

HOLLY SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL



SENIOR HANDBOOK & PLANNING GUIDE

Senior Calendar of Events

September 17 th , 5pm	College Fair and Senior Information Night
September 26 th , 10am	Wech Tech Fall Exploration Fair
October 11 th , 7pm	Homecoming Dance
October 24 th	Cap and Gown Order Deadline for Mid-Year Grads
January 22 th , 6pm	Mid Year Graduation Ceremony
March TBD	Cap and Gown Distribution
April TBD	Cap and Gown Distribution
April 17 th , 8pm	Prom
April 29 th , 9am	Senior Assembly
May 22 nd , 9am	Class of 2026 Awards Ceremony
May 22 nd , Noon	Class of 2026 Picnic
TBD	Baccalaureate Service
June 13 th , 8pm	Graduation Ceremony

Senior Activities Overview

It is the administration's hope that all seniors will participate in these activities. Senior must be students in good standing in order to participate. When students violate policy and/or choose not to meet expectations, they may lose the privilege participating in activities including Graduation, Prom, or the Senior Picnic.

Financial Obligations

Seniors must pay all HSHS financial obligations in order to receive graduation tickets. This includes any remaining dues, fees, fines, assessments for missing textbooks/uniform, equipment/etc.

Seniors **will not** receive Gradation tickets and **cannot** participate in the Graduation Ceremony until all financial obligations are met.

ALL FEES, FINES, ETC. MUST BE PAID IN FULL BY:

JUNE 1, 2026

Senior Exam Exemption

Seniors may be exempt from exams based on the following criteria:

- Students must have a projected final grade of B or higher
- Students must have 10 or fewer absences in the course
- Students cannot be exempt from state testing including field testing.

Absences may be excused or unexcused. College visitations will count as part of the 10 days.

College Planning for the Senior Year

Fall of Senior Year:

- **Attend a senior meeting with your counselor.**
- Prepare your brag sheet to send to your counselor and those writing your recommendation letters.
- Attend college fairs and open houses to decide where you will apply. Speak with college admissions representatives to ask them questions.
- Complete the Residency Determination Service for in-state tuition.
Ncresidency.cfnc.org
- Complete college applications, know your deadlines! Make sure to apply for any college-based scholarship opportunities you are eligible for.
- Send transcripts! These will be available no sooner than **September 22th**.
 - In-State colleges must be sent through the Transcript Manager on cfnc.org (This is the only way final transcripts will be sent in June.)
 - Out-of-State colleges must be sent through scriborder.com
- Checking testing police for ACT and SAT for college you have applied to. If sending test scores, be sure to send scores directly to the colleges from ACT and SAT website.

Winter of Senior Year:

- Complete your FAFSA at fafsa.gov
- Finish up college any college applications.
- Search for scholarship in the community.
<https://hshsstudentservices.weebly.com/scholarships-financial-aid.html>
- Visit or virtually tour the colleges you are very interest in to help make your final decisions.

Spring of Senior Year:

- Make sure all fees and fines have been paid and that you have received your cap and gown.
- Make a final decision on which college you will attend. Pay attention to deadlines for submitting your deposit to secure your spot.
- Turn in any scholarships you have received to Student Services to be included in the scholarship total and recognized on our Senior Slide Show.
- Complete the Senior Survey in May!
- Final Transcripts:
 - In-State college must be sent through the Application Hub on cfnc.org
 - Out-of-State colleges must be sent through scriborder.com

25/26 Important Test Dates

ACT Test Dates	
Test Date	Registration Deadline
September 6, 2025	August 1, 2025
October 18, 2025	September 12, 2025
December 13, 2025	November 7, 2025
February 14, 2026	January 9, 2026
April 11, 2026	March 6, 2026
June 13, 2026	May 8, 2026
July 11, 2026	June 5, 2026

SAT Test Dates	
Test Date	Registration Deadline
September 13, 2025	August 29, 2025
October 4, 2025	September 19, 2025
November 8, 2025	October 24, 2025
December 6, 2025	November 21, 2025
March 14, 2026	February 27, 2026
May 2, 2026	April 17, 2026
June 6, 2026	May 22, 2026

College Admission Test

Register or request scores for the SAT [Here](#).

Register or request scores for the ACT [Here](#).

If you are still interested in improving your scores please pay close attention testing dates and make sure you can meet the college and universities deadlines.

To send your official test scores to a University or College, go to their website and request your scores be sent directly to the University or College. There will be a fee.

You can find recommendations for test prep on our [Student Services Website](#).

Scholarships

Student Services has a document which will be updated weekly to include any vetted scholarship information that we receive along with the qualifications and instructions on how to apply for the scholarship. It is recommended that students check this list regularly and ALL year long as scholarship are added throughout the year and there are some hard deadlines that will need to be met.

Students should also check the following locations to search for scholarships for which they may qualify. Some suggestions (but not limited to):

- College websites (where the student is applying)
- Church groups
- Parent work employers
- CFNC.org
- Community organizations
- National Scholarship App searches and websites
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**Remember, you do not have to PAY to get a scholarship, students and parents should be wary of any solicitation where they must pay money to apply or receive a scholarship.*

Scholarship Website

HSHS will ask students to report ALL scholarships they have been awarded (regardless of whether they accept them or not) to Student Services so that we can celebrate these achievements as well as calculate a "CLASS TOTAL" of all scholarships. This is also reported to WCPSS.

A presentation will be created to celebrate your accomplishments!!!

Applying for Student Aid

Federal Application for Federal Student Aid, [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov), is required for students who may qualify for federal grants and student loans. HSHS has a counselor who will be able to assist students and families with this information. Tori Sharpe is available 1 day a week at WSHS and is also available via email at vsharpe@wcpss.net. Mrs. Sharpe is a great resource available to you through WCPSS. It is recommended that all students fill out the FAFSA application.

Application will be available early December this year!

Follow your School Counselors on [Instagram](#): @hshs.student.services
 Find your Counselor on the [Student Services Website](#).
 Find the [WCPSS Graduation Requirements](#).
 Look at [Minimum Admissions Requirements \(MAR\)](#)

MILITARY

- [Military](#)
- [Meet with a Recruiter](#)
- [Study for the ASVAB](#)
(Given in Fall and Spring)

STEPS TO APPLY TO COLLEGE

1. APPLY
 APPLY TO IN-STATE COLLEGES: Use [CFNC.org](#) or [Common App](#), 2-year colleges use [CFNC.org](#)

COLLEGE RESOURCES.

- [Search College Majors](#)
- [Search Wake Tech 2-year Community College Transfer Options](#)
- [Search Wake Tech Community College Associate/Diploma Programs](#)
- [College Application Month FREE APPLICATIONS](#)
- [SCHOLARSHIPS!!](#)
- [NC College Admissions Information](#)
- [HSHS College Planning site](#)
- [College Essay Writing Tips](#)
- Letters of Recommendation
 Complete a [BRAG SHEET](#) for your recommender
[Who to Ask](#) [Myths & Truths](#)

APPLY TO OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGES: Use the individual college website or [Common App](#)

[Common App FAQ](#) [Common App Toolkit](#)
[Inviting & Assigning Recommenders](#)

2. Complete [Residency Determination](#) on CFNC.org
[More info and directions on RDS](#)
3. Complete [FAFSA](#) (opens 10/1/2022) [More info on Financial Aid](#) and [FAFSA Day](#)
 E-mail our Financial Aid Counselor for help at vsharpe@wcpss.net
4. **ALL STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING THEIR OWN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT using the instructions below regardless of the application process you choose.**
(Counselors do not send transcripts despite instructions you may receive from colleges nor do we use any other transcript submission web portals such as SENDedu)
 IN-STATE colleges use [CFNC.org](#) Application Hub
 OUT-OF-STATE colleges use the [WCPSS Transcript Request System](#).
 Full instructions to send transcripts can be found on the [Student Services Website](#)
5. Send your [ACT](#) and/or [SAT](#) scores

SAT/ACT

- Register to take the [ACT](#) and/or [SAT](#)
- [ACT/SAT Conversion Chart](#)
- [Which one should I take? ACT or SAT?](#)
- [Khan Academy Practice](#)

ATHLETICS

- [NCAA Eligibility Center](#)

CAREER

- [Employment Opportunities](#)
- [Mrs. Murray \(HSHS Career Development Counselor\) website](#)
- Take a Career Assessment at [CFNC.org](#) in the Learn About Your Career Interests section or [Major Clarity](#).
- Write a resume using [these tips](#).

Graduation Details



Raleigh Convention Center Commencement

Date: June 13th

Time: 8 pm

Address: 500 S. Salisbury St

Arrive: 6:45 pm

- Be on time. Plan for traffic, parking, and other delays.
- There is a drop-off area under the “Shimmer Wall” on McDowell Street for seniors and those guests who have difficulty walking distances.
- When you arrive check in with the HSHS staff member who is assigned to your row.
- Parents and guests will be admitted 45 minutes before the start time through all entrances. Seating is first come, first serve and guests may not reserve or hold seats.
- Wear your graduation cap and gown to graduation.
- Be careful NOT to lose your tassel; it falls off easily and cannot be replaced.
- Write your full name inside your cap.
- The processional line up will begin at approximately 7:45pm; Late students may not be allowed to join the processional.

Raleigh Conventions Center Reminders

The parking garage fee is \$10 per car for graduation.

The RCC will not allow anyone to enter the facility with flowers in glass vases, signs, balloons, noise makers, food, drinks, or wrapped packages.

Handicap guests are encouraged to park in parking area under the Marriott Hotel and enter the RCC from the underground parking. Only 1 person will be allowed to accompany wheelchair guest in the reserved wheelchair section of the ceremony.

Due to fire code, strollers & tripods cannot block aisles and will have to be stored at the entrance.

During the ceremony, individuals should remain seated and should not be out of seats to take pictures or move closer to the stage. Camera tripods cannot block aisles. Guests may videotape from their seat, but tripods may not be set higher than eye level or block the view of other guests.

Everyone will need to exit the Convention Center immediately after the ceremony.

Directions to the Raleigh Convention Center



Raleigh Convention Center, 500 South Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27601

From Points West: I-40 east to exit 298B South Sanders Street.

From Points East: 64/264 to I-440 east; merge onto I-40 west and exit at 298B South Saunders Street.

From Points South: US-1 North to I-40 east; exit at 298B South Saunders Street.

From Points North: US-1 South into the city – left on Lenoir Street.

The convention center website is: <http://www.raleighconvention.com>

The site contains additional information about parking, directions, and a detailed downtown city map.

Graduation Etiquette/Details

Graduation is a formal event with a specific dress code for students. In general it includes the following expectations.

- ❑ All students participating in graduation must wear the HSHS approved cap & gown. As the style of the gown has not changed, students may wear a cap and gown from a previous HSHS graduation if they choose.
 - ❑ Men should wear a white dress shirt with a collar. They must also wear a tie. Neck ties or bowties are both appropriate. Pants must be dark in color. Shoes must be dark dress shoes. Jeans / denim are not appropriate.
 - ❑ Ladies should wear a lightweight dress under the graduation robe. The dress should not exceed the length of the gown. Shoes should be dark dress shoes. Ladies who prefer may also wear dark pants.
 - ❑ Students should be cautioned that footwear needs to be appropriate to comfortably walk briskly as well as walk up and down stairs safely.
 - ❑ Caps are to be worn straight on the head and parallel to the floor. No decorations or alterations on caps and gowns will be permitted.
 - ❑ Tassels are worn on the right side of the cap until the conclusion of the graduation ceremony. Graduates will be instructed to move their tassel to the left side to signify graduation during the ceremony. Note that tassels can fall off easily and we do not have replacements.
 - ❑ Caps and gowns should be pressed and wrinkle free prior to the ceremony. Note that gowns melt easily if ironed. Wrinkles will generally “fall out” with steam.
 - ❑ Only HSHS Club or Honor Society Cords, Capstone Hoods or Honors stoles should be worn. Men or ladies who have any concerns about the dress code listed above should talk with Ms. Prue or Ms. Jones.
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- ❑ Seniors must arrive one hour prior to the start of graduation. For the Class of 2025, this means that they must arrive by no later than 6:45pm.
 - ❑ Anticipate that graduation will conclude in no more than one hour.
 - ❑ Do not bring items with you to graduation that you have to carry. You will not be permitted to carry them into the Convention Center.
 - ❑ All electronic devices must be off during the entire ceremony. Graduates will not be able to use a phone as a camera at any point in the ceremony.
 - ❑ Diplomas will be distributed immediately after the ceremony. All unclaimed diplomas will need to be picked up at HSHS the week

Ceremony Photos

Lifetouch will be at graduation taking official photos of each senior as they receive their diploma on stage from the principal. More information will be coming soon regarding how to order your graduation photo directly through Lifetouch.



following graduation.

- ❑ School rules apply to all graduation activities. Inability to follow school rules and graduation guidelines may impact your ability to participate in the ceremony. We want this to be a happy time for each graduate, but we will prioritize a dignified ceremony for the group as a whole.
- ❑ Yelling or pranks during graduation will distract from the ceremony. If necessary, students will be removed from the ceremony and/or their diploma withheld. If this happens, students will have to make arrangements to pick up their diploma at Holly Springs High at a later date.
- ❑ The Raleigh Convention Center requires all guests attending to have a ticket regardless of their age.
- ❑ The Raleigh Convention Center does not allow anyone to enter the facility with flowers, signs, balloons, noisemakers, wrapped packages, camera bags, book bags / backpacks, food or drinks.
- ❑ During the ceremony, individuals will be allowed to take pictures along the far wall to the right of the stage only.
- ❑ Seniors will graduate in alphabetical order. Each student will cross the stage and receive a diploma cover from the principal.
The audience is asked to refrain from applause or noise in order for all seniors' names to be heard.
- ❑ A professional photographer will take a picture of each senior as s/he is presented the graduation diploma cover.
- ❑ The event will be live streamed. A link will be placed on the HSHS website within 24 hours before the event for families to use.
- ❑ Seating in the convention center is first come, first serve basis. Security staff will not allow guests to "save seats."

For guests with special needs:

- ❑ There is a designated drop off area by the "Shimmer Wall" on McDowell Street for seniors and their guests who have difficulty walking.
- ❑ Guests with a wheelchair will be escorted by convention center staff to an appropriate area. If you anticipate guests in wheelchairs, please contact Ms. Prue (eprue@wcpss.net) to talk through supports and logistics for your family.