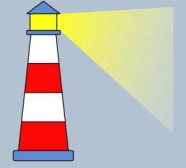




DECEMBER 2023

# THE GUIDANCE LIGHT

Cold Spring Harbor Central School District



## *Cold Spring Harbor Jr/Sr HS Counseling Center NEWSLETTER*

### **A Message from the Director's Desk:**

Dear Students and Families,

The first few months of this school year have been full of exciting activities and successful events. I am a little surprised to realize another calendar year is coming to a close, and I cannot help but reflect on what I had anticipated the year to include. Did I make the most of 2023? Did I achieve my goals? Do I even remember all of my goals? Can I have a little more time? As this year comes to an end, and we look forward to the fresh start of 2024, we have much to look forward to and many new plans to set in motion.

In schools, we are faced with the excitement and challenges of planning for a new school year. We will embark on the course selection process for the 2024 - 2025 school year in early January. Included in this process is a review of course recommendations that will be made by teachers in December and will be available to be viewed by students and parents on the eSchool portal. Recommendations are made with the information we have now. Current student progress guides teachers to make informed decisions regarding a student's best chance for success in the next course. These recommendations are made for each particular subject area and are then viewed in the context of the student's entire program when the course selection meeting with the school counselor takes place in January or February.

As students and families review teacher recommendations, course offerings and the academic program for 2024 - 25, please remember there are many people and resources available to help with the decision-making process. The counselors, teachers, and building leaders can help, along with the Program of Study, Scope and Sequence documents for each course, and grade-specific course planning documents. This newsletter includes important information about all of this...and much more!

Warm regards and best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season,

*Mona E. Hecht*



### **Important Dates:**

**12/2:** SAT Exam

**12/4: Grade 11 College Kick-off Parent/Student Night Program**  
7PM - PAC

**12/8:** Recommended deadline to request college application materials from the counseling center for January 1 deadlines

**12/9:** ACT Exam



**COLD SPRING HARBOR  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Soaring Higher • Growing Stronger • Achieving Greatness*



# COURSE SELECTION TIMELINE

*Important Dates to Remember*

## I. December 2023:

- ⇒ Teachers make course recommendations for individual students in all core courses. Course recommendations will be visible on the eSchool student/parent portal on December 18, 2023.
- ⇒ Program of Study and individual grade-specific scheduling sheets are available for students/families to review and use to plan a list of requested courses.

## II. January/February 2024:

- ⇒ School counselors meet with students to review course recommendations and choose elective courses. Parents are encouraged to participate.

## III. March 4, 2024:

- ⇒ Course requests will be locked and master schedule build will begin. Changes to course requests will not be made after this date; level changes will be reviewed as needed.

### Cold Spring Harbor Jr/Sr High School

**Counseling Center**  
(631) 367-6840



Mona E. Hecht

Assistant Superintendent for Counseling,  
Student Services and Human Resources

#### COUNSELORS

Angelica Ferraro

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Jennifer Pickering

Gerard Spennato

### December Counseling Center Programs

#### Grade 11 College Planning Kick-Off Parent/ Student Workshop

Monday, December 4 at 7pm in the PAC

There are many factors to consider as students explore college options and prepare for the college application process. This parent/student program will provide guidance on the multiple steps and activities students and families will engage in over the next several months, including a review of the Naviance program for college exploration.



*We look forward to seeing grade 11 students and their parents on the evening of December 4*

#### Classroom Counseling Sessions

During the month of December, counselors will be meeting with students in classroom sessions to Kick-Off the College Exploration Process with students in grade 11. Also, students in grade 8 will participate in classroom sessions on time management and high school planning to follow-up on the evening Parent/Student Night program for 8th grade families. The counseling department works with students in classroom and group settings to provide information to all students before following up individually and/or in small groups to address specific students' interests, needs and plans.



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## PSAT....Now What?

PSAT/NMSQT scores were released by the College Board in early November. Students in grades 10 and 11 who took the PSAT/NMSQT in October are now able to view their score reports. Students can log into their College Board account for their full report. Also, scores have been uploaded into Naviance and can be viewed there. Counselors have connected with each student who took the PSAT to ensure they are able to access their scores and understand how to read the report. This [brief video](#) can also help guide students through the score report.

The PSAT was a practice exam. Students in grade 10 had an early look into the testing process and the new digital exam while juniors can use their score report to help determine their next steps in the college testing cycle. This year's PSAT was the **first digital exam** and all future SAT exams, beginning in March 2024, will be digital exams. The digital SAT exam is shorter (2 hours instead of 3) and includes an adaptive model whereby questions students receive later in the exam are determined by how they answer questions in the first module of the exam.

There are many practice test options available to students. CSH students have two **FREE** ways to practice and prepare for both the Digital SAT and the upcoming ACT exams.

1. On December 16, All CSH students can take a [FREE Practice Digital SAT and/or Practice ACT](#) through the Princeton Review. The tests will be taken online at home and results will be provided immediately.
  2. All Cold Spring Harbor HS students also have access to the *free* **Methodize Test Prep** Program. Students can access this program through the menu in their Castle Learning accounts. Methodize provides SAT and ACT prep tools including diagnostic tests, full length exams, a vocabulary builder and a complete self-paced preparation program for both exams - SAT and ACT - with informative videos and instruction on specific test question types with tips to address them. Watch this [video](#) from creator/founder Mr. Tom Ehlers to learn more and then *give Methodize a try!*
- 

### ***Grade 8 Parent/Student Night Program***

On **Wednesday, November 29**, the Jr/Sr High School team joined the counseling department in presenting the annual [High School Transition Program for 8th grade](#) families. The program included important information about the academic offerings in 9th grade and beyond, the differences between junior high school and senior high school, and the many things to think about as students continue their 8th grade year while looking ahead to all the high school has to offer. We will be completing the 2024 - 2025 course selection process in the next few months, and the decisions made now will have an impact as students move forward. This is an exciting time and there is much support available. Please reach out with questions and concerns as the next several months unfold.



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# 2024 - 2025 COURSE SELECTION

A student's high school course schedule allows them to engage in academic options that are rigorous, interesting and rewarding. Thoughtful planning includes a balance of challenging coursework with opportunities to meet with success. As you choose from the many options, you are encouraged to think about your four-year high school plan and your academic goals. Some questions you may want to ask yourself include:

- Which subjects interest me most?
- Where do I find the most success?
- What are my strengths?
- What challenges me most?
- How much time can I commit to my school coursework and my other activities?

Decisions that are made during the course selection process lead to the creation of the master schedule and course placement. It is important to make thoughtful decisions while factoring in the level of rigor of each course, the overall commitment of the entire course schedule, and the ability to balance school and other commitments. Student transcripts ultimately reflect courses taken and grades earned. Careful planning with the end in mind can lead to success.

## IMPORTANT SCHEDULING RESOURCES

### Grade-Specific Scheduling Forms:

Students and parents are able to view all course options, by grade level, using our *NEW* Grade Level Scheduling Forms (see below). These forms provide a list of courses available to students in each grade level. Families are encouraged to review the forms carefully, with specific attention to the expectations of individual courses, the student's interests, and both short and long term goals. The Program of Study is a great resource to access in order to learn more about course pathways and specific course topics. The [current Program of Study](#) is available as a reference and the 2024 - 2025 Program of Study will be posted, and available in printed copy, before the end of December.

### GRADE 9 (for current 8th grade students):

[GRADE 9 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)

### GRADE 10 (for current 9th grade students):

[GRADE 10 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)

### GRADE 11 (for current 10th grade students):

[GRADE 11 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)

### GRADE 12 (for current 11th grade students):

[GRADE 12 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)



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# Winter and Spring with the Class of 2025!

The high school counselors began the annual **College Kick-Off** Classroom Sessions with grade 11 students on Tuesday, November 28. The counselors conducted this first session of a three-part series to assist students as they begin to embark on the college exploration and post-high school planning process. During this first session, counselors introduced the importance of finding college options that are **“the right fit”** for each student. They did this by beginning to outline the many factors that may be considered as students start to identify their personal preferences, specific goals, and individual dreams when thinking about this next important step in their journey. If you are a parent of a junior, ask them about the shoe they chose!



Much time will be spent with juniors this winter and spring, as counselors continue to bring important information to students through sessions II and III of the **College Kick-Off** program. These sessions will be followed by individual student/parent meetings with the counselors. In order to plan for those meetings, students and parents will be asked to complete the **Junior Bio**. Information about the Junior Bio will be shared in January, so stay tuned for that!



Please mark your calendars for two important events:

- \* **Monday, December 4, 2023 (7pm PAC):** Grade 11 Parent/Student Night - College Exploration Process
- \* **Monday, January 22, 2024 (7pm PAC):** *Finding the Right Fit College* with Robert Franek, Editor in Chief, Princeton Review



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# COUNSELORS LEADING THE WAY

During the month of November, we were reminded of the many ways we can express our gratitude to those who help us along the way and support us each day. One of the counseling center bulletin boards provided members of our school community with one way to do just that. Ms. Herold, our wellness counselor, created this *Gratitude Tree* and shared colorful leaves and markers, inviting students, faculty, and staff to show who they are grateful for at this time. Parents also had a chance to add their own leaves during the most recent CSHHS PTG meeting! In addition to our family members, friends, teachers and counselors, we also learned that some of us are thankful for fall weather, dogs, weekends, baby giggles, good health, friendships and candy.



In early November, our junior high school counselor, Ms. Pickering, and school psychologist, Dr. Main, attended the annual national conference of the Association for Middle Level Education where they served as presenters on important middle school issues. Their presentation, titled “*A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Supporting Transition and Increasing School Connectedness*” focused on ways to build an environment of belonging and connectedness for all students. Specific information was shared highlighting ways Cold Spring Harbor has worked to address this priority, including the available student spaces - The Nest and H-1 - as well as the work of the grade level teams and the specific student-centered activities that are incorporated throughout the year in small groups. Additionally, Dr. Main presented on her Parent University sessions that address needed middle school information for parents. These groups have been offered annually in the late spring and have included topics such as Executive Functions in Adolescents, Mindfulness Skills, Motivational Factors for Adolescents and the Adolescent Brain. Mrs. Pickering and Dr. Main attended valuable workshops while at the conference, and look forward to implementing new ideas into the junior high school program throughout the year. Stay tuned also for the valuable events later in the year during this year’s Mental Wellness Month in May!



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# FREE Practice SAT and/or ACT

The **Princeton Review**®

## Free Digital SAT® and ACT® Virtual Practice Tests for Cold Spring Harbor Students!

Free practice tests are a great way to find out how you may score on the SAT or ACT without having the scores count.

### DSAT

Sat, December 16th, 2023  
9:00AM



SCAN QR CODE OR CLICK  
[HERE](#) TO REGISTER

Registration Deadline 12/15/23

### ACT

Sat, December 16th, 2023  
9:00AM



SCAN QR CODE OR CLICK  
[HERE](#) TO REGISTER

Registration Deadline 12/15/23

**All tests will be held online.**

- Students will receive detailed instructions on how to log on and complete the test online at home.
- Multiple timing options are available for students with accommodations.
- After the test, you'll receive a comprehensive score report detailing your strengths and weaknesses.

**Want more information on courses and tutoring?**  
**Visit [PrincetonReview.com](https://PrincetonReview.com) or call 800-2REVIEW.**

Questions? Contact [Elyssa Cooke](#)- Long Island Outreach Specialist  
[631-664-3079](tel:631-664-3079) | [elyssa.cooke@review.com](mailto:elyssa.cooke@review.com)

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## WS BOCES: Wilson Tech

Each year, a few students from Cold Spring Harbor HS join students from 17 other school districts in the towns of Babylon, Smithtown and Huntington to learn skills that employers need. The students attend Western Suffolk BOCES' Wilson Tech career and technical education programs for a half day while continuing to take courses in CSH for the other half of their school day. Technical career programs along with health careers, transportation careers and construction careers are just some of the options available to interested students.

On Wednesday, **December 13**, a representative from WS BOCES Wilson Tech will be **onsite in the counseling center during periods 4 and 5** (10:00—11:15am) to meet with interested students. Information will be shared about the variety of program options and questions can be addressed at that time.

See your counselor if you are interested in exploring Wilson Tech. A full list of available programs can be found in the [Program of Study](#).

### Career and Technical Education

**DID YOU KNOW?**

## COLLEGE TRIVIA!!

- The list of *most attended colleges* by CSH students over the last 10 years includes 3 of these 4 schools. Which college is **not** in the top 10 Most Attended:
  - Bucknell University
  - Nassau Community College
  - University of Florida
  - University of Michigan - Ann Arbor
- Over the last ten (10) years, the **top 3** most attended Ivy League colleges by CSH students (in order of enrollment, highest to lowest) are:
  - Cornell Univ., Univ of Penn., Brown
  - Univ. of Penn., Cornell Univ, Princeton Univ.
  - Cornell Univ., Dartmouth College, Univ. of Penn.
  - Dartmouth College, Cornell Univ., Brown Univ.
- The SAT will be a DIGITAL exam, starting in what month?
  - December 2023
  - January 2024
  - March 2024
  - September 2024
- This college's mascot is a deer:
  - University of Maine
  - Lewis and Clark College
  - Fairfield University
  - Carleton College



Answers: 1. C, 2. C, 3. C, 4. C



## NCAA College Athletics: CORE COURSE GPA

All Cold Spring Harbor HS students have free access to the **Core Course GPA** Program. Student athletes who are interested in playing collegiate athletics can find helpful guidance through these [available resources](#).

Additionally, more than a dozen [brief videos](#) on recruiting and the NCAA Eligibility process.

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