



THE GUIDANCE LIGHT

Cold Spring Harbor Central School District



Cold Spring Harbor Jr/Sr HS Counseling Center NEWSLETTER

A Message from the Director's Desk:

Dear Students and Families,
Happy New Year!

Returning to school and work after the holiday break often brings a mix of emotions—excitement to reconnect with those we've missed during the recess, renewed energy as we embrace our New Year's resolutions, and perhaps some apprehension as we look ahead to the busy months that remain in the school year.

This edition of our newsletter provides valuable information to help families navigate some key decisions that will soon be upon us. Course selection for the 2025-2026 school year takes place in January and February. During this time, CSH counselors will work closely with students in all grades to finalize their course selections. Following this, individual college planning conferences with juniors and their parents will begin in March.

To support families in these important decisions, we've included specific guidance in this newsletter. Parents of students in grades 7-10 are encouraged to participate in the course selection meetings, either in person or by phone. Links are provided for parents to share their date and time preferences for scheduling. I encourage each family to carefully review the guidance outlined in this issue. Highlights include:

- Step-by-step instructions for considering course options
- Helpful reminders and links to resources that support the decision-making process
- Suggested questions to reflect on as individual choices are made

Additionally, counselors will be reaching out to juniors and their parents later this year to schedule junior college planning conferences. In preparation for these important meetings, juniors are encouraged to start working on their Junior Bio. More details can be found inside!

We look forward to supporting you as we embark on this next phase of the school year.

Warm regards and wonderful wishes for a very happy and healthy 2025!

Jeannette Alomia



COLD SPRING HARBOR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Soaring Higher • Growing Stronger • Achieving Greatness



Important Dates:

1/13: 7 pm PAC—SAT/ACT All you need to know

1/20: Late Registration Deadline for February 8 ACT

Important Dates to Remember

COURSE SELECTION TIMELINE

I. January/February 2025:

Course recommendations for all core content area courses are visible to students/parents on the eSchool portal.

School counselors meet with students to review course recommendations and choose elective courses. Parents of students in grade 7-10 are invited and encouraged to participate. Please share your availability through the grade-specific form and the counselor will confirm your appointment date and time:

[Grade 7 Appointment Preferences](#)

[Grade 8 Appointment Preferences](#)

[Grade 9 Appointment Preferences](#)

[Grade 10 Appointment Preferences](#)

Please note: Juniors will meet with their counselor in early January. Parents will be invited to participate in the junior conference (March - May) to discuss post high school plans and review course selections for senior year.

II. March 5, 2025: Course requests will be locked and master schedule build will begin. Changes to course requests will not be made after this date; level changes will be reviewed as needed.

Cold Spring Harbor Jr/Sr High School

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January Counseling Center Programs

SAT & ACT: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Parent/ Student Workshop

Monday, January 13 at 7pm in the PAC

All students in grades 7-11 and their families are invited to attend the SAT & ACT: All You Need to Know workshop on Monday, January 13 at 7 p.m. in the PAC. This session will cover the key similarities and differences between the two tests, test-optional admissions, guidance on which test to take, and available test prep resources for CSH students. For more details and to register, please click [here](#).

We look Forward to seeing everyone on the evening of January 13



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2025 - 2026 COURSE SELECTION

Where Do We Begin?

Effective learning happens when students clearly understand what they need to know (FACTS), comprehend (CONCEPTS), and be able to do (SKILLS). This same approach underpins the academic planning process. As counselors collaborate with students and families, the following framework serves as a guide for making informed decisions:

FACTS:

We start by gathering and reviewing the student's academic record and reflecting on their current and past school experiences. This includes preparing all necessary resources, such as course recommendations, grade-specific course options, the Program of Study for detailed course descriptions, the scheduling timeline, and the student's academic history.

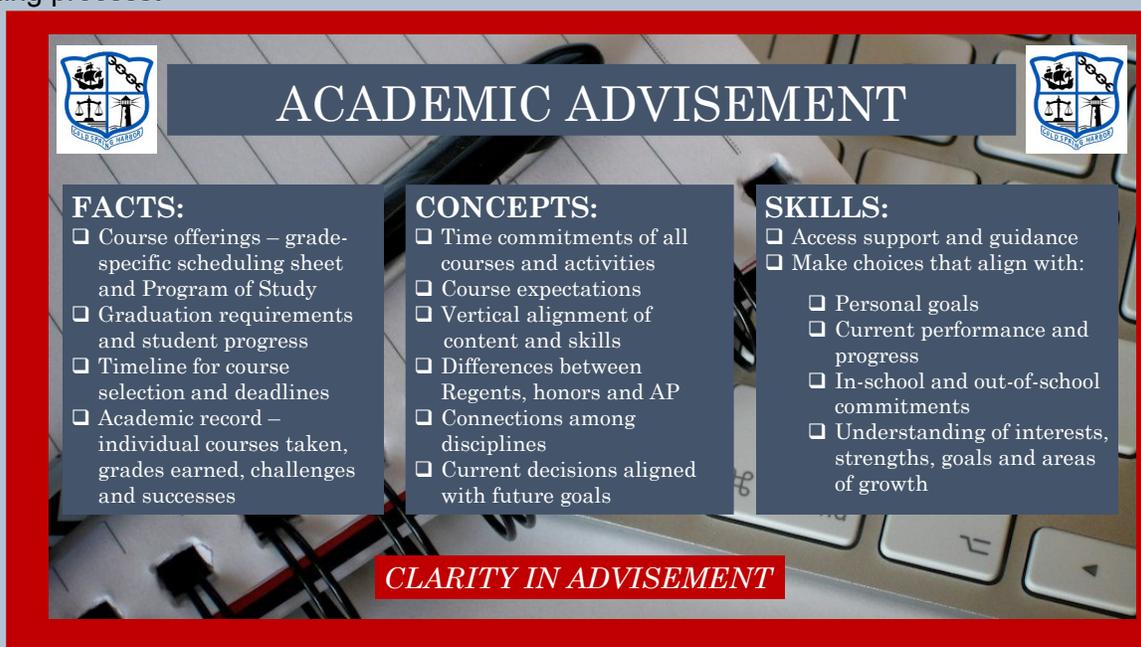
CONCEPTS:

Counselors guide students in understanding key considerations that influence their academic decisions. These include evaluating time commitments based on both in-school and out-of-school activities, understanding the expectations of various courses, aligning course options with their strengths and interests, and factoring in personal goals and future aspirations.

SKILLS:

Through this process, students learn to apply their knowledge (facts) and insights (concepts) to design a personalized, rigorous academic program. They also develop the ability to identify when they need support and where to find it within our school. Cultivating self-awareness of their strengths, areas for growth, personal objectives, and knowing how to seek help will empower them to achieve success.

This framework aims to support all students and families as we navigate this year's course selection and academic planning process.



ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

FACTS:

- Course offerings – grade-specific scheduling sheet and Program of Study
- Graduation requirements and student progress
- Timeline for course selection and deadlines
- Academic record – individual courses taken, grades earned, challenges and successes

CONCEPTS:

- Time commitments of all courses and activities
- Course expectations
- Vertical alignment of content and skills
- Differences between Regents, honors and AP
- Connections among disciplines
- Current decisions aligned with future goals

SKILLS:

- Access support and guidance
- Make choices that align with:
 - Personal goals
 - Current performance and progress
 - In-school and out-of-school commitments
 - Understanding of interests, strengths, goals and areas of growth

CLARITY IN ADVISEMENT



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2025 - 2026 COURSE SELECTION

As students and parents begin to explore the many course options available for next school year, it is important to be aware of the valuable resources that have been created for this purpose. These *steps* can provide the pathway to a successful course selection process:

First, each grade level has a specific planning sheet that includes all core content area courses (on the front) and all elective options (on the back). As families explore the needs and wants to fill our school's nine period day, these grade-specific sheets provide a snapshot of all that is available.

GRADE 9 (for current 8th grade students):

[GRADE 9 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)

GRADE 10 (for current 9th grade students):

[GRADE 10 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)

GRADE 11 (for current 10th grade students):

[GRADE 11 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)

GRADE 12 (for current 11th grade students):

[GRADE 12 COURSE SELECTION FORM](#)



Next, as families review course offerings, questions arise regarding content covered, course expectations and prerequisites. All of this and more can be found in the

[**2025-2026 PROGRAM OF STUDY**](#)

Additional specific information regarding high school courses can be found in our

[**Scope and Sequence Documents.**](#)



Then, students and parents are encouraged to have open discussions about expectations for academic achievement, extracurricular activities, time management, and personal challenges. Identifying areas of interest and strength, as well as recognizing potential difficulties, can provide valuable insight for making informed course selections. A helpful resource outlining the time commitment for certain courses is available [HERE](#). Be sure to reference this document during your conversations.

Finally, students and parents will meet with counselors to review teacher recommendations, course offerings, individual time commitments inside and outside of school, and personal goals and challenges. Striving for BALANCE is key—choose a level of rigor and challenge that motivates you to reach your potential while allowing time for success, relaxation, and enjoyment.



The course selection process will close on Wednesday, March 5, 2025



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SUMMER GUIDE: Programs for High School Students

Students and families are encouraged to review the

[CSH Counseling Center Summer Guide for HS Students](#)

The guide provides details on a variety of programs available to students for Summer 2025. While this document will be updated as we receive more information, we want to share it now to help you plan ahead, as many programs open registration during the winter months and tend to fill up quickly.

SENIORS:

Mid-Year Grades Reminder

Mid-Year Grades Reminder

After second-quarter grades are posted, the Counseling Center will send mid-year grade reports to all colleges that students have applied to. Please note the following important information:

Grades must be finalized by the end of the marking period. Any changes to grades after report cards are posted could result in an inaccurate report being sent to colleges. If grade changes occur, updated reports will be sent, but this can disrupt the application process.

Review your current performance, assignments, and assessments. If you need to make up work, submit missing assignments, or complete any assessments, be sure to address these before the marking period ends on January 24th.



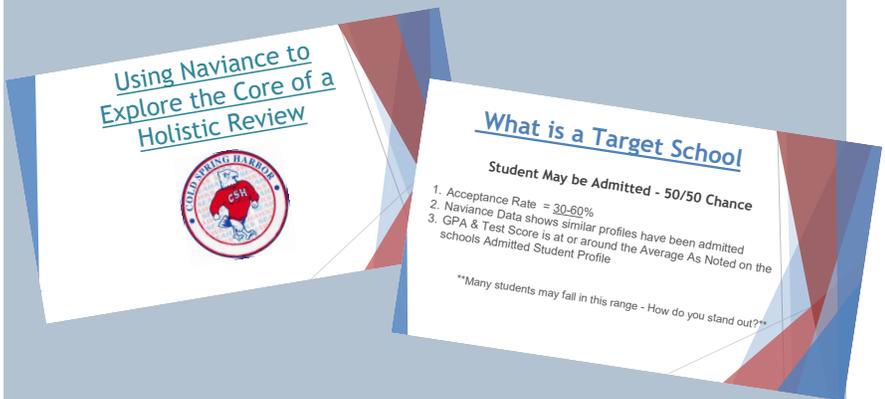
Winter and Spring with the Class of 2026!

High school counselors will be working with students during classroom sessions on January 8th as part of ***College Kick-Off Part III***. These final sessions will give students the opportunity to engage in individual Naviance college searches, guided by our counselors to help them make the most of this valuable tool.

During these sessions, students will also learn more about the **JUNIOR BIO**, an essential component of the college exploration and planning process. While much of the Junior Bio focuses on student-provided information, there is also a section for parents to complete. The details shared through this form will be vital as students, families, and counselors work together over the next several months to navigate the college application process.

Choosing the right post-high school path is a process that requires thoughtful consideration, and there are many excellent options available. Naviance is a helpful tool that allows students to narrow down these options and identify the best-fit colleges for them.

Junior college planning conferences, involving both students and parents, will begin in early March, once the course selection process is complete. We look forward to working with you during this important phase of the college planning journey!



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CSH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

Grade 6 to 7 Course Selection Process: Students transitioning from Lloyd Harbor School or West Side School will be assigned to their 7th grade courses over the winter months. There are a few options for students/families to choose, and information regarding these choices will be shared with students and parents. Students will meet the junior high school team during visits to 6th grade classrooms in early February. During these visits, Ms. Harman (assistant principal), Ms. Pickering (school counselor), Dr. Main (school psychologist) and faculty from the junior high school will share information about academic and transition issues. Students will learn about the courses they can choose (e.g., Spanish Language, French language, band, orchestra, chorus and general music) as well as courses they may be recommended for or identified to take in grade 7 (e.g., advanced classes English, SS and Science, Math lab, English lab, and/or Pre-Algebra 1). Information will be shared with parents and choices will be requested from families in early February for world language and music options.



Grade 7 to 8 Course Selection Process: Students currently in grade 7 will be assigned their courses from grade 8 during the winter months. The few options students/families choose include music, art and/or TV Production and Broadcasting (Hawk Talk). Ms. Pickering will provide information to families about these options and the process for making choices; the [Grade 8 Program Planning Sheet](#) will be used for each student. Parents are invited to participate when Ms. Pickering meets with each student, and parents can request dates/times for these meetings using this [FORM](#).

Grade 8 to 9 Course Selection Process: Students currently in grade 8 begin to have more choices regarding their course selections as they enter the high school. All families are encouraged to review the grade-specific course selection [grade 9 planning sheet](#). Parents are invited to participate when Ms. Pickering meets with each student, and parents can request dates/times for these meetings using this [FORM](#).

Junior High School Counseling CANVAS Pages: Please be sure to join the 7th and 8th grade CANVAS pages that Ms. Pickering has been maintaining and sharing with students and families. Please review this page regularly!

Mental Wellness Month: As we move into 2025, we look forward to continuing to address wellness for all students - mental wellness as well as physical wellness. Last spring, our junior high school team initiated Mental Wellness Month in May. This will be repeated in May 2025 with even more activities, reminders and practices to support each member of our school community. Stay tuned for more information over the next few months, and please remember to make personal wellness an ongoing priority.



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Mark Your Calendars!
All Jr. and Sr. High School Families are Encouraged to Attend

The
Princeton
 Review®

COLD SPRING HARBOR COUNSELING CENTER PRESENTS:

SAT® & ACT®: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL EVENT

MONDAY, JANUARY 13TH 2025 7-8PM

AT COLD SPRING HARBOR HIGH SCHOOL

REGISTER TO JOIN

Scan to register

WHAT WE'LL COVER:

- Similarities and differences of both tests
- Deep dive into both tests
- Test Optional Admissions
- Which test should I take?
- Test prep resources available to you



OR CLICK HERE



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 31+ COURSE!

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Course Selection Reminders:



A student's high school course schedule offers the opportunity to pursue academic options that are challenging, engaging, and rewarding. Thoughtful planning involves balancing rigorous coursework with opportunities for success. As you consider the various options, it's important to reflect on your four-year high school plan and academic goals. Here are some questions to help guide your decision-making:

- Which subjects interest me most?
- Where do I find the most success?
- What are my strengths?
- What challenges me most?
- How much time can I commit to my school coursework and my other activities?

The choices made during the course selection process directly impact the creation of the master schedule and course placements. It's crucial to make thoughtful decisions, considering the rigor of each course, the overall workload, and your ability to balance academics with other commitments. Student transcripts will reflect both the courses taken and the grades earned. By planning carefully with the future in mind, you can set yourself up for success.



1. CSHHS teachers have been very busy supporting this Class of 2025. In addition to the school counselors, this number of teachers wrote letters of recommendation to support students' applications:

- A. 17
- B. 24
- C. 29
- D. 50

2. As of the last week of December 2024, CSHHS teachers have been asked to write this number of letters of recommendation for the Class of 2025:

- A. 123
- B. 175
- C. 243
- D. 1135

3. When college representatives visited CSHHS this fall, these two colleges had the most students sign up to meet with the representatives:

- A. Univ. of Michigan -Ann Arbor and Lehigh Univ.
- B. University of Florida and University of Georgia
- C. University of Michigan - Ann Arbor and Univ. of Florida
- D. Penn State and University of Georgia

4. These colleges have a *blue* devil for a mascot, except this one which has a *red* devil:

- A. SUNY Fredonia
- B. Dickinson College
- C. Duke University
- D. Central Connecticut State University



Answers: 1. D, 2. D, 3. A, 4. B

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) was released in November, 2024. All families who are seeking financial aid for college must submit the FAFSA. Please note: Some colleges require the FAFSA to be submitted for consideration of any/all aid on campus, so it is important to review individual college guidelines on their financial aid webpages. See your counselor for more information.

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