receive a fee waiver to take the SAT or ACT, please bring your free/reduced lunch verification letter to Ms. Brenda Powell, counseling secretary. If you received a fee waiver for the SAT or ACT, you will login to your College Board or ACT account to receive a code to use as a fee waiver for college applications. If you are completing college applications on Common App and you select fee waiver, you must email your counselor noting how you qualify for a fee waiver.

Early Action – If you select “Early Action” when applying to school, this is nonbinding. You will receive an early response to your application but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date.

Early Decision – If you select “Early Decision” when applying to school, this is a binding agreement. You can only apply to ONE school under this admission plan. You will be required to withdraw any applications you have at other colleges and may not apply to more schools.

Regular Decision – You have the option to apply to several schools, review offers of admission and financial aid, and make a choice

Rolling Admission – Colleges with rolling admissions evaluate applications as they are received versus waiting to evaluate all applications after a hard deadline.

Test Blind – This refers to a policy where the admissions review process would not look at standardized testing (SAT or ACT) even if provided by the applicant.

Test Optional – This refers to a policy where the admissions review process allows all or some applicants to decide whether to submit SAT or ACT scores as part of their application. It doesn’t mean that schools aren’t interested in seeing all applicants’ test scores, but if a student doesn’t submit their scores, it won’t be counted against them in the application review.

Residency Determination – This establishes if students should have in-state or out-of-state tuition. You must complete this when applying to college.

ASVAB – Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery tests your knowledge of basic concepts and skills to date, and it determines what branch and rank in the military you are eligible for.

The ACT WorkKeys - This test is a standardized skills assessment designed to measure career readiness. In North Carolina, seniors who are identified as Career Technical Education (CTE) concentrators take the ACT® WorkKeys. CTE Concentrator means you’ve completed or will complete a CTE Career Pathway before graduation.