Counseling Chronicles

NEW CANAAN HIGH SCHOOL — NOVEMBER 2026

FIRST ¼ DOWN!

The first quarter closed on October 27. Report cards will be available on November 5. Encourage your child to reach out to their counselor or teacher if they are struggling. The Writing Center, Math Center, and Peer Tutoring Program are all fantastic resources!

JUNIORS

Mark your calendars! **Junior Parent Night** will be held Thursday, November 19 at 6pm. This event will serve as a kickoff to the postsecondary planning process and give parents the opportunity to meet with their child's counselor to review next steps and what to expect for their juniors as they begin to think about life beyond NCHS.

CollegeBoard PSAT scores have been released, and we are approaching the time to begin prepping for the SAT, which all juniors will take in March.
All students must create a CollegeBoard account. Through this account, they can access Khan Academy and SchoolHouse, two free resources that provide personalized tutoring and practice SATs.
School Counselors will be meeting with juniors during Building Block on **Wednesday, December 9** to begin the post-high school planning process. We will discuss PSAT scores and future testing (as well as many other topics!) in these groups.

FRESHMEN

On October 9, all freshmen met with their counselors to complete a Learning & Productivity assessment. This activity helped students to better understand their preferred environments and ways to approach learning and studying. Ask to see their results!

We met again with all ninth graders during Building Block on October 28 to begin discussing their four-year academic plans in advance of their freshman appointments. These one-on-one meetings with each student and their counselor will begin this month. In this meeting, we will discuss your child's transition to high school and goals for their time at NCHS; the preliminary four-year plan will be sent home.

SOPHOMORES

How are you getting involved in the NCHS community? It's not too late to join a club or pursue extracurricular areas of interest. See your counselor if you are in search of activities!
We are looking forward to kicking off our sophomore Building Block Programming in January.

AP UPDATES

The portal remains open to register and pay for 2027 Advanced Placement exams. Any exam ordered after November 1st will be subject to a $10 late fee. CLICK HERE to register for your exam(s). The last day to register is November 8th. A $42 late fee applies after November 8th.

SENIORS

All seniors should review their first quarter grades and speak with teachers about any questions or concerns. If your child wishes to send first quarter grades to any/all of the colleges to which they've applied, they must complete this form and email it to our Registrar, Mrs. Granite (lisa.granite@ncps-k12.org).

Senior Internship Program applications will open on December 2! For more information about the program, click here.

SIP!

Tips for Parents of College Bound Seniors:

- Most colleges have portals for applicants that list the components of the file and the status of whether they have been received. Please note that it takes time for colleges to process materials as they are received. If your child checks too soon, the college may still be downloading documents into the student's folder.
- Please do not try to fill out your child's applications, Naviance or Transcript Request Forms. These tasks are designed to be completed by students and there is support available to them in the counseling office.
- Counselors hold "Blind Admissions" sessions during November, where we view each senior's college selections to ensure that each student has applied to enough "likely" colleges. Letters are mailed home confirming the colleges to which NCHS has sent transcripts. If we feel a student needs to add schools, we will provide suggestions. Students are highly encouraged to follow up with their counselors.

FINANCIAL AID FOLLOW-UP

If you were unable to attend last month's Financial Aid Night, you may find the recording here.
Four common mistakes students & parents make on the FAFSA:

1. *Completing the FAFSA too late.* The earlier you file, the more money is available to you. As time passes, you lose your negotiating power.
2. *Assuming that you make too much money to fill out the FAFSA.* Each year, several **billion** dollars in free federal aid goes unclaimed because qualifying families do not apply. We recommend that **all** families complete the FAFSA. Filing can open up opportunities later on in college, no matter your income!
3. *Not checking "interested in work-study" on your application.* Students should check this box because it allows them on-campus work opportunities with tax benefits as a subsidy for college costs. Many don't know what the term means so they ignore it, but this could be an excellent supplemental income!
4. *Assuming you're an "independent".* Even if you pay your own bills, file your own taxes and live by yourself, you may still fall into the category of a dependent student and must provide your parents' financial information.

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT THE SCHOOL COUNSELING WEBSITE FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS, VIDEO PRESENTATIONS, FORMS, AND RESOURCES. AND FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM! @NCHS_COUNSELORS