

## Counseling FAQs

### Academics and Graduation

- What classes are needed to graduate? How many credits?

*Students must earn 26 credits to graduate. Students are required to complete an English and math each year (including Alg I, Geometry, and Alg II); three sciences (including Biology and Chemistry or Physics); four histories (including W. History or W. Geography, Government, Economics, and US History); Personal Finance; one and-half PE credits (including Wellness); Fine Art; Foreign Language; and Program of Study completion. For more information visit <http://classroom.jc-schools.net/counseling> click on the Curriculum Guide link.*

- What are Peer Tutoring, Peer Counseling, Principles of Business A, and PATT classes?

*All four courses are for seniors in good academic, discipline, and attendance. Peer Tutoring provides the opportunity for mature students to work with teachers and their students who have exceptional needs, thereby learning more about exceptional students while helping them be successful in the high school setting. Peer Counseling is a training program for tutoring and/or classroom assistance to individual students or small groups. Principles of Business A/Clerical Aid allows students to receive practical experience in many facets of clerical procedures from office work to teacher's aide. Practical Applications of Teacher Training (PATT) provides the opportunity for college-bound students who plan to major in education to student-teach in an elementary classroom setting. For more information, visit the counseling website and click on the Curriculum Guide.*

- What do I need to do to graduate early?

*JCHS offers early graduation on a year-to-year basis and is not guaranteed to be available. However, if early graduation is approved, students with all required courses complete at the end of December are eligible. Students must pass all coursework to be eligible. If this is an option, your counselor will have information in the spring of your eleventh grade year.*

- What courses are available at the AP level?

*The AP courses are listed in the Curriculum Guide, found on the counseling site. For more questions about AP courses see Mrs. Sanford or Mrs. Whitson, the AP Co-Coordinators.*

- What are the requirements for Honors and AP courses?

*Honors recommendations traditionally start with teacher recommendation. AP courses follow the national recommendation of a 19 ACT and/or PLAN score in the subject of interest. If you are interested in Honors or AP courses in the future make your current teacher(s) in the subject of interest aware of this. Many of these courses require summer/winter break reading and assignments. Please see your counselor or an Honors/AP teacher for specifics and recommendations. Also, please review information in the Curriculum Guide, found on the counseling site.*

### **Test Prep**

- How can I improve my test taking skills or prepare for the PLAN, ACT, or EOCs?

*The counseling website has a Testing link that offers a wealth of test prep and planning information. Also, JCHS offers a 9-week ACT course and after school ACT Prep services. For more information about ACT Prep see Mrs. Belliveau (121) or Mrs. Pedigo (323).*

### **Scholarships and Financial Aid**

- How do I get scholarships?

*Scholarships can be awarded for academic, athletic, brief essay skills, interests, volunteer work, life experiences, etc. Some scholarships can be awarded to students years prior to graduation. Scholarships vary in amounts and renewability. Visit the counseling site and click on the Scholarship and Financial Aid link for more information. Also, follow the guidelines listed on the Student link for tips.*

- What courses will help me with scholarships?

*Honors, Dual Enrollment, and Advanced Placement (AP) courses will improve opportunities for scholarship. Also, maintaining high grades in standard courses are important for scholarship potential. Each scholarship has specific guidelines. Begin your scholarship search on the counseling website for more detailed requirements.*

- How do I qualify for financial aid?

*All students should complete the FAFSA ([www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/)) in January of their senior year. Based on the FAFSA results students may be awarded federal, state, or institutional funding based on financial need. If you have more questions, visit the counseling site and/or your counselor.*

- What is the HOPE Lottery Scholarship? Requirements?

*The HOPE Lottery Scholarship fund is awarded to students earning either a 3.0 GPA, a 21 ACT Composite, or both. This scholarship covers up to \$3,000 per year at the community college level and up to \$6,000 per year at qualifying four-year institutions. For more information visit the counseling site and click on Scholarships & Financial Aid link. The picture of Scholar Dollars is linked to more information related to Lottery funding.*

## **College**

- How can I take a dual enrollment course?

*Students meeting the requirements by any local college may be eligible for dual enrollment coursework. Any college level course may be taken for credit at the college and high school level. However, English Composition is currently reserved for seniors only. The typical requirements for most courses include a 3.0 unweighted GPA and a 19 ACT Composite score. Some courses do not require a minimum ACT score, but in general it is required for English, math, and science courses. Please visit Mrs. Roach, the Dual Enrollment Coordinator, or your counselor for more details and grant funding options.*

- What is the cost for a dual enrollment course?

*Dual enrollment costs vary depending on the school you dual enroll with (WSCC, PSCC, UT, etc). College tuition rates vary from year to year and are typically based on a per credit hour basis plus additional fees. (Example: WSCC 2012-2013 cost for a traditional 3 hour class was approximately \$450 plus book expenses.) Qualifying students can access grant funding for up to \$600 per semester. (This would allow students in the previous example to use \$300 in grant funding and the student would owe \$150 plus books.) Please see Mrs. Roach for more information on dual enrollment. Also, more information can be accessed on the counseling website's main page. (The dual enrollment grant link is highlighted in yellow.)*

- When should I start visiting or researching colleges?

*It is never too early to begin your college search! However, please speak with your counselor before you attend a college visit that interferes with a school day. College visit days are available to juniors and seniors, but must be preapproved. Many colleges visit JCHS or offer weekend and summer visitation opportunities. For a complete list of colleges in the region, visit the counseling site and click on College.*

- What do I need to do to go to college?

*Students interested in attending college should begin researching colleges online or through print materials available in the counseling office. Every college has requirements. The overall MINIMUM qualifications for admission to a four-year college include a 19 on all parts of the ACT, completion of graduation requirements including a fine art and foreign language, and a 2.75 unweighted GPA. However, colleges are setting higher standards every year! If a student does not meet requirements at a four-year school, two years at a community college is typically recommended.*

- How can I find a college with a program I am interested in?

*Visit [CollegeForTN.org](http://CollegeForTN.org) and select the College Planning option. There are several options for finding information, but the Explore Programs and Majors is the best starting point. You can also visit the counseling site and find tools on both the College and Career links.*

## **Career**

- I want to be a . . . when I grow up. Where can I find information?

*There are many resources for discovering career options, educational requirements, pay scales, workplace environment, etc. Visit the counseling page and click on the Career link.*

- What if I am not interested in college? What courses or options should I explore?

*All students are strongly encouraged to pursue some form of post-secondary educational training. This can include a technical school, apprentice program, or certificate training. All students should aspire to become highly qualified in the career field they plan on entering. Some programs can be completed in two to three months, while others may take longer to complete. If you learn through hands-on activities, one of these opportunities may be beneficial to you! Please see your counselor if you are unsure of options after graduating from JCHS.*

- Where can I get help creating a high school resume?

*Visit the Career link on the counseling website for instructions, samples, and guidelines. Also, ask your counselor or English teacher to review and proof your resume.*

- What is a Job Shadowing Day?

*Job Shadowing experiences allow students to visit someone in the career field they are interested in pursuing after high school. Students are permitted one day per school year and this day can be used any day that does not have a required assessment or event. You must complete an application that can be accessed on the Career link on the counseling site. Attendance, discipline, and grades must be satisfactory to gain approval for this experience. Applications should be submitted to Mrs. Potter at least two weeks prior to the anticipated job shadow day.*

## **Activities**

- How can I get more involved in school activities?

*JCHS has many clubs and activities to help enhance students' high school experiences. A copy of "Beyond the Books" can be obtained in the counseling office and lists clubs, organizations, and athletic opportunities. Each activity has a sponsor or coach who can answer detailed questions you may have. Some activities are limited to specific grade levels, academic achievement, or require auditions/tryouts.*

- What if I am interested in sports in high school and/or college?

*Students interested in playing a sport should speak with the coach for the specific sport(s) they hope to play. Tryouts are held at varying times, depending on the sport's season. If you anticipate playing sports at the college level you should become familiar with the rules and regulation set forth by the NCAA and high school seniors should complete and pay for the NCAA Clearinghouse as soon as possible. This is required for NCAA eligibility. A link to the NCAA Clearinghouse is located on the main counseling site and is highlighted in orange under the logo. See Mrs. Roach for more NCAA information.*

**Visit your counselor if you have any questions or want more information.**

Counselors are assigned to students by the first letter of the student's last name:

|                  |              |                      |
|------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Cathy Whitson    | A, C, & D    | whitsonc1@k12tn.net  |
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