

# GUIDANCE NEWSLETTER



## Whitnall School District

WHS School Code:  
500838

### YOUR WHS GUIDANCE COUNSELORS:

**Michael Neumann**  
**Students A - I**  
**(414) 525-8522**

**Janet Callender**  
**Students J - O**  
**(414) 525-8523**

**Nora Revoir**  
**Students P - Z**  
**(414) 525-8521**



### PAYING FOR SCHOOL

1. Find out as much as you can about the schools you are interested in.
2. Discuss options for paying. Discuss pre-paid tuition programs and scholarships.
3. Request information on financial aid.
4. Apply for financial aid.
5. Complete any other aid or admission forms required by the school.
6. Receive the Student Aid Report, review it, and send it to the financial aid offices of the schools you are considering.
7. Receive your award letter, which comes from the school's financial aid office.
8. Consider the financial options outlined in the award letter. These options may include grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study programs.
9. Accept or reject all or part of the award package.
10. Reapply for financial aid each year you are in college or post secondary training.

### HELPFUL WEBSITES:

www.fsa4counselors.ed.gov  
www.studentaid.ed.gov  
www.students.gov  
www.Going2College.org  
www.KnowHow2GO.org  
www.heab.wi.gov  
www.wasfaa.net  
www.finaid.org  
www.college.gov

### Schedule for College Admission Tests

#### ACT Test Dates: PLUS\*

ACT FEE: \$34.00 \$49.50  
LATE FEE: \$55.00 \$70.50

You may register for either of two test options: ACT Assessment or ACT PLUS Writing, which includes a 30 minute writing test. See registration packet or your counselor for additional information.

Test Date	Deadline	Late Deadline
2/11/12	1/13/12	1/20/12
4/14/12	3/09/12	3/23/12
6/09/12	5/04/12	5/18/12

#### SAT Test Dates

SAT Fee: \$49.00  
LATE FEE: \$75.00

Tests will include a writing assessment.

Test Date	Deadline	Late Deadline
1/28/12	12/30/11	1/13/12
3/10/12	2/10/12	2/24/12
5/05/12	4/06/12	4/20/12
6/02/12	5/08/12	5/22/12

### Top Ten Financial Aid Tips

1. **Obtain a FAFSA:** The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the first step toward applying for assistance. You can get one on-line at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).
2. **Get Organized:** Begin to tackle the FAFSA. Even if you have not decided on a school, organize your

It is highly recommended that students apply on-line at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). You will be asked to choose a test site when you register. This year Whitnall will serve as a site for the April 14 ACT test date. The test Center Code to use when filling out the packet is 212220. The ACT PLUS writing assessment is only required at the following schools: UW Madison, Marquette University and the University of Minnesota. The most common college admission test for the state of Wisconsin is the ACT. Some students who will attend college out of state may need to take the SAT. Students should check with their guidance counselor to determine the correct test. Most colleges require students to score a composite score of 21-23 on the ACT if students are not in the top half of their class. If you are unsure about a college's requirements, you can call or check the school online.

**\* Juniors** Those planning to attend college after their senior year should plan to take the ACT in April, June or October, 2012. The PSAT results should be returned to juniors before Christmas break. Ask your son or daughter to show you his/her results!

**\* Scholarships** The search for scholarships is an ongoing process. Many scholarships arrive in our office daily. You are encouraged to check for scholarships online at: [www.whitnall.com](http://www.whitnall.com). Click on Guidance Services.

personal financial information.

3. **Apply Early:** Some student aid is awarded on a first-come, first serve basis.
4. **Research Scholarships**
5. **Surf the Internet:** (but beware of companies that charge a fee for otherwise free information)
6. **Explore Federal Loan**

**\* Financial Aid** Parents should fill out the actual form online as soon after January 1 as possible. Please note that the form will not be accepted before January 1. A financial aid information night will be held **Tuesday, December 6**. Please see the attached letter concerning financial aid night.

\* You can apply for a Federal Student Aid PIN number prior to January 1st. You will use this pin number throughout the financial aid process. Please go to [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov).

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION!**

\*College Goal Sunday—families will be offered assistance in filling out the financial aid form. For more information go to [www.WiCollegeGoalSunday.org](http://www.WiCollegeGoalSunday.org).

\*It is free to file the FAFSA. Be careful of scams. While filing, go directly to [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) (not to [www.fafsa.com](http://www.fafsa.com)).

\*A great site to find out what your family may have to contribute to your child's education is [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org). Families can find out their EFC (Expected Family Contribution) and determine if you may be eligible for a Pell Grant.



**Programs:** Perkins Loans, Federal Stafford Loans, PLUS Loans

7. **Compare Lenders**
8. **Look Into Private Loans**
9. **Seek Free Information**
10. **Call for Help:** A toll free hotline is available from College Answer: 1-800-891-4599



**The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is your first step to financial aid.**

**What is it?**

The FAFSA is the form that the federal government uses to determine your eligibility for federal aid.

**How does it work?**

Using your FAFSA, the federal processor determines your Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

EFC is the amount of money your family can be expected to contribute each year to your college costs.

Your school will then try to meet your need through a financial aid award made up of funds from federal, state, school and private sources as well as loans, grants and student employment.

**Where can I get one?**

Complete your FAFSA online at:  
[www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)  
OR  
Call 1-800-4-FED-AID for assistance.



**COMPLETING THE FAFSA**

•**Complete your FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1st.** The FAFSA becomes available on January 1st of each year. Since funds are limited at many schools, early submission maximizes your chances of receiving financial aid.

•**Submit the FAFSA whether or not you think you qualify for aid.** Sometimes being rejected for federal aid is a prerequisite for receiving private awards.

•**Contact your prospective college's financial aid office for additional information.** Your school may require forms in addition to the FAFSA or may have an earlier submission deadline.

**5 Most Common FAFSA Mistakes**

1. Do not leave a field blank. Use a zero if the question does not apply to you.
2. Don't forget to report ALL required sources of untaxed income.
3. Use the 1040 Federal tax return for reporting income and taxes paid, not the W2.
4. Include yourself in household size, even if you didn't live there the previous year.
5. Sign the application electronically via your pin number. If you are filing as a dependant, make sure your parents sign too.

**AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE FAFSA**

•**Read your Student Aid Report (SAR) carefully.** The SAR is your official record that the federal processor received your FAFSA. If you find any errors on your SAR, you should report them to your prospective college's financial aid office to ask how you should make corrections. Unresolved errors could affect your total aid award.

•**Call 1-800-433-3243 if you do not receive your SAR in 4-6 weeks.** Be ready to provide your name, Social Security number and date of birth for verification.

•**Note your Data Release Number (DRN).** Your DRN is the four digit number located on the upper right hand corner of your SAR. You will need it to apply to additional colleges or universities.

•**Check to see if your SAR has been selected for verification.** Look under the date (on the upper right hand corner) for the letters EFC followed by a series of numbers. If there is an asterisk (\*) after your EFC (Estimated Family contribution), your SAR has been selected. This means that your prospective college will compare your SAR with documents, including tax returns, that verify your financial status. About one third of all SAR's are selected for verification.