



## Dear Class of 2025 Students and Parents/Guardians:

Congratulations on your senior status! I am excited to work with you this year as you mature. Whether you are headed to work, college, the military, or another endeavor, I hope to support you during this transition year.

This letter contains information that I hope will answer some common senior-year questions. Most of this information (as well as this letter with links to the webpages mentioned throughout) is posted on our GOC Counseling webpage, which can be found by clicking on the “Counseling” tab on the GOC homepage or by visiting <https://schools.gcpsk12.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=17321> directly.

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### Diploma Requirements

First, before you move on to your next step in life, you must ensure you receive your high school diploma. The high school graduation requirements can be found under High School Planning here <https://schools.gcpsk12.org/Page/31178>. Your *Senior Application for Graduation* that outlines your remaining graduation requirements will be mailed to your home address during October. Students must pass all classes required for graduation with a 70% or better to receive their diploma. Parents, you can keep up with your student’s grades throughout the year by checking ParentVUE. A video walkthrough of how to access ParentVUE is posted here: <http://www.kaltura.com/tiny/xnl1a>. The name listed on your diploma must match your legal name on your birth certificate. Double-check that StudentVUE has your name spelled correctly.

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### College Admissions

To assist in your post-secondary planning, we have created a College and Career planning page (located in the Counseling tab or direct link: <https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/31181>) with information and video tutorials on college admissions, financial aid, and career readiness. If you plan on attending college, I also suggest you visit the web pages of the colleges you want to apply to very early in your senior year (Seriously, now would be the best time to start!). Every college has different deadlines, and each school's application process is unique. Our webpage gives you some general guidelines, but you are responsible for knowing the particular requirements of the schools you want to apply to. A good place to start is the college’s “freshman class profile” or “admitted student profile.” This summarizes the students accepted at that particular college the previous year. You can compare your information (such as GPA and test scores) to those of the “average” student who was admitted to help determine whether a particular college is a good fit for you.

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## SAT/ACT

The SAT and ACT are used to predict your ability to succeed in college and are part of your college application. Review individual college admission webpages to determine your options and note admission requirements. Certain scholarships may also require SAT or ACT scores, so registering for these tests is encouraged. Technical colleges, including Gwinnett Tech, do not typically require the SAT or ACT. If necessary, these schools will have you take a placement test called the Accuplacer after applying. If you know you are attending a technical college, you are not required to take the SAT or ACT.

A video tutorial on the SAT and ACT tests can be found on our webpage's "College and Career" page: <https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/31181>. These tests are different from the ones you are used to taking in school. We do not schedule them or sign you up for them. You register online and pay for them yourself (if you are on free or reduced lunch, a fee waiver is available. If you need one, please email [GOCTesting@gcpsk12.org](mailto:GOCTesting@gcpsk12.org) **at least** ten days before the registration deadline). Let me know if you need help registering for the SAT or ACT! We can schedule a registration help session that you can attend virtually.

It is essential to know your college admission deadlines and schedule your SAT/ACT test at least six weeks before the admission deadline to ensure your scores arrive on time. Typically, you do not need to take both tests. Nearly all schools look only at your highest score on EITHER test. However, if you are applying to a very competitive college, you will likely want to try both tests since there is no way of predicting which one you will do better on.

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## Naviance

Naviance Student is a comprehensive website for planning college and a career. It is linked with Naviance, a service we use in our office to track and analyze data about college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information specific to our school.

Naviance Student allows you to:

- **Get involved in the planning and advising process**—build a resume, complete online surveys, complete the It's Time Packet (counselor and teacher letters of recommendation), and manage timelines and deadlines for making decisions about colleges and careers.
- **Research colleges**—Compare GPAs, standardized test scores, and other statistics to actual historical data from our school for students who have applied and been admitted in the past.
- **Research careers** – Research hundreds of occupations and career clusters and take career assessments.
- **Make plans for the future**—Set goals and to-dos and complete tasks assigned by the school to better prepare yourself for your future college and career goals.

A Naviance student guide can be found on our website at: <https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/34172>

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## GEORGIA MATCH

GEORGIA MATCH is a simple way for you to know where you are eligible for admission (to be admitted to college), based on your high school calculated HOPE grade point average (GPA) through 11th grade. Your GEORGIA MATCH colleges are on your GAFutures Student Dashboard.

The colleges and universities listed on the student's GEORGIA MATCH Dashboard represent a provisional acceptance only and does not guarantee acceptance to a college or university or a specific major/program of study. An official admissions status is determined by the college or university using their admission criteria and the student's final transcript and high school graduation status. You will still need to submit an application to colleges listed on your Student Dashboard. For more information on Georgia Match program visit <https://www.gafutures.org/college-planning/georgia-match>

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## Transcript Requests

As you start completing college and scholarship applications, you will find that you will need to send your official transcript to the colleges you apply to. You may also need official transcripts for scholarship applications. A video tutorial of how to request your transcript via Georgia Futures for in state colleges and other transcript requests form can be found on the "Senior" page or direct link:

<https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/26938> You can also request your official transcript be sent to both in-state and out-of-state colleges via your Naviance account. Here is a video tutorial on requesting transcripts via Naviance: [www.screencast.com/t/LMtSlif3e1](http://www.screencast.com/t/LMtSlif3e1)

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## Financial Aid/Scholarships

College can be affordable! An overview of financial aid is available on our webpage <https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/31182>. The primary sources of financial aid for college are federal and state aid, school-based scholarships, and private scholarships. To apply for federal and state aid (including the HOPE and Zell Miller scholarship), you complete an application called the FAFSA. A link to the FAFSA and information on completing it are available on the webpage listed above. We also have links to several different scholarship search engines on our webpage. Deadlines vary widely, so just like with college admissions, make sure you are mindful of deadlines. If you are requesting recommendation letters for a scholarship or college application, it is important to ask your recommender several weeks in advance for a letter. To request a letter of recommendation from me or from one of your teachers, please complete the "It's Time Packet" found in Naviance under the About Me tab. Notify me via email regarding specifics of the letter you are requesting. There is also a "Scholarships" page (<https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/20477>) on our website where I post information for local scholarships that come across my desk. I suggest you check this site frequently throughout the year. Some of the scholarships posted here have very small applicant pools which increases your chances of receiving them.

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## **Hope/Zell Miller Scholarships**

The HOPE and Zell Miller scholarships are specific to Georgia residents and awarded based on your final HOPE GPA. The Georgia Student Finance Commission calculates HOPE GPAs based on academic courses taken while in high school. Your HOPE GPA is NOT the same as your GCPS GPA and it is not printed on your transcript. You can check your HOPE GPA on the Georgia Futures webpage: [www.gafutures.org](http://www.gafutures.org). GOC must have your social security number on file for you to be able to view your HOPE GPA and for you to be eligible for HOPE/ZELL funding. Please bring in a copy of your SS card to our Registrar Lea Anne Cavanaugh if you are missing this required piece of information. You will be able to view your status on your Senior Application for Graduation when it is mailed to your home address during the month of September.

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## **Senior Events and Communication**

I hope your senior year is special! There are several events throughout the year that honor the Class of 2025. Please check the GOCOWLS newsletter published and emailed weekly. Make sure that you (parents included) are receiving and reading the newsletters. Announcements include important reminders regarding senior events, college visits, scholarship opportunities, and other senior-specific information. Archives of GOCOWLS can be found here <https://www.gcpsk12.org/Page/16931>. If you are planning to walk at GOC's graduation this year, please email and let me know.

Please feel free to contact your counselor throughout the year via email, text, or phone call. You can also set up an individual senior meeting at your request. Counselors look forward to working with you as you transition from high school to college, work, or other endeavors.

Sincerely,

GOC High School Counseling Team