

Counseling Update for PTA, September, 2017

Parents should read and understand the drop policy for classes that are listed on page 40 of the Parent-Student Handbook. The first drop period, which ends at three weeks, removes the class entirely, the second drop at eleven weeks shows on the transcript as an “W” no matter the grade, and the third drop allowed through the seventeenth week records as an F if that is the grade being earned. Parents should also know and understand the pass/fail policy explained as a bulleted point on page 44 of the handbook.

Students have until the Sept. 22 deadline to register for the October 28 ACT test. The fall test dates are primarily for seniors that have not yet taken a college admissions test, seniors that want to try to improve upon their score, or for students in other grades that just want to practice. The ACT is also offered on December 9, with a November 3 deadline to register. The first Sat I or SAT Subject Tests are given on October 7, with a September 19 late registration deadline. The SAT is again offered on November 4 with a registration deadline of October 5. Register on-line at www.actstudent.org (ACT) or www.sat.org/register (SAT). Either test suffices as a college admission test, **you do NOT have to take them both.**

We are still discussing where we will go for our counselor college trip this fall. Tentative plans are to visit western Iowa, eastern Nebraska and possibly South Dakota. This yearly trip is possible due to the much appreciated financial support from our PTA.

Jen Byers is the lead on the joint PTA, Counseling Wellness Program. It will cover sexual health, healthy lifestyles, and mental health, but it has been broadened to coincide with national theme months and is incorporating our Student Senate, SADD, and JEL organizations as partners in conducting activities for education and awareness. The counseling office is working on a brochure describing the program for anyone who would like more information.

We suggest that your best line of communication for student progress is POWER SCHOOL. You can see missing assignments by clicking on the student’s grade in PS. Parents can usually diagnose a student’s problem in a class by checking attendance, grade, and quality of assignments as accessed through clicking on the grade. CANVAS is another tool that parents and students can use to keep track of individual classes. Parents can access CANVAS by going to the district website, <http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/>, where they will find the information needed to setup their own login account.

Please check the daily announcements on the school web site for colleges visiting WHS. Students can get a pass from the counseling secretary.

The Eastern Iowa College Fair will be held on the Kirkwood campus on Sept. 13, from 9:30am-11:30am. It is an opportunity for students to meet and talk with over 100 institutions.

Please check out our counseling web site linked to <http://washington.cr.k12.ia.us/>, under the people then counselor tab. You can find information on counselors, academic expectations, courses, college visits, scholarships, career academies, volunteer opportunities, health programming, how to write a resume, cover letter, balance a budget, etc. We link to college search programs, college search websites, the Iowa Regents Admission Index, the Common Application, NCAA Eligibility Center, the FAFSA (Free

Application for Federal Student Aid), and <https://cedarrapids.kuder.com/> which provides a great interest inventory.

Iowa Assessments

This is taken by **all grades except the seniors.**

It is given once a year in the spring. Check your calendar for dates.

The scores are included on transcripts and contribute to the picture of a student's capabilities.

This test also determines whether a student needs to be in a class designed for remediating deficient scores.

PSAT (A College Board test provided once a year in October on a specific date)

This is taken by sophomores for practice only. Juniors take it for **qualifying for the National Merit Scholarship program, or for practice.** It is usually taken only by the top quarter of the class. Registration will start in the counseling office on Friday, September 25 for the October 11 test.

This is a practice college admissions test. The cost is approximately \$20. Sophomores make take the test for practice and the district will pay the test fee.

ACT (an ACT Corporation test with mandated national test dates, offered six times during the year)

This test is a **college admission test** taken by juniors, usually in the spring of the year (Feb., April, or June). Seniors may take it in September, October or December if they had not taken it in their junior year or if they are trying for a better score.

It has the option of taking a writing test which colleges may or may not insist on having.

It is acceptable to every college as the admission test that they require.

The cost is \$46.00 or \$62.50 depending on inclusion of the writing test. Web site www.actstudent.org

SAT (a College Board test with mandated national test dates, offered seven times during the year)

It is a **college admission test** taken by juniors, usually in the spring of the year (March, May, or June). Seniors would take it in Oct., Nov, or Dec. if they had not taken a test in their junior year or if they wanted to get a better score.

It has an optional essay writing test.

It is acceptable to every college as the admission test they require.

The cost is \$46.00 for the SAT or \$60 for the SAT with Essay. Web site [www. sat.org/register](http://www.sat.org/register)

SAT Subject Tests (Formerly known as SAT II's, College Board tests with mandated national test dates, offered seven times a year)

This is a test taken by juniors and seniors, only when a select college has subject or achievement tests as part of their admission requirements. A student can take up to three Subject tests on any national test date. This would be in addition to a college admission test (SAT/ACT). It is offered the same seven dates as the SAT. The cost is \$26.00 plus \$21 for each test taken. Foreign Language tests are not offered at every testing. Web site www.sat.org/register .