

WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE 101

The College Counseling and Testing Center, located in A-205, is open to students before school (including late start Thursdays) and all day, including both lunch periods. Students are welcome to stop by and take advantage of the resources available, register online for tests, work on college applications, search for information, visit with college recruiters, and ASK QUESTIONS! The College Center has a library of information on colleges, scholarships, testing materials, brochures, and pamphlets full of resources.

Make sure you get a permit from the College Center in advance or have a pass from your classroom teacher during class time. You must be wearing a visible ID. Please sign in when you enter!

Micki Karacek
College Counselor
mkaracek@houstonisd.org

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PREP HQ – YOUR COMPREHENSIVE COLLEGE PLANNING TOOL!

SIGN UP FOR PREP HQ – THIS IS A MUST!

Prep HQ is a web-based program that enables the College Center Staff and your Deans to communicate with students and parents. It is accessed through the Westside website and provides information regarding scholarships, summer programs, college planning, financial aid, test information, resources, and college searches. Also available is an individual organizer that will create a resume, a college list, and will hold information that the student inputs along with their grades, GPA, test scores, and class rank.

HOW TO REGISTER:

Prep HQ is a web-based program that enables the College Center Staff and your Deans to communicate with students and parents. It is accessed through Westside's website and provides information regarding scholarships, summer programs, college planning, financial aid, test information, resources, and college searches. Also available is an individual organizer that will hold information that the student inputs along with their grades, GPA, test scores, and class rank.

To Register: Go to [Prep HQ](https://www.prephq.com/?id=txwestside) (https://www.prephq.com/?id=txwestside). In a gray box to the left, "click here to register." Students will be asked several questions, then they will create a user name and password. Once they are registered, parents email address can be added. Students, if you do not know your parents email, you may add them later by clicking on "settings." Parents will then receive all emails sent. In order for parents to actually retrieve the information, students must give their user name and password to their parents.

NAVIGATING THROUGH PREP HQ:

The Welcome Page: This is the first page that you see when you log in to Prep HQ. Below the brief description of Prep HQ, all current Announcements are displayed.

Message Center: When an email is sent from the College Center to a particular distribution list, the message will remain stored in the message center.

My Organizer: This is the section in which students can create college lists, create a resume, and make a list of community service hours, school activities and awards. Students can also create a file of college applications and scholarships sent, and eventually view their personal academic record. (This will include grades, GPA, rank, and all test scores. This information will be downloaded by HISD, and should be available in the Fall of 2007).

Colleges: This page is used to inform you of scheduled college visits and/or college events. You may also search for various colleges based on selected criteria. If you have a particular college that you would like to view, simply type in the name and click on "find." The college will appear with all pertinent data regarding entry requirements, majors offered, and athletic programs. A direct link to the school's website is also located in the top right hand corner of that page. Before closing, click on "Save to college list." All colleges that are saved will be stored by the student in "My Organizer" under "college list."

Occupations: When this section is opened, a variety of occupations appear. If you click on an occupation of interest, the link will describe the occupation and, give job descriptions and list several schools that offer a related major.

Surveys: At the end of March, the senior survey will appear online. Seniors must complete the survey as part of the check out process. This enables Westside to gather vital information

which is used to create our school profile. School profiles are sent to colleges along with requested transcripts.

Scholarships: This page includes scholarships downloaded from the District, Prep HQ, and any that the Westside College Center receives. They are listed in order of the deadline date. Simply click on the name of the scholarship and a complete description with all requirements can be viewed. In most instances, hard copies will be made available in A205. Sometimes the application form must be downloaded. READ!!! Websites are listed when an application may be downloaded.

Summer Programs: Any summer program or internship received by the Westside College Center will be posted under "Summer Programs." Click on the title and you can view a complete description, website or contact information and requirements for acceptance in the program. In some instances, you will have to go to the website to download the application. READ!!!

Test Prep: This section provides information presently provided by Sylvan Learning Center. They give an overview of the SAT, ACT, and PSAT. If you click on FAQ's, most of your questions regarding the tests should be answered. Sylvan also offers test prep and a direct link to their site is provided.

Financing College: In this section you will find a direct link to the FAFSA and information on grants, work study, several types of financing of college, and information on public and private loans.

On Track : Once you have created a "college list" in "My Organizer," you may view your list in On Track. When you click on one of the colleges on that list, you can view all the scholarships offered at that particular school.

Office Information: This is where students and parents can find information directly related to our College Center.

Links and Resources: Prep HQ has provided direct links to several worth-while resources such as NCAA Clearinghouse, Fast Web, college scholarship search sites, College Board, and others.

Test Information: This will be updated each Fall with all the Testing Dates for that school year: PSAT, SAT, ACT, AP exams, and TAKS. (Direct links to register for SAT and ACT are also provided.).

Student Checklist: A student checklist for college planning has been provided for each year in high school. (This will be revised and updated periodically).

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

Your college application process begins as FRESHMEN! Prep HQ will provide valuable information and help guide you but this website should help answer most of your questions.

YEAR-BY-YEAR ACTION PLANS:

There are student checklists under Prep HQ that outline what you should be doing each year and help you stay on track!

FOUR-YEAR PLAN AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

You will complete a [four-year plan](#) with your dean your FRESHMEN year and update it annually. [Graduation requirements](#) can be found on our website under Academics.

TAKING THE SAT OR ACT

Colleges require that you take one of these standardized tests for admission (see individual school policies). **WHEN?** - It is recommended that students take both tests once during the spring of their JUNIOR year. (Information regarding each test is provided by Prep HQ). If you are satisfied with these initial scores, you need not test again. If you do better on one of the tests, but feel you can further improve, then take that test again when you return in the fall.

****NOTE:** If you are on free or reduced lunch, make sure you stop by A205 and pick up a fee waiver before you register. SAT II, (the subject tests) are required by many highly selective schools. Check to see if they are required by the schools to which you are applying. If so, take these tests during the year in which you are enrolled in the corresponding AP course.

Test Score Comparison

ACT If you scored a . . .	OLD SAT or a . . .	NEW SAT It's about the same as...
36	1600	2400
35	1560-1590	2340
34	1510-1550	2260
33	1460-1500	2190
32	1410-1450	2130
31	1360-1400	2040
30	1320-1350	1980
29	1280-1310	1920
28	1240-1270	1860
27	1210-12-30	1820
26	1170-1200	1760
25	1130-1160	1700
24	1090-1120	1650
23	1060-1080	1590
22	1020-1050	1530
21	980-1010	1500
20	940-970	1410
19	900-930	1350
18	860-890	1290
17	810-850	1210
16	760-800	1140
15	710-750	1060
14	660-700	1000
13	590-650	900
12	520-580	780
11	500-510	750

This chart shows comparative scores for the three major college entrance exams: The ACT, the "Old" SAT, and the "New" SAT.

SAT: Visit collegeboard.com for more information or to register for tests.

ACT: Visit act.org for more information or to register for tests.

Our High School Code is 443522.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES AND EXAMS

Many colleges will give you credit for Advanced Placement courses taken in high school depending on the scores received on the AP exams in May. More information is available on our website under Academics. Check individual college websites to find out their credit policy.

APPLYING ON LINE (Apply Texas)

All colleges prefer that students apply online. The State of Texas has an online application which is now called Apply Texas. There is also a national common application which is used by many private schools. Both are available on line and are linked to college websites. Through Prep HQ, click on "my organizer" and go to your college list. Pick the school to which you are applying and click on their website. Maximize the page and look for "Prospective Students" or "freshman admissions." For State schools, the common application should appear. If a particular school does not use either type of application, then you will simply fill out the one provided on their website. When using a common application, remember to check which essays are required by the school to which you are applying. **ALL COLLEGE APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND SENT BEFORE YOU GO HOME FOR THE WINTER HOLIDAYS!**

THE ESSAYS

It is advised that you begin working on essays in the spring of your JUNIOR year. At the start of fall semester SENIOR year, have your English teacher look them over and make

CLASS RANK: A tentative rank will be issued through the Registrar's office in October of senior year. (This is what you will use on college applications.) Final rankings will be distributed in late January/early February. **NOTE:** If your rank improves and places you in a higher percentile, please request a new transcript be sent to colleges immediately!

PERSONAL DATA SHEETS AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: [Personal Data Sheets](#) give deans and teachers the information they need to write your recommendation letters. They must be completed and returned to your dean before Thanksgiving Break of your SENIOR year! After it is completed, make copies to give to your teachers. If you are applying to a school "EARLY DECISION," make sure you turn in the data sheet at least two weeks in advance. It is your responsibility to attach an addressed and stamped envelope for the recommendation needed. **NOTE:** Do not put your name as "sender." This will be stamped with the Westside address.

REQUESTING A TRANSCRIPT: The School Registrar is responsible for sending a transcript to colleges. The Registrar's office is room A116. This is located directly below the College Center. A transcript must be requested at least one week prior to the date needed. Make sure you bring

the correct address of the school when you make the request. You will need to fill out a separate request card for each school. There is a \$1.00 fee for each transcript.

MID YEAR REPORTS: Many colleges also require mid year reports as well as school reports, (counselor and teacher evaluations). These can often be downloaded from their admission websites. Print the Mid Year report, fill out the top section that says "Applicant" and turn it in to your Dean in January. (Remember to attach an addressed, stamped envelope). This will be sent out by your Dean as soon as final rankings become available. The initial school reports should be given to your Dean and teachers when you turn in your Personal Data Sheet.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS: Information on financial aid, the FAFSA, and scholarships is available in [Prep HQ](#).

BEFORE GRADUATION: At the end of your senior year (prior to senior check-out) you will be required to complete the Senior Survey in Prep HQ. You must also request a final transcript be sent to the college that you will attend.

COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES VISITING WESTSIDE

We regularly have representatives from colleges and universities visiting our Westside campus. Check prep HQ under the College link for the current schedule. In addition, Westside hosts a College Night every October. We typically have over 150 schools represented; one-stop shopping! Check our calendar for the exact date.

YOU VISITING COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Please remember that if you need to leave school early or will be absent because you are visiting a college or university, you must complete a [Campus Visit Release Form](#) (also available in your dean's office). Several signatures are required on this form so please plan ahead. Forms must be completed and submitted to the Attendance Office 48 hours IN ADVANCE of the absence.