

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling services are an important part of the high school experience. Each student is assigned a counselor, usually through an alphabetical assignment process. The counselor usually remains with the student for the entire four year program and assists in course selection, graduation requirements, college admission, post-secondary decisions, and social-emotional issues.

COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTERS

College and Career Centers are located in each of the District 200 high schools. They provide a variety of services to students, parents, and community members concerning college admission, career options, military enlistment information, and many other post-secondary education opportunities.

Among the services available at the College and Career Center are:

- ◆ **General Reference Materials** – The College and Career Center provides information on ACT/SAT Testing, text prep options, military recruitment, scholarship bulletins/applications, The Common Application, and other materials related to the college application process. These materials include transcript request forms, teacher recommendation forms, Senior Counselor Recommendation Forms, and NAVIANCE FAQ.
- ◆ **Website** – Each high school has many resources listed on their website. Students and parents are encouraged to become familiar with these resources and access them appropriately. The sites may be found at www.wnhs.org/guidance/guidance.htm and www.cusd200.org/domain/387.
- ◆ **Computer Access** – Each high school's College and Career Center has computers for student use to research careers and colleges and to work on college applications.

College Admission Assistance – The College and Career Center (CCC) assists in all areas related to college selection and admission. While the junior year is the primary starting point for the college admission process, planning may begin as early as freshman year.

- ◆ **College Visits** – Schedules for visits from college and university representatives are posted on the announcement system, the District 200 high school websites, NAVIANCE, and within the College and Career Center on a regular basis throughout the year. Recruiters from the military, career representatives, and other post-secondary representatives also visit the schools and are available to meet with students. Students must sign up through their NAVIANCE account 24 hours in advance to meet with a representative.
- ◆ **College Night** – This program is hosted by each school during the fall of junior year. This program outlines the specific steps required for successful completion of the college admission process. Specific dates are listed in the school's newsletters and through the school websites.
- ◆ **General Information** – Informational pamphlets, government forms, and computer information related to college scholarships and other financial aid are readily available in the College and Career Center. The scholarship bulletin is posted on the school's website. NAVIANCE is also available in the College and Career Center. Early fall of senior year is the suggested time for students to begin applying for scholarships and financial aid.

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COUNSELOR APPOINTMENTS

Students can make appointments to see counselors by coming to the College and Career Center. Parents/guardians are invited to contact their student's counselor with any questions or concerns they may have. **Parents/guardians are urged to make appointments prior to coming to the office.**

COUNSELOR CONFERENCES

While the counseling staff is always available to assist students, several general counseling sessions are held throughout the four-year high school cycle to assist students with grade specific issues.

- ◆ Freshman Year – Counselors meet with freshmen in the fall to help facilitate a smooth transition into high school. Discussion topics include graduation requirements, extracurricular and club information, curriculum facts, counseling program details, and support personnel available. Individual or group conferences may be held with each freshman to create a tentative four-year plan of classes that meet graduation requirements and future goals.
- ◆ Sophomore Year – Early second semester sophomores take part in a group meeting in which several topics are covered including the course selection procedure, explanation of graduation requirements, and post-secondary school plans in relationship to courses. Career planning is also introduced throughout the year.
- ◆ Junior Year – Group and individual meetings are held to review high school grades and transcript details. Testing and financial aid information relevant to vocational school and/or college, as well as other post-secondary plans, are discussed. A proposed senior schedule of classes, including any required courses, is completed.
- ◆ Senior Year – The program for seniors consists of an early fall presentation about

the college application process, military recruitment, and other vocational issues. This is followed by individual conferences between student and counselor to review the student's post-secondary plans.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

In the course of their high school experience, many students may experience difficulty or stress, which impacts their ability to perform academically. To help students work on these issues, the counselors, in conjunction with the social workers and psychologists, offer individual or group sessions. These are conducted during the course of the school day and rotate through the various school periods so that a student does not miss a particular class more than another. Students who are part of a group are responsible for any missed class work during their attendance at these meetings. Referrals for groups can come from the counselors, the deans' office, parents, teachers or the students themselves. The focus of these meetings is on problem solving and coping strategies which help the student to be more effective in day-to-day activities.

These groups address some of, but not limited to, the following issues or concerns:

- ◆ academics/time management
- ◆ family issues/divorce/step-family issues
- ◆ grief/loss
- ◆ school adjustment
- ◆ social/peer issues
- ◆ substance use/abuse
- ◆ managing emotions

Information about these groups can be obtained by contacting the assigned counselor or talking to one of the social workers or psychologists in the building. Students involved in such programs that meet more than five times within an academic year must secure parent/guardian permission. Release forms for such permission are forwarded to the parent by the supervising professional.

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TEST PREPARATION SERVICES

A variety of test preparation services are available to students. While District 200 does not endorse any specific test preparation service, the schools do provide information to such programs through the College and Career Center. The choice of program and participation is strictly a personal decision of the student and family. There are several options that can be used in preparing for these tests ranging from computer software to test preparation services sponsored by various private companies. The fees for these classes vary and may cost up to several hundred dollars. A preparation course allows a student to become familiar with the test format and to practice items from actual tests. Test taking strategies and test anxiety reduction are covered in these courses. These courses will not teach a student math skills or English skills they have not already learned. Students are reminded that practice tests are available from www.act.org and www.collegeboard.org.

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcript service is available in the College and Career Center through the school registrar. The fee is \$5 per transcript, official and unofficial.

- ◆ Students/parents may request a transcript through the appropriate transcript request form. Students eighteen years of age and older do not require parental permission for the release of a transcript.

- ◆ Transcripts must be requested in person or through the United States Postal Service. Telephone requests cannot be honored, because a transcript is an official document that requires a written signature.
- ◆ An official transcript includes: courses completed, courses in progress, grades, attendance record, and cumulative GPA. The official school transcript does **NOT** contain test results from ACT, SAT, or any other private testing agency. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the appropriate testing agency to have official test scores sent to the college.
- ◆ Transcript requests are processed within ten school days from date of request.
- ◆ Students, who complete a college application online, must still request an official transcript from the District 200 school they attend.
- ◆ Official transcripts are not released to individuals. They must be mailed directly to the appropriate agency as identified by the request. However, unofficial transcripts may be released directly to the individual.