



School District of Niagara
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Dear Students and Parents of the Class of 2020:

WELCOME TO YOUR SENIOR YEAR! Finally, it's your chance to be the oldest and wisest students in the school! I want to share some upcoming dates that are very important for your Senior Year. Parents, please keep this list in a safe place, so that you can refer to it later.

College Applications: The University of Wisconsin System will accept applications beginning September 1st, 2020. All Private and Technical Colleges also begin accepting applications around that date. It is extremely important that your applications are sent in early. I ***strongly*** recommend your College applications be submitted by November 15th. Some Colleges, Technical Colleges, and programs have been closing earlier than in past years. Seniors are encouraged to apply on-line, this process is faster and allows you to apply to more than one school at the same time. Be sure that you let me know that you have applied for a college so I can send your transcripts, ACT Scores, and money (if you didn't pay online). The following websites have updated admission requirements (be sure to familiarize yourself with the specific requirements as each school may vary and be different than our own High School graduation requirements), campus tours and preview day information, applications, tuition reciprocity, and much, much more:

University of Wisconsin School System: www.apply.Wisconsin.edu
Wisconsin Technical Colleges: www.witechcolleges.org
Wisconsin Private Colleges & Universities: www.wisconsinmentor.org
Information on over 5,500 Institutions: www.anycollege.net
Virtual Tours www.eCampusTours.com
University of Wisconsin School Info. www.uwhelp.wisconsin.edu
Minnesota-Wisconsin Tuition Reciprocity www.heab.state.wi.us/mnwiapp.html
University of Minnesota Application Status Check <http://admissions.tc.umn.edu>

Scholarships: Bi-weekly I will post Scholarship information I receive in the mail, on my school website or on remind. **Local Scholarship applications will not be available until approx. January/February of 2020.** Enclosed with this letter is the best national scholarship search website I've encountered, www.fastweb.com. This FREE scholarship search will connect you with hundreds of nationwide scholarship applications. Other Scholarship Search Websites:

www.wiredscholar.com www.collegenet.com/mach25
www.gocollege.com

It's important to note the **warning signs** for **scholarship scams**: 1) you have to pay a fee 2) money back guarantee 3) credit card/bank account information required 4) offers exclusive information. If this is the case for the scholarship you are interested in, I strongly recommend that you do not use their services. More often than not, they are a scam. Also be very careful about information such as "Who's Who Among American High School Students." They will charge a lot of money to have a very tiny picture put in their book.

Xello: Xello is an excellent tool to help every senior. Through Xello each senior has the ability to research colleges and careers in addition to requesting e-transcripts be sent to colleges. I strongly urge each senior to utilize this new tool.

Accuplacer Skills Assessment: This assessment is given to juniors and seniors who have already applied to Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. Students must meet the benchmarks that are set by the Instructors and Deans. The Assessment can be taken online at NWTC. Students need to have testing and transcripts sent to the Colleges at least two weeks prior to applying. When these items are received and loaded pre-application, the system will be able to tell the students right away if they are accepted or missing information.

Compass: This assessment is given to seniors who have already applied to Bay de Noc College. All students entering Bay de Noc must have taken either the ACT or Compass assessment. The Compass assessment is a free service offered by Bay College and is administered by the college. To prepare for this assessment go to:
<http://www.act.org/compass/sample/index.html>.

ACT (American College Test): The ACT is required for admission to practically any university or four-year college in the Midwest. It is the preferred test of the UW System. The ACT was given to all juniors last year but can be taken again. For test dates please come to the guidance office. Registration packets are available in High School Guidance Office or by registering online at <http://www.act.org>. This website allows students to access information on registration, test preparation, test dates and deadlines, the new Writing Test Option, costs, and much more. The cost is \$39.50 (no writing); \$56.50 (Plus writing). This is a very important test as colleges use it as their entrance exam, therefore students should not take it lightly!! Study, Study, Study!! There are practice tests available on-line and in the Guidance Office.

SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test): The SAT is very similar to the ACT, in that it is required for admission to four-year colleges and universities on the East and West coast. If you want more information on the SAT, please stop in. I also have these registration packets available beginning in August. Again, I strongly recommend you take this test as soon as possible. Stop in the Guidance Office for test dates. The writing segment is mandatory for all SAT 1-test takers as part of the assessment. For more information on the new SAT 1, go to www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/newsat/about.html.

ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery): This test is open to all interested Juniors and Seniors. The test is administered at school during the school day on November 9th. There is no charge. The Armed Services uses this test as a recruiting tool. It also provides an excellent career exploration service, which will enable you to match your interests, abilities and personal preferences to over 200 civilian and military occupations. You can also use your ASVAB results with *Military Careers*, a career information resource, to determine your chances of qualifying for different military occupations. **Even if you are not considering the military, this can be a valuable assessment.** The ASVAB Test will be scheduled in November.

Campus Visits: Students are strongly encouraged to visit campuses of schools they are interested in attending. You can set up your own campus visit (preferred/faster) OR ask me to set up a campus visit for you. All of the campus visit dates I receive are posted outside the High School Guidance Office.

Recruiters: Throughout the school year, recruiters from Universities, Colleges, Trade Schools, Technical Colleges, and the Military will come to Niagara High School to meet with interested students. Whenever possible, there will be announcements made, asking students to sign up in the High School Guidance Office.

Selective Service: All males are reminded to register at age 18 with the Selective Service at www.sss.gov

Financial Aid Night: Will be in October. The meeting generally lasts one hour with time for questions afterwards. **This meeting is strongly recommended to any students/parents considering post-secondary education.** No one can apply for Financial Aid until their 2016 income taxes are completed. This year you should begin filling out the FAFSA on October 1st. Many colleges have set a “priority date” meaning that if you have not applied for Financial Aid by that date, you may not get Financial Aid. Here are a few websites to refer to:
www.mheso.state.mn.us/calculator/initialform.cfm
www.finaid.org www.studentaid.ed.gov www.nasfaa.org
www.ed.gov/pubs/collegecosts www.fafsa.ed.gov (federal aid application)

I’m certain there will be more information available throughout the school year, but for now, that’s it! If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 251-4541 ext. 232 or e-mail me at spetschar@niagara.k12.wi.us.

Sincerely,

Sherri A. Petschar, PK-12 School Guidance Counselor