



Wakefield
HIGH SCHOOL

POST SECONDARY PLANNING NIGHT

CLASS OF 2026

AGENDA

- Exploring Your Options:
 - 2-Year, 4-Year, Technical & Certificate Programs
 - Choosing the Right Path for You
 - College Admissions: Deadlines, Requirements & What Officers Look For
 - Application Essentials: SAT, ACT, TOEFL & More
- What Juniors Should Be Doing Now
- Final Reminders & Next Steps
 - Q&A Session





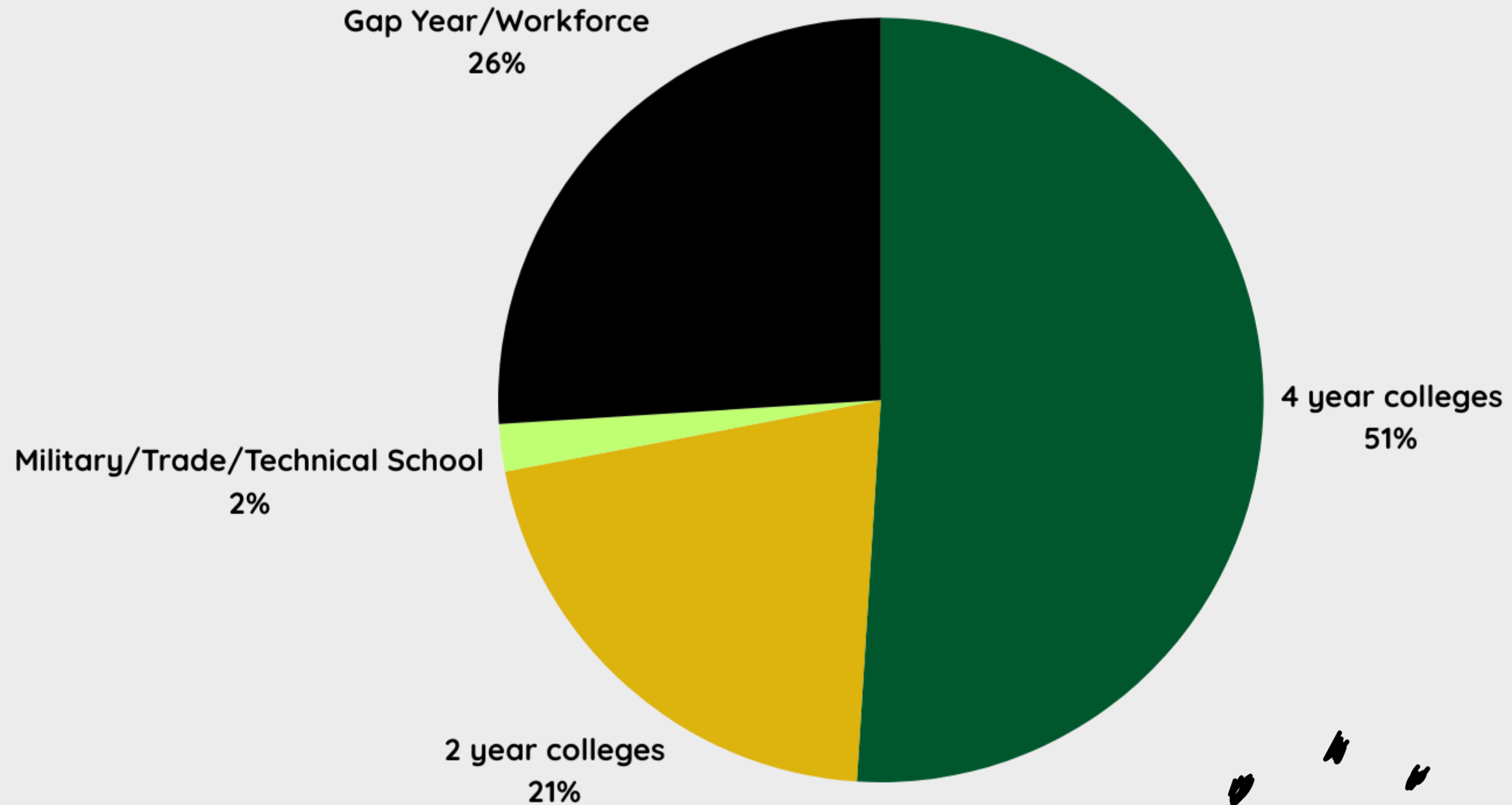
POP QUIZ

**NAME ONE POST SECONDARY
OPTION A STUDENT HAS
AFTER THEY GRADUATE.**



WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS AFTER GRADUATION?

Class of 2024

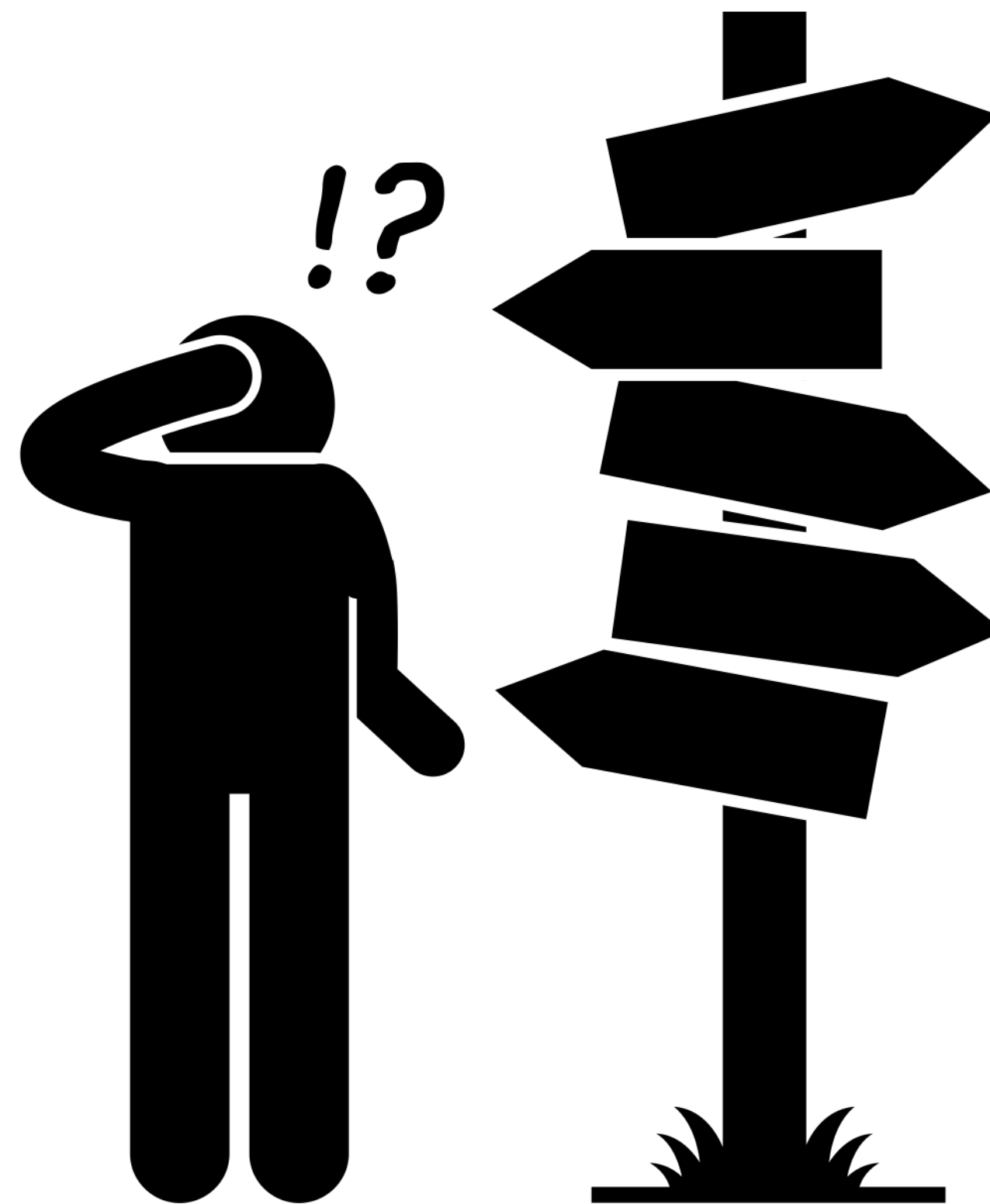


HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT PATH IS RIGHT FOR ME?

- Reflect on your 5- & 10-year goals
- Assess your academic, emotional & social readiness
- Have honest talks with parents about finances, location & independence
- Consider pros & cons of 2-year vs. 4-year colleges



ADDITIONAL
PATHWAYS
AFTER
HIGH
SCHOOL:



GAP YEAR

A break between high school and college to gain experience, explore interests, or prepare for the future.

Why Consider It?

- ✓ Personal growth & independence
- ✓ Career exploration & work experience
- ✓ Avoid burnout & enter college focused
- ✓ Travel & cultural experiences
- ✓ Save money & plan finances

Options:

- ❖ Work or internships
- ❖ Volunteer & service programs
- ❖ Travel & study abroad
- ❖ Military service or apprenticeships

Things to Consider:

- Plan ahead & stay productive
- Check college deferral policies
- Budget for costs & funding options



TRADE/VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

A career-focused school offering hands-on training in **2 years or less**.

Benefits:

- ✓ Affordable & faster than a 4-year college
- ✓ High-demand, well-paying careers
- ✓ Hands-on learning & job-ready skills

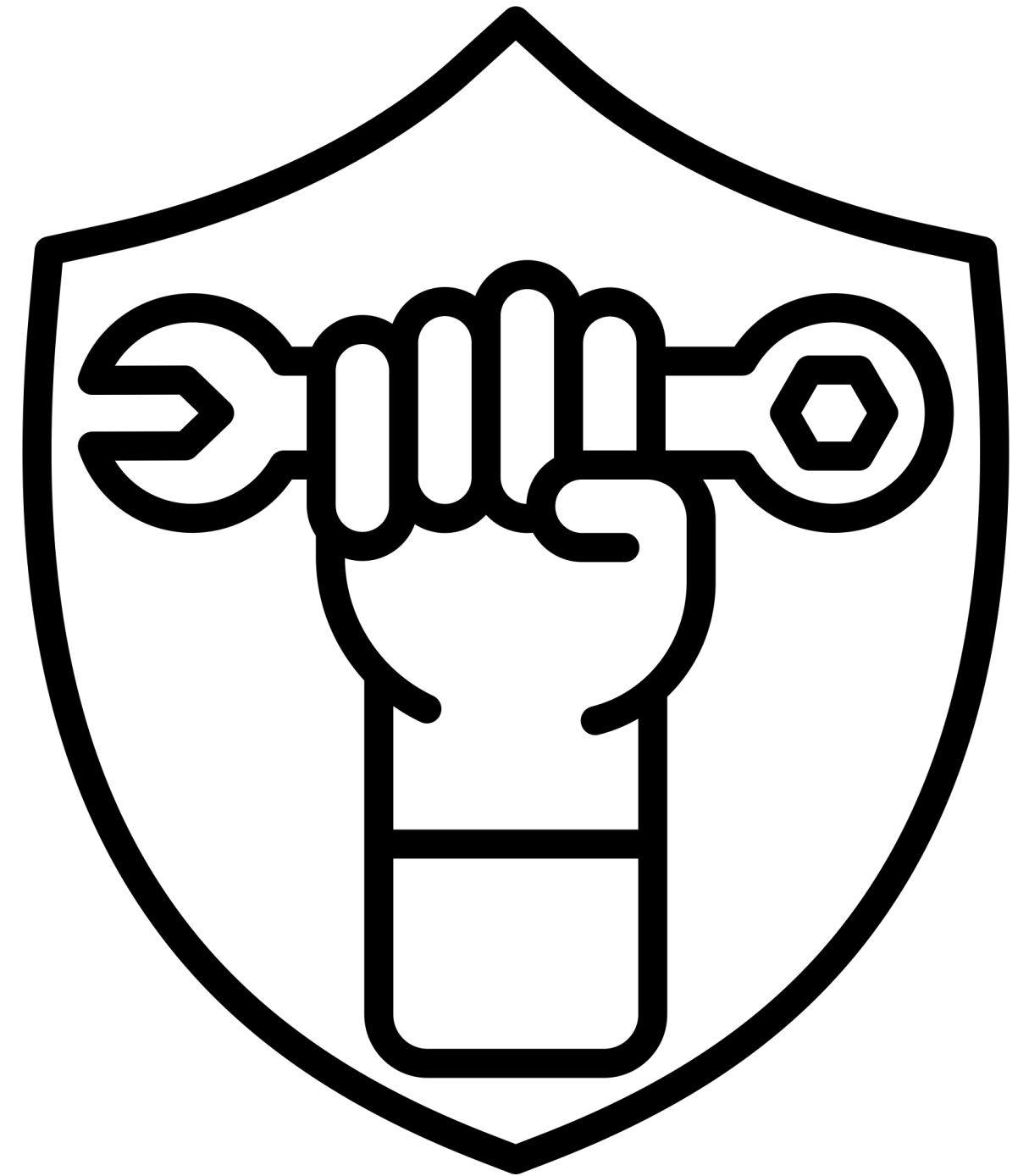
Popular Trades:

- ✦ Electrician, Plumber, HVAC
- ✦ Mechanics, Welding, Construction
- ✦ Healthcare, IT, Cosmetology, Culinary

Things to Consider:

- Research accredited programs & costs
- Look into apprenticeships & certifications
- Explore financial aid options

Trade schools offer a **direct path to a stable career** with **less time in school!**





ADDITIONAL PATHWAYS

Apprenticeships – Paid, hands-on training in fields like electrician, plumbing, carpentry, IT, and healthcare with industry certifications.


Military Service – Join the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, or Space Force for career training, tuition benefits, and leadership experience.

Workforce Entry – Start working right away to gain experience, build skills, and save money for future education or career growth.

Entrepreneurship – Start your own business, freelance, or pursue creative careers in art, design, tech, or content creation.

Dual Enrollment & Early College Programs – Earn college credits while in high school to save time and money.

Certifications & Bootcamps – Short-term, skill-based programs in tech, healthcare, business, and trades for fast career entry.



2 YEAR
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
SCHOOLS

NOVA

Northern Virginia
Community College



4 YEAR
COLLEGES
AND
UNIVERSITIES

COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES



OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY



POP QUIZ

**WHAT DOES NOVA
STAND FOR?**



NOVA

- **Dual Enrollment:** classes are offered during the school day at Wakefield or Arlington Career Center and are taught by high school teachers who are credentialed as NOVA adjuncts
- **E-Summer Program:** Rising high school juniors and seniors can apply to participate in the summer program designed to introduce students to STEM careers, including careers in the energy industry.
- **Early Online College (EOC):** High school juniors and seniors can take up to two tuition-free college courses per semester (Fall, Spring) at NOVA,
- **JumpStart2NOVA:** High school seniors who are continuing at NOVA after graduation can take two tuition-free summer college courses.
- **ACCESS Academy:** The Accelerated College and Employability Skills Academy offers eligible Virginia high school students a unique opportunity to develop career skills, particularly in IT, while preparing for a smooth transition to college.

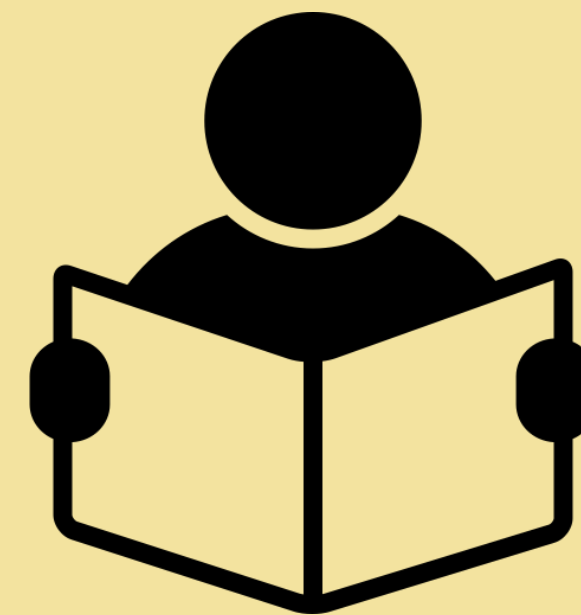
Northern Virginia Community College

- **Eligibility & Steps to Apply:**

- ✓ Minimum GPA & school counselor approval
- ✓ Placement test or qualifying scores (may be needed)
- ✓ Apply online (follow specific application process)
- ✓ Complete enrollment by each program deadline

- **Why Choose NOVA?**

- ✓ Save time & money
- ✓ Experience college coursework early
- ✓ Build a strong academic foundation






NOVA

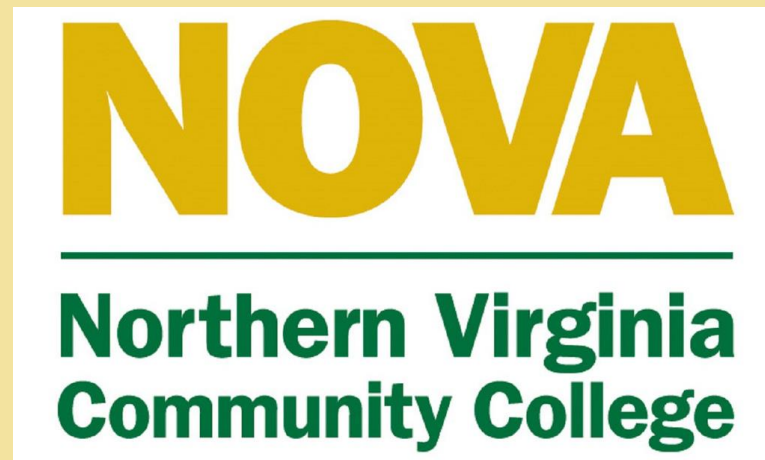
Northern Virginia Community College

- 7 campuses
- Offers Associate Degree, Certificate Programs, and Career Studies Certificates
- Open to all seniors—no minimum GPA required
- SAT/GPA determine placement:
 - 3.0+: College-level courses
 - 2.0-2.99: College + remedial classes
 - Below 2.0: Developmental classes
- Guaranteed transfer options to 4-year colleges
- NOVA Counselor will be available to students at Wakefield



Benefits:

- ✓ Time to grow, mature & improve academics
 - ✓ Explore career/major options
 - ✓ Save money!
- 



Things to consider attending a two year college:

Cost Savings

Class Sizes and Personalized Attention

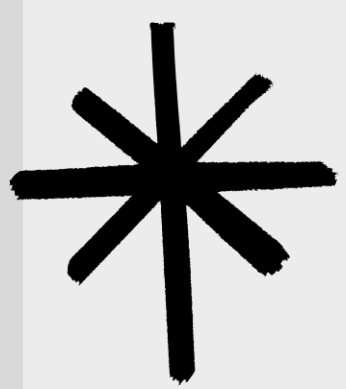

Time to Explore and Discover

Boost GPA and Improve Transfer Prospects

Smooth Transition to Higher Education

Flexibility and Convenience

Associate's Degree



FOUR YEAR COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES

Is a 4-Year College Right for You?



Do Your Research:

Admission requirements (GPA, SAT/ACT)

Majors, internships & cost

Safety, match & reach schools



Be Realistic:

Most WHS students apply to 6-10 schools—it's not a competition!

Visit/tour colleges before applying



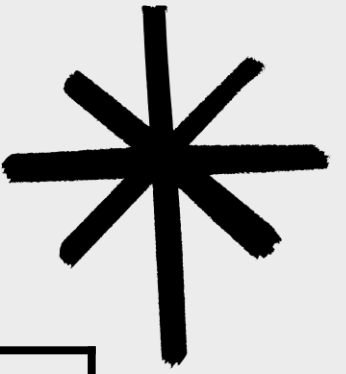
Stay Organized:

Check your email daily—communication is key!

Use the WHS College Planning Checklist



ADMISSIONS DEADLINES TERMS



| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Early Decision | Binding (legal contract) You can only apply to ONE Early Decision school Admission is granted usually by December 1st |
| Early Action | Non-binding You can apply to multiple schools Admission is granted usually before winter break |
| Regular Decision | Non-binding You can apply to multiple schools Typically in January/February Admission is granted by April 1st |
| Rolling Admissions | You can apply whenever you want Admission is granted on a first-come, first-serve basis so you can apply early for an early notification |

WHAT INFORMATION DO COLLEGE ADMISSION OFFICERS REVIEW?

Transcripts (Grades/overall GPA)

Strength of high school courses

Admissions test scores (ACT/SAT) "Test-Optional"

Essay- a big part of your application

Student's demonstrated interest

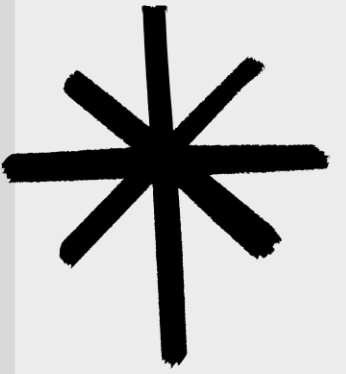
Personal accomplishments

Resume (extracurricular activities, club/sports, jobs)

Leadership

Letters of recommendation

Courses in progress senior year & mid-year reports



COMPONENTS OF COLLEGE APPLICATION

| Component | Person Responsible | Submission |
|---|--------------------|---|
| College Application (Essay, resume, etc.) | Student | Online through admissions websites, Common App. or Coalition App. |
| *SAT/ACT Test Scores | Student | Student submits request through College Board or ACT |
| Teacher Letter of Rec. | Teacher/Counselor | Student ask teacher in person first Submit official request via online portal (Plan 4 weeks in advance) |
| Official Transcript | Counselor | Transcript Request Form (Available in the fall) Once submitted, Counselor sends the following items through online portal. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Official Transcript• School Profile• Secondary School Report• Teacher Letter of Rec. (if requested)• Counselor Letter of Rec. (if requested) |

COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTS

NOTE: BEFORE YOU TAKE ONE, FIND OUT IF THE SCHOOLS YOU ARE APPLYING TO ARE "TEST-OPTIONAL"



Consists of four tests: English,
Math, Reading, Science
Writing component is optional
Top composite score is 36



Consists of two tests: Verbal & Math
Each section is scored 200-800
Perfect score is 1600



Additional tests that colleges may require for non native
English speakers.

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY DIRECT ADMISSIONS OPPORTUNITY

What is GMU DA?

- Smooth transition from Wakefield to GMU
- Personalized advising & access to GMU resources
- Cost-effective pathway to a four-year degree



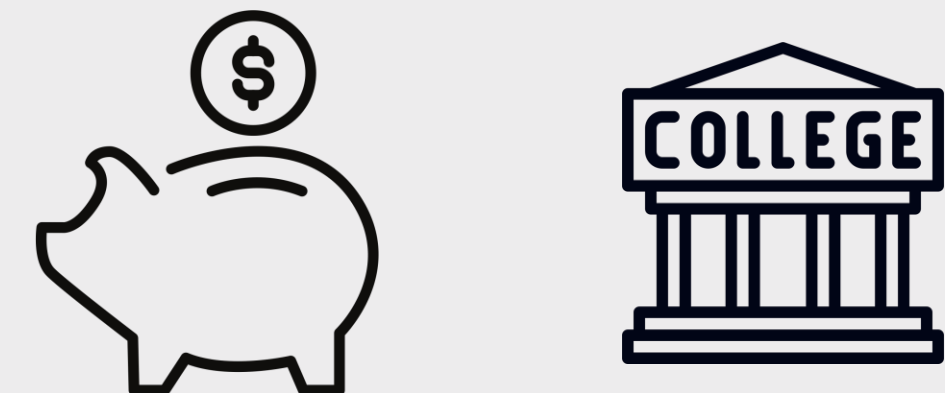
How It Works:

- ✓ Student who qualify apply directly to school
- ✓ Work with GMU advisors to ensure a smooth transfer
- ✓ Transition directly to GMU



Why Choose Dual Admission?

- ✓ No separate GMU application after NOVA
- ✓ Early access to GMU events & advising
- ✓ Affordable way to earn a bachelor's degree



POP QUIZ

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR
SUBMITTING THE COLLEGE
APPLICATION?**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



SchoolLinks is a modern, college and career readiness platform designed to help students plan for their future, offering tools for self-discovery, college exploration, and career planning.

WHAT SHOULD JUNIORS BE DOING NOW?

COLLEGE & CAREER RESEARCH

- Use school links & CollegeBoard for research
- Visit college campuses
- Town Hall Career Fairs
- Explore virtual tours, presentations & seminars

ACADEMICS

- Keep grades up—this is your last full year to boost GPA!
- Prepare for AP exams & plan senior year schedule with your counselor
- Identify teachers/coaches for recommendation letters

WHAT SHOULD JUNIORS BE DOING NOW?

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

Register & take the SAT/ACT

<https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/>

<https://www.act.org/>

COLLEGE APPLICATION PREP

- Review the WHS College Planning Checklist WHS College Planning Checklist
- Plan 4 weeks ahead—applying is like an extra class!
- Stay organized with deadlines & time management

TIPS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Support independence & realistic goals
- Help your child stay organized (limit to 10 college applications)
- Plan **4 weeks ahead** for deadlines
- Encourage college & career research: campus visits, rep visits (Fall 2026), virtual tours & panels
- Counselors are meeting with juniors to discuss post-secondary plans





IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Please check your email daily!

Look out for emails regarding college rep visits, scholarships, and other important notifications.

Do your research on potential schools!

Visit each school if possible.

Be realistic with your schools (safety, match, and reach schools).




Plan 4 weeks ahead!

Teachers and counselors have approximately 50-60 other seniors requesting letters of recommendations/transcripts.

Submit elimination of middle school grades, spring 2025 see your counselor for form and details.

Regularly check Counseling Website Calendar

<https://wakefield.apsva.us/counseling/counseling-calendar/>



POP QUIZ

**WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE
NEW ONLINE PLATFORM WE
WILL BE USING FOR COLLEGE
AND CAREER READINESS?**

CONGRATULATIONS





**THANK YOU
VERY MUCH**

QUESTIONS

