

POST-SECONDARY PLANNING PACKET

Materials for the Class on 2022

Class of 2022: Welcome to the Post-Secondary Planning Process!!

The Junior year of high school requires you to start really thinking about a decision that will probably be one of the most important ones of your lifetime: Choosing a form of higher education and making post-secondary plans. Your post-secondary plans often impact many other life choices – lifestyle, values, and occupation – and you should be thorough and strategic about this decision.

We recognize that each student begins the post-secondary planning process in a different place, and as your School Counselors, we hope to meet you where you are. We hope that you will take the lead in researching and applying to higher education institutions, and we will work to support you through every step of the way.

In this packet you will find a number of resources designed to help you stay on track and be prepared throughout the college application process. However, you are bound to have questions that are not covered in this guide, that are more specific to you and your post-secondary choices. Strive to become your best advocate and be sure to seek out your School Counselor to let us know how we can best support you. You should also feel comfortable talking to the various institution's admissions offices.

We look forward to working with you and your family during this exciting time. Good Luck!!

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Junior Year Post-Secondary Planning Timeline

Fall:

- Register for the College Board's Preliminary Scholastic Assessment (PSAT) exam.
 - Scores are important, as they are used to qualify for National Merit Scholarship Competition and the National Achievement program
- Start researching post-secondary schools!
 - You can do this by reviewing that school's website, visiting with post-secondary representatives that come to Huron High School, attending college fairs, etc.
 - When researching colleges be sure to look at their admission requirements, to make sure you are meeting the admission criteria in regards to course work, tests (ACT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests), etc. See your School Counselor if you have questions.
- If interested, you may want to research military academies and colleges.
 - Most military academies and colleges start the admissions process earlier than traditional colleges and universities.
- Register with some scholarship search engines!
 - There are scholarships that can be found through these search engines that you can apply to NOW!
- **STAY ACTIVE!**
 - While your grades in high school are important, colleges also look at what you do outside the classroom.
 - They like to see that you are involved in extracurricular activities, community service, etc. and that you take on leadership roles when possible.

WINTER:

- Schedule your Junior Registration with a School Counselor, starting in January.
- Continue researching colleges/careers/military options.
- Continue searching for scholarships.
- Finalize a testing plan for the SAT and/or ACT – Refer to testing dates located in the packet.

SPRING:

- Visit schools you are interested in.
 - When you set up your individual visit, ask for appointments with departments of financial aid, admissions, academic advisers, professors, and other students.
- Take the ACT and/or SAT exams.
 - April of Junior year is the most common date for students to take these exams for the first time.
 - PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!
 - SDMyLife has Method Test Prep, which is a FREE ACT test prep program.
 - There are numerous other websites that offer free test prep check out the "Useful Resource Websites" link
- Complete your Junior Conference worksheet and email to your School Counselor by Friday, May 14th.
- Continue searching for scholarships.
- If you are enrolled in Advanced Placement courses, consider taking the AP tests for that subject.
- Work on your resume.
 - The school(s) to which you will apply to in the fall will already know your grades and test scores, but they need to know more about you.
 - Your resume should include school activities, community activities, community service, sports, awards and recognition, hobbies and work experience.
 - SDMyLife has a "Build My Resume" link to help
- Begin thinking of teachers, counselors or other adults who you would want to write letters of recommendation for you.
 - Even if you are applying to colleges that may not require a letter of recommendation, you may run across scholarships that do, so it is always good to have a couple letters recommendation ready.

SUMMER:

- Narrow your list of potential post-secondary institutions
- Continue to research scholarships
- Make summer count! Summer is a time for fun, but you can also use it to your advantage. Build up your college savings account with a job and your resume with volunteer work

ACT vs. SAT: Which One Should I take?

<u>ACT</u>	CONTENT	<u>SAT</u>
Four required separate sections- Reading, English, Math, Scientific Reasoning; one optional section -Writing with an essay		Two parts – Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (Reading and Writing & Language) and Math; one optional section - Essay
Four separate sections ranging from 35 – 60 minutes, each subject area is completed before moving on to the next content area; 30-minute essay section at end of test	FORMAT	Four separate sections ranging from 25-65 minutes, each subject area is completed before moving on to the next content area. There is an optional 50- minute essay, and total testing time with the essay is 3 hours and 50 minutes.
Each subtest scored 1-36; composite score also 1-36 (not a strict average of the four sections); essay also scored 1-36 but NOT included in composite score	SCORING	Each section scored 200-800; all two sections included in overall score for a maximum possible total 1600; overall score achieved by adding up scores of each subtest
ACT (No Writing): \$52 ACT Plus Writing: \$68 (Fee Waivers are available for eligible students)	COST	SAT (No Writing): \$49.50 SAT Plus Writing: \$64.50 (Fee waivers are available for eligible students)
Four scores can be sent to colleges along with registration fee; \$13 per school after fourth selection; students not obligated to send scores anywhere, but will pay an additional fee if sending scores after testing	SENDING SCORES	Four scores can be sent to colleges along with registration fee; \$12 per school after fourth selection; students not obligated to send scores anywhere, but will pay an additional fee if sending scores after testing
Each individual ACT test is independent and must be sent separately to schools- scores do not accumulate on test record	TEST RECORD	Each individual SAT test is independent and must be sent separately to schools – scores do not accumulate on test record
Every four-year school in the US accepts the ACT (with the exception of the Webb Institute in NY)	SCORE ACCEPTANCE	Accepted by all four-year colleges in the US – preferred by schools outside the US
No Subject Tests or equivalent- however, some colleges allow ACT to be substituted for BOTH SAT Reasoning and Subject tests in admission	SUBJECT TESTS	One-hour multiple choice Subject Tests available in languages, sciences, math, social studies and literature
No penalty for incorrect answers – blank and incorrect responses incur the same “points off”	TEST STRATEGY	No penalty for incorrect answers – blank and incorrect responses incur the same “points off”
Six times per year – never on same date as SAT	FREQUENCY	Seven times per year – never on same date as ACT
www.act.org	REGISTER	www.collegeboard.org
https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-day.html	TEST DAY	https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/taking-the-test

ACT Planning

April is nationally the most popular date for high school junior to take the ACT for the first time. Reason being, is students are encouraged to get through as much of their junior year coursework as possible.

- Students can take this test more than once, post-secondary institutions will look at the best score
- Students can register for the ACT at www.act.org
- Students should set aside about 30-45 minutes when sit down to build ACT account
 - There will be an Interest Inventory that will need to be completed, as well as inputting courses taken in high school, amongst other things
- The best way to prepare for the ACT is to PRACTICE!
 - Students should **NOT** go into an ACT exam unprepared
 - SDMyLife has a great FREE ACT prep program called Method Test Prep
 - Mr. Dix offers ACT Math prep courses each semester
 - There are other FREE ACT prep websites listed on the Student Services webpage, under “Useful Resource Websites”
- A 24 ACT composite score is needed in order to meet one of the eligibility requirements for the SD Opportunity Scholarship
- In order for students to **not** have to take Remedial English courses, they must score an 18 or higher English subscore
- In order for students to **not** have to take Remedial Math courses, they must have an 1150 or higher Math Index for South Dakota schools.
 - The Math Index is determined by a formula that takes into account the students ACT Math Subscore and cumulative GPA
- Student should send their score report to post-secondary institutions they are interested in
 - ACT will send a score report to up to 4 schools for FREE
 - Students can send scores to more than 4 schools for a small fee
- Scores are normally reported 3-8 weeks after the test date
- You will find a detailed checklist on www.actstudent.org about what to bring to the test center, what not to bring, and requirements for admission.

2020-2021 ACT Test Dates

TEST DATE	REGISTRATION DEADLINE	LATE FEE REGISTRATION
December 12, 2020	November 6, 2020	November 7-20, 2020
February 6, 2021	January 8, 2021	January 9-15, 2021
April 17, 2021	March 12, 2021	March 13-26, 2021
June 12, 2021	May 7, 2021	May 8-21, 2021
July 17, 2021	June 18, 2021	June 19-25, 2021

SAT Planning

The SAT is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It is a multiple-choice, pencil-and-paper test administered by the College Board.

The purpose of the SAT is to measure a high school student's readiness for college, and provide colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants, very similar to the ACT. College admissions officers will review standardized test scores alongside your high school GPA, the classes you took in high school, letters of recommendation from teachers or mentors, extracurricular activities, admissions interviews, and personal essays. How important SAT scores are in the college application process varies from school to school.

Overall, the higher you score on the SAT and/or ACT, the more options for attending and paying for college will be available to you.

Spring is nationally the most popular time of year for high school juniors to take the SAT for the first time. Reason being, students are encouraged to get through as much of their junior coursework as possible. Also, if you need to retake the test, you can do so fall of your senior year.

- Students can take this test more than once, post-secondary institutions will look at the best score
- Students can register for the SAT at www.collegeboard.org
- The best way to prepare for the SAT is to PRACTICE!
 - Students should **NOT** go into SAT exam unprepared
 - There are other FREE SAT prep websites listed on the Student Services webpage, under "Useful Resource Websites"
 - Princeton Review has great FREE resources at www.princetonreview.com
- Student should send their score report to post-secondary institutions they are interested in
- Scores are normally reported 3-8 weeks after the test date
- You can find more information of what to expect on test day on www.collegeboard.org

2020-2021 SAT Test Dates

TEST DATE	REGISTRATION DEADLINE	LATE FEE REGISTRATION
December 5, 2020	November 5, 2020	November 6-24, 2020
March 13, 2021	February 12, 2021	February 13-March 2, 2021
May 8, 2021	April 8, 2021	April 9-27, 2021
June 5, 2021	May 6, 2021	May 7-26, 2021

Getting the Most Out of a College Visit

Being on a college campus, even for a few hours, can tell you a lot about the college and how well you might fit in at that institution. Below are some tips for how to get the most out of visiting college campuses.

Things to Consider Before You Visit:

- While it is tempting to visit only the most prestigious schools on your list, you should make sure you visit colleges that are within the realm of possibility for you.
- Good times to visit:
 - Second semester of 11th grade – you do get two days as a junior to go and visit campuses during the school day – See your School Counselor for more information
 - Any school breaks you may have during 11th and 12th grades
 - Summer before your senior year- Remember that campuses may not seem lively over the summer because the student body is not there. Try not to let this sway your opinion
 - Visit the school's admissions website to look at different opportunities for prospective student visits

Things to Do During Your Visit:

- Campus Tours
- Information Sessions
- Class Visits
 - Many schools invite prospective students to sit in on a class or two. Sometimes this needs to be pre-arranged. Contact the admissions office or check that school's website for specific information.
- Overnight Visits
 - Many colleges arrange for prospective students to stay on campus with a student host. You can eat in the dining hall, visit some classes, and spend the night in a residence hall.
- Meeting with an Academic Department or Professor
 - If you have specific questions about the opportunities in a specific major, use this occasion to try to meet with someone in the department. Be sure to arrange this in advance.
- Meeting with a Financial Aid Counselor
 - If you will be applying for financial aid, this is your opportunity to ask about grants, scholarships, and student loans. Pick up any forms or applications you may need to apply for aid.
- On-Campus Interviews
 - If you are visiting a school that offers interviews and you are very interested in the school, make an appointment before you get to campus for an interview. Be prepared to sell yourself as a successful candidate for admission. Also, prepare some school-specific questions for your interviewer.

Making the Most of Your Visit:

- Don't get too emotionally involved with your tour guide
 - These students love their college and are trained by the admissions office to be honest, but to say positive things about the school. Their view may not be the most objective.
- Pay close attention and ask questions of the tour guide.
 - Why did you choose this school? What do you like best about being at this school? What do you like least? What courses have you enjoyed the most and why? What are the big issues on campus right now?
- Things to consider and observe while you are on tour:
 - The appearance of campus; student dress – casual or sophisticated; friendliness of the community; hot topics – pick up a student newspaper to see what's happening on campus; how are students getting around campus; library; residential options; amenities; food
- If there is something you want to see that wasn't on the official tour, ask your guide if you can see it!

Campus Visit Worksheet

Post-Secondary School: _____ City, State: _____

CAMPUS	
Are the facilities up to date and operating?	Notes:
Is the campus safe?	
Is the library good for studying and research?	
Is there a student health facility?	
What is the surrounding city or town like?	

ACADEMICS	
What is the average class size?	Notes:
What is the most popular major or classes?	
Are there Teaching Assistants (TA)?	
What academic supports are available?	

STUDENT LIFE	
Diversity	Notes:
Clubs/Organizations	
Dorms	
Dining	
Athletics/School Spirit	
Social-Greek Life	

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

Scholarship Resources

Here are some scholarship search engines. These are excellent resources for students, to try and get your hands on more money for your post-secondary endeavors. We strongly encourage you to get some accounts up and running, and start applying to any and all scholarships you are eligible for. FREE MONEY IS THE BEST MONEY!

- www.raise.me/ - This is a new site where students are awarded scholarship money from colleges each time they demonstrate success in high school. Goals such as receiving an A or a B in a class, participating in a school club, or spending a few hours volunteering in your community could earn a young person money for college. Raise.me is entirely free. The cost of the program is paid by colleges and charitable foundations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Facebook's charitable giving.
- www.fastweb.com - Fastweb, which has helped 50 million students find money since the site was founded 15 years ago, was the first online scholarship matching service and the first free national scholarship matching service. Fastweb's site indicates they currently have roughly 1.5 million scholarships worth \$3.4 billion in their database.
- www.Collegenet.com - CollegeNET is a technology company that builds web-based tools for event and academic scheduling, prospect and admissions management, tuition processing, and alumni development for colleges and universities. CollegeNET also operates a scholarship search engine and social network where students create topics, participate in discussions, and vote on scholarship winners.
- www.scholarships.com - Scholarships.com now claims to be the largest free and independent scholarship search and financial aid information resource on the Internet, with more than 2.7 million scholarships worth a total of \$19 billion in their database.
- www.christianconnector.com - Online Christian College Scholarship Resource Program
- www.scholarshipmonkey.com - ScholarshipMonkey.com claims their database provides students access to more than 1 million undergraduate, and professional scholarship awards worth in excess of \$3 billion from greater than 4,000 sources. Like the other search engines, they are committed to providing their service free of charge.
- www.studentscholarships.org - Great scholarship search engine.
- www.finaid.org/scholarships/unusual.phtml - Find some of the most interesting scholarships available on this website
- www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams - Watch for phony scholarship search offers by checking out this site first
- www.scholarshipamerica.org - Great scholarship and college resource
- www.scholarships4students.com - Great resource for scholarships available to high school students and college students
- www.findtuition.com - Great scholarship search engine
- www.scholarshipexperts.com - Great website for scholarships and college info
- www.zinch.com - Great website for scholarships and college info
- www.cappex.com - Great website for college and financial aid planning, and scholarship connector.
- www.bigfuture.org - Great website for college and financial aid planning, and scholarship connector.
- www.iHELPLoan.com - Billions of dollars in scholarship awards
- www.tuitionfundingsources.com - Great resource for college scholarship and career info.
- www.unigo.com - Great resource for college planning, scholarship search, student loans, etc.

**Encourage you to also check out the Scholarship List that we have posted on the Student Services webpage. This provides you with many scholarship opportunities, some that are geared specifically for HHS seniors. If there is a scholarship you are not eligible for now, is there something more that you can do that would make you eligible when the time comes?

What is Dual Credit?

Dual credit is an excellent opportunity for eligible high school juniors and seniors to enroll in public postsecondary institutions in South Dakota and simultaneously earn credits for both their high school diploma and postsecondary degree or certificate.

Dual credit courses are offered by the postsecondary institution's faculty members, are governed by the postsecondary institution's policies, and follow the postsecondary institution's established processes for admissions, registration, billing and grad reporting. Courses include college-level content and subject matter; students choosing to participate will be held to the same expectations and standards as college students.

Through a program approved by the South Dakota Legislature, dual credit coursework is available to high school juniors and seniors at the incredible discounted rate of \$48.33 per credit. Typically, students enrolled at these institutions pay about \$200 per credit at the state's four technical institutes and \$300 per credit at the state's public universities.

Students are able to choose from a number of on-campus and online classes, including general education and career and technical education courses.

Who pays for Dual Credit?

You are responsible for the \$48.33 per-credit cost and any required textbooks or related course materials.

Now the question is, are you eligible to take Dual Credit courses and are they right for you?

If you are interested in taking Dual Credit courses, you need to visit with your assigned School Counselor to determine if you are eligible to take Dual courses prior to filling out the application.

- High School **Seniors** wanting to take a Dual Credit course must meet ONE of the following:
 - Earn an ACT composite score of 21 or higher, reflective of the 50th percentile OR
 - Rank in the upper one-half of their graduating class OR
 - Have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- High School **Juniors** wanting to take a Dual Credit course must meet ONE of the following:
 - Earn an ACT composite score of 24 reflective of the 70th percentile OR
 - Rank in upper one-third of their graduating class OR
 - Have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.50 on a 4.0 scale

If you are eligible for Dual Credit courses, you can pick up a Dual Credit packet in Student Services that will outline the instructions to apply. Applications have to be completed each semester you take a Dual Credit course.