

WIGGINS HIGH
SCHOOL
COLLEGE HANDBOOK

Counselor

Marissa Zufall

970.483.7762 x 4204

This handbook was written by Summer Lang, Wiggins HS Counselor 07/08 and updated by Marissa Zufall.

Role of Student

Periodically check your transcript each semester for accuracy.

Register for college prep classes.

Research college admission requirements and deadlines.

Register for the appropriate tests (ACT, SAT, ASVAB, etc).

Use CollegeinColorado.org

Request individuals to write letters of recommendations on your behalf.

Request Counseling office to send transcripts to appropriate colleges/scholarships committees.

Role of Parent

Periodically check the student's transcript for accuracy.

Be supportive and helpful throughout selection and application process without enabling the student.

Research with the student college information: tuition, requirements, programs, scholarships, etc.

Sign the Records Release form to allow the school to send transcripts when requested.

Fill out required financial aid documents (FAFSA- Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

Help facilitate college campus visits.

Help students make realistic goals, both financially and academically.

Role of School

Counsel students on academic classes offered.

Advise students and parents on process of applying for college.

Help students find best college match.

Inform students of test dates.

Prepare accurate transcripts and send those transcripts when requested to do so.

Assist student in developing resumes and college essays.

Help students navigate the financial aid process.

Display and distribute scholarship information.

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What to consider when choosing a college...

Academics

Do I have the required GPA, HS classes, and test scores to be accepted to this college? (Check your index score)

Does this college have the program I am interested in?

Do I have the abilities to be successful in this program at this college?

Does this college offer tutoring?

Financial

How much will it cost to attend this college? Tuition, fees, room and board, transportation, books.

Does this college offer scholarships that I qualify for?

Location

Is this college too close or too far from home?

Is this college located in a community that I will adjust well to?

Activities

What activities does this college offer?

Will I be able to make friends and have a social life at this college?

All of this information can be found on the CollegeinColorado.org website.

Narrowing Down Your Choices

Start a filing system.

Make a list of colleges you are interested in.

Talk to people (Counselor, parents, other students who have attended, teachers).

Check out colleges' websites.

Visit with college representative when they visit the high school or attend college fairs where they are present..

Next Steps...

Once you have narrowed down your choices down to 3-5, research these schools even more. At least one of these schools should be a "safety school" – where you are an automatic acceptance. Find out about each school's application process, deadlines, programs, cost of attendance, scholarships, housing facilities, and activities.

Now start filling out applications!

Applying to Colleges

Most applications are done online, however you still may complete a paper version of some applications.

You may need your parents help in filling out these applications.

It is suggested that you print a hard copy off the college's website, gather appropriate information and fill it out, then transfer the information to the online application.

If you want to complete a paper application, you need to be sure your handwriting is legible and neat.

The counseling office can assist you in completing applications and mailing applications.

Most colleges require that all application materials be mailed together from the high school. You may choose to turn in all application documents that may include transcripts, essay, resume, and application fee to the counseling to be mailed.

Make copies of everything you send, just in case it is lost in the mail!

Index Scores

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has established admissions standards for undergraduate applicants for admission at each public institution of higher education. Each school has been assigned an index score that corresponds with a chart of ACT scores and GPA. The Index Score is just one aspect of the admittance process. Meeting the Index Score does not guarantee acceptance, nor does not meeting the Index Score confirm denial.

Scholarships

Students should be actively looking for and completing as many scholarships as possible.

Scholarships that are sent to the high school are posted on the bulletin board outside of the counseling office, posted on the counseling web page, and distributed to senior mail boxes of those who qualify.

Scholarship applications may be found in the file cabinet in the counseling office.

Students are encouraged to search for scholarships using other sources: CollegeInColorado.org, FastWeb, College Invest, etc.

If students need assistance in completing scholarships applications, they may consult with the counseling office, teachers, or other school staff.

Financial Aid

Students and one parent should apply for a PIN. This PIN will be your signature when filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

A Financial Aid workshop will be offered to students and parents in January/February.

The counseling department is available to help complete the FAFSA.

College Representative Visiting the High School

Throughout the year, college representative make appointments with the counseling office to visit the high school.

These presentations are usually during the high school lunch time and in the Distance Learning Lab.

Check the calendar outside the counseling office, the counseling department's website, and the daily announcements for dates and times.

If you would like the counseling office to set up a visit with a specific school, just let them know and they can schedule the visit.

Campus Visits

Initial visits (usually done during the junior year and summer before senior year) are very important in helping you discover what schools you could see yourself attending.

Try to see as many different types of schools as you can: junior colleges, public universities, and private universities.

Ask in advance to meet with professors from departments you are interested in, financial aid advisors, or sponsors or coaches or activities.

Parents are encouraged to make these initial visits with their student.

Group campus visits will be set up throughout the year (usually one group visit per grade).

The counseling department can assist you in scheduling these visits.

Armed Services

If you are interested in serving in one of the armed services, contact the counseling office and an appointment can be made on your behalf.

You should plan on taking the ASVAB.

NCAA Initial -Eligibility Clearinghouse

If you plan to participate in intercollegiate athletics at an NCAA Division I or II institution in fall 2011 or thereafter, you must have both your academic and amateurism status certified by the eligibility center before representing the institution in competition. For more information and to register visit www.ncaaclearinghouse.net

College Readiness Tests

PSAT

The PSAT is recommended for advanced sophomores and juniors. It is the practice SAT exam as well as the qualifying exams for the National Merit Scholars program. Students must pay the school for this test. The PSAT will be given during regular school hours in October. Interested students must contact the counseling office to register.

PLAN

The PLAN is the practice ACT and is given to all sophomores during regular school hours in October. Students will be registered during their English classes.

ASVAB

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery is given to any Junior or Senior who is interested in the armed services or who would like useful career information. Any students interested in taking the ASVAB should contact the counseling office to set up a time.

State ACT

All juniors are required to take the state ACT that will be given during school hours in April. All students will be registered during their English classes. This version of the ACT is accepted by most colleges and scholarship organizations.

National ACT

Students wanting to take the ACT at any other time than the state day, should contact the counseling department for test dates.

SAT

Students interested in taking the SAT should contact the counseling office for test dates.