



# Class of 2026



Postsecondary Options,  
College Planning, and  
Summer Steps

How to prepare for senior year



# Learning Objectives



## Walton's Counseling Department

Who is my school counselor?

How do I get information from the school counseling department?



## Post-secondary Options

What options are available to me after graduating from Walton?



## College Admissions Factors

What factors influence college admissions decisions?



## Building a College List

How do I research colleges?

How do I build a college list?



## Summer Steps

What can I do over the summer to prepare for my senior year?

What is the Postsecondary Options Packet and when is it due?



# School Counseling Department

- Who is my school counselor?
- How do I get information from the school counseling dept?





# School Counselors



**Mrs. Clary (A – Ch)**  
[lauraclary@cobbk12.org](mailto:lauraclary@cobbk12.org)



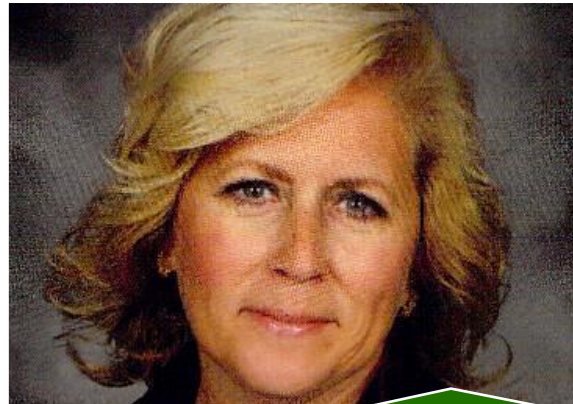
**Dr. Alpert (Ci – G)**  
[betsy.alpert@cobbk12.org](mailto:betsy.alpert@cobbk12.org)



**Mrs. Dunham (H – K)**  
[donna.dunham@cobbk12.org](mailto:donna.dunham@cobbk12.org)



**Mrs. Watford (L – N)**  
[erica.watford@cobbk12.org](mailto:erica.watford@cobbk12.org)



**Mrs. Harwood (O – Sl)**  
[tina.harwood@cobbk12.org](mailto:tina.harwood@cobbk12.org)



**Mrs. Fay (Sm – Z)**  
[lisa.fay@cobbk12.org](mailto:lisa.fay@cobbk12.org)

# School Counseling Support Staff



**Dr. England**

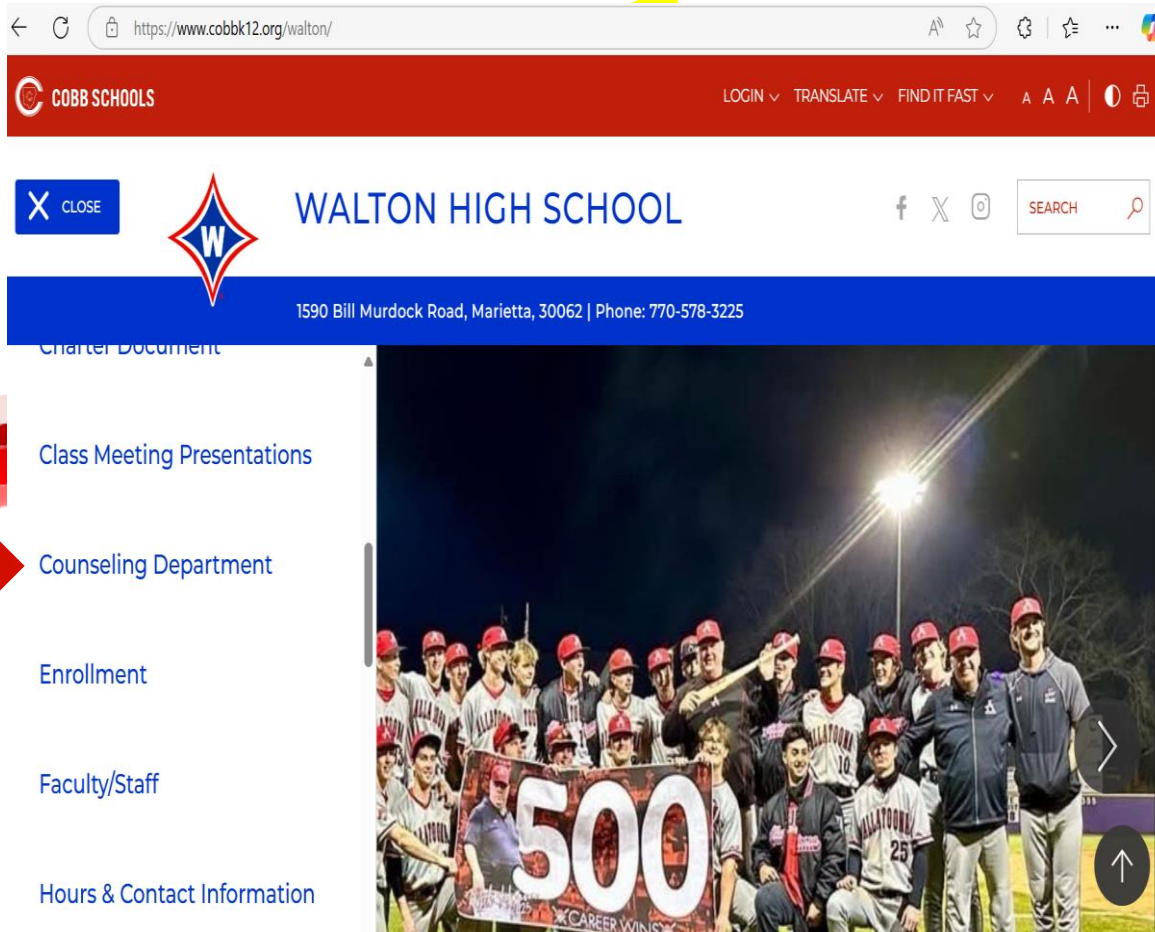
College Advisor  
Scholarship Coordinator  
Volunteer Service Hour Coordinator  
[rebecca.england@cobbk12.org](mailto:rebecca.england@cobbk12.org)



**Mrs. Schrenk**

Registrar  
Records Room  
in the Counseling Suite

# School Counseling Website



## Walton High School Counseling Department

1590 Bill Murdock Road • Marietta, GA 30062

Tel: 770.578.3225 • Fax: 770-578-3227

[New Student Enrollment Information](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[www.waltonhighcounseling.com](http://www.waltonhighcounseling.com)



# School Counseling Social Media

FOLLOW US ON OUR  
**SOCIAL**  
**MEDIA**



@waltonhighcounselors



@waltoncounselor



@waltonhighcounselors



@walton\_counselors

Scan QR code to follow us on your  
preferred social media platform





# Postsecondary Options

What options are available to me  
after graduating from Walton?





# Military

- Consult recruiter for military opportunities
- Explore ROTC scholarships
- Take the ASVAB (offered at Walton every fall & spring)
- Military academy appointments are highly competitive

	Websites	Military Academy
Air Force	<a href="http://www.af.mil">www.af.mil</a> and <a href="http://www.airforce.com">www.airforce.com</a>	Air Force Academy <a href="http://www.usafa.af.mil">www.usafa.af.mil</a>
Army	<a href="http://www.army.mil">www.army.mil</a> and <a href="http://www.goarmy.com">www.goarmy.com</a>	West Point <a href="http://www.westpoint.edu">www.westpoint.edu</a>
Coast Guard	<a href="http://www.uscg.mil">www.uscg.mil</a> and <a href="http://www.gocoastguard.com">www.gocoastguard.com</a>	US Coast Guard Academy <a href="http://www.uscga.edu">www.uscga.edu</a>
Marines	<a href="http://www.marines.mil">www.marines.mil</a> and <a href="http://www.marines.com">www.marines.com</a>	Future Marines attend the US Naval Academy
Navy	<a href="http://www.navy.mil">www.navy.mil</a> and <a href="http://www.navy.com">www.navy.com</a>	US Naval Academy <a href="http://www.usna.edu">www.usna.edu</a>

# Postsecondary Options cont.

## Gap Year



- Internship and community service opportunities
- Work/volunteer for a non-profit organization
- Travel
- Work/career exploration
- Gap year fair information

## Direct to Work



- Take the ASVAB for career exploration
- Research careers on O\*NET OnLine
- Enroll in certification programs
- The HOPE Grant covers certain technical college certificate & diploma programs

# Postsecondary Educational Options



You can attend several types of schools or colleges after graduating high school



## Specialty or Trade School

- Certificate or diploma
- Examples:
  - Atlanta School of Massage
  - Aviation Institute of Maintenance



## Community or Technical College

- Certificate, diploma, or associate's degree
- Examples:
  - Georgia Highlands College
  - Chattahoochee Technical College

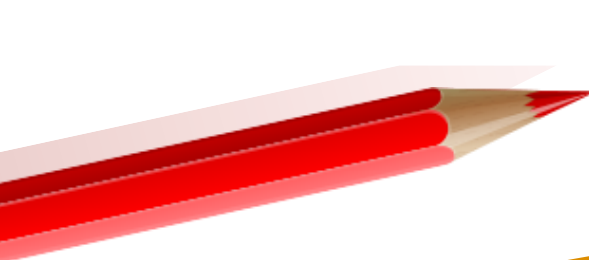


## 4-Year College or University

- Bachelor's degree
- Examples:
  - The University of Georgia
  - Kennesaw State University





☐

**ADMIT**

☐

**DEFER**

☐

**DENY**



## College Admissions Factors

What factors influence college admissions decisions?



# Let's brainstorm

What factors do you think influence college admissions decisions?



# Factors in Colleges Admissions

- Extracurricular activities
- Essays
- Letters of recommendation

RIGOR/  
QUALITY OF CLASSES

GRADES & GPA

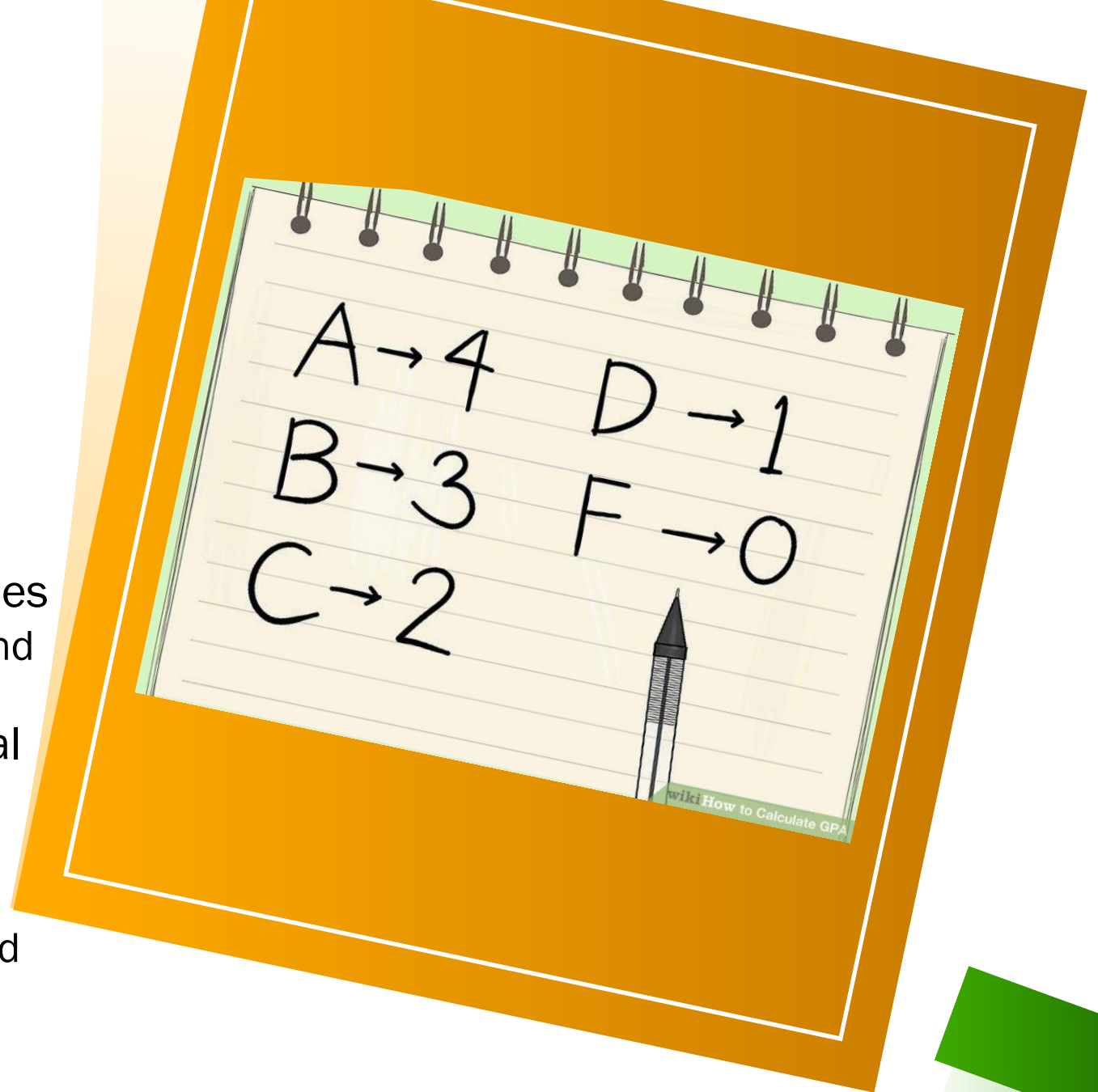
TEST SCORES



# How Colleges Calculate GPAs

## Colleges use varying methods to calculate GPAs

- Typically recalculate GPAs from CORE classes
  - English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language
- May or may not “weight” Honors, AP, or dual enrollment courses
  - Examples:
    - UGA only weights AP classes
    - Alabama and Auburn take Weighted GPA directly off Walton’s transcript
    - Univ of South Carolina weights Honors and AP courses the same



# College Admissions Testing

## What does “test optional” mean?

- Check college website for test optional status
- **ONLY** submit test scores that will enhance your overall application
  - Other application components may be weighted differently if you do not submit scores
- Upcoming testing dates:
  - SAT - [www.collegeboard.org](https://www.collegeboard.org)
    - May 3, 2025
    - June 7, 2025
  - ACT - [www.act.org](https://www.act.org)
    - June 14, 2025
    - July 12, 2025



# College Admissions Essays Tips



Start early

Reflect on  
personal  
experiences

Be authentic

Focus on a  
narrow topic

Follow  
instructions


Edit and  
revise

Seek  
feedback

Proofread  
carefully



Common App  
essay prompts  
are now  
available!



<https://www.commonapp.org/blog/announcing-2025-2026-common-app-essay-prompts>



# Letters of Recommendation

Not all colleges require letters of rec

## TEACHER LETTERS OF REC

- Verify whether the colleges you're applying to require or accept teacher letters of rec
- **ONLY** ask for letters from teachers if they are required or accepted
  - Personally request letters from teachers by **Sept. 1**
  - Choose at least one core academic teacher
  - Provide the Teacher Recommendation Form to each teacher
  - Download the Teacher Recommendation Form at [www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026](http://www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026)

## COUNSELOR LETTER OF REC

- Counselors must have a completed Postsecondary Options Packet to write a letter of recommendation

**Teacher Recommendation Information Form**

This document should be TYPED and given to the teacher by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Be sure to request a recommendation in person before you give this document to the teacher.

**NOTE: Not all colleges require a letter of recommendation.**

Today's Date: Click or tap here to enter text.  
Teacher's Name: Click or tap here to enter text.  
Student's Name: Click or tap here to enter text.  
Student's Email: Click or tap here to enter text.  
Student's Cell Phone: Click or tap here to enter text.  
Year and Class, you had this teacher: Click or tap here to enter text.  
First Deadline that requires this teacher recommendation: Click or tap here to enter text.

Major (including Undecided): Click or tap here to enter text.  
Career (including Undecided): Click or tap here to enter text.

1) I am asking you to write a college recommendation letter because: Click or tap here to enter text.  
2) The best piece of work (composition, research paper, lab, etc.) that I did for your class: Click or tap here to enter text.  
3) My proudest moment in your classroom: Click or tap here to enter text.  
4) My favorite memory of your class: Click or tap here to enter text.  
5) The experience or specific assignment that challenged me the most in your class: Click or tap here to enter text.  
6) I believe I grew in your class because: Click or tap here to enter text.  
7) I would describe myself using the following words (two to three qualities or character traits): Click or tap here to enter text.  
8) The characteristic I most want colleges to know about me: Click or tap here to enter text.  
9) The following would be a helpful bit of information to include in my recommendation letter: Click or tap here to enter text.  
10) My grade(s) in your class: \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> semester and \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. I made a \_\_\_\_\_ on the AP exam for this course (if applicable). I believe my grade in your class is/is not an accurate reflection of my work (why or why not): Click or tap here to enter text.

# Postsecondary Options Packet

The Postsecondary Options Packet is part of your senior summer English assignments

- Email your Postsecondary Options Packet to your school counselor by **Monday, August 4**
- Counselors use the information you provide in the Postsecondary Options Packet when writing letters of recommendation
  - Be accurate
  - Provide very specific examples
  - The more information you provide, the better
- Download the Postsecondary Options Packet at [www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026](http://www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026)

**Post-Secondary Options Packet**  
Walton High School  
1590 Bill Murdock Road  
Marietta, Ga 30062  
CEEB School Code: 111987

**\*\*\*WHEN COMPLETED - email this packet directly to your School Counselor, due the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school\*\*\***

Name: Enter first and last name  
Email: Enter email address  
Cell Phone: Enter phone number.  
Current Weighted GPA: Click or tap here to enter text.

**Senior Year Classes:**

First Semester Classes	Second Semester Classes (Tentative)
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

**Teachers who know you well:**

1. Teacher #1.
2. Teacher #2.
3. Teacher #3.

**School Activities: (Ex. Clubs, teams, sports, performing arts)**

Name of group	Grade or age participated	Responsibilities or office held (if applies)
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities

**Outside Activities: (Ex. church, community involvement, etc.)**

Name of group	Grade or age participated	Responsibilities (if applies)
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities
Click to enter name of group.	Grade/age	Responsibilities



# Building a College List

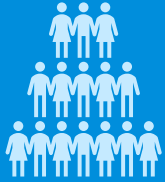
- How do I research colleges?
- How do I build a college list?



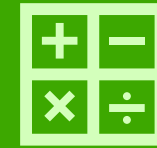


# College Fit

Campus size  
& location



Programs &  
majors



**COLLEGE  
FIT**



Cost



On-campus  
activities

# HOPE Scholarship

## 4-year public colleges & universities in Georgia (ex: UGA, KSU)

	HOPE GPA	Rigor Courses	SAT/ACT Score (one sitting)	Approx. Tuition Coverage
HOPE Scholarship	3.0	4	n/a	portion (changes yearly)
Zell Miller Scholarship	3.7	4	1200 (SAT) 25 (ACT)	100%

## Technical College System of Georgia (ex: Chatt Tech, Lanier Tech) Certificate or diploma programs

	HOPE GPA	Rigor Courses	SAT/ACT Score	Approx. Tuition Coverage
HOPE Grant	n/a	n/a	n/a	portion (changes yearly)
Zell Miller Grant (3.5 college GPA)	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%

# Selective College Scholarships

School	Name of Scholarship	Website
Davidson College	Belk Scholarship	<a href="https://www.davidson.edu/admission-and-financial-aid/financial-aid/types-financial-aid/scholarships/nomination-scholarships/john-m-belk-scholarship">https://www.davidson.edu/admission-and-financial-aid/financial-aid/types-financial-aid/scholarships/nomination-scholarships/john-m-belk-scholarship</a>
Indiana University	Wells Scholarship	<a href="https://wellsscholars.indiana.edu">https://wellsscholars.indiana.edu</a>
Northeastern University	Torch Scholars Program	<a href="https://torch.northeastern.edu">https://torch.northeastern.edu</a>
Bard College Boston College Brandeis University Texas A&M University The College of Wooster The George Washington University	Posse Foundation Scholarship	<a href="http://www.possefoundation.org">www.possefoundation.org</a> and <a href="http://www.possefoundation.org/sites/atlanta">www.possefoundation.org/sites/atlanta</a>
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Morehead-Cain Scholarship	<a href="https://www.moreheadcain.org">https://www.moreheadcain.org</a>
University of Virginia	Jefferson Scholarship	<a href="https://www.jeffersonscholars.org">https://www.jeffersonscholars.org</a>

# Reach, Match, & Likely Schools



## Reach schools

- Academic credentials fall below the school's range for the freshman class
- Apply to 1 – 2 schools



## Match schools

- Academic credentials fall within or slightly higher than the school's range for the freshman class
- Apply to 2 – 3 schools



## Likely schools

- Academic credentials are much higher than the typical range for their freshman class
- Apply to at least 1 school



# Common App

## What is the Common App?

- The Common App serves as a universal college admission application accepted by over 1000 colleges and universities
- Colleges and universities that accept the Common App:
  - [www.commonapp.org/explore](http://www.commonapp.org/explore)
- Common App essay prompts are **now available**  
<https://www.commonapp.org/blog/announcing-2025-2026-common-app-essay-prompts>
- Common App applications open **August 1**
  - <https://www.commonapp.org>

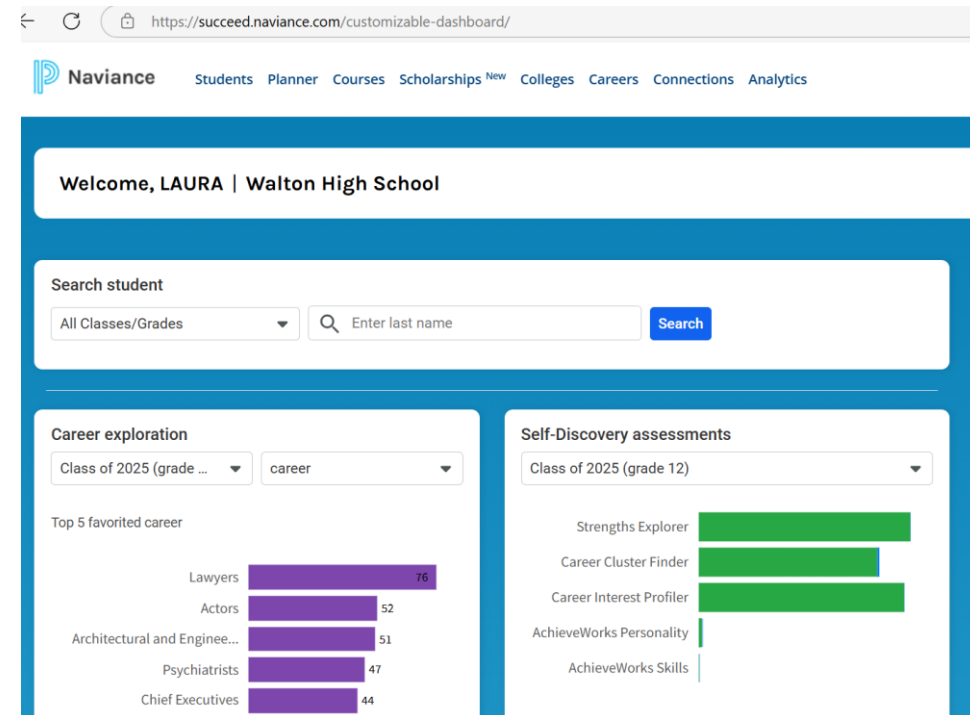


# How to Use SuperMatch College Search in Naviance

- Located in Naviance
- Explore options and discover colleges that are a match with your academic profile and what you're looking for in a college experience

## How to log into Naviance

1. Go to [www.cobbk12.org/walton](http://www.cobbk12.org/walton)
2. Click on Find it Fast
3. Click on Naviance
4. You will automatically be logged in through Clever
5. Use your Office 365 login information to access Naviance from home

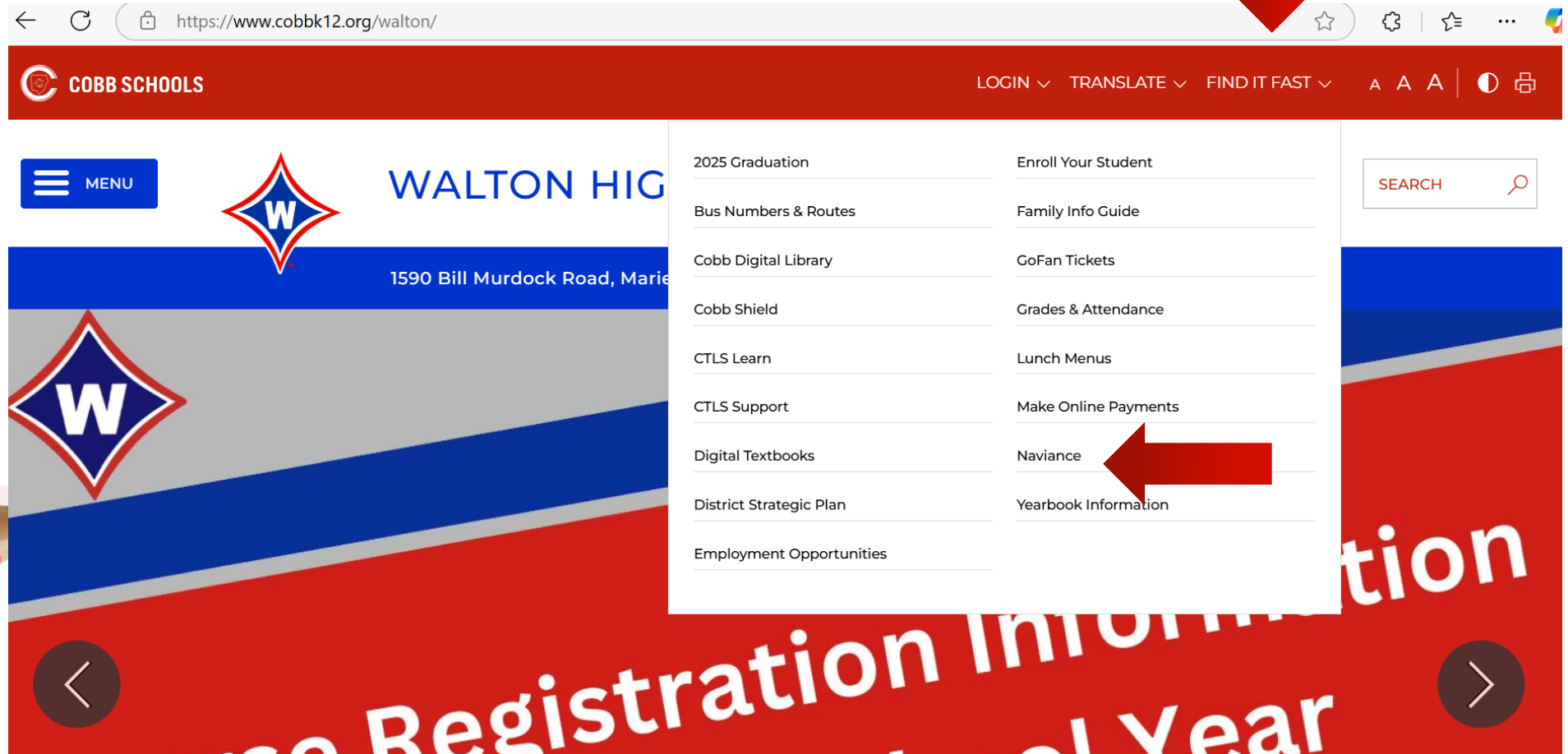


The screenshot shows the Naviance student dashboard. At the top, the URL is <https://succeed.naviance.com/customizable-dashboard/>. The dashboard is personalized for Laura at Walton High School. It features a search bar for students, a career exploration section with a bar chart of top 5 favored careers, and a self-discovery assessments section with progress bars for various tools.

Career	Count
Lawyers	76
Actors	52
Architectural and Engine...	51
Psychiatrists	47
Chief Executives	44

Assessment	Progress
Strengths Explorer	100%
Career Cluster Finder	100%
Career Interest Profiler	100%
AchieveWorks Personality	0%
AchieveWorks Skills	0%

[www.cobbk12.org/walton](http://www.cobbk12.org/walton)  
Find it fast - naviance



The screenshot shows a web browser at the URL <https://www.cobbk12.org/walton/>. The page header includes the COBB SCHOOLS logo and navigation links for LOGIN, TRANSLATE, and FIND IT FAST. A mobile menu is open, displaying a list of links. A red arrow points to the 'Naviance' link in the menu. The background features a large banner with the text 'Registration Information' and 'Year'.

COBB SCHOOLS

LOGIN ▾ TRANSLATE ▾ FIND IT FAST ▾

MENU

WALTON HIGH SCHOOL

1590 Bill Murdock Road, Marietta, GA 30067

2025 Graduation

Bus Numbers & Routes

Cobb Digital Library

Cobb Shield

CTLS Learn

CTLS Support

Digital Textbooks

District Strategic Plan

Employment Opportunities

Enroll Your Student

Family Info Guide

GoFan Tickets

Grades & Attendance

Lunch Menus

Make Online Payments

Naviance

Yearbook Information

SEARCH

Registration Information

Year

# How to Use SuperMatch College Search



1. Select **Colleges**
2. Select **SuperMatch College Search** under **Find Your Fit**
3. Select **Select Criteria To Start**
4. Continue refining your search by selecting **Choose Fit Criteria** at the top
5. Sort your criteria into the **Must Have** and **Nice to Have**
6. Select **Pin To Compare** colleges on your results list
7. Select **Favorite** to add colleges you are interested and want to learn more about
8. Select **Save Search** and name the search
9. Select **Colleges** and **Colleges I'm Thinking About** to research about the colleges on your favorites list
10. Repeat the above steps to start a new search or edit a saved search

8 selected criteria  
To refine your results, use the arrows to move your criteria into the "Must Have" and "Nice to Have" boxes.

**Must Have**

- X Athletics [1] →
- X Campus Surroundings [2] →
- X Cost < \$60000 →
- X Greek Life →
- X Organizations and Clubs [2] →

**Nice to Have**

- X Location [9] ←
- X Master's [1] ←
- X Internships and Co-ops ←

**Your Results** Your results include 0 institutions that are both an **academic match** and also match all the criteria selected above.

	Fit Score	Academic Match	Highlights	Cost	Pick what to see
<b>University of Miami</b> Coral Gables, FL, Suburb near Large City 4 year, Private nonprofit ★ PINNED ♥ FAVORITE	84% Why?	Average You GPA 3.8 N/A0 SAT 1390 N/A ACT 32 N/A <small>To determine if you're an academic match for this institution, enter your GPA and/or standardized test scores.</small>	Photos/Videos on Profile Program Spotlights Virtual Tour	Tuition & Fees \$47,040 Room & Board \$13,666	Customize what you see category at
<b>Faulkner University</b> Montgomery, AL, Suburb near Large City 4 year, Private nonprofit, Churches of Christ ★ PINNED ♥ FAVORITED	77% Why?	Average You GPA 2 N/A0 SAT 1000 N/A ACT 20.5 N/A <small>To determine if you're an academic match for this institution, enter your GPA and/or standardized test scores.</small>	No Highlights Available	Tuition & Fees \$19,160 Room & Board \$7,400	Customize what you see category at





# How to Research Colleges

1. Select **Colleges**
2. Select **Colleges I'm Thinking About**
3. Select the college you want to research
4. Review the college's general information in **Overview**
5. Scroll down to see how your GPA and test scores compare with others who have applied to the college
6. Continue researching the college by selecting **Studies, Student Life, Admissions, and Costs**
7. To learn even more about the college, return to **Colleges I'm Thinking About**
8. Select **More**
9. Select **Scattergram** to view Walton's Application History, Acceptance Rate, Application Requirements, Recommended Courses, Application Factors, and Application Information
10. Select **Communicate** if you would like to send a message to the admission office



# How to Add “Colleges I’m Thinking About”

When you add colleges to the “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list, you will

- Receive email updates with information about these colleges
- Receive notifications when these colleges visit Walton

1. Select **Colleges**
2. Select **♥Colleges I’m Thinking About**
3. Select **+Add Colleges to List**
4. Search for college by name, state, or key word
5. Click on the **♥** icon next to the college

*Note: You will not be able to add “Colleges I’m Applying To” until mid-August*

Colleges I'm thinking about

Search for colleges

+ Add Colleges to List

Compare Me

♥ ★ Georgia College - Milledgeville

Milledgeville, GA

★ Georgia College - Milledgeville

CA

Student

N/A

Multiple Deadlines ▼N/A

MORE ⋮

★ Kennesaw State University

CA

Student

N/A

Multiple Deadlines ▼N/A

MORE ⋮

University of North Georgia

CA

Student

N/A

Multiple Deadlines ▼N/A

MORE ⋮

★ Samford University

CA

Student

N/A

Multiple Deadlines ▼N/A

MORE ⋮



# Summer Steps

- What can I do over the summer to prepare for my senior year?
- What is the Postsecondary Options Packet?



# Summer Steps Checklist

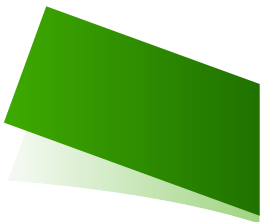


- **REVIEW**  
today's  
PowerPoint  
presentation

- **RESEARCH**  
postsecondary  
options (gap  
year, military,  
workforce,  
trade schools,  
colleges)

- **DECIDE**  
which post-  
secondary option  
is right for you

- **REGISTER**  
for the SAT or  
ACT (if needed)



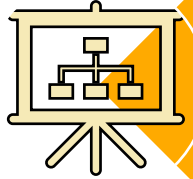


# Summer Steps Checklist

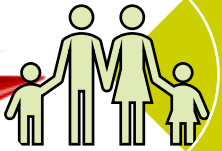


- **DRAFT**  
Common App essays if applying to Common App schools
- **COMPLETE**  
Postsecondary Options Packet and email it to your school counselor by **August 4**
- **OPTIONAL**  
complete the Teacher Recommendation Form for each teacher you will ask to write a letter of rec (2 max)
- **OPTIONAL**  
register for the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) if you plan to play sports at a D1 or D2 college

# Upcoming Events for Senior Year (dates TBD)



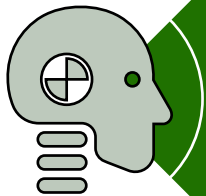
Postsecondary Presentation for all Senior English classes



Senior Family Night



Financial Aid Night



ASVAB test

# Class of 2026 Website

[www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026](http://www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026)

- Downloadable PDFs
  - PowerPoint of presentation
  - Summer Steps Checklist
  - “How To...” Guide
  - Postsecondary Options Packet
  - Teacher Recommendation Form
- Detailed Summer Steps
  - Naviance college tools
    - SuperMatch College Search
    - How to research colleges
    - How to add “Colleges I’m Thinking About”
  - SAT & ACT registration & dates
  - Common App schools & essay prompts
- Upcoming Fall Events





For more info, visit  
[www.waltonhighcounseling.com/  
class2026](http://www.waltonhighcounseling.com/class2026)

Have a great summer!

