"The Ultimate Senior Survival Guide"

Good decisions are made with good information!

Welcome to senior year!! This year will be filled with fun, excitement, and BIG decisions. We have a special page on our website just for you. Please check back regularly, as we will update it throughout the year. College deadlines are just around the corner.

Get organized! Make great grades! Research and Plan!

Tift County High School CEEB: 113 005

Plough deep while sluggards sleep. ~Benjamin Franklin

Senior Year Checklist

August

- ☐ Meet with your counselor to review your transcript and Senior Course Check
- ☐ Update your www.GAcollege411.org account.

September

- ☐ Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- ☐ If you are planning to apply for Early Action or Early Decision, you need to prepare and submit those applications now. Make sure you allow enough time to prepare any essays you will need to include in your application.
- ☐ As you prepare these early applications, be sure to give any recommendation forms to appropriate teachers and counselor. Make sure your portions of the forms are filled out completely and accurately. Also, don't forget to see Mrs. Jackson in the Guidance to complete a "Transcript Request Form." She will upload or mail your official transcript to the school(s) to which you are applying.
- ☐ Keep files or a notebook with all college and financial aid information.
- ☐ Visit colleges and take tours. Interested in Military? Research military branches and visit with military representatives at TCHS during lunch.
- ☐ Start your scholarship search… www.fastweb.com & www.GAcollege411.org.
- ☐ Attend the Gacollege411/Georgia Student Finance Commission Presentation in the PAC on Friday, **September 26, 2014**.
- ☐ Interested in participating in college athletics? Meet with Ms. Gloria Beard and register for the NCAA Clearing House: http://eligibilitycenter.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html

Parents are always welcome in the Guidance Office!!

October

- Plan to attend the Probe Fair on **November 5th from 9:00-11:00 AM at TCHS. *PARENTS WELCOME!!***
- Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- Discuss plans for after graduation with your parents.
- Work on college applications.
- Meet with college representatives visiting our high school. These are announced in morning announcements, posted in hallways, and posted on our website. These are usually in the Commons during lunch or in the Guidance Career Center.
- Early Decision candidates should complete college applications. Ask teachers and your counselor for recommendations TWO weeks in advance.
- Visit colleges and take tours.
- Provide teachers with an addressed and stamped envelope for college recommendations.
- Submit college applications 10 school days prior to the college deadline.
- Search and apply for scholarships…at your college, on www.GAcollege411.org, Scholarship Newsletter, Guidance Office, etc.

November

- Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- Attend the Probe fair November 5th, 2014 from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Over 50 GA colleges will be on campus at TCHS.

STAR Student Recognition:

2015 STAR Student nominees must satisfy all of the following requirements:

Be a TCHS senior

- **NOTE:** The STAR Program is designed to recognize high school seniors who have the highest SAT score in their graduating class and meet all the other program requirements. How many classes a student takes off campus or how involved the student is with extra-curricular activities at the school are irrelevant in determining the STAR Student.

- **Take the three-part SAT any year on any national testing date through and including November 8, 2014.**

- **Important: November 8, 2014, is the last acceptable SAT test date for the 2015 PAGE STAR program.** Please register at www.collegeboard.com
- Score highest **on a single test** date (scores may **not** be combined from two or more test dates) on the three-part SAT among qualified seniors in the school. Nominees' SAT scores must be equal to or higher than the latest available national average on the math, critical reading and writing sections. **The national averages for 2015 will be available in late September/early October.**

- Be in the **top 10 percent. If the student with the highest SAT score does not** meet the top 10 criterion, the student with the **next highest SAT score who does meet the criterion** becomes the nominee.
- **November 8, 2014 is the last acceptable SAT test date for the 2014 PAGE STAR program.** Take the three-part SAT any year on any national testing date through and including November 8, 2014. Be in the top 10 percent and score highest on a single test date (scores may not be combined from two or more test dates) on the three-part SAT among qualified seniors in the school. See Mrs. Wells in the Guidance Office if you have any questions or what to confirm we have your scores.

- ☐ Be in the process of completing college applications.
- ☐ Early Decision deadlines are often **October 15, November 1, November 15, or December 1. Be aware of deadlines.**
- ☐ Meet with college representatives visiting the school. Visits are announced in morning announcements, posted in hallways, and posted on our website.
- ☐ Check the Scholarship Bulletin Board and visit your Guidance Office often.
- ☐ Submit college applications 10 school days prior to deadline.
- ☐ Participate in Georgia Apply to College at TCHS on **November 12, 2014, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM in Room 308** if you have not already applied to college.
- ☐ Begin gathering income tax information for Financial Aid.

December

- ☐ Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- ☐ Complete all applications by 2 weeks before deadlines to avoid holiday mail rush. All applications that you request to be mailed before the winter vacation must be submitted to the Guidance Office one week prior to the break.
- ☐ Review the Scholarship Newsletter online and in the Guidance Office.
- ☐ Read, read, read over the holidays

January **~Money, Money, Money~**

- ☐ Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- ☐ After **January 1**, complete and submit your *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA), along with any other financial aid applications your school(s) of choice may require. You can complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.gov. Don't wait for acceptance offers from your schools before you apply. Go to www.fafsa.gov to verify when your state deadline is or call 1-800-4-FED-AID for assistance. Be sure to meet any and all deadlines.
- ☐ Meet with your counselor to review your transcript and Senior Course Check.
- ☐ Watch for January College application deadlines.
- ☐ Review the TCHS Scholarship Newsletter online and in the Guidance Office.
- ☐ Meet with your counselor if you need any mid-year reports sent.
- ☐ Attend Financial Aid Night! Georgia Student Finance Commission/ HOPE/ FAFSA Presentation with your parent(s) on **Tues., Jan. 27th – 5:30 PM in the PAC**.
- ☐ Are you living on campus? Housing applications usually due in January.

February

- Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- If you completed the electronic FAFSA, you can expect results within 3 to 5 days. Make any necessary corrections and return it to the FAFSA processor. The FAFSA must be updated.
- Complete your scholarship applications.
- Local Tift Area Scholarship Packets ready for seniors. **APPLY, APPLY, APPLY**!!

March

- Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- Contact the financial aid office at the colleges to which you have applied to make sure they have received the appropriate application material from you.
- Review your financial aid award letters to select the best deal for you.

April

- Register for the upcoming SAT and ACT if have not done so already. See Mrs. Couch in the Guidance Department if you need a fee waiver.
- You should hear from the colleges to which you submitted regular decision applications. From those colleges that accept you, compare your acceptance letters and your financial aid and scholarship offers.
- Make your acceptance choice. Find out what deposits you will be required to make to ensure your place in the freshman class.
- When you decide which college you want to attend, you need to notify that school by letter of your commitment, submitting any required deposit check. Many colleges require this notification letter to be postmarked by May 1.
- Write thank you notes to scholarship sponsors as you are awarded scholarships.

May

- Take the Advanced Placement exams for any AP subjects you've taken in high school.
- If you were placed on a waiting list for a particular school, and you decided to wait for an opening, contact that school and let them know you are still interested.
- **Tift County High School Class of 2013 Graduation ~ May, 23, 2015!**
- Inform the Guidance Office where you need your final transcript to be sent.

Senior College Application Check List

- Develop a list of 3 to 5 colleges and review their websites.
- Apply online at www.GAcollege411.org.
- Transcript Request due 2 weeks before college application deadline- See Mrs. Jackson in the Guidance Office and complete a "Transcript Request Form" …No appointment needed!
- Review college application requirements. Do you need a counselor evaluation, teacher letter of recommendation, shot record, application fee, etc.?

- Many college/universities have Early Action/ Early Decision deadlines and require applications be received by an earlier date. Check with your college for specific deadlines and requirements.
- Pick up a "Letter of Recommendation Request" in the Guidance Office if you need a letter of recommendation from a teachers or your counselor. Please allow at least **TWO WEEKS** for a letter of recommendation to be written. Be sure to ask a teacher who knows you well and can speak positively about you.
- Standardized test scores (ACT or SAT) must be sent directly from ACT or College Board (SAT) for most colleges.
- Attend the Tift Co. Probe College Fair on **Nov. 5, 2014**, **9:00-11:00 AM in the Commons**
- Set up college campus visits. See your School Counselor for prior approval.
- Get organized! Create a file or notebook of all of your college information. Keep a calendar with deadlines and important dates.
- Be sure to inform your School Counselor of any required any mid- year reports that must be mailed by January.
- Meet with your School Counselor.

University of Georgia Deadlines! TCHS has many students interested in UGA... Reminder - the deadline for the Early Action Application is October 15th. Regular Decision Application deadline is January 15, 2015. Seniors applying for the Foundation Fellowship and Bernard Ramsey Honors Scholarship must meet the new deadline application of November 1st.

What is your college admission deadline? Be sure to look be aware of the admissions deadlines for the colleges where you are applying.

HOPE Scholarship Latest Information

at www.GAcollege411.org

College Campus Visits

- Many colleges offer a Saturday Open Campus Day for seniors and parents of seniors.
- TCHS Seniors are allowed two (2) college visit days.
- Contact the Admissions Office of the school you plan to visit and make an appointment to tour the campus.
- Obtain a College Visit Form from the TCHS Guidance Office to take with you and have it signed and validated by an official from the college being visited.
- Return the college visit form to TCHS as your written excuse for the Attendance Office.
- Seniors are responsible for all assignments missed.

United States Military

Recruiters from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marines, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and the National Guard visit TCHS and share information about career opportunities with students. You may also set up a meeting with a military recruiter and your family at the recruiter's local area office. The ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) Test is administered at your local recruiting office. This test can help your determine which military positions suit you best. Be sure to pick up brochures and other materials in the Guidance Office Career Center and learn about various military opportunities.

Work after High School

Some students decide to go straight into the workforce following graduation from high school. It is necessary that you start a resume right away if this is your plan. Your teachers, BDB Advisor, and School Counselor can assist you with designing your resume. Be sure to add references and contact information to your resume. Start looking for jobs in the classified section of the newspaper, the Georgia Department of Labor office, and by asking a particular business if they have jobs available and/or are they accepting applications.

Deadlines

Beat deadlines, don't just meet them. Apply well before the deadline! Remember that your Teachers and School Counselors have to process applications for many other seniors. Be sure to look at each college website and be aware of Early Action and/or Regular Admissions deadlines.

NCAA Clearinghouse- COLLEGIATE SPORTS

- Meet with Ms. Gloria Beard today. Room # 207.
- The NCAA has established a clearinghouse for both recruiting and eligibility purposes for student-athletes in Division I and II.
- All students with an interest in either Division I or II programs should register at www.ncaa.org **BEFORE you have any official visits to schools.** If you have ever attended another school, you must submit a copy of the form to that school as well.

SAT

www.collegeboard.org

Apply on line or pick up an application in the Guidance Office. Be sure to check online for any updates.

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late registration Deadline
October 11, 2014	**September 12, 2014**	**September 30, 2014**
November 8, 2014	**October 9, 2014**	**October 28, 2014**
December 6, 2014	**November 6, 2014**	**November 24, 2014**
January 24, 2015	**December 29, 2014**	**January 13, 2015**
March 14, 2015	**February 13, 2015**	**March 3, 2015**
May 2, 2015	**April 6, 2015**	**April 21, 2015**
June 6, 2015	**May 8, 2015**	**May 27, 2015**

ACT

www.actstudent.org

Apply on line or pick up an application in the Guidance Office. Be sure to check online for any updates.

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
September 13, 2014	**August 8, 2014**	**Aug. 22, 2014**
October 25, 2014	**September 19, 2014**	**Oct. 3, 2014**
December 13, 2014	**November 7, 2014**	**Nov. 21, 2014**
February 7, 2015	**January 9, 2015**	**Jan. 16, 2015**
April 18, 2015	**March 13, 2015**	**Mar. 27, 2015**
June 13, 2015	**May 8, 2015**	**May 22, 2015**

TCHS Testing Code

It is very important that you be sure to enter Tift County High School's CEEB code (113 005) in the appropriate section of the ACT or SAT registration form so that the TCHS Guidance Office will receive a copy of your scores.

SAT and ACT FEE WAIVERS

To be eligible for a fee waiver, you must be a high school student who

- Is an 11th or 12th grade student, if taking the SAT
- Is a 9th through 12th grade student, if taking the SAT Subject Test.
- Meets one or more of the following requirements...
    - Is enrolled in a free or reduced lunch program.
    - Is enrolled in a program for the economically disadvantaged
    - Family receives public assistance
    - Family lives in federally subsidized public housing
    - Is a resident in a foster home

Number of Fee Waivers Allowed

- Students are eligible for only two SAT registrations and two SAT Subject Test registrations.
- Students are eligible for 2 ACT fee waivers

Fee Waiver Coverage

- The SAT fee waiver covers the registration fee (not late registration fees)
- Four additional flexible score reports
- Up to four College Application Fee Waiver

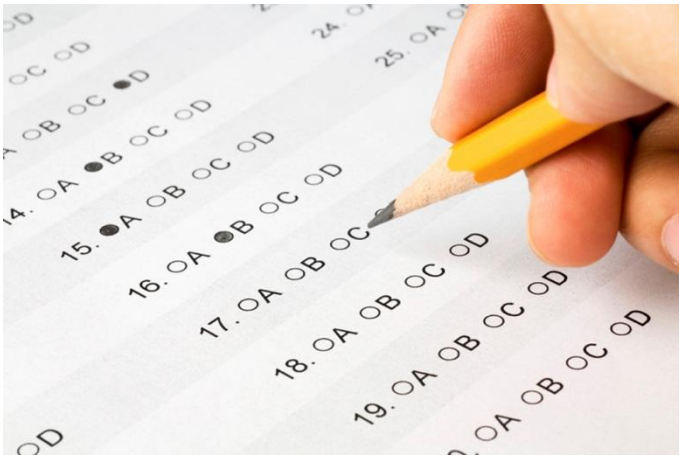
How to Get Your Fee Waiver

- See **Mrs. Couch** in the TCHS Guidance Department.

Registration Process

- Registration using fee waivers can be done on-line or through paper registration
    - ACT = www.actstudent.org
    - SAT = www.collegeboard.com

NOTE: *Fee waivers are distributed on a first come first serve basis.*



Guidance Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the School Counselors?

A-C Paige Wells
D-I Jean Guzman
J-P Dr. Barbara Bryant
Q-Z Tara Miller

Who are the other Guidance Staff?

Registrar- Michele Mitchell
Assistant Registrar – Vivienne Couch

Secretary/Trancripts- Celeste Jackson
School Social Worker- Octavia Faulk

How do I get a copy of my transcript?

- See Mrs. Jackson in the Guidance Office and complete a Transcript Release Form. Allow 2 days. These are FREE for current students.

How can I retrieve my GACollege411 password?

- See Mrs. Jackson or your School Counselor in the Guidance Office.

How can I learn about upcoming college visits?

- These are posted on the Guidance website and in morning announcements.

Do I have to take both the SAT and the ACT?

- No, most colleges accept either test. However, you should always check with your college.

How do I sign up for SAT and/or ACT?

- SAT- www.collegeboard.org ACT- www.actstudent.org
  Or you can pick up a paper application in the Guidance Career Center.

Where can I learn more about HOPE, FAFSA (Financial Aid), NCAA, Late-In, SAT, ACT, and graduation requirements?

- See the TCHS website and attend Financial Aid Night at TCHS.

How do I make an appointment with my School Counselor?

- See Mrs.Jackson for a Guidance Appointment Pass.

Where can I get scholarship information?

- TCHS Website- Scholarship Newsletter updated monthly
- Local (Tift area) Scholarship Packets- distributed to each senior in BDB in January 2015
- College Websites- look at Financial Aid and Scholarship links
- National Searches
- Books and other resources in the Media Center and the Guidance Career Center

HOPE Scholarship Frequently Asked Questions:

1. How do I know what courses count in the HOPE Scholarship GPA calculation?

Please reference the chart at the following link for information on which courses will count in your HOPE Scholarship GPA calculation according to your graduation date.
https://secure.gacollege411.org/images/ga/pdfs/HOPE_Calculation.pdf

2. How do I apply for the Georgia HOPE Scholarship or HOPE Grant programs?

YOU CAN APPLY for HOPE by submitting the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**, or electronically by using **GSFApps** on this website, or completing the paper HOPE Scholarship and Grant Application that is printable from this website.

3. How do I qualify for the Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant (GTEG) program? Do I need a certain grade point average or demonstrate financial need?

The GTEG program is not based on academic merit or achievement and is not a need-based program. A recipient must be enrolled as a full-time student at an eligible private college or university in Georgia and meet other basic eligibility requirements, such as Georgia residency.

4. How do I apply for the Georgia LEAP Grant?

Georgia students apply for the Georgia LEAP Grant program by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid FAFSA). You should also check with the Student Financial Aid Office of the eligible Georgia postsecondary institution you will attend. The school may require you to complete their institutional form for student aid or provide additional information.

5. How can I benefit from the Georgia HOPE Program if I did not graduate from high school with a "B" average?

Although you are not eligible for the HOPE Scholarship as a college freshman, you may be able to enter the program as a college sophomore or above, if you earn a cumulative grade point average of a 3.0 or greater at the college level. In addition, you may benefit from the HOPE Grant, which does not require a certain GPA. The HOPE Grant assists students seeking a technical certificate or diploma, rather than a college degree.

6. How do I check my loan status?

You can check your loan status by visiting www.GAcollege411.org and selecting "Loan Service Center" from the SHORTCUTS menu on the right hand side of the page. You can also call our Customer Relations Department at 1-800-505-4732 from 8:00am – 5:30pm, or check your status anytime using the Interactive Voice Response System which is available 24 hours a day.

7. How do I check my high school HOPE GPA to determine my HOPE eligibility?

To view your high school HOPE GPA calculation report for determining your HOPE eligibility, go to www.GAcollege411.org. Click on "HOPE GPA" on the right side of the webpage.

From: www.GAcollege411.org

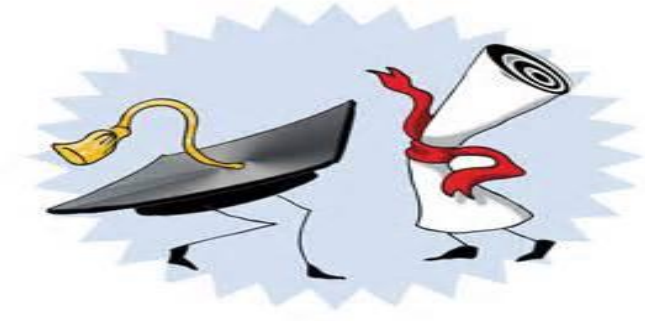
Avoid Senioritis!!

- Keep your eye on the prize. Your goal is to graduate with the strongest grades.
- Approach each day with a positive attitude, no matter how busy you may be.
- Develop time management skills and stay organized.

- Write down all important dates: deadlines for applications, exams, project due dates, activities related to clubs or sports, family or friends.
- Ask questions and seek help from your parents, school counselor, teachers, and BDB advisor. They are here to support you and help you succeed.
- Eat healthy, get exercise each day.
- Turn off your cell phone, iPod, and computer and get some sleep! Don't shortchange yourself with lack of sleep.
- Senior year comes along once in a lifetime, so even though you will be focused on the admissions process and busy with studies, plan time for fun with friends. Relaxation and rest are just as important as pushing yourself to achieve your goals. And, when you walk across **Brodie Field in May**, knowing that your grades are as good as they have ever been, you can hold your head high.
- You're on your way to a successful future career.

TCHS

"Class of 2015"



Credit Recovery

Ask your School Counselor about Credit Recovery Options. This is a great way to get caught up on credits.

Financial Aid for College

What is Financial Aid?

Financial Aid is simply money that comes from someplace other than your family's pockets or bank accounts to play for your education. Financial Aid comes in several forms:

SCHOLARSHIPS- usually awarded for excellence in academics, athletics, volunteer work, the arts; you are not required to pay back a scholarship, but you may have to maintain a certain grade point average to keep the scholarship or renew it if applicable.

GRANTS- usually need based; family and student income is often considered; you are not required to pay back a grant.

LOANS- money you and/or your family borrow. Loans must be paid back by the person taking out the loan. If it is the student, repayment usually begins after graduation from college.

Where does Financial Aid come from?

Financial Aid comes from a variety of sources: the federal government, the state government, colleges and universities, civic groups, churches, individuals, families, etc.

FAFSA

The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The federal government offers money to help students pay for college. This application is available online at www.GACollege411.org or at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA is available on JAN.1st of the year you plan to start college. Be sure to go to www.GACollege411.org and click on Financial Aid Planning.

Scholarship Newsletter

Pick up your updated copy in the Guidance Office today! These are updated regularly and posted on the TCHS website.

Local Scholarships

Local Scholarships are from Tifton area businesses, families, and organizations. Seniors will receive a list of local scholarships by February.

Watch for Financial Aid Scams

Never pay money to apply for a scholarship or for someone to help you search for scholarships!

Helpful Websites

Georgia's one stop shop for students and parents.

www.GACollege411.org

College Entrance Exams

www.collegeboard.com

www.actstudent.org

Military Options

www.militarycareers.com

Scholarship Search

www.scholarships.com

www.fastweb.com

www.finaid.org

Think before you Post!

Make good decisions about what you post online!!

You never know who might be looking…

Warning: Admissions Officers, Scholarship Sponsors, and Future Employers research the Internet. Make sure what they see is suitable for viewing!