



Connecting Waters Charter School

Accredited by the Schools Commission of Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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Rebecca Berringer • Layout

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Roy Shimp • Editor

Dates to Remember

November 11
Veterans Day-
No School

November 24-26
Thanksgiving Break-

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News from the Executive Director

Dear Parents, Staff and Students,

I am happy to give you the great news that our school charter was renewed for another five years through June 30, 2016 at the Waterford Unified School District board meeting on Thursday, October 14. The law prohibits charter schools being renewed for more than a five year period. We received the Maximum renewal time!

A special thank you to Nita Hawk (parent council treasurer), Arthur Hawk (11th grade student), Ruth Womack (Education Specialist), and Eric Schoffstall (IEM Education Coordinator) for coming to the district board meeting and lending their support!

There was an unanimous vote (5-0) to approve the charter renewal! It's because of the hard work of our parents, ESes, students, support staff, administration and the confirmation through our student achievement data and educational philosophy that it was an unanimous decision to continue our charter. YOU are making a difference in education and showing that there can be Parent Choice and flexibility in education while maintaining high standards!

Our job now is to continue our hard work, increasing our student achievement goals, and looking forward to our WASC accreditation review in April! Please review our accreditation portion of our website and review the achievement data:

Data Charts: <http://www.connectingwaters.org/accreditation/data2012.pdf>
CST Comparisons: <http://www.connectingwaters.org/accreditation/cstcomp0910.htm>
Community Profile: <http://www.connectingwaters.org/accreditation/commpro2010.pdf>

You can also help by being part of a focus group that looks at improvements for our school. If you are interested in being part of a focus group, please email cwsecretary@connectingwaters.org

Sherri Nelson
Executive Director

Happy Thanksgiving!





CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam)

Remember CAHSEE testing on **Nov. 9th (English language arts)** and **10th (Math)** for eleventh and twelfth graders who have not yet passed! Please contact your ES if you have any questions regarding location, dress code, or other information. Scores will be available eight weeks after testing.

STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting)

In addition to the test prep given to you by your ES, please visit this link to help your students gain familiarity and experience with sample STAR questions

<http://starsamplequestions.org/starRTQ/search.jsp> This searchable website was designed to help parents understand the STAR Program and familiarize their children with testing. Sample questions are featured from the California Standards Tests; including questions from each grade level, information about levels of performance, and grade-level parent guides.

Sample test questions include:

- ◆ Standards being assessed.
- ◆ Questions as they appeared on the tests and their related proficiency levels.
- ◆ Correct answers to questions.
- ◆ Percent of students who answered the questions correctly.

CMA(California Modified Assessment) is an alternative test available to students with IEP's who meet specific criteria. Based on grade level content, it is less rigorous than the CST's. The test is formatted with larger font sizes, a sans serif font for easier reading, more white space on the page and shortened passage lengths. Visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/cmastar.asp> for more details. Contact your ES with any questions.

The goal in California is to have all students perform at the proficient or advanced level.

These tests measure student achievement in:

- ◆ Mathematics
- ◆ English–language Arts
- ◆ Science
- ◆ History-social science

Purposes for Testing

Teachers, parents and education officials can use the results to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to improve student learning. Students and their parents can compare individual academic abilities against grade-level requirements and the results of other students in that grade.

The information will help you to:

- ◆ Understand how children are performing.
- ◆ Identify areas where children need additional help.
- ◆ Know where to get more help.



Student Council News!!

Judy Orr, Student Council
jorr@connectingwaters.org

Congratulations to Talitha Jesse, the winner of the T-Shirt design contest. The Student Council is working on getting the design into production and will announce T-Shirt sales shortly. The Council invites students to be on the Student Listserve. E-mail your name and e-mail address to parentlistserv@connectingwaters.org and a request to be added to the listserv. In addition, a student newspaper is under construction. If you would like to help with the student newspaper, please e-mail Sana at cwstudentnp@connectingwaters.org with questions, comments, or ideas.

Unfortunately, due to small numbers, there will be no sports league for the fall. Watch the parent and student listserves for a sports day where students will be able to meet for the day to play a designated sport. The next Prom meeting will be November 15th at 11:10 online at:

<http://moodle.connectingwaters.org/mod/illuminate/view.php?id=711> Bring your ideas to share. The Student Council meetings for the rest of the year will be November 1st, December 6th, January 10th, February 7th, March 7th, April 4th, and May 2nd. All students are invited to attend online at: <http://moodle.connectingwaters.org/mod/illuminate/view.php?id=711>

English Department News

Teresa Matranga • English Dept. Chair
tmatranga@connectingwaters.org
1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 4

Hello from the English Department! Do you love to write? Have you ever wanted to be published? If so, opportunity is knocking at your door again this year. The Student Newsletter is sponsoring their second annual Essay of the Month Contest. If you have written an essay, an article, or a poem you think is good, please submit it to the Student Newsletter to be considered for publication. All grade levels can enter. This is an ongoing monthly contest. Join the fun, develop your writing skills, explore your creativity, and become a published writer in your school newsletter! Send your submissions to: CWstudentnp@connectingwaters.org

In addition, just a reminder, if your student is enrolled in an Illuminate course, please check his or her grades in Moodle. Students who do not turn in homework, projects, and writing assignments, will receive lower grades. If you have questions, or your student has special needs, please call or e-mail your ES or the Illuminate teacher. If you need more assistance, feel free to call me at 1-800-808-9895 Ext. 4, then ext. 4.

Social Studies Department

Lori Freeman • Curriculum Director
lofreeman@connectingwaters.org
1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 5

The Social Studies Department teachers are enjoying our classes! We have been very pleased with our students' work. Most students are doing very well. Please be sure to monitor your students' grades and be sure they finish out the semester strong. You can view their grades at any time online by logging into Moodle using your student's account.

Students earning a-g credit will be taking their proctored final exam next month. Please be sure your ES has signed them up at the nearest location. Students should be given a study-guide to help prepare them for their test. In order to earn a-g credit, students must take the proctored exam.

Curriculum News

Lori Freeman • Curriculum Director
lofreeman@connectingwaters.org
1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 5

Happy November! Thanksgiving is the perfect time to reflect on those things for which we are thankful, as well as a time to share with others. I hope everyone enjoys the holiday with family, food, and togetherness. If you have any questions regarding curriculum, please feel free to contact me via phone or e-mail at any time. I am also available on the 3rd Monday of each month to meet in person at the Modesto Learning Center from 10-12. If you would like to meet in person during this time, please e-mail me at lofreeman@connectingwaters.org so we can schedule an appointment.

Did you know? There are many ways to meet grade level standards and help your child be prepared for their STAR or CAHSEE test next semester. For a list of resources, please visit our website at <http://www.ieminc.org/handbook/curriculum/csuggest/cwtestprep.htm>

Math Department News!

Debbie Kutz, Math Specialist
dkutz@connectingwaters.org
1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 3

Strand Boost courses are fairly new to the math department. You may want to consider checking one out if your 5th -12th grade student needs an extra boost in one of the following strand areas: Number Sense-- Fractions, Decimals, or Percents, or Algebra and Functions. These short, intensive classes use the "Keys To" booklets by Key Curriculum Press and meet twice a week either online or in person. As interest increases, more classes will be made available. The current class is Decimals Strand Boost and the next class that we have planned is Percents Strand Boost. Contact Debbie Kutz, CWCS Math Specialist, if there is a particular Strand Boost class that you would be interested in joining.

Drop-In Math Tutoring

Free math tutoring for all ages continues to be available at both learning centers. This is a study hall format where students bring math assignments on which to work and ask specific questions as time allows. Parents may also attend and bring content-related questions.

Modesto Learning Center
Wednesdays, 2:15-3:45

Ceres Learning Center
Thursdays, 12:30-2:30



Health News! By Heather Grossman, School Nurse

What Kids Eat Can Affect Their Learning

Children of all socio-economic levels are at-risk for poor nutrition today. While some children do not have access to sufficient food due to financial issues, others are consuming the wrong types of food. Foods high in fat, sugar, and sodium put them at risk for obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses.

Iron deficiency is one of the largest nutritional problems of children in the US. Iron deficiency and anemia can lead to shortened attention span, irritability, and fatigue. Children will thus perform badly in the areas of vocabulary, reading, and other tests.

Even children who are well nourished but who skip breakfast experience impacts on their learning. Such things as speed, accuracy and problem solving tasks become affected.

Parents can lead by example. Eat a well balanced diet and decrease or eliminate sugary and processed foods available in the home. Help children to read nutrition labels on food and have them help make healthy choices at the grocery store. Items we consume, with the fewest ingredients (especially ones we recognize, not manufactured fillers and additives) are the best for us. An even better learning tool is to take a field trip to a fruit stand or the farmers market. Nature provides us with the best meals and snacks!

http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/labels.html

<http://kidshealth.org/kid/nutrition/food/breakfast.html>

http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/go_slow_whoa.html?tracking=K RelatedArticle

Language Arts News

Terry Leppien, Literacy Director
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Academic Vocabulary

High school students need to know a core set of vocabulary words to be successful in high school and college. These words are from the Academic Word List, compiled by Coxhead (2000), which consists of 570 word families that are not in the most frequent words of English. They occur commonly in a variety of academic texts. These 570 words are grouped into ten sublists that reflect word frequency and range. The Academic Word List is not limited to a specific field of study. The words are useful for learners studying in a variety of disciplines, such as science, history, health, law, business, and literature. This word list does not contain technical words likely to appear in only one specialized field of study. As expected, knowledge of these words can significantly increase a student's comprehension level.

High school students who are taught these high-utility academic words and use them are likely to be able to handle academic material with more confidence and competence. Knowledge of these words allows students to use less energy guessing meanings and consulting dictionaries.

The following link gives the Academic Word List and exercises for students to use:

<http://www.academicvocabularyexercises.com/id21.htm>

Sources: Coxhead, Averil. (2000). A new academic word list. TESOL Quarterly, 34, 213-238.



Congratulations Spelling Bee Finalists!

It was a GREAT day on Oct. 18, 2010 at the Modesto Learning Center
for the 5th Annual Spelling Bee Contest

The 4th – 6th grade winners ~

S. Shimanuki - 1st place

M. McGuire - 2nd place

A. Freitas - 3rd place

The 7th & 8th grade winners ~

S. Soine – 1st place

M. Monroe – 2nd place

E. Sample – 3rd place

We had 9 spellers that competed at the Elementary Level &
5 spellers at the Jr. High Level

Each participant received a certificate of participation, participant ribbon,
& reward coupons from Funworks and John's Incredible Pizza.

Top Three Spellers received gift Cards from Target.

We would like to say

“Congratulations”

to the finalists in the Connecting Waters' Spelling Bee

Elementary Finalists will advance to the Stanislaus County Spelling Bee
Championship on November 3rd

Junior High Finalists will advance to the Stanislaus County Spelling Bee
Championship on November 9th

Thank you to ALL who participated. You made it a FUN, Challenging and
GREAT

Brought to you by your Special Education Department

HELP YOUR STUDENT SET PERSONAL GOALS

Having your student develop good study habits and learn how to set goals is critical in assisting him/her in attaining academic success! We can suggest a website that will help students develop and monitor their personal goals at: <http://www.goalforit.com>

The website helps locate charts to monitor your youngster's progress for more than 30 or more personal goals such as getting household chores done, improved behavior, or work completion. For older students, the website has the ability to create custom goals as well (for example: personal finance, health and fitness, to-do-lists, and so on). Students can monitor their progress through a series of charts which are created in, and only accessible through, a private account that a parent creates, and cannot be accessed by anyone else. The best part - it is easy, fun, can be customized to fit the goal you want to monitor, and 100% FREE!

DOES MY CHILD NEED SPEECH THERAPY?

Many parents are concerned about whether their children need to be referred to the PLT (Personalized Learning Team) process for a speech and language screening. Some children are fast to talk: some are slower. The California Code of Regulations Title 5, Section 3030 states a student must meet one or more of the following criteria for a student to be eligible for speech therapy:

- ✓ Pupil's speech reduces intelligibility and significantly interferes with communication
- ✓ Pupil's speech attracts adverse attention
- ✓ Production of sounds is below that expected for pupil's age
- ✓ Speech production adversely affects educational performance

So when should a student be able to produce different sounds? The following guidelines are provided by our Speech-Language Pathologists to assist you in determining if a speech assessment is warranted.

Age of Acquisition	Consonant Sounds
2-3	<i>p, b, m, h, w, d, vowels</i>
3-4	<i>y, n, k, g, t, f(initial)</i>
4-5	<i>l(initial), th(voiced)</i>
5-6	<i>f(final), v, l(final), sh, ch, j</i>
6-7	<i>ng, s, z, consonant and vocalic r</i>
8.5	Final age of sound acquisition

Most of the children in kindergarten, first, and second grade who are misarticulating these sounds will correct their speech without intervention by a Speech-Language Pathologist. The awareness they gain from multisensory phonics programs and enriched language environments is frequently enough information for them to change their speech. The effect on communication will depend on the **type, severity, and number of errors**. Researchers found that the final age for acquiring the skills to articulate sounds is 8.5 years. This means that sound differences persisting past 8.5 years are not likely to spontaneously correct, and warrant further investigation by our special education department.

Governor's Challenge

The 2011 Governor's Challenge Competition is a contest among California K-12 schools that encourages California students, parents and teachers to get active, healthy and fit.

One school in each of the state's eleven regions will be named a Regional Award Winner and qualify as a finalist in the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports' 2011 Governor's Challenge Competition. Connecting Waters Charter School is considered to be in the Gold Country Region County.

Connecting Waters was one of the Front Runners just three years ago and received \$1,000 towards physical fitness equipment! Items were purchased with award money that are available for check out at the learning centers and school office!

All students who are taking PE need to sign up for the Challenge. Just be active an additional 30-60 minutes three days each week. All students who are not taking PE need to sign up for the challenge too. Here are some ideas to increase your physical fitness activity by 30-60 minutes each day: walking, bike riding, swimming, hiking, jogging, jumping rope, in-line skating, roller skating, skateboarding, golfing, baseball, kickball, lacrosse, soccer, volleyball, exercise video, dancing, Wii exercise, ping pong (table tennis), tennis, playing catch with a friend, or playing basketball (throw some hoops).

2011 Governor's Challenge Competition Timing

- ⇒ **January 31, 2011:** Last day to record Active Days for Front Runner Recognitions
- ⇒ **May 31, 2011:** Last day to record Active Days for the Governor's Challenge Competition
- ⇒ **June 1- June 9, 2011:** Governor's Council works with principals of leading schools to verify results and request essays from school finalists
- ⇒ **September, 2011** (exact date to be determined): Announcement of Governor's Challenge Competition Grand Prize Winning School

Students: Sign up here- <http://calgovcouncil.org/challenge/individual/>

Teachers/Parents/Staff: Sign up here- <http://calgovcouncil.org/challenge/english/teachersignup/>

Region: **Gold Country Region**

Counties: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Mono, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tuolumne, Yolo, Yuba. **(Alameda, Mariposa, Merced, and Santa Clara are included in this because Connecting Waters is located in the Stanislaus County)**

Students will need to provide the following info:

First Name

Last Name

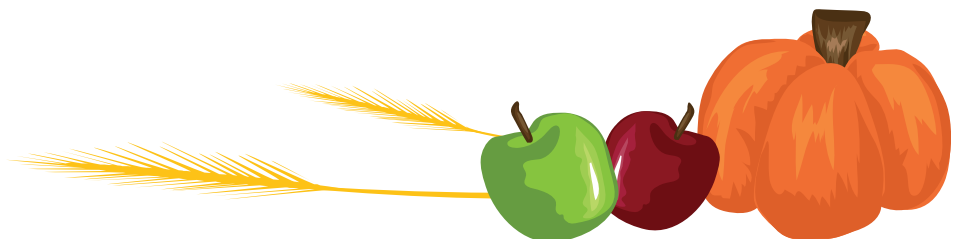
Email Address

Password

Repeat Password

School Zip Code: **95386**

Grade



...Continued from page 8, Governor's Challenge

How it works:

Sign up to take the Governor's Challenge.

Track your activity level each week with our online calendar.

Be active for at least 30-60 minutes 3 days each week. Maintain this schedule for 4 weeks and earn a Certificate of Completion and an official Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports patch.

Activity Guide can be downloaded: <http://www.calgovcouncil.org/activeguide/>

Incentives

- All Students (K-12) who take the Governor's Challenge qualify for one free lift ticket at Mammoth Mountain.
- High School Students, California Teachers, and Parents qualify for a free 30 day pass to 24 Hour Fitness when they sign up for the Governor's Challenge and a free 90 day pass when they complete the Governor's Challenge.

Rewards

All Students completing the Governor's Challenge will qualify for a Certificate of Completion from the Governor's Council. Students can earn one certificate per academic year.

School Awards

- ◆ Grand Prizes- Three brand new fitness activity centers to the grand prize winning elementary school, middle school and high school made possible by the Anthem Blue Cross Foundation.
- ◆ Regional Awards- Eleven \$5,000 awards to purchase physical activity equipment made possible by CVS/pharmacy, plus a \$1,000 Gift Certificate to CVS/pharmacy.
- ◆ Front Runner Recognitions- Thirty-three \$1,000 awards to the elementary, middle and high schools in each region that record the most Active Days by January 31, 2011.

For more information

Email info@CalGovCouncil.org or call 310-867-2951.



Yearbook News

Our full color, hard-cover yearbooks are only \$35.00!!

There are three ways to order your yearbook:

- ◆ You can order your yearbook at the Ceres Learning Center, Modesto Learning Center, or at the school office in Waterford.
- ◆ You can order your yearbook securely online by going to this link:
<https://www.yearbookordercenter.com/> Type in our School's code which is "12000" and click continue. Follow the steps to complete your purchase.
- ◆ Call the toll-free number 1-866-287-3096, Monday through Friday 8 am until 5 pm, Central Time. If you by phone, you will need to know our Order Number is 12000.

Yearbooks will now be available with the option of having a name plate on the front with your student's name and will cost an extra \$5.00. Yearbooks ordered online or by phone may be purchased using VISA, MASTERCARD, DISCOVER, or E CHECK. **Please note that yearbooks purchased online or by phone will have a \$3.50 processing fee.**

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT NEWS

Mary Halter • School Counselor
mhalter@connectingwaters.org
1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 2

Greetings from the Guidance Department! We are here to help you determine your future academic and career goals.

Contact information:

Mary Halter, School Counselor
1-800-808-9895 ext. 4 then 2
mhalter@connectingwaters.org

Important Information for Seniors-Class of 2011

Dates to Remember:

- ◆ **November 30, 2010**- last day to apply for CSU (www.csumentor.edu) and UC (www.ucop.edu/pathways)
- ◆ **December**- last month, for most colleges, to take SAT (www.collegeboard.com) or ACT (www.act.org) for UC or CSU entrance in Fall 2011. Make sure to use our school code **053706** when you take the test.
- ◆ **December**– attend the Financial Aid Workshop at Waterford High School
- ◆ **March 2, 2011**– last day to file CalGrant GPA Verification Form (needs to be requested from Mary Halter) and FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov)

FAFSA www.fafsa.ed.gov and CalGrant (GPA Verification form which must be requested from the Guidance Dept at CWCS) **application period is Jan.1st through March 2nd**. Remember, Financial Aid is available for community college and vocational schools as well as universities!

Make sure to attend the Financial Aid Workshop at Waterford High School in December, more information to follow in listserves and newsletters!

CollegeWeekLive FALL – November 3rd and 4th

WHO: High school students and parents *should attend*.

WHAT: CollegeWeekLive FALL is a free online *college fair featuring over 300 colleges and universities from across the country and around the world as well as live video presentations from admissions experts and current college students.*

WHERE: Online at www.CollegeWeekLive.com. *Free.*

WHEN: Wednesday & Thursday, November 3rd-4th.

WHY: *At CollegeWeekLive FALL, you can . . .*

- ◆ Chat live with admissions reps from more than 300 colleges - show your interest!
- ◆ Find more than \$2.5 million in financial aid & scholarships from participating colleges.
- ◆ Hear what campus life is like via student video webcasts from favorite schools.
- ◆ Get great admissions advice from experts presenting live via video on topics such as:
- ◆ *How to write a college application essay*
- ◆ *How to find scholarships*
- ◆ *Register and attend to be eligible to win a \$10,000 scholarship from CollegeWeekLive.*

[Register for Free Today!](#)

Guidance Department Educational Series 2010-11

Title	Date/Time	Location	Description
PLAN = Practice ACT	November 18th 9am to 1pm	Modesto Learning Center	High school students are invited to take this practice test to prepare for the ACT exam. The Guidance Department explains the test results and assists students in understanding their academic strengths and weaknesses. \$12 fee CP #19199
High School Orientation Meeting For 7th and 8th graders!!!!	Feb. 17th 10am	Online via Elluminate	A very important meeting to discuss the importance of high school and the courses you should take: Do you want to attend college? A trade school? How about Junior College? Now's the time to plan for your future!! A must attend event! For the Elluminate session, please contact Guidance for instructions on how to attend at guidancecounselor@connectingwaters.org To reserve your space for the Modesto LC workshop, call the Office at 1-800-808-9895 ext. 6.

Read the Connecting Waters Newsletter online at the beginning of each month to learn about upcoming scholarships OR check our scholarship page, updated monthly at

- Go to www.connectingwaters.org, then "School Departments", then "Guidance"
- "Scholarships/Grants"
- "Current Scholarships"

Sign up for the student Listserve to get updates on information regarding financial aid, scholarships, college, college fairs, and more.....

Looking for resources? Visit the Guidance website at www.connectingwaters.org/Guidance. You will find the High School Catalog, Career Resources, Scholarship and Grant information, Grad Requirements information, and more!!!!

Graduates: Important Information about Financial Aid

FAFSA and CalGrant due by March 2, 2011!

What is the FAFSA? The FAFSA www.fafsa.ed.gov is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and is the application used for all types of federal financial aid – for junior colleges, trade schools, colleges and universities!

Who should apply? All graduating students who plan to attend a junior college, trade school, private college, or university.

When is it due? California students - file BOTH forms between January 1, 2011 and March 2, 2011

FAFSA form is online at www.fafsa.ed.gov Cal Grant GPA Verification Form – request from the CWCS Guidance Department guidancecounselor@connectingwaters.org . The Guidance Department will certify it and send it back to you. It is your responsibility to mail the completed form to the California Student Aid Commission.

Apply early!!! Don't wait until you have been accepted into a college for you or your parents to file year-end tax returns. You may use estimates from December pay stubs and other end-of-year records which can be corrected later when you receive your Student Aid Report (SAR).

Why apply? Don't assume you or your family makes too much money to get financial aid. You should still file the FAFSA! Many factors affect your financial need such as the number of children in your household in college and the age of your oldest parent. What's more, a number of colleges require their students to submit a FAFSA before considering them for institution-based financial aid.

How do I apply? Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to begin. To start, you will need to get a PIN (Personal Identification Number) by clicking on the "Register for PIN" button then follow the prompts. The student and one parent must set up a PIN. Then, fill out the FAFSA and submit it. If you use a PIN when filing on-line, you do not have to sign and mail a signature page.

Where do I get the GPA Verification Form? Call Mary Halter at 1-800-808-9895 ext.4 then 2 to request the form or email your request to guidancecounselor@connectingwaters.org . The Guidance Department will certify the form and send it back to you. It is your responsibility to mail the completed form to the California Student Aid Commission postmarked by March 2, 2011. TIP: keep a photocopy for your records and send using a Certificate of Mailing from the Post Office, this provides proof that you mailed the form by the deadline.

CWCS does not file the GPA Verification Forms for you. You are responsible for obtaining the certification from the Guidance Department and sending the form in the mail!

Looking for the right college? Try these websites:

www.college.gov - start with "why go", then "what to do" then "how to pay"

www.californiacolleges.edu - click on the "Getting Started" button

www.collegeboard.com - go to "For Students" and then "plan for college"

SAT and ACT- Register: SAT www.collegeboard.com ACT www.act.org Please use the CWCS School Code: 053706 NOTE: test results are posted onto high school transcripts