

This Book Belongs To:  
«StudentName»

# Belleville West

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## Senior Planning Guide

Provided by:  
Belleville West School Counselors

*Belleville West School Code:*  
*140-265*

# Welcome to Senior Year

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This book is for you, SENIOR! We hope that it will help as you transition to the next phase of life. And, remember, we are here to help you along the way! Don't be afraid to ask!

## Counselor Assignments

Last Name of Student	Counselor	Phone Number	Email
A – D	Ms. McMurray	222-7648	<a href="mailto:jmcmurray@bths201.org">jmcmurray@bths201.org</a>
E - J	Mr. Solomon	222-7671	<a href="mailto:tsolomon@bths201.org">tsolomon@bths201.org</a>
K - P	Ms. Daniels	222-7644	<a href="mailto:jdaniels@bths201.org">jdaniels@bths201.org</a>
S - Q	Mrs. Cryder	222-7646	<a href="mailto:acryder@bths201.org">acryder@bths201.org</a>
T - Z	Mrs. Koeneman	222-7643	<a href="mailto:dkoeneman@bths201.org">dkoeneman@bths201.org</a>
CTE Counselor	Mrs. Guinn	222 -7853	<a href="mailto:aguinn@bths201.org">aguinn@bths201.org</a>
Administrative Assistant	Ms. Clemons	222-7611	<a href="mailto:lclemons@bths201.org">lclemons@bths201.org</a>
Registrar (Transcripts)	Ms. Schraufnagel	222-7676	<a href="mailto:sschrauf@bths201.org">sschrauf@bths201.org</a>

This book is **COLOR CODED** for your viewing pleasure!

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**YELLOW** = All About College

**GREEN** = Financial Aid/Scholarships

**WHITE** = Useful Documents

**BLUE** = Career and Military

**PURPLE** = Notes

# CHECK US OUT

## *On Social!*



**bwcounselors**



**@bwcounselors**



**BW School Counseling Office**



Google Classroom

**Class of 2026 SENIORS**  
**join code wf4efqz**

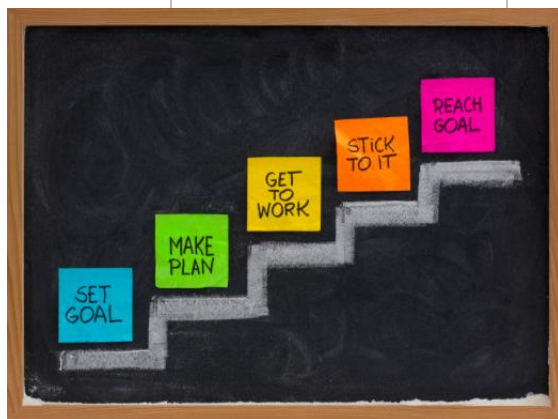
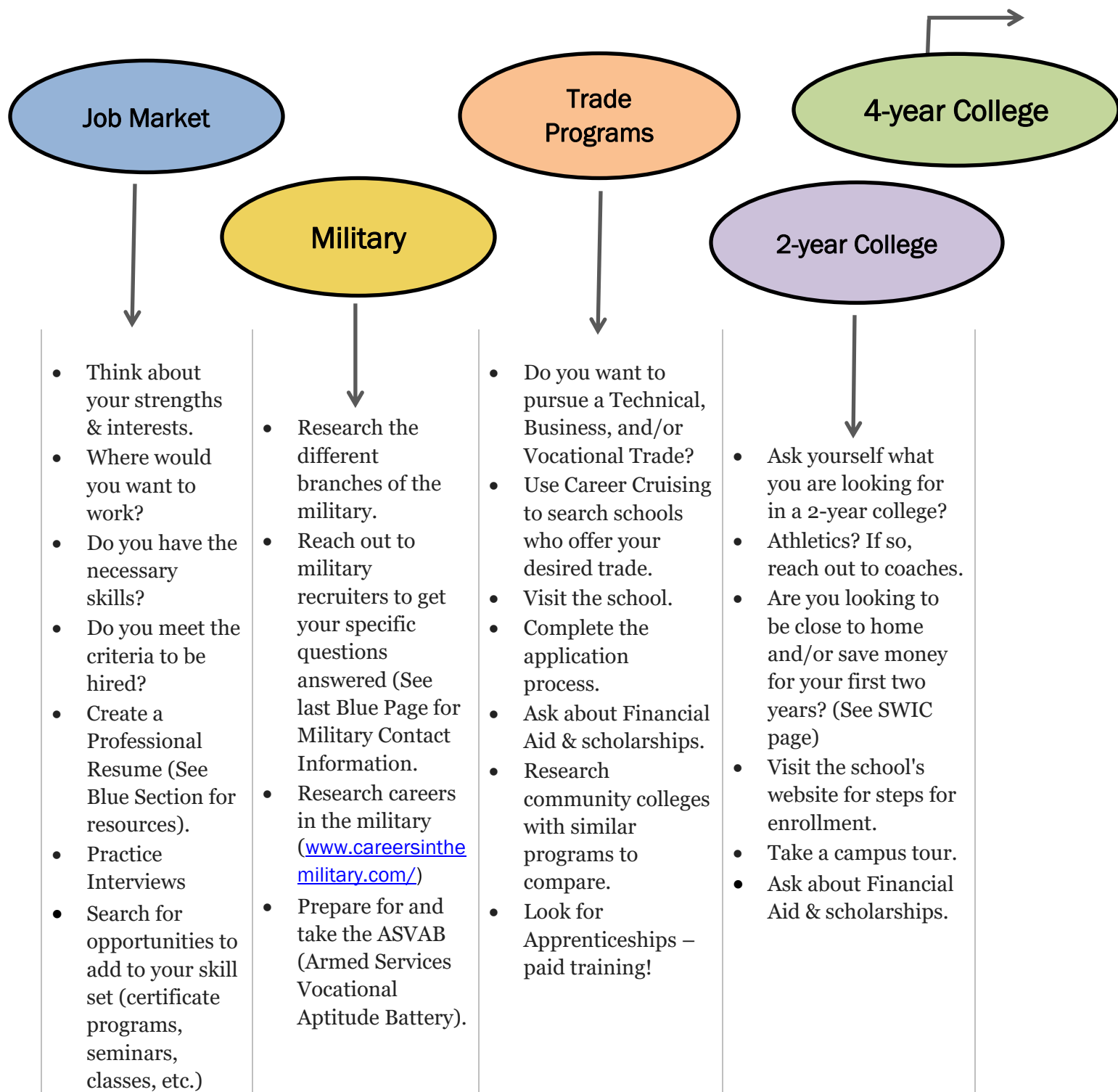
**Social Media Tip for Seniors - Clean up your social media!**

Selective schools and scholarship programs check your cyber footprint, so get those unflattering photos and posts off the web!

# *Choose Your Path*

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# COLLEGE

## PLANNING TIMELINE

### Fall Senior Year

- Make a list of 3-5 schools.
- Attend College Rep Visits & Onsite Events
- Register & take (re-take) the Fall ACT or SAT exam
- Meet with your School Counselor for Individual Senior Conference
- Request letters of recommendation
- Write & Revise Essays
- Apply for a FSA ID & Pin Number
- Apply for Financial Aid at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) (opens Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>)
- Submit applications (recommended by Halloween)
- Set up Parchment account and request Official Transcripts
- Go on College Visits
- Begin your scholarship search (Green section).
- Register for AP Exams

### Spring Senior Year

- All applications AND transcripts should be submitted by now.
- Create a calendar of upcoming events & deadlines
- Continue scholarship search
- Take a second look at the schools to which you've been admitted
- Take AP Exams if applicable
- Consider financial aid packages
- In May, complete Senior Survey
- Use Parchment to order Final Transcript "on hold" for grades
- Begin the enrollment process at your school of choice

### Summer Senior Year

- Make a college budget
- Keep tabs on college bills & scholarships
- Attend orientation
- Complete enrollment process
- Pay any required deposits for college classes and housing
- Meet your roommate(s)
- Request transcripts for dual credit classes and/or AP scores to be sent to your college

# ACT & SAT Dates & Deadlines

## Upcoming SAT Dates

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
Sep 13, 2025	Aug 29, 2025	Sep 2, 2025
Oct 4, 2025	Sep 19, 2025	Sep 23, 2025
Nov 8, 2025	Oct 24, 2025	Oct 28, 2025
Dec 6, 2025	Nov 21, 2025	Nov 25, 2025
Mar 14, 2026	Feb 27, 2026	Mar 3, 2026
May 2, 2026	Apr 17, 2026	Apr 21, 2026
Jun 6, 2026	May 22, 2026	May 26, 2026

REGISTER ONLINE at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

## Upcoming ACT Dates

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
Sep 6, 2025	Aug 1, 2025	Aug 19, 2025
Oct 18, 2025	Sep 12, 2025	Sep 30, 2025
Dec 13, 2025	Sep 12, 2025	Nov 24, 2025
Feb 14, 2026	Jan 9, 2026	Jan 23, 2026
Apr 11, 2026	Mar 6, 2026	Mar 24, 2026
Jun 13, 2026	May 8, 2026	May 29, 2026
Jul 11, 2026	Jun 5, 2026	Jun 24, 2026

REGISTER ONLINE at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)



## FREE On the Spot College Admissions



## College Rep Visitor Calendar



SCAN ME

## *College Search - Where to Start*

<https://portal.il.cis360.org>

Login using Clever and navigate using the tabs at the top  
-Take surveys to help with career search (Self-Survey)  
-Discover training opportunities (Education)  
-Work on your resume and prepare for interviews (Employment)

[Bigfuture.org](http://Bigfuture.org)

Click FIND COLLEGES, then COLLEGE SEARCH to narrow down your college choices, also find testing info, college planning tips and more

[O\\*Net Interest Profiler -  
mynextmove.org/explore/ip](http://O*Net Interest Profiler - mynextmove.org/explore/ip)

Interest inventory, career match

[College Navigator -](http://College Navigator - nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

[nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

College Search, Tuition Comparison, and various resources

[Niche.com/colleges](http://Niche.com/colleges)

College and Scholarship Search

[Visit Individual College Websites:](http://Visit Individual College Websites:)

Admission info, cost, size, campus life, majors offered, etc.

[Campusreel.org](http://Campusreel.org)

Use your Gmail acct to log in & view short video clips taken by actual students at the college.

<http://campustours.com/>

Virtual tours of college campuses



# 10 Tips for a College Visit

1. Take the Admissions Campus Tour.
2. Eat in the cafeteria & converse with current students.
3. Sit in on a class or two and schedule a meeting with an instructor.
4. Learn about extracurricular interests.
5. Check out the campus facilities.
6. Explore the campus through the lens of campus media.
7. Visit the outside community.
8. Take photos and notes during your visit.
9. Questions, questions, questions – no question is a stupid question.
10. Follow your gut feeling about the campus.



## Campus Visit Guide

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide>

# THE APPLICATION PROCESS

## Ways To Apply

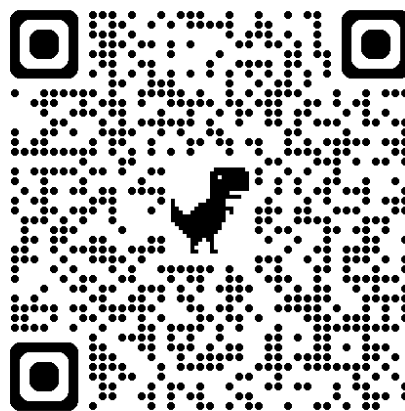
### Individual College Websites

- Navigate to the school's website
- Find the APPLY tab or button and begin

### Common Application

Some students may have to (or choose to) apply through **Common App**: [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

- Used by over 1,000 colleges
- How to get Started (follow QR code)



### Don't forget your Transcript!

No application is complete without the official transcript – sent through Parchment.

# THE APPLICATION PROCESS

## Other Tips & Tricks

### Types of Schools

- Understand the admission rates and criteria & be realistic about how you may fit.

### 3 TYPES OF SCHOOLS

WHEN APPLYING FOR COLLEGE:

- SAFETY SCHOOLS
- TARGET SCHOOLS
- REACH SCHOOLS

#### "SAFETY" SCHOOLS

- Higher admissions rate
- Student surpasses requirements

#### "TARGET" SCHOOLS

- Student has better than 50/50 odds
- Academic profile fits average student

#### "REACH" SCHOOLS

- Lower admissions rate
- High academic ranges and requirements

### Personal Information:

- Brag on yourself, but not too hard
- Highlight what makes you special or different
- Talk about extracurriculars and academic rigor
- Show your passions

### Proofread & Meet Deadlines:

- Be sure to proofread, check for accuracy, proper spelling, capitalization, etc.
- Have a parent or at least one other person proof.
- Be aware & meet deadlines

# For Prospective College Athletes



## Core Course GPA Requirements:

DI – 2.3    DII – 2.2

### *It is your responsibility to:*

1. Understand and meet the eligibility requirements set forth by NCAA.

Student Athlete Guide Book

[http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility\\_center/Student\\_Resources/CBSA.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Student_Resources/CBSA.pdf)

List of NCAA Courses at District 201

<https://web3.ncaa.org/hsportal/exec/hsAction>



2. Register yourself and pay the registration fee at

<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future>



3. Send your test scores to the Eligibility Center by entering the Center code **9999** on your registration materials.

4. Use Parchment to send your transcripts to: NCAA Eligibility Center – you will need your NCAA ID number.

### **DIVISION I 16 Core Courses**

- 4 years of English.
- 3 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 1 year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy).

### **DIVISION II 16 Core Courses**

- 3 years of English.
- 2 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 3 years of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy).

Visit NCAA website for details on GPA and Test Score Requirements

<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future>



**TO ENROLL PLEASE FOLLOW THE 3 STEP PROCESS BELOW**

**1**

### GET A STUDENT ID NUMBER

[NEW STUDENTS  
APPLY NOW!](#)

[RETURNING  
STUDENTS](#)

[VISITING  
STUDENTS](#)

**2**

### SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION AND MEET WITH AN ADVISOR

Meet with an [Academic Advisor](#) to discuss degree or certificate requirements, course placement, and class selection. Prepare for your visit by setting up your [eSTORM](#) and [SWIC email](#) accounts.

[MEET WITH ADVISOR](#)

[SET UP ESTORM ACCOUNT](#)

[SET UP EMAIL ACCOUNT](#)

Show proof of [residency](#) at Enrollment Services. Send official high school and/or college transcripts to Enrollment Services, [2500 Carlyle Ave., Belleville, IL 62221](#) or electronically through Parchment, Nat'l Student Clearinghouse or Joint Services Transcripts.

[ENROLLMENT SERVICES WEBSITE](#)

[DIRECTIONS TO ENROLLMENT SERVICES](#)

**3**

### MAKE PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Apply for financial aid, military benefits, SWIC scholarships, or make payment arrangements.

[HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID](#)

[MILITARY BENEFITS](#)

[SCHOLARSHIPS](#)

[PAYMENT ARRANGMENTS](#)

**START HERE**



# ***Paying for College***

Mark Your Calendars!

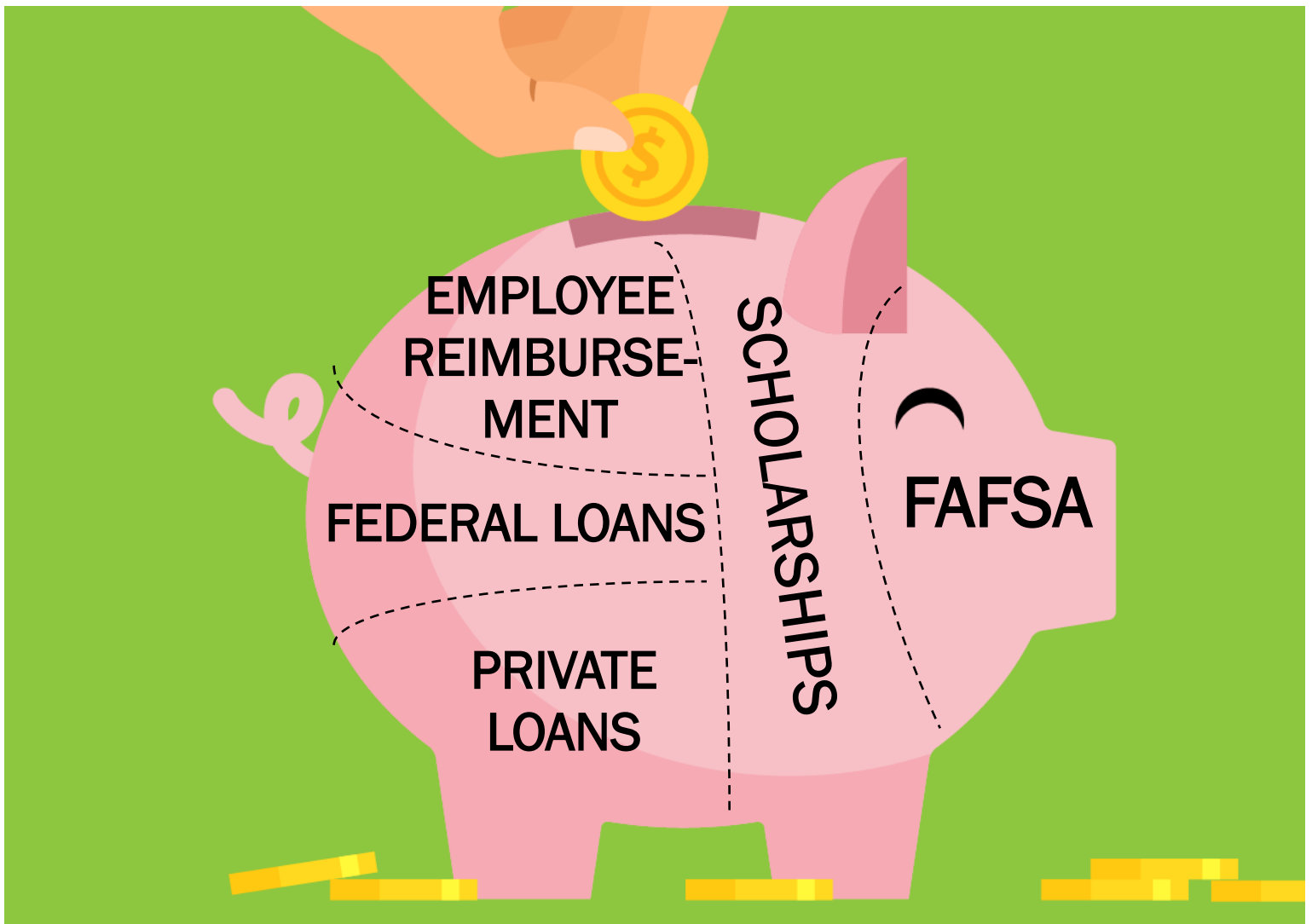
Financial Aid Session  
**October 8<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm**  
Belleville West PAC

FAFSA Completion Workshop

**TBD**

Watch Email for Info

## WAYS TO GET MONEY FOR COLLEGE





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The Illinois State Board of Education has **MANDATED** that the  
Free Application for Federal Student Aid be filled.

**THIS IS A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT**

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### WHAT IS FAFSA?

- FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

### WHEN SHOULD YOU COMPLETE FAFSA?

- The application will open **October 1st**
- Awards made until funds are depleted - FIRST COME FIRST SERVED!
- College Deadline—Check with the college(s) you are interested in attending.

### WHERE DO YOU APPLY?

- You must apply online at *www.fafsa.gov*
- To request a paper application call 1-800-433-3243

### WHAT CAN I DO NOW?

- Students and parents can apply NOW for a FSA ID number at  
*http://fsaid.ed.gov*.

### WHAT IF I'M UNSURE ABOUT MY PLANS, DO I STILL NEED TO FILL OUT FAFSA?

- No, non-participation forms are available in the counseling office, C109, and online at *https://www.isac.org/pd/fafsa-mandate.html*.
  - Once completed, email a copy to [BWRegistrar@BTHS201.org](mailto:BWRegistrar@BTHS201.org) or drop it off at C109.



The Counseling Office is pleased to offer  
another FREE Resource:

**ISAC Representative EVERY Thursday**  
during lunch hours



# Financial Aid FAQ

## Who is eligible to receive federal student aid?

- a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen with a high school diploma or GED
- males must be registered with the selective service
- individuals who demonstrate financial need (except for unsubsidized Stafford Loans)

## How much financial aid am I eligible to receive?

-Eligibility for aid depends on your:

- expected family contribution (EFC)
- year in school
- enrollment status (full time/part time)
- cost of attendance at the school you will be attending



## Federal Student Aid Programs

The U.S. Department of Education awards more than \$120 billion a year in grants, work-study funds, and loans to more than 13 million students. *Federal student aid* covers such expenses as tuition and fees, *room and board*, books and supplies, and transportation. Aid also can help pay for other related expenses, such as a computer and dependent care. Thousands of schools across the country participate in the *federal student aid programs*; ask the schools you're interested in whether they do!

*Federal student aid includes:*



**Grants** are usually based on financial need and don't have to be repaid.



**Loans** are an investment in your future. But remember, they must be repaid with interest.



A **work-study** job lets you earn money while you're in school.

# Scholarships

## Scholarships Are Everywhere!

There are inside sources for scholarships and outside sources.

- **Inside Scholarship Sources:** school, place of employment, and local churches/organizations.

*The School Counseling Office posts these weekly on our website.* →



- **Outside Scholarship Sources:** use search engines to find more information on a larger scope.



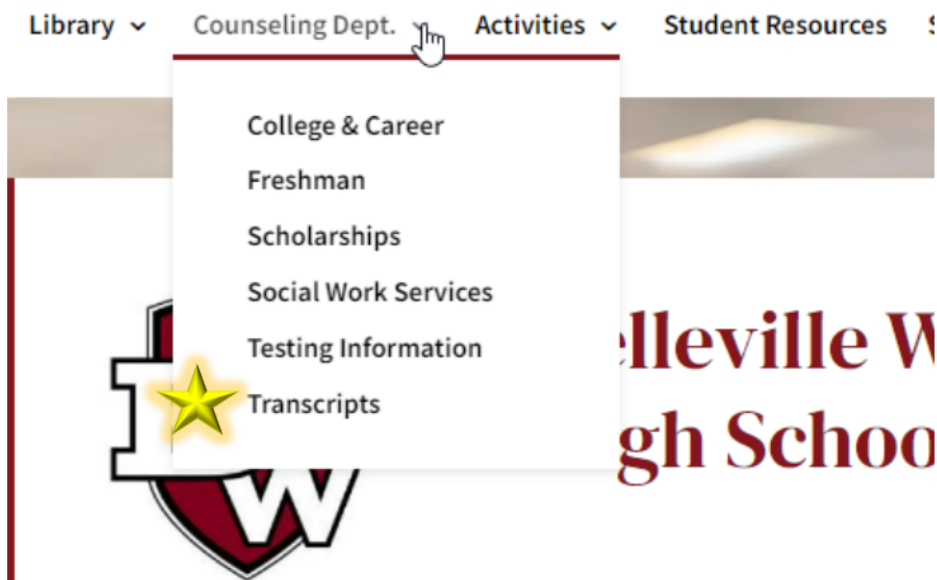
# Scholarship Tips

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- ✓ Be prepared to INVEST time and effort.
- ✓ Look for scholarships provided through your college of choice.
- ✓ Research local FIRST (BW Counseling list, unions, membership organizations, parent & student employers).
- ✓ Be sure you meet the qualifications.
- ✓ Online searches are great resources – GOOGLE it!
- ✓ Read the directions CAREFULLY!
- ✓ Be aware of college deadlines and required documents (i.e. admissions, financial aid forms, and scholarships, etc.)
- ✓ Keep letters of recommendation and transcripts on hand so you don't have to request new ones for each application.
- ✓ Be neat.
- ✓ Never Pay to Apply.
- ✓ Apply ON TIME!
- ✓ Apply, Apply, Apply! The more you apply, the better your odds.
- ✓ Always be sure all pieces of the application are included (and in the requested order).
- ✓ Prepare a scholarship resume and prepare for interviews.

# Transcript Request

BTHS 201 has partnered with Parchment to send your official transcript quickly and securely to outside institutions.



Information can be found on the Belleville West website within the Counseling Department drop-down.

Seniors also receive bi-weekly emails titled *“Transcript Info”*

## TEST SCORES

- State required SAT scores are automatically included on transcripts. Other test scores from National SAT and ACT test dates may not automatically be included.

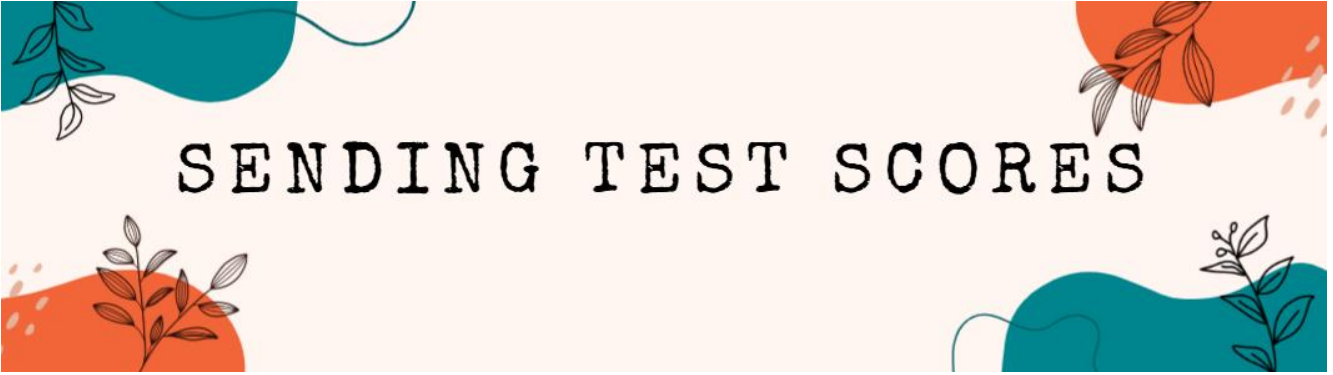
## PARENTAL CONSENT/ COMPLIANCE WITH FERPA

- Students under 18 must have a Transcript Release & Consent form signed by a parent or legal guardian on file.
- When a student turns 18, or graduates, ALL rights regarding records transfer to the student.

## OTHER INFORMATION

- All transcript orders are **FREE** when obtained through the school or sent electronically through Parchment while enrolled within District 201.
- Official Transcripts will **NOT** be released a PERSONAL or a Student's BTHS email address. Colleges and state/federal facilities will not accept self-printed copies as official.

If you have questions regarding your transcript, test scores, or Parchment, should contact their Counselor or the campus Registrar.



# SENDING TEST SCORES

## **ACT Scores:**

- Log into [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)
- Send scores through your account.
- For help, text ACT Help at 202-988-4996
- Your school day test scores will be on your official transcript (unless you request removal)

## **SAT Scores:**

- Log into [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- Send scores through your account.
- For help, call SAT Help at 888-SAT-HELP (888-728-4357)

## **AP Scores**

- Log into [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org); and click MY AP
- Send scores through your account.

# Letter of Recommendation



## THE PROCESS...

### 1. Fill out a Letter of Recommendation Request Form

*(paper copy attached & electronic version available on BW Counseling website or by following this QR Code -*



### 2. Give to the person you would like to write your letter

*Letters can come from school, community or church  
Pick the person that knows you **BEST***

### 3. DO NOT simply drop a form into a teacher's mailbox or email. Approach them face to face during their free time.

### 4. Allow that person 2 weeks to complete the letter

### 5. Write your recommender a brief note of thanks

### 6. We **STRONGLY** urge you to waive the right to review, if they ask, because a confidential letter has more credibility

# Letter of Recommendation Request

Students - Please complete about yourself and give to the person who you have identified as someone who knows you well.

Please ask your recommenders if they are able and willing to write a letter for you, and give them two weeks notice.

## I. Section One- Recommendation Information

Student Legal Name \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Name to be used in letter \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Pronoun to be used in letter \_\_\_\_\_  
{Note – Recommender will need to refer to Student Legal Name one time to assure matching to application.}

I need this letter for (circle one)      admissions      scholarship      other (please explain)

Name of the college/university/scholarship/organization \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date you are submitting the recommendation request \_\_\_\_\_

Date you need the recommendation letter \_\_\_\_\_ (note: please allow at least two weeks)

When the letter is completed (please circle):    return to me    mail the letter    e-submit the letter    other

Address (mail or electronic) to be sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## II. Section Two- Academic Background

Please describe your proudest achievement in school. Give specific details on the achievement and indicate why you were proud of this particular accomplishment. The more specific you are, the better the letter will be!

Describe your leadership in the classroom. How do you display characteristics that set you apart from your peers? Be specific! Just answering “hard work” or “tried my best” will not make for an interesting letter.

What are your future plans? Please include short and long term goals, what you plan to study/college major, your ideal career, etc.



### **III. Section Three- Co-Curricular Information**

Please list any co-curricular activities in which you have been actively involved during high school.

Describe the leadership roles you have had in co-curricular activities. Please indicate how you were selected for the leadership role (peer election, nomination, appointment by adviser)

Describe your leadership characteristics. Give SPECIFIC examples of leadership such as new initiatives for the club, working with fellow club members, specific tasks you accomplished. Explain how you LED and not just participated in the activity.

### **IV. Other information.**

Please indicate any other information you would like included. Community service, employment, groups outside school, scouting, awards, etc.

Is there anything unique about you that you would like to share?



Mrs. Guinn  
District CTE Counselor  
[aguinn@bths201.org](mailto:aguinn@bths201.org)

Not sure what you want to do after high school? Need help with financing training or college? Not sure if college is right for you?

You may be thinking about a path which does not include a 4 year college. Remember there are many ways to reach your destination. Here are some options:

1. **Earn while you Learn:** In-demand career fields like healthcare and technology, construction and manufacturing provide opportunities to train you and pay you at the same time. These can also be traditional apprenticeship opportunities in the manufacturing or construction related fields. Follow QR Code and find the [Apprenticeship/Internship Resource page](#) section for more info.
2. **2 Year College/Trade School:** Students enter trade school or a community college to begin their studies and earn certificates for careers requiring short term training. Students will often go on to 4 year colleges from the community college.
3. **Military:** Many students choose a path in the military right after high school. Some want lifelong careers in the service while others use that opportunity to help them pay for college.
4. **Choose all of the above.** Some students will choose a little from each of the 4 options above to help them reach their career goals.

All links can be found on the District #201 College and Career Readiness website.

<https://sites.google.com/bths201.org/collegeandcareerreadiness/home>



# CAREER Pathways

## **Straight to Work After High School Graduation**

- Spend some time putting together short and long term career goals
- Investigate different pathways to reaching your goals
- Get some help with putting together your professional resume
- Practice Interviewing
- Attend local career fairs
- Develop a LinkedIn profile
- Clean Up Social Media prior to applying for positions
- Develop a customized cover letter & resume for each position you are applying
- Identify a few people who might be able to serve as a strong reference for you
- Investigate ways to gain industry credentials and training while you are working

# ***Going on an Interview? Applying?***

- Use NETWORKING skills
  - Contact people you know working at the desired company
  - Try to get a personal referral; personal referrals go a long way!
  - Check out the [listing of companies](#) who are hiring Belleville District #201 students. The list is in the student bulletin & on the school website! It is updated frequently.
- Make a Resume
  - Most applications are done online, so have your resume on hand and formatted to be copied and pasted in an online data system
  - Check out the [Belleville District #201 College and Career website](#) to help with resume writing
- Dress like you are getting the job!
  - When turning in your application or resume dress like you are getting an on the spot interview - Dress professionally!
  - Wear a nice collared or button down shirt and slacks
  - Make sure they remember you and not what you are wearing
  - Be polite & courteous
- Silence and put your cell phone in a pocket or purse
- BE CONFIDENT! Smile! Relax!
- Follow up!
  - After you apply, wait a few days and call once to check on the status of your application



# Military Contacts



## **Air Force**

St. Claire Plaza  
10885 Lincoln Trail  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208  
618-293-0003 – office

## **Air Force Reserve**

2400 East Drive  
Scott Air Force Base, IL 62225  
618-781-2289 – office cell phone

## **Army**

St. Claire Plaza  
10885 Lincoln Trail  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208  
618-398-2276 – office

## **Army ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps)**

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Edwardsville, IL 62026  
618-650-2518 – office

## **Coast Guard**

10712 West Florissant Ave.  
St. Louis, Mo 63136  
314-521-3845 – office

## **Illinois Air National Guard**

St. Claire Plaza  
525 Lincoln Hwy Suite 19  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208  
618-222-5709 – office

## **Air Force ROTC**

SLU - 3631 Forest Park Avenue  
St. Louis, Mo 63108  
314-977-8227 – office

## **Army National Guard**

St. Claire Plaza  
525 Lincoln Hwy Suite 23B Fairview Heights, IL 62205  
618-606-4443 cell

## **Marines**

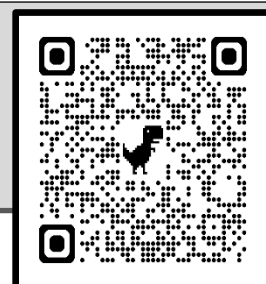
10885 Lincoln Trail  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208  
618-398-2356 – office

## **Navy**

10885 Lincoln Trail  
Fairview Heights, IL 62208  
618-394-0312 – office

The **ASVAB** (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) is a required test to be admitted into any branch of the military. You can take the practice ASVAB, as well as the official ASVAB, with a recruiter.

## **Study Guide:**



# *What young MEN should know...*

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Registering with Selective Service (also known as the draft):

Young men **MUST** register- *IT'S THE LAW!*

- Fill out a registration form within 30 days of your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- It's easy to register! 3 different ways:
  1. Enter your information at <http://www.sss.gov>
  2. Complete, sign & return the card you may get in the mail
  3. Or fill out an SSS registration form at a Post Office.

*Do your country—and YOURSELF—a favor.*

*Register with the Selective Service  
within 30 days of your 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday!*



# Notes

Use this section to track your top colleges, top careers, admissions requirements, scholarships, questions for your high school counselor or admissions representative, upcoming college visits, etc.



Your counselor will send an email link the first week of **October** for you to select an appointment slot

- **Homework Assignment**

- Career = 2-3 career choices
- College = 5-10 college choices
- Military = branch selected





## Notes

[illegible]