

# VHS Counseling Newsletter

Winter 2024

In this issue...

- Virtual College Fairs
- Financial Aid Resources
- Info for Seniors - including PE waivers, Community Service hours, Mid-Year transcripts
- Info for Juniors - including PSAT score reports and college admissions tests
- Running Start Interest Meeting
- Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)
- Course selections for 2024-25
- VHS Counseling Website
- How to access school supports



## Virtual College Fairs - Save the Dates!

- Sunday, Feb 18
- Sunday, March 24
- Sunday, April 21



These virtual college fairs are FREE and open to the public. For registration information information and more details about how a virtual college fair works go to [this link](#).

## Financial Aid Resources

Financial Aid

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid: [FAFSA Application](#)
- Washington Application for State Financial Aid: [WASFA Application](#)
- [Washington State Financial Aid Programs](#)
- [Virtual Financial Aid Info & Filing Events](#)
- [Financial Aid Myths / Mitos Sobre Ayuda Financiera](#)

Scholarships

- Scholarship search tool: [theWashBoard.org](#)
- [College Bound Scholarship](#)
- [Scholarship Opportunities](#)
- [Vashon Community Scholarship Foundation](#)

## Upcoming Financial Aid, Scholarship, and Loan Webinars

The Washington Student Achievement Council offers a series of webinars to help students and families access funding for college. All are free, via Zoom, and require advanced registration. [Register here / Registrarse aqui](#)

Upcoming:

**Financial Aid 101 for Parents & Caregivers**  
**January 24th, 5:30-6:30**

## Seniors – Important updates

**Seniors:** You are one step closer to earning your diploma in June! Here are some important updates to keep you on track.

- **Community Service Hours** – Community service hours for ALL seniors are due by **January 25th**. Service hour forms are both on the [counseling website](#) and outside of the counselors' offices. Contact Jenn Coe at [jcoe@vashonsd.org](mailto:jcoe@vashonsd.org) for more information.
- **PE Waiver forms** - if you completed a fall sport or participated in other sports during high school but have not yet submitted a [waiver form](#), you must do this by **January 25th**. Winter sports waivers will be accepted after the season is completed.
- **Mid-Year Transcripts** - Counselors will be sending mid-year reports to colleges after semester 1 grades post the week of February 6th. If you have already added your counselor to your Common Application and/or Coalition Application your Mid-Year Report, which include your semester 1 grades, you have no additional action to take. If you need official transcripts sent to programs that are neither on the Common App nor the Coalition App these need to be ordered via Parchment. For details go to the VHS website and click on the "Transcripts" tab. *Seniors: it is up to you to let colleges know if there are any unexpected grades or changes to your semester 2 schedule BEFORE the transcripts are sent.*
- **Financial Aid** - All seniors are encouraged to fill out a federal ([FAFSA](#)) or state ([WASFA](#)) application for financial aid, both of which are free of charge. There is money available for apprenticeships, technical and trade schools, community college as well as 4-year universities. Contact Jenn Coe at [jcoe@vashonsd.org](mailto:jcoe@vashonsd.org) for more information.

## Juniors - PSAT Updates and Next Steps

While the pandemic has moved more and more colleges to either drop their ACT/SAT test requirements or make the tests optional, it is critical that students research the admissions requirements for any post-secondary institutions they may be considering applying to. Typically, students who plan to attend a 4-year college that may require a college admissions test should plan to take either an ACT or SAT at least one time before the end of junior year.

Reviewing PSAT results from October is a great way for juniors to prepare for the SAT. Score reports for the PSAT are now available to all juniors who took the test.

### How to Access Your PSAT Scores

- If you provided your email address on your answer sheet on test day, you'll receive an email notifying you of when your scores are available. The email will have a unique access code that will connect you to your scores online. If you didn't provide an email address on your answer sheet on test day, you can still access your scores online.
- **Note:** In either instance, if you haven't already done so, you'll be asked to set up a free College Board account before you can view your scores.
- Don't have a College Board account? Save time and [set one up now](#).
- Once you've received your scores, learn how you can use your scores for practice, scholarship opportunities, and more in [this video](#) and find more detailed information about your score [HERE](#) and see a powerpoint with details about free practice [HERE](#).

If you did not take the PSAT this year you can also access free Khan Academy Prep via the College Board website. For more information about the SAT including upcoming dates, test sites, and registration info go to <https://www.collegeboard.org/>.

The ACT is another way students can fulfill the admissions test for 4-year colleges which require this. For upcoming dates, test sites, and registration info go to <https://www.act.org/>. Free prep materials including ACT practice tests and study guides can be found [here](#).

JUNIORS interested in attending 4-year colleges which require ACT or SAT, or who are unsure of the requirement should plan to take at least one of these tests by June 2024. The sooner you sign up, the better your chances of securing a test at a location that is as close to where you live as possible. Students can register [HERE](#)

## Running Start Interest Meeting

- **Save the Date: February 29th, 7:00 pm** (virtual meeting; link to follow)  
Any 10th or 11th grade students interested in participating in Running Start are required to attend this meeting. The meeting will take place virtually and is open to parents/guardians as well. More details will be sent out as the date approaches. This session will be led by VHS school counselors.
- **Tacoma Community College** will host their own Virtual Info Session on **Wednesday, March 6 at 5:00pm**. Meeting details will be posted to [tacomacc.edu/runningstart](https://tacomacc.edu/runningstart).

## ASVAB Testing

**9:30 - 12 pm, Feb. 8th at VHS**

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test is a free, standardized, multiple choice test that tests language, math, science and technical skills. It is required for entry into the military but it can also be very useful for students not interested in the military. For example:

- The ASVAB Career Exploration Program helps students identify their strengths and interests.
- The ASVAB can help students satisfy the state assessment pathways graduation requirements with a qualifying score (check with counselor to see if this is a good option for you).
- Results are NOT shared with the military (unless you choose to do so) and students are not required to talk with a military recruiter.
- It's FREE.
- The ASVAB is available to 10th - 12th graders and is scheduled for February 8th, 9:30 am-12 pm in the VHS Library.
- Sign up by February 5th with Jenn Coe: [jcoe@vashonsd.org](mailto:jcoe@vashonsd.org), (206) 463-8609 or stop by room 2007.
- Free practice tests are available online.
- Students need to bring a fully charged Chromebook or laptop (no tablets) with pop up blockers disabled in order to take the test.

## Course Selections for the 2024-25 School Year

During the month of February, counselors will be visiting 9th-11th grade classrooms to facilitate activities which will ultimately lead to students selecting their courses for the 2024-25 school year. During these visits, students will review their transcripts, track their progress towards graduation and have an opportunity to ask counselors questions so that they are making informed choices during course selection in March. Parents/Guardians can anticipate additional communications regarding the course selection process.

## Vashon High School Counseling Page

**Students/Parents/Guardians** The [VHS Counseling website](#) has a plethora of resources. These include but are not limited to information about:

- Grade level resources and post high school planning
- Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Resources for Low Income Families
- Community Service, including forms
- Course Related Forms, including PE waivers
- Prevention Resources
- Counselor and Career Tech Education Coordinator contact information

Check it out!



## How to Access School Support

As a reminder, here is a list of who to turn to with specific concerns.

- Academic concerns: Start with your student's teacher – they are a phenomenal resource! All contact information for teachers is in Skyward or on the school's website.
- Academic concerns beyond individual classroom concerns: If you have questions about your student's abilities or how they are progressing towards graduation, please contact their counselor.
- Any questions about social issues, stress management, post high school planning, student support, transitioning to high school, service learning, peer relationships and more...contact your student's counselor.
- Concerns about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs – prevention and intervention Mandi Wilcox [mwilcox-c@vashonsd.org](mailto:mwilcox-c@vashonsd.org)
- Health Concerns: Amy Nielsen [anielsen@vashonsd.org](mailto:anielsen@vashonsd.org)
- Medical appointments can be made at the Neighborcare Clinic once your student is registered with them. More information at <https://neighborcare.org/clinics/vashon-island-high-school/> or 206.548.7550
- Discipline questions or concerns: John Erickson [jerickson@vashonsd.org](mailto:jerickson@vashonsd.org)
- Attendance reporting: [dfranson@vashonsd.org](mailto:dfranson@vashonsd.org)
- Bus Route questions: (206) 463-2525
- Family Partnership: Nidia Sahagun (206) 580-9070

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