



# WESTON HIGH SCHOOL

Paul Peri, Principal

[perip@weston.org](mailto:perip@weston.org)

Kelly Flynn, Asst. Principal

[flynnk@weston.org](mailto:flynnk@weston.org)

444 Wellesley Street

Weston, MA 02493

(781)786-5800

Fax: (781)786-5829

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Dear Wildcat Community-

We are headed into our first full week of school, only to be followed by a second straight full week of school. Looking forward to getting into a nice rhythm as the fall season officially begins Tuesday. The **Guidance and Counseling Office** is a busy place this time of year. This week's memo will give you an idea of what counselors are up to.

**Student Schedules:** Having addressed almost 180 course change requests during their limited summer workdays, counselors have spent significant time since the start of school working with students to finalize their courses given constraints in the schedule. There is less flexibility than in prior years, and we thank you for your understanding.

**New Wildcats:** Counselors are getting to know freshmen and helping students new to the district get settled. We are welcoming back a half a dozen students who were not here last year, as well as about 30 students new to Weston. We hope that you will help us to welcome them into our community!

**Getting Back to 'Normal':** The transition back to 'normal' school has been an adjustment for us all. Counselors collaborate with families, teachers and others to support students who struggle. Please be sure to reach out to your counselor if you have any concerns, whether large or small. It helps when counselors know what is happening in a student's life, as it can have an impact on school.

**Supporting Seniors' Applications to College:** Counselors have been preparing for 'college application season' behind the scenes since the summer - updating information to reflect changes to the process integrating the Common Application and Naviance, improving internal processes, and generating the documents needed to support students' applications, such as the School Profile. Seniors and families are kicking the application process into full swing, and some students have already begun submitting applications. WHS has well over 90% of its seniors apply somewhere early (early action or early decision), but this does not mean that this is the *only* path, and counselors are working with students who are planning for regular college applications, gap years, postgrad options, work and other post-secondary plans as well.

Some of the resources include:

- A series of informational videos to senior families outlining the college landscape, components of an application, Weston's process and financial aid (links on the high school website if you're interested).
- Google Classrooms for each counselor's students with resources, checklists, forms and links to guide students through the 'nuts and bolts' of the college process.
- Student informational sessions with their own counselors (that replace the old 'Guidance Seminar 12' to answer questions.
- Individual student meetings.
- Calls or zoom meetings with parents/guardians.
- Parent/Guardian Q&A sessions via zoom on Thursday, 9/23.
- A letter going out to senior families specifically that focuses on the process at WHS, including critical documents and deadlines.

Counselors know that the process may feel daunting for students and families, but if you manage the deadlines and details, things go smoothly. It's important for students to take care of themselves, finding time to relax and get away from the pressures of school and applications. Be sure not to make college the sole topic of conversation around the house! If you're feeling overwhelmed, see your counselor to work out a plan. Also, communication is key - between students, families, counselors, teachers and, as desired, college coaches. It's important that everyone be 'in the know' and on the same page.

**PSAT for Juniors:** Counselors will be sending information out to juniors and families about the PSAT (practice SAT and National Merit Qualifying Test for juniors), which will be administered on Saturday morning October 16th at Weston High School.

**College Admissions Panel:** Guidance is organizing a virtual panel discussion with college admissions representatives in November. Last year, there were many sophomore and junior families who ‘attended’ along with senior ones. More information will come once the date is set.

**Get to Know Guidance:** Please join us on Tuesday, October 12th at 7:00pm for a Principal’s Coffee that features our WHS Guidance & Counseling Department. This evening will be an opportunity for us to talk ‘all things guidance’ and to continue to get to know our counselors better. More information, the zoom link, and an opportunity to submit questions, to be shared soon.

**Website:** The Weston High School Guidance Department website which can be found [here](#), offers information on a variety of school topics including contact information. The site is continually updated with resources and timely information.

As you can see, there’s a lot going on! Counselors hope that you will reach out to them with questions and suggestions, but also ask for your patience as they juggle everyday activities with college meetings and students in need. If you have a general question or need a counselor to get back to you quickly, contact the Guidance Administrative Assistant, **Enid DeCastro**, at 781-786-5820. She’s a great resource and can help you if a counselor is tied up.

As always, please reach out to us at any time.

Sincerely,

Paul Peri and Kelly Flynn