

COUNTDOWN TO GRADUATION

GRADE NINE

Fall

You will get to know your counselor, counseling department staff, and be introduced to Walter Johnson's College/Career Center. Your counselor will visit your Social Studies Classes to answer any questions you have about High School, MCPS levels of attainment, and the four years ahead of you. Remember to get the best grades possible for a good start to high school. The grades earned in ninth grade are part of your official high school transcript.

- Participate in school extracurricular activities.
- Take the PSAT if appropriate.
- Improve your writing, reading, and test-taking skills.
- Become familiar with the Walter Johnson web page, the Counseling web page and the College/Career Center web page, at www.walterjohnson.com.

Spring

You will meet with your counselor to plan next years schedule and review your academic progress.

- Work on earning your student service learning hours.
- Check out the job listings or summer programs listed on the Career Center web page.

GRADE TEN

Fall

You will take in Career Interest Inventories with your Health class, and learn more about the College/Career Center at WJ. Continue to track yourself along with MCPS levels of attainment.

- Extend your participation in extracurricular activities.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT offered at WJ each October.
- Find out what kinds of post-secondary schools offer the education you need to meet your career/interest plans.
- Start and develop a resume of activities and references.

Spring

You will meet with your counselor to plan next year's program to reflect your interests and school progress.

- Consider career and technology course offerings at the Thomas Edison High School of Technology.
- Consult with teachers about taking the SAT II tests in subjects you have completed.
- Continue earning student service learning hours during the summer.
- Check the WJ College/Career Center web page for summer jobs and opportunities.

GRADE ELEVEN

Fall

- Register for the PSAT/NMSQT offered at WJ each October. JUNIORS MUST TAKE THE PSAT TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ANY NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP STATUS.
- Think about taking an SAT prep course.
- Read "Countdown to Careers and College" on the Career Center web page or posted in the Counseling Office.
- Attend career presentations sponsored by your school, MCPS, and through the business community.
- Continue to track yourself along with the MCPS levels of attainment.
- Acquire part-time volunteer or job experiences related to career plans.
- Monitor your student service learning hours.
- Meet with post-secondary school representatives who visit the WJ College/Career Center.
- Get information on apprenticeship programs, trade and technical schools, if interested.

Spring – Grade 11

- Consider career goals as you select classes.
- Plan next year’s program to enhance prospects for employment opportunities and post-secondary school admission.
- Register for ACT and /or SAT I/SAT II.
- Consider an internship for your senior year.
- Make an appointment with the College/Career Center to do a computer search to identify appropriate post-secondary schools.
- Make sure you receive and look through the College Compass Points folder of information from your counselor.
- Attend college fairs and school-sponsored programs. Confer with your counselor about post-secondary plans.
- Attend career information programs.
- Spend time in the College/Career Center exploring materials. Continue checking the Career Center web page for updated information.
- Assemble a file of materials collected from post-secondary schools and those distributed by the Walter Johnson Counseling Department.
- Further develop your resume/personal references.
- Continue earning student service learning hours if needed. Consider completing this requirement before grade 12.
- Talk to teachers and staff about college/careers.
- Start thinking about making campus visits to post-secondary institutions.

GRADE TWELVE

Summer/Fall

- Make an appointment with your counselor for you and your parents to discuss post secondary plans and to review high school records including all graduation requirements.
- If you did not make an appointment with the College/Career Center in the spring of your Junior year to do a college search and discuss post-secondary plans, do so, now.
- Request applications from post-secondary schools. Set up a file system for information you receive.
- Make campus visits to post-secondary institutions.
- Register to ACT, SAT I/SAT II.
- Stay abreast of all scholarship opportunities by visiting the Career Center web page, and checking the internet.
- Continue working on your resume.
- Draft a generic essay for college applications.
- Fill out college applications as they become available.
- Complete and remaining students service learning hours.
- Talk to admission representatives who visit WJ’s College/Career Center.

Fall

- Familiarize yourself with Walter Johnson’s transcript procedures and follow instructions from the Registrar.
- Continue to access all college/career information available in the College/Career Center. Browse through the materials.
- Seek letters of recommendation, if needed. Give teachers and counselors sufficient notice.
- Fill out applications for college well in advance of each college’s deadline.
- Request a midyear transcript to be sent to your colleges by February 1.
- DON’T STRESS OUT!

December – Grade 12

- Most parents complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA – mail after January 1 or complete the online version) and other financial forms as required by the post secondary schools. Be sure to check to see which forms are required and complete/mail by their deadlines!!!
- Make sure the CSS Profile is filled out for colleges that require it.

Spring – Grade 12

- Maintain good grades and good attendance.
- Notify your counselor of your applications status as you hear from colleges.
- Request a final transcript to be sent to the college you will attend in the fall.
- Notify the colleges you are not planning to attend.
- Thank your Parents, Teachers, Counselor, College/Career Coordinator, and others for all the help and support they have given you.

Make Your High School Years Memorable!

- **READ** – The more you read the better prepared you are for the world of work and college
- **WRITE** – Improve your writing skills as much as you can. The ability to communicate on the job and in college is vital.
- **DEVELOP** – Develop good study habits, time management and decision-making skills.
- **CHOOSE YOUR SUBJECTS WISELY** – Continue taking college prep mathematics, science and foreign language courses.