School Counseling

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Department Guide

for

Students and Families

North Haven High School

School Counseling Department

This guide was designed to provide you with information and answers to questions related to the School Counseling Department at North Haven High School. We hope you find this quick reference guide helpful in navigating some topics of common inquiry.

**School Counseling**

*At a Glance*

**School Counseling is comprised of four general areas of focus.**

**Individual Planning**

Individual planning consists of activities and conversations that focus on assisting each student in developing, analyzing, and evaluating his or her education, career, and personal goals and plans. Conversation topics may include individual advisement, self-awareness, goal setting, decision making and career exploration.

**Responsive Services**

Responsive services consists of strategies and interventions that school counselors use to address student problems which are preventing student success in academic, career, and personal/social development. School counselors identify barriers to academic success and acknowledge the challenges that students face on a daily basis. They work with students to remove these barriers and challenges through individual and group counseling, consultation, crisis intervention as appropriate and referrals as needed.

**Curriculum**

Curriculum is the means by which school counselors promote the healthy development and growth of all students. The curriculum provides developmental and sequential lessons and activities in classroom and/or group settings, which address student development in academic, career and personal/social domains. The School Counseling Program at NHHS follows the State of CT and National Standards for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs.

**Collaboration**

Collaboration focuses on services to students through consulting with teachers, school administrators, parents, outside providers, and agencies regarding student needs. Collaboration also includes leadership to school- and district-based committees on student needs and resources.

**Grade-Level Calendar of College and Career Readiness Activities**

**Grade 12**

* Meet with School Counselor
* Post-Secondary Planning Meeting/College Application Process (September)
* Take the SAT
* College Funding/Financial Aid Night (October)
* Application assistance workshop daily through November
* Sign up to meet with various college representatives that visit NHHS (in Naviance)
* Search for scholarships (those that come to our office are posted in Naviance)
* Start Financial Aid Process (fafsa.ed.gov beginning January 1st)

**Grade 9**

* Introduction to School Counselor Meeting (October)
* Career Interest Inventory

**Grade 10**

* Meet with School Counselor
* Do What You Are – Career Inventory

**Grade 11**

* Meet with School Counselor
* Take the PSAT in October
* Post-Secondary Planning Meeting/College Search Process (December/January)
* Attend College Planning Seminar (March)
* Take the SAT (Spring)

**Student Services-Related Information**

*Fast**Facts*

*Below please find answers to questions and information on various topics related to the School Counseling Department.*

**Advanced Placement (AP) Exams**

Advanced Placement courses offer exams in May. Registration takes place for the exams in the NHHS School Counseling Department for one week in February. Listen to announcements for the specific dates. In January, keep an eye on the mail for a letter and registration form.

**College Representatives Visits**

North Haven High School Juniors and Seniors are provided opportunities to meet with college admissions representatives at various dates and times in the Career Resource Center (located in the School Counseling Department). In the early fall, watch for postings in Naviance under the ‘Colleges’ tab for dates and colleges who will be visiting. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about and demonstrate interest in a college. Register to visit with a representative through your Naviance account.

**Communication**

The School Counseling Department has a webpage and a Facebook page (NHHS School Counseling Department). Here we post reminders and information on various student matters. We also publish information in the quarterly newsletter News & Views. The webpage and newsletter are accessible via the NHHS website.

**Course Selection**

Course selection process begins at the end of January each year. Students will participate in a presentation regarding the process and deadlines for completion. Typically, students will work with their teachers and counselor to complete their course selection form. They must obtain teacher signatures for any course with a prerequisite. They will then enter their course selections online in Power School and return the form to the School Counseling Department. In early February, NHHS hosts a Course Information Fair. This evening provides students and families with the opportunity to investigate courses by asking questions to members of each department.

Developing a master schedule has many components and takes quite a bit of time. When this is complete, counselors will review each student’s schedule to ensure they received the correct courses. Every effort is made for students to have their first choice of classes. In June, when this process is complete, students will receive a letter in the mail indicating courses to which they have been enrolled. This is the time to let your counselor know if there is an error. Students will receive their full schedule with locations and teachers when they arrive on the first day of school.

**College Funding and Financial Aid**

Learning about the financial aid process and understanding how to finance a college education has become an essential component in attending college. We host a College Funding/Financial Aid Night each October. This presentation is hosted by an expert in the field of college funding. Students can begin the financial aid process January 1st of Senior Year at fafsa.ed.gov. It is not necessary to pay for assistance in completing this form. Free assistance is available on a Sunday in January at Gateway Community College. More information about assistance can be found at <http://www.collegegoalsundayct.org>.

**Individual Counseling**

School counselors engage students in individual counseling utilizing a Brief Counseling model. Individual counseling can be helpful in addressing mental health needs and personal challenges of students. This type of support is aimed towards assisting students in being available for classroom learning when faced with a personal challenge. If the difficulty is pervasive and has the potential for long-term counseling needs, counselors may provide information about a referral to a school social worker or outside provider.

**Naviance**

Naviance is a web-based program that provides comprehensive college and career readiness activities for middle and high school students. It helps align student strengths and interests to post-secondary goals. Students begin using this program in grade six and engage in college and career readiness activities each year. This program contains career interest inventories, college search tools, a resume builder, a goal-setting module, and serves as the gateway to the college application process.

**Power School**

Power School is a web-based student information management system. It contains many features such as student schedules, online course selection, attendance, discipline documentation, and grades. Parents and students can access the Parent Portal and sign up for various alerts. This portal provides access to current grades. Access information can be obtained from the main office.

**The SAT and PSAT**

**SAT**

Students will typically register to take the SAT in the Spring of Junior Year and the Fall of Senior Year. Depending on the requirements of particular colleges, some students my take the SAT Subject Tests in June of Junior Year. Register at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

**PSAT**

NHHS Sophomores and Juniors will take the PSAT during the day on a designated Wednesday in October. This is at no cost to families. Results and information about the PSAT will be available in December or January. The College Board will provide access to Khan Academy resources which will help students to understand their areas of strength and weakness in addition to resources to enhance academic skills.

**Scholarships**

Information regarding scholarship applications that are provided to the School Counseling Department are posted on Naviance under ‘Scholarships’ as well as in the office in hard copy. Various other scholarships are awarded through the PTSA Scholarship fund. Applications are typically made available in the Spring.

Resources to search for scholarships can be found via websites such as [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com) and [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) as well as smart phone apps like ‘Scholly’.

**Transcript Requests**

Students may obtain a copy of their unofficial transcript at any time by visiting the School Counseling Department. Official transcripts must be sent from the School Counseling Department to the requesting agency. When requesting transcripts students must complete a Transcript Release Form and have it signed by a parent/guardian (if the student is under 18 years old). The transcript request process for college applications has additional steps. Please see the Post-Secondary Planning Guide for Seniors (available online) or visit the School Counseling Office for more information.

**Withdrawal from School**

If you need to withdraw your child from school (moving, etc.) a parent or guardian must come to the School Counseling Office and sign the withdrawal form. This must be done in person per State of Connecticut law. You will need this form when enrolling in the next school. The School Counseling Department will send school records to the new school upon receipt of a records request from the school.

State of Connecticut, State Board of Education (2008). *A Guide to Comprehensive School Counseling Program Development.*