



WEST MICHIGAN
AVIATION ACADEMY

**COUNTDOWN TO
GRADUATION**

Class of 2020

A Handbook for Seniors

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CALENDAR 2019-2020

AUGUST	
1	2019-2020 Common Application becomes available online
16	Registration Deadline for September 14 National ACT Test Date
19	First day of Senior Year
23	WMAA Closed
27	Senior Student & Parent Night 7pm
30	WMAA Closed
SEPTEMBER	
2	Labor Day-No School
6	Registration Deadline for October 5 National SAT Test Date
9	Early Release- Dismiss 1:35pm
9	Senior Workshop-College Applications- 1:45-4:30
14	National ACT Test Date
16	National Honor Society Induction Ceremony, 7:00pm
20	Registration Deadline for October 26 National ACT Test Date
23	Early Release- Dismiss 1:35pm
23	Senior Workshop- College Applications- 1:45-4:30pm
TBD	Jostens to present graduation ordering options
OCTOBER	
1	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) becomes available
3	Registration Deadline for November 2 National SAT Test Date
5	National SAT Test Date
TBD	Jostens orders due
14	Early Release- Dismiss 1:35pm
14	Senior Workshop- College Applications, 1:45-4:30pm
16	Half Day for Students-Dismiss at 11:30pm
TBD	College Night at Aquinas College
21	Parent-Teacher Conferences 5-8pm
23	Parent-Teacher Conferences 5-8pm
24	Parent-Teacher Conferences 1-3:30pm- Half Day for students
25	WMAA Closed
26	National ACT Test Date
28	Early Release Day- Dismiss at 1:35pm
28	Senior Workshop- College Applications, 1:45-4:30pm
29	FAFSA Workshop-6:00pm
31	Recommended deadline for college applications
NOVEMBER	
2	National SAT Test Date
8	Registration deadline for December 7 SAT Date
8	Registration deadline for December 14 ACT Test Date

11	Early Release Day-Dismiss at 1:35pm
11	Senior Workshop-College Applications, 1:45-4:30pm
13	Half Day for Students- Dismiss at 11:30am
27	No School, Thanksgiving Break
DECEMBER	
1	Senior pictures due to yearbook
7	National SAT Test Date
9	Early Release Day-Dismiss at 1:35pm
14	National ACT test
16	Semester Exam in 1st hour
17-19	Semester Exams AM- classes 2-7- students dismissed at 11:30am
20	Records Day- No Students
23	Winter Break begins
JANUARY	
6	WMAA classes resume
10	Registration deadline February 8 ACT
13	Early Release Day- Dismiss at 1:35pm
20	Martin Luther King Holiday- No students
27	Early Release Day- Dismiss at 1:35pm
31	Service Academy Nomination must be recieved
FEBRUARY	
10	Early Release Day- Dismiss at 1:35pm
17-18	Mid-Winter Break, WMAA Closed
24	Early Release Day- Dismiss at 1:35pm
28	Registration deadline for April 4 National ACT Test date
MARCH	
1	State of Michigan deadline for filing FAFSA
4	Half Day for Students - Dismiss at 11:30am
9	Early Release Day-Dismiss at 1:35pm
23	Early Release Day-Dismiss at 1:35pm
APRIL	
3-10	WMAA Closed; Spring Break
4	National ACT Test date
13	Classes Resume
20	Early Release Day-Dismiss at 1:35pm
TBD	Jostens to deliver graduation orders
TBD	National College Fair at DeVos Place
MAY	
1	Decision Day/Candidates Reply Date
1	Award and scholarship notifications due to Mrs. Zuberbier
4	AP United States Government and Politics Exam, 8:00am
5	AP Calculus AB Exam, 8:00am
5	Senior Awards Program, 2:00pm

6	AP English Literature and Composition Exam, 8:00am
7	AP Chemistry Exam, 8:00am
8	AP United States History Exam, 8:00am
8	AP Computer Science A Exam, 12:00pm
11	AP Biology Exam, 8:00am
12	AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam, 8:00am
12	AP Psychology Exam, 12:00pm
13	AP Microeconomics Exam 12:00pm
14	Half Day for Students-Dismiss at 11:30am
14	AP Macroeconomics Exam, 12:00pm
15	AP Computer Science Principles 8:00am
15	AP Statistics Exam, 12:00pm
18-21	Senior Exams
22	Senior Breakfast
25	Memorial Day-WMAA Closed
26	Baccalaureate
28	Senior Commencement

SENIOR PICTURES

Seniors are responsible for submitting a picture to the yearbook. In the past, families have chosen either a photography studio, professional photographer, or a friend to take the picture. The yearbook guidelines are: one wallet size (2.5" X 3.5") vertical, color photograph in high resolution (300 Dpi) to be submitted to the yearbook. Chosen photos should be a front-facing picture from roughly the mid-abdomen up. The photo should be chosen carefully and represent you as the lady/gentleman you are at WMAA. Photos must be submitted by December 1st, 2019 to the yearbook staff by either submitting a hard copy to Ms. Burrow or by emailing your jpeg file to yearbook@westmichiganaviation.org. If you choose not to provide a professional senior picture, yearbook staff will take a picture of you in school uniform to place in the school yearbook.

If you have not scheduled a date to get senior pictures scheduled, you should do so soon. There are dozens of photographers in the Grand Rapids area who do senior pictures, but their schedules fill up fast, so get in touch with them as soon as possible. Ms. Burrow can answer any further questions about photographers, senior pictures, or requirements that you may have.

Consult your photographer's online portfolio to consider the type of pose, clothing, etc. that you would like for yourself. Many studios send out notices of "early bird" discounts that can help keep the price down. In deciding how many pictures to order, you might keep in mind some other uses for them: relatives and friends, some college applications, graduation/open house invitations, some scholarship applications, some awards, etc.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR 18-YEAR OLD STUDENTS

Upon reaching the age of majority, each student at West Michigan Aviation Academy has the opportunity to choose the *Attendance Policy for 18-Year Olds* or to remain under the current school year policies. Before accepting this new policy, carefully read the responsibilities required of the student. A copy of the *18-Year Old Policy* is available in the school office, or online in the *Student Handbook*.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

The college application process will begin in just a few short months for the Class of 2020. As a goal, please complete and submit all college applications by October 31, 2019. Mrs. Zuberbier will be visiting all senior English classes in August to review the application process with seniors.

Students, please be mindful that the entire college application process is now completed online. In addition to unique online admissions applications for individual colleges or universities, more than 800 colleges and universities throughout the country now use *The Common Application*, which can be accessed at www.commonapp.org.

WMAA uses *SCOIR* exclusively to manage the college application process. During senior year, students and parents will use *SCOIR* to manage the college search and selection process and all college applications. While college applications are not submitted to colleges through *SCOIR*, all requests for transcripts, counselor statements, and teacher recommendations must be electronically submitted through *SCOIR*. In February 2020, Mrs. Zuberbier will automatically send students' seventh semester grades to all colleges where admission is pending. In July 2020, a final transcript will be sent to the college the student elects to attend.

For budgeting purposes, please keep in mind that most colleges require an application fee. This fee can range from \$20 to as high as \$75 per application. Some colleges may waive this fee if financial need is shown. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch should see Mrs. Zuberbier to obtain up to four application fee waivers to select colleges and universities.

It is the student's responsibility to ask for letters of recommendation from their teachers, providing teachers sufficient time to complete quality letters. Students must also record the teacher's name and email address in the students' *SCOIR* account. Once the teacher has

written the letter, he/she will enter the letter in SCOIR so that Mrs. Zuberbier can send it directly to the college(s).

Most colleges ask on their applications if you have ever been convicted of a crime or if you have ever been suspended or expelled from school. If you have, you are expected to answer truthfully, and you will likely be asked to provide an explanation to the college. WMAA is a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling and, as such, subscribes to its *Statement of Principles of Good Practice*. Accordingly, WMAA will provide colleges to which a student has applied whatever information the counselors and administration believe is appropriate and/or requested concerning that student. This also applies to any change in your status between the time of application and graduation. A change in status includes, but is not restricted to, academic violations, suspension and dismissal.

In summary, students are expected to:

- Complete the FERPA waiver of rights, allowing WMAA to release academic data to requested colleges and universities.
- Check WMAA email daily and respond. When applying for college/universities or even scholarships, it is best to use a personal email account. Make sure you create an appropriate email address.
- View upcoming visits by college representatives and sign up to attend, using your SCOIR account.
- Continually update prospective and active applications through SCOIR.
- Request transcripts to colleges through your SCOIR account.
- At least two weeks prior to the deadline, request (in person) letters of recommendation from teachers; record through SCOIR.
- Track application progress to be sure all items are sent in a timely manner

NATIONAL TESTING OPTIONS AND DATES

1. ACT

The ACT is a college admissions test administered six times per year in test centers throughout the country. Colleges usually require that students submit scores from the ACT (or the SAT) as a part of the college admissions process. The test consists of four sections — English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. Students receive a score for each section, plus a composite score ranging from 1 to 36. Seniors who have not taken the ACT, or those who wish to take the test for either admissions or scholarship purpose, may do so by registering online at www.actstudent.org.

2. SAT

The SAT test is administered seven times per year at test centers around the country and the world. Colleges usually require that students submit scores from the SAT (or the ACT) as a part of the college admissions process. The SAT consists of critical reading, math, and an optional writing section. Juniors in the state of Michigan take the SAT as part of the required state assessments. Should students wish to retake the SAT, they may register online at www.sat.collegeboard.org.

3. SUBJECT TESTS

Many highly selective colleges and universities require applicants to take the SAT Subject Tests. SAT Subject Tests are the only national admission tests that measure students' knowledge and skills in particular subject areas. The SAT Subject Tests give students an additional opportunity to distinguish themselves and showcase their skills in a particular subject area.

If necessary, most students take the SAT Subject Tests toward the end of their junior year or at the beginning of their senior year. However, you should take tests such as World History, Biology, Chemistry or Physics as soon as possible after completing the course in the subject. Students tend to do better on other tests, like languages, after at least two years of study.

4. Advanced Placement (AP)

Advanced Placement Examinations are administered in May each year for students who have completed specific Advanced Placement courses. West Michigan Aviation Academy offers specific AP courses in United States History, American Government, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Calculus AB, Spanish Language & Culture, Computer Science Principles, Computer Science A, Statistics, Chemistry, and English Literature. Students at WMAA will have an opportunity to take AP exams May 4th-May 15th, 2020. Each of these tests costs approximately \$94 with reduced fees available for students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. CollegeBoard is changing the registration process for AP exams for the 2019-2020 school year. Students will register for their exams in the Fall of 2019, instead of the Spring of 2020.

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 on strong results on AP exams, but students are not penalized if they have not taken them. Students are advised to check with the colleges they are interested in applying to for specific information on how Advanced Placement credits may be applied.

SCHOLARSHIP SEARCHES

In the past several years, many computer scholarship search companies have sprung up around the country. But college financial aid administrators and high school counselors are largely distrustful of these companies. Why? People who have little or no experience with or knowledge of financial aid, run most search companies. They tend to charge a lot of money for information that can be found free of charge in libraries, school counselor 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 still must apply. 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. Beware of

official-looking, even federal government looking, mailings. Some of these companies are great at marketing.

Here are scholarship websites we recommend for students to use:

www.unigo.com

www.fastweb.com

www.collegexpress.com

We also recommend students review the Financial Aid website at the university they are interested in attending. Most schools will post their school specific scholarships on their website and will require students to have already submitted an application in order to qualify for their scholarships.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Twenty-six credits, with specific departmental distribution, are required to graduate from West Michigan Aviation Academy. Their counselor continually reminds students that they need to be aware of the number of credits they have and what specific requirements they must complete prior to graduation. A *Credit Check* form is mailed home each July with the student's report card showing the number of credits earned as of that date. It is always wise to be proactive and know how many credits the student earns each semester.

For students to be eligible to participate in commencement, the school operates with the following policy regarding who can and cannot "walk" at commencement:

"Students lacking not more than one credit at graduation time will be permitted to participate in commencement exercises, provided they are enrolled in summer school for the necessary credit. However the diploma will be withheld until all graduation requirements have been fulfilled."

Be aware that this policy means that students will be monitored by the senior counselor right up until the day of the commencement ceremony. Only those who have at least twenty-five (25) credits will be allowed to participate in commencement.

COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

As one of the requirements for graduation, WMAA students must complete 100 hours of community service. Students who transfer to WMAA will have this requirement prorated based on their year of entry. This requirement must be 100% fulfilled prior to graduation. Students who have not completed their 100 hours of community service will not receive a diploma and will not be allowed to participate in senior end-of-year activities, including graduation.

Community service hours are tracked by the front office. Students should be aware of how many hours they have submitted and how many hours remain. Community service log forms are available in the main office as well as on the school's website.

SENIOR INCENTIVES

Watch for information regarding an incentive program for second semester as it relates to exams for seniors.

AWARDS PROGRAM

The annual Senior Awards Program will be held on May 5, 2020 to honor all seniors and recipients of special awards and scholarships. All seniors will be expected to attend, and parents of seniors are invited. Seniors will be able to dress up for this event.

GRADUATION RELATED TOPICS

1. Cap, Gown, Tassel, Etc.

Jostens, Inc. has been chosen by the school to sell graduation items. The Jostens representative will visit the school in the Fall to distribute and explain their catalog to seniors. The cap, gown, and tassel will be approximately \$30 and must be ordered through Jostens. Measurements will be taken when the order is placed. Be sure to try on the cap and gown when it is received to check the fit! It must be sent back immediately if a replacement is needed for the ceremony. Hang on to your tassel. They are easily lost or misplaced. Announcements, mugs, open house invitations, thank you notes, etc. can also be ordered from Jostens.

2. Baccalaureate

A nondenominational Baccalaureate service is being planned for our graduating seniors by senior parents. The event is scheduled for the evening of May 26, 2020. This event is entirely voluntary, and all seniors and their families, regardless of their faith tradition, are encouraged to attend. Those graduating students who choose to attend this formal event will be required to dress appropriately (boys to wear jackets and ties, and girls to wear similarly appropriate dress attire.) If anyone is interested in helping with the planning, please contact Mr. Fisher.

3. College Scholarships Earned by Graduates

A listing of college scholarships and special awards earned by graduating seniors is included as a segment of the Senior Awards Program and in the Commencement program.

Scholarships and awards students earn, must be presented to the WMAA School Counseling Office no later than Friday May 1, 2020. Awards, grants, or scholarships, which are part of a financial aid package based on demonstrated financial need are not included in this listing.

4. Commencement Ceremonies

Commencement/Graduation will be held at Calvin College. There are no ticket requirements or number restrictions. Older guests and those in need of special seating or parking should call the WMAA office at least one week in advance so proper accommodations can be provided. A letter will be sent in early May to all graduates and their families with details about the program, including a review of the dress and behavior codes.

5. Recognition of Top Scholars

A variety of recognitions are given each spring to the top academic students:

1. At the senior awards program in May, the top *Summa Cum Laude* students are recognized based on *cumulative weighted* grade point averages of 4.0 or above through seven semesters.
2. At commencement, the top ten students with the highest *cumulative weighted* grade point averages through the eighth and final semester of school will be recognized as the **Academic Top Ten** students in the class. The school will not name a Valedictorian or Salutatorian.
3. Various media outlets often request a Top Ten from each high school in the area. These requests frequently come in early to mid-May. WMAA will respond to these requests by providing a list of the Academic Top Ten students in the class based on a *cumulative weighted* grade point average through the date of the request.
4. The Grand Rapids Press may request names and profiles of WMAA students for their Super Star recognition. WMAA will comply with the criteria established by the Grand Rapids Press, which may or may not coincide with Academic Top Ten.

**A Publication of the
Student Services Department
West Michigan Aviation Academy**

**7th Edition
May 2019**