

COUNTDOWN TO GRADUATION CLASS OF 2018



A handbook for
East Grand Rapids High School
Seniors and their parents/guardians

Calendar 2017-2018

- **Summer 2017**
 - ✓ Schedule senior pictures
 - ✓ October 6 – deadline to submit pictures for yearbook
 - ✓ Investigate possibilities for post-graduation, i.e. college, work, travel, military, etc.
- **July 28**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for August 26, 2017 SAT
- **August 4**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for September 9, 2017 ACT
- **August 23**
 - ✓ Senior Registration 8:00-10:00 AM; Senior Red Schedule Changes
- **August 26-27**
 - ✓ Senior Retreat, Camp Henry, Newaygo
- **August 26**
 - ✓ SAT Testing Date not @ EGRHS
- **August 28**
 - ✓ College Essay Writing Workshop 3:00 pm
- **August 30**
 - ✓ College Essay Writing Workshop 3:00 pm
- **September 8**
 - ✓ First day college applications will be processed via Family Connection
 - ✓ Deadline to register for October 7, 2017 SAT
- **September 9**
 - ✓ ACT Testing Date not @ EGRHS
- **September 14**
 - ✓ College Application Workshop, 6:30 PM, Learning Commons
- **September 22**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for October 28, 2017 ACT
- **September 26**
 - ✓ College Application Workshop, 6:30 pm, Learning Commons
- **TBA**
 - ✓ Senior parent graduation meeting (meeting called by parents of class officers)
- **October 5**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for November 4, 2017 SAT
- **October 6**
 - ✓ Senior and baby pictures due for inclusion in yearbook
- **October 7**
 - ✓ SAT and SAT Subject Tests @ EGRHS
 - ✓ Registration deadline for November 4, 2017 SAT
- **October 18**
 - ✓ Colleges with an early action deadline or early decision deadline of November 1 must be entered in Family Connection

- **October 27**
 - ✓ Recommended deadline to list colleges in Family Connection for colleges operating on a “rolling” admissions system
- **October 28**
 - ✓ ACT Testing @ EGRHS
- **November 1**
 - ✓ Colleges with an early action or early decision deadline of November 15 must be entered into Family Connection
- **November 2**
 - ✓ Registration deadline for December 2, 2017 SAT
- **November 3**
 - ✓ Registration deadline for December 9, 2017 ACT
- **November 4**
 - ✓ SAT and SAT Subject Tests @ EGRHS
- **November 13**
 - ✓ *Financial Aid Information Night* for seniors and parents; 7:00 PM, Little Auditorium
- **December 1**
 - ✓ Colleges with a January 1-15 deadline must be entered into Family Connection
- **December 2**
 - ✓ SAT and Subject tests @ EGRHS
 - ✓ Colleges with a January 1-15, 2018 deadline must be entered into Family Connection
- **December 9**
 - ✓ ACT Testing @ EGRHS
- **January 12**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for February 10, 2018 ACT
- **February 9**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for March 10, 2018 SAT
- **March 9**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for April 14, 2018 ACT
- **March 10**
 - ✓ SAT and SAT Subject tests (NOT @ EGRHS)
- **March 26**
 - ✓ Academic Boosters’ Awards Program; 7:30 PM, PAC
- **April 6**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for May 5, 2018 SAT
- **April 14**
 - ✓ ACT Testing Date not @ EGRHS
- **May 1**
 - ✓ *Candidate’s Reply Date* – deadline to reply to college of student’s choice
- **May 3**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for Jun 2, 2018 SAT
- **May 4**
 - ✓ Deadline to provide Guidance Office with copies of scholarship/award letters for inclusion in Honors Assembly and graduation programs

- ✓ Deadline to register for June 9, 2018 ACT
- **May 5**
 - ✓ SAT and SAT Subject Tests @ EGRHS
- **May 7**
 - ✓ AP Chemistry (AM); AP Psychology (PM)
- **May 8**
 - ✓ AP Spanish Lang (AM); AP Physics 1 (PM)
- **May 9**
 - ✓ AP English Lit (AM); AP Physics 2 (PM)
- **May 10**
 - ✓ AP Gov (AM); AP Environmental Science (PM)
- **May 11**
 - ✓ AP US History (AM)
- **May 12**
 - ✓ Junior/Senior Prom
- **May 14**
 - ✓ AP Biology (AM); AP Physics C (PM)
- **May 15**
 - ✓ AP Calc AB, AP Calc BC (AM)
- **May 16**
 - ✓ AP Eng Lang Comp (AM); AP MacroEcon (PM)
- **May 17**
 - ✓ AP World History (AM); AP Statistics
- **May 18**
 - ✓ Honors Assembly 9:00 AM
 - ✓ AP Microeconomics (AM); AP European History (PM)
- **May 21-22**
 - ✓ Senior Exams
 - ✓ May 22 – last day of classes for seniors
- **May 23**
 - ✓ Seniors decorations, breakfast, video, graduation practice
- **May 24**
 - ✓ Graduation, 7:00 PM, Memorial Field
- **June 2**
 - ✓ SAT Testing @ EGRHS
- **June 9**
 - ✓ ACT Testing @EGRHS
- **June 15**
 - ✓ Deadline to register for July 14, 2018 ACT

YEARBOOK PICTURES

1. Senior Pictures: Seniors are responsible for submitting a picture for the yearbook. **The yearbook guidelines are: one wallet size vertical, color photograph to be submitted to the yearbook by October 6, 2017.** Many studios send out notices of “early bird discounts” that can help keep the price down. In deciding how many pictures to order, you may want to keep in mind some other uses for them: relatives and friends, college applications, scholarship applications, athletic interests and awards.
2. Baby Pictures: Seniors’ baby pictures are solicited for a separate section of the yearbook. If you want a baby photo included, you must submit a photo that is different from your senior picture, with a check for \$35 payable to EGRHS. These pictures are optional and may be submitted in any size. The deadline for submission of baby photos is **October 6, 2017.**

DUAL ENROLLMENT

State law requires that school districts allow eligible students to enroll in college courses at local accredited and support their enrollment by paying a portion of the school’s Foundation grant from the State toward the college tuition. Any student interested in the possibility of enrolling in college courses during their senior year should discuss this with their guidance counselor.

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS – GENERAL INFORMATION

The Guidance Office will begin processing applications no sooner than **Friday, September 8, 2017.** We will continue to utilize **Family Connection**, a service designed for students and families. Family Connection is a comprehensive website that you can use to research colleges and careers, electronically request transcripts for college applications, request teacher recommendations, and manage your college applications. Family Connection is linked with Naviance Succeed™, a service that we use in our guidance office to track and analyze data about college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information that is specific to our school. Family Connection will allow you to:

- Research hundreds of careers and career clusters, and take career assessments, such as Do What You Are® test.
- Research colleges by comparing GPA, standardized test scores and other statistics to actual historical data from EGRHS students who have applied and been admitted in the past.
- Request transcripts and teacher recommendations electronically for all of the colleges to which students apply.
- Track the sending and receipt of transcripts and teacher recommendations, as well as application status, manage timelines, and deadlines for making decisions.

Family Connection also lets us share information with you about upcoming meetings and events, scholarship opportunities and other college and career information resources. To visit our school’s Family Connection site, go to: <http://connection.naviance.com/egrhs>. The student will use his/her Skyward access username and password to access Family Connection. The parent/guardian also has access to Family Connection; however, they have their own username and password. If you have not already done so, please make sure the student enters a **valid email address** so that the school can communicate important information regarding college applications, testing and critical deadlines.

All transcript requests and teacher recommendation requests must be submitted through Family Connection; however, students will NOT apply to college(s) through Family Connection. We have created a short instructional document which outlines the steps you will need to take to sign up for the Common Application, request transcripts and teacher recommendations through Family Connection. This document is located on the Guidance Office web page at <http://egrhs.egrps.org/Guidance/index.html>. **It is critical that you and your student review this document prior to applying to college.**

Each senior who is applying to college must pay a \$10.00 college application processing fee at the time of registration on August 23, 2017. This fee covers the cost of sending and managing the students' transcripts and associated documents to colleges. It also allows the Guidance Office to track the application and receive notification that the college has received the application. **Transcripts will not be processed until the \$10 fee has been paid.**

At the end of January, the Guidance Office automatically sends seventh semester grades to all of the colleges to which the students have applied. At the end of June, final transcripts are sent to the colleges which the students are attending.

The Guidance Office will process completed applications and electronically submit them after they are listed under "Colleges I am Applying to" in Family Connection. Students should enter these at least a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to any application deadline.

Most colleges require an application fee, which can range from \$20 to \$75 per application. Colleges will waive this fee if financial need is demonstrated. Students may want to discuss this with their guidance counselor.

Many colleges accept the Common Application. A copy of the Common Application and information regarding any supplements requested by specific colleges may be downloaded from <http://www.commonapp.org>. Essay prompts for 2017-2018 are now available.

The Common Application for the Class of 2018 is currently live. A new feature allows the applications to "roll over" into the next cycle, as long as the student indicates it is for the 2017-2018 application cycle.

NATIONAL TESTING OPTIONS AND TESTING DATES

1. **SAT:** The SAT consists of critical reading, math and writing sections and takes three hours and forty-five minutes. The test is administered seven times per year at test centers around the country and the world. Nearly all selective colleges and universities require this test or the ACT as part of the admissions process. Seniors who wish to take the SAT may do so on August 26, October 7, November 4 or December 2, 2017. Registration must be completed no later than July 28, September 8, October 5 or November 2, 2017, respectively. Register online at www.collegeboard.org.
2. **SUBJECT TESTS:** These are one-hour tests measuring specific achievement in 23 subject areas such as world language, mathematics, science and history. Selective colleges may require subject tests in addition to the SAT. If required, most colleges ask for two or three tests of the student's choosing. It is advisable to check college website for specific requirements. **Students may take only the SAT or SAT subject tests on any given test date.** Students may take up to three SAT subject tests on August 26,

October 7, November 4 or December 2, 2017. Seniors applying to college on an *early decision* or *early action* basis are advised to take SAT subject tests no later than November 4, 2017. Register online at www.collegeboard.org.

3. ACT: The ACT is a college-based admissions test administered seven times per year in test centers throughout the country. Colleges usually require that students submit scores directly from the ACT or SAT as a part of the college admissions process. The test consists of four parts: English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning, and an optional writing section. Students receive a score for each section: a composite score ranging from 1 to 36, and a separate writing score, if applicable. Seniors who have not taken the ACT or those who wish to retake the test, may do so on September 9, October 28 or December 9, 2017. Registration must be completed no later than August 4, September 22 and November 3, 2017, respectively. Register online at www.actstudent.org.
4. ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP): Advanced Placement examinations are available in May for students who have just completed specific AP courses. East Grand Rapids High School offers specific AP courses in US History, US Government and Politics, World History, Spanish Language, Physics, Statistics, Biology, Calculus, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Psychology, English Language and English Literature. AP exams are not required for college admissions, but are often used for college credit or for placement in advanced courses upon admission to college. Colleges will look favorably upon strong results on AP exams, but students are not penalized if they have not taken them. **Students are advised to check with the colleges to which they may seek admission for specific information on how AP credits may be applied.** Students will have an opportunity to take AP exams May 7 – 18, 2017. The cost of each exam is approximately \$100. Students will register and pay for the AP exams online through Total Registration. Information regarding the registration dates will be provided to students in early February.

SCHOLARSHIP SERVICES

In the past several years, many online scholarship search companies have sprung up around the country; however, college financial aid administrators and high school guidance counselors are largely distrustful of these companies. Why? Most of these companies are run by people who have little or no experience with or knowledge of financial aid. These companies tend to charge a lot of money for information that can be found free of charge in libraries, guidance offices, bookstores, colleges and on the internet. In addition, search companies simply provide a list of scholarships for which you **may** be eligible, but for which you must still apply. Beware of “official” looking mailings (even government-looking mailings). Some of these companies are great at marketing!

Furthermore, some of the scholarships they list are federal or state programs which are available to you once you are determined eligible for need-based financial aid.

- Ask these questions before signing up:
- Is the company for profit?
- Is the company a franchise?
- How much experience does this person have in financial aid?
- Can I believe their guarantee?
- How complete will the information I receive be?

- Does the company have a list of past clients I can contact?
- Do I need to spend money to receive this information?

WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT!

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Twenty-three (23) credits, with specific departmental distribution, are required to graduate from East Grand Rapids High School. Students are continually reminded by their counselor that they need to be aware of the number of credits they have and what specific requirements they must complete prior to graduation.

It is a good idea to periodically check the credit area on your student's report card. There you will find the total number of credits earned to date. If there is a discrepancy in the number of credits you believe your student has earned, speak with your student's counselor. Be proactive.

The school operates with the following policy regarding who can and cannot "walk" at commencement:

*"Students lacking **not more than one (1) credit** at graduation time will be permitted to participate in commencement exercises, provided they have a plan to complete the necessary credit. However, the diploma will be withheld until all graduation requirements have been fulfilled."*

This policy means that counselors will closely monitor students through the day of commencement. Only those who have at least twenty-three (23) credits will be allowed to participate in commencement.

Again, be proactive. Know how many credits your son or daughter has and what course requirements are remaining for their graduation to be realized.

HONORS ASSEMBLY

The annual Honors Assembly will be held on May 18, 2018 from 9:00-11:00 AM to honor all seniors and recipients of special awards and scholarships. All seniors will be expected to attend and parents/family members of seniors are invited.

Please provide the Guidance Office with copies of scholarship/award letters for inclusion in the Honors Assembly and graduation programs by **no later than May 4, 2018**.

GRADUATION-RELATED TOPICS

1. Cap, Gown, Stole and Tassel: Jostens has been chosen by the school to sell graduation items. They visit the school in December to distribute and explain their catalog to seniors. Orders are taken in January and items are delivered to the school mid-April. Measurements are taken when the order is placed. **Be sure to try on the cap gown when received to check the fit; items must be sent back immediately if a replacement is needed for graduation.** The cap, gown, stole and tassel must be ordered through Jostens. The 2018 price is approximately \$40. Announcements, mugs, open house invitations, thank you notes, etc. may also be ordered from Jostens at the same time.

2. College Scholarships Earned by Graduates: A list of college scholarships and special awards earned by graduating seniors is a segment of the Honors Assembly program. Scholarships and awards are included **only if a copy of the award notification is provided to the Guidance Office by no later than May 4, 2017**. Awards, grants or scholarships which are part of a financial aid package based on demonstrated financial need are **not** included in this list.
3. Commencement Ceremonies: Graduation is held on Memorial Field or in the gym, depending on the weather conditions. In either case, there are no ticket requirements or number restrictions. Older guests and those in need of special seating or parking should call the main office (235-7555) at least one week in advance of graduation. The principal will send a letter in early May outlining the dress and behavior codes. The graduation speaker is the senior class president.
4. Top Ten: Two different recognitions are given each spring for the top students in the senior class. At the Academic Boosters' Awards Program in March, the **top fifteen** students, based on cumulative weighted grade point averages through the seventh semester, are recognized. At commencement, the **top ten** student with the highest cumulative weighted grade point averages through the eighth and final semester are recognized.

PARTY SPONSORED BY SENIOR PARENTS

An all-night party after commencement for all graduating seniors is organized and chaperoned by senior parent volunteers. The parents of the senior class president plan this party.

Parental involvement is needed in order for the graduation party to occur. For planning purposes, the cost for the 2017 Graduation party was \$125. Students who seek financial assistance to participate in these activities should contact Carolynne Allaben in the Guidance Office (this remains confidential).