



golden eagles

Contact Information

Mercer County High School
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School Counselors

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Counseling Secretary

Ashley Clark
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Mercer County HS Guidance Office



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@mercocounseling

Counselor's Information

Mark Your Calendars

- Dec. 4-8 2nd Semester Schedule Changes
Dec. 22 End of 2nd Qt/1st Semester - 2pm Dismissal
Dec. 23-Jan 8 Holiday Break
Jan. 8 No School-Teacher's Institute
Jan. 9 School Resumes
Jan. 15 No School Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan. 17 FAFSA Completion Night



Every junior should have signed up for a College Board account. Khan Academy can be found on College Board and is a great, free program for students to practice skills for the SAT test in April. They can practice each subject area individually with feedback from Khan Academy on their skill sets and areas needing improvement. They can also take full length SAT tests through this website. We highly encourage our Juniors to do some practice sessions on a weekly basis and/or a practice question a day. We also highly encourage them to take at least one full length practice test before the school issued test in April. They will also get feedback from the writing portion of the

Attention SENIOR Parents

Senior Parents- Filing of the FAFSA is now a graduation requirement in the state of Illinois. If you absolutely know that you will not be needing financial aid or federal student loans, there is a waiver that can be filled out and signed to meet this requirement. We still do not have an exact date of when the FAFSA will be open, but will get the word out when it is released. There will be a FAFSA completion night on Jan. 17th for those needing assistance.

2024 Graduates Post-Secondary Up-date



Please stop by the counselor's office with any questions or concerns you may have about Post-Secondary plans.

1. All Seniors should have submitted or are finishing up their college applications at this time. If you need further assistance with this process please contact the counselor's office.
2. Seniors should collect recommendations from teachers & community members for scholarship applications by mid January.
3. Since housing will be limited at most colleges, seniors should notify colleges in January and state their plans. Students should then make a housing deposit in about four to six weeks.
4. Seniors planning to enter the workforce immediately after high school should be completing resumes & researching jobs.
5. Many colleges will allow seniors to take the ACT & SAT on campus, with the understanding that the ACT & SAT scores are only valid at that school. Seniors may want to take advantage of this opportunity to raise scores so they are eligible for admission or scholarships at that college.
6. Parents are encouraged to call the counselor's office if they have any questions concerning their student's post-secondary plans. (phone 309-582-2223)

Juniors Research Post-Secondary Plans

During the month of January juniors should discuss and research post-secondary options with their parents. Parents are asked to help students narrow the post-secondary selection to three by August of 2024. Please note the following suggestions to help with the post secondary search.

1. Take a career inventory on-line.
2. Research post-secondary schools on-line for chosen career fields.
3. Arrange post-secondary visits with schools of interest.
4. Compile a list of local scholarships & collect applications to review scholarship criteria.
5. Take the SAT in April (at MCHS).
6. Meet with college representatives in February, March, & April as they visit MCHS.
7. The following are excellent sites to access as post-secondary plans are developed.

www.isac.org (Illinois Student Assistance Commission)

www.irs.gov (Educational Tax Credit and Benefits)

www.collegeboard.com (College Planning Resources)

www.fastweb.com (Private Scholarships Search Site)



SAT Test Dates—SAT.org

SAT No Essay—\$60

(late fee required—\$30)

The following SAT test dates are available for all high school students who wish to take the test. *Please note the SAT will be given here at the high school in April to all Juniors.



<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
December 2, 2023	November 2, 2023
March 9, 2024	February 23, 2024
May 4, 2024	April 19, 2024
June 1, 2024	May 16, 2024

*Fee waivers are available if you qualify. See the Guidance office with questions

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ACT Test Dates ACT Plus Writing

ACT No Writing—\$60

ACT Plus Writing—\$85

Test option change - \$25

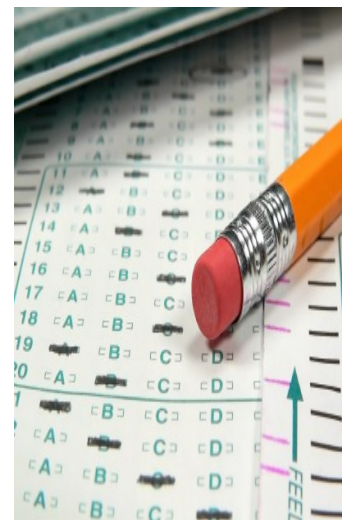
(late fee required—\$36)



The following ACT test dates are available for all high school students who wish to take the test:

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Fee Deadline</u>
December 9, 2023	November 3	November 17
February 10, 2024	January 5	January 19
April 13, 2024	March 8	March 22
June 8, 2024	May 3	May 17
July 13, 2024	June 7	June 21

Students may register on-line at www.act.org and use a credit card for payment. REMEMBER to include Mercer County High School's code 140008 on the registration information so the school has your ACT scores for your transcript. Keep in mind that the ACT can be taken multiple times & colleges do not care if scores go down on retakes. Colleges will not pull the highest scores from multiple dates but do take the highest scores from one single test date regardless of the number of times the test has been taken. **Fee waivers are available if you qualify.





Visit Colleges

Now is the time to visit colleges. Check the school calendar on our school website for days out of school and make arrangements to visit colleges. Keep in mind that most schools are open for Saturday visits. No School or In-Service Days are good days to schedule college visits. Check out the following dates:

<i>Teacher's Institute</i>	<i>Jan. 8</i>
<i>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i>	<i>Jan. 15</i>
<i>President's Day</i>	<i>Feb. 19</i>
<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>March 25-April 1</i>

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Schedule Changes for 2nd Semester

Schedule change requests for 2nd semester courses will be accepted December 4th–8th. Please stop by the counseling office or email Ms. Hains or Mrs. Clark with your requests.

Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) (www.isac.org) is a trusted source for college information set up by the State of IL. Whether you're a student or parent you will find valuable information on grants, scholarships, loans, financial aid, prepaid tuition, financial aid estimator, loan repayment calculator and much more.

The Federal and State Aid Estimator provides an estimate of how much financial aid, including the State of Illinois' Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant, may be available to help pay for college. Results are based on estimates and may not reflect actual awards. Access the calculator at www.isac.org. Click on e-Library on the top menu bar, then on the side menu Applying for Financial Aid, click Calculators, then Federal and State Aid Estimator.

Use the Federal and State Aid Estimator to:

- Estimate an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for both public and private colleges.
- See how "what-if" situations (inheritance, bonus, moving, etc) may impact your financial aid eligibility.
- Estimate education loan payments for Stafford, PLUS, Perkins, and others
- Print your own EFC Report for future references
- Estimate current year MAP & PELL grant eligibility.

