

The College Search Process

Freshman Year (grade 9)

Get to know NWS! The more connected you are to the school, the better you will academically perform.

Maintain **good evaluations and grades** in classes. Colleges look at your grades from freshman – senior year. Grade 9 counts!

Get involved in activities of interest to you. Colleges like to see students beyond just grades and test scores. What are you passionate about? What do you like to do in your free time? Make these things a priority too.

Sophomore Year (grade 10)

Maintain good evaluations and grades in classes. If you struggled in certain areas in grade 9, do not get discouraged. Colleges notice grade improvements from one year to the next.

Continue to be **involved in NWS and activities** of interest. And try something new too!

Think about your **summer plans**. Consider a summer program or volunteer experience to expand old interests or explore new ones.

Junior Year (grade 11)

Register on Naviance/Family Connection at the beginning of the school year. Naviance is an internet based search and communication tool used at NWS throughout the college search and application process.

Attend College Visits at NWS in September, October, and November. Over 100 colleges/universities visit our campus during these months. **Juniors can attend any college visit if they occur during a free period.** College representatives are members of the admission committee, who speak at the school about their particular college/university. This is a great time to begin learning about the wide variety of colleges/universities in the US and around the world.

All juniors take the **PSAT** in October.

Attend a **college fair!** A number of large college fairs are held in Seattle each year. At a fair, students can talk to college representatives or pick up materials from colleges/universities.

Seattle Area College Fairs

Seattle Area Independent School College Fair (usually October/November)

Seattle Performing and Visual Arts Fair (usually October/November)

Seattle National College Fair (usually October/November)

Seattle Spring College Fair (usually March)

Attend **Junior College Night** in January to officially start the college counseling process with Anna Burkhalter, Director of College Counseling.

Talk to friends and family about different schools, and also about what kind would be best for you – do you want to go to an engineering program, an arts school, a small liberal arts school? Would you prefer small or large, urban or rural, east coast, west coast, Midwest, Canada.....?

Meet with Anna starting in February to talk about what you are looking for in a college and start creating your college list.

International Students: Consider when you plan to take the **TOEFL** test. Register in spring of your junior year for fall dates. It has become very difficult to get a testing seat in Seattle, so plan ahead. Taking the TOEFL in your home country over the summer may be another great option.

Consider taking a **SAT/ACT prep class**. NWS hosts a SAT prep class in the spring. If you are nervous about the SAT, this may be a good option. The class includes practice tests and test-taking strategies. Test prep opportunities outside of NWS are also available.

Register for and take the **SAT or ACT** or both in the spring, Talk to Anna about whether or not you need to take **SAT Subject Tests (SAT IIs)**.

In the spring, begin **visiting colleges** you are interested in.

Senior Year (grade 12)

Meet with Anna at the beginning of your senior year to talk about how you are doing with your college search and application.

Work on your **essays and activities list, and all other parts of your applications**. Anna will look at your essays and/or activities list twice and give general feedback.

Attend **Senior College Night** in September to make sure you are doing all the necessary things in the coming months.

Attend **College Visits at NWS** in September, October, and November. Usually over 100 colleges/universities visit our campus during these months. **Seniors can attend any college visit**, however it is courteous to give a teacher two days advance notice if you will be missing class.

Retake any **SAT, ACT, or TOEFL exams** as needed. Make sure you meet the required deadlines for registration! The last suggested test date for all exams is December.

Prepare your application forms! Early deadlines usually are in November, a large number of deadlines are in January, and most colleges stop accepting applications by March.