

# **Boonton High School**



## **Junior Post-High School Planning Guide**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>BHS School Counseling Department Directory</b> .....	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>BHS Graduation Requirements</b> .....	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>NAVIANCE</b> .....	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>2020-2021 Junior Year Timeline/Schedule for College Planning (September to August)</b> .....	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Options for After High School</b> .....	<b>Page 10</b>
❖ Private vs. Public/College vs. University	
❖ Types of colleges and universities: 2 –year schools, Nursing schools/career schools, 4-year schools, Service Academies	
<b>Standardized Testing Information</b> .....	<b>Page 12</b>
❖ Test Optional Colleges and Universities	
❖ Types of Standardized Tests	
❖ When to Take the Test & SAT/ACT Registration and Test Dates chart	
❖ Understanding College Entrance Examinations	
❖ Comparison Chart of SAT & ACT	
❖ ACT to New SAT Concordance Table	
❖ Test Preparation & Score Reporting/SuperScoring	
<b>Resume Writing &amp; NAVIANCE</b> .....	<b>Page 19</b>
❖ Creating a Resume in Naviance	
❖ Resume Tips	
❖ Action Words for Resume Writing	
❖ Sample Resume	
<b>Examining Your Goals, Values, Interests and Abilities/NAVIANCE Assessments</b> .....	<b>Page 24</b>
❖ Self-Assessment	
❖ Goals Assessment	
❖ Values Assessment	
❖ Interests Inventory	
❖ Abilities Inventory	
<b>College Research Tips and Tools &amp; NAVIANCE Resources</b> .....	<b>Page 30</b>
❖ Identify your priorities	
❖ College Critique	
❖ List of Naviance College Research tools	
<b>Examining Your College Research/Information</b> .....	<b>Page 35</b>
❖ Using Naviance, College Guide Books/Materials, and the Internet	
❖ 5 Steps to Research Colleges and Universities	
❖ College Comparison Chart	
❖ 6 Considerations for your College Search	
❖ College Search checklist	
<b>The College Admission Process</b> .....	<b>Page 47</b>
❖ Procedure	
❖ Application Items (in priority order)	
❖ What Colleges Look For in the Application (in order of importance)	
<b>The Language of College Planning</b> .....	<b>Page 51</b>
❖ Types of Admission Decisions, Types of Degrees, College Terminology	
<b>Special reminders: Scholarship Search, NCAA/College Athletics</b> .....	<b>Page 53</b>
<b>Looking Ahead: The Common App Rollover, Financial Aid/FAFSA</b> .....	<b>Page 56</b>
<b>Financial Aid</b> .....	<b>Page 57</b>
<b>Summer Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>Page 58</b>
<b>Helpful Websites/Resources</b> .....	<b>Page 59</b>

**Boonton HS School Counseling Department Directory**

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**BHS CEEB code: 310130**

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**Our School Address:**

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At Boonton High School, we believe it is critically important for every student to have a solid post-secondary plan upon graduation. Students have five options available to them after high school: *four-year college, community college, career/technical training school, military service, or employment*. All too often, students fail to plan for life beyond high school and they find themselves making a last-minute decision about the future, instead of a well-informed choice. The information contained in this guide will help parents and guardians support students as they begin to formulate their four-year and post-secondary plans.

It is our belief that the student's best interests are served through good communication among the four parties involved – the student, the school, the parents/guardians, and the colleges/universities. The following information is pertinent to the college admissions process.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this material.

**NJ MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE**

<b>SUBJECT AREA</b>	<b>NJ HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE</b>	<b>SPECIFIC COURSES TO TAKE AT BHS</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>4 Years</b>	<b>4 Years</b>	-English 9 -English 10 -English 11 -English 12
<b>Math</b>	<b>3 Years</b>	<b>4 Years</b>	-Algebra I -Geometry -Algebra II
<b>Science</b>	<b>3 Years</b>	<b>3-4 Years</b>	-Biology w/Lab -Chem/Environmental Science w/Lab - Physics w/Lab
<b>History/Social Studies</b>	<b>3 Years</b>	<b>3-4 Years</b>	-World History -US History I -US History II
<b>World Language</b>	<b>1 Year</b>	<b>3-4 Years</b>	-Spanish or French
<b>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</b>	<b>1 Year</b>	<b>3+ Years</b> if pursuing Art, Music, Theatre, Dance	-Photography, Art, Concert Band, Choir, Concert Choir, Music Appreciation/Musical Theater, Yearbook, Music Theory
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Century</b>	<b>1 Year</b>	<b>3+ Years</b>	-Technology, Business, Consumer Science
<b>Personal Financial Literacy</b>	<b>1/2 Year</b>	<b>N/A</b>	-Personal Finance -Business Administration -Accounting H/DC -AP Macroeconomics
<b>Health &amp; Physical Education</b>	<b>4 Years</b>	<b>N/A</b>	-PE/Health 9 -PE/Health 10 -PE/Health 11 -PE/Health 12
<b>Total Credits &amp; *NJSLA Testing</b>	<b>120 Credits &amp; *Passing the NJSLA</b>	<b>Gen. Ed.- 130 cr. Gateway- 145 cr. *NJSLA or an equivalent test</b>	-Additional Electives  *PSAT, SAT, ACT, ASVAB, ACCUPLACER, Portfolio Class

## NAVIANCE


An electronic resource that provides a unique set of tools to help students through the entire college application process including, but not limited to:

- Researching college options
- Choosing where to apply
- Requesting recommendations
- Delivering electronic transcripts
- Tracking scholarship applications

All BHS students have a Naviance log-in. Juniors will use Naviance primarily to research schools and build resumes, while Seniors will use it to assist with the college application process and seek out scholarship opportunities. Naviance provides one easy-to-use source to manage the college application process from beginning to end.

Naviance website: <https://student.naviance.com/boonton>

Naviance | Student



Welcome to Naviance Student

Email

Password

Remember me [Forgot your password?](#)

Login

Are you new here?

[I need to register](#)

**Boonton High**  
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[Privacy Policy](#)

## JUNIOR YEAR TIMELINE

### SEPTEMBER

- Give some serious thought to your reasons for wanting to attend college. Evaluate your goals, your values, your interests, and your abilities.
  - Use Naviance inventories to help with your self-analysis. Make lists of your abilities, social/cultural preferences and personal qualities, List things you may want to study and do in college.
  - Use the worksheets in this college planning guide.
- Meet with your school counselor to review your courses for junior year. Be sure you have a solid College Preparatory (CP) program and your electives reflect your interests.
- Prepare for the **SAT on 10/14** if you have registered for it.
- Find out when college representatives will be visiting BHS (virtually and in-person) via Naviance (put the dates in your calendar).
- If you are an athlete planning to continue playing a sport in college, register with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility Center ([www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)).
  - Visit [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) to review academic eligibility criteria.
  - Make sure your school counselor knows!

### OCTOBER

- Several ACT dates are offered throughout October.
- Attend the **BHS Parent/Guardian Virtual Financial Aid Night on October 1st at 6pm.**
- **BHS will not be able to offer the PSAT this October.** The PSAT is used to determine your eligibility for National Merit Scholarships and certain scholarships for minority students. It also helps identify weak areas that need strengthening before your upcoming SAT or ACT. To see if there is another local testing site please visit CollegeBoard.
- Attend the **College Funding Coach's "Little-Known Secrets of Paying for College" Virtual Presentation on October 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.**
- Attend the **BHS Parent/Guardian Virtual College Planning/NCAA/Naviance training night on October 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.**
- Register for virtual college rep visits via Naviance (put the dates in your calendar).

### NOVEMBER

- Keep your grades strong- get extra help or tutoring if needed.
- Continue attending college rep visits (check Naviance).

### DECEMBER

- Review your PSAT results via CollegeBoard. Create a CollegeBoard account if you have not done so already. Read the materials provided with your scores, including free personalized SAT practice from Khan Academy. Consider a test-prep course if necessary.
- Attend virtual or in-person college fairs (held at many high schools and colleges), gather information about different schools, ask questions about academic requirements, and learn about the college application process and available sources of financial aid.
- Learn about colleges from their websites, talk to friends/family members/teachers/recent grads that are in college. List the college features that interest you.
- Make a file to manage your college search, testing, and application data. If appropriate, start to gather material for a portfolio (drama, music, art, sports, etc.).

## **JANUARY**

- Decide what type of college you are looking for: two-year/four-year, liberal arts/technical. Determine what factors are important to you: location, setting, size, etc.
- Start preparing to take the Spring SAT or ACT.
  - Develop your individual SAT testing schedule with your school counselor. Remember to register at the appropriate time via CollegeBoard.org. SAT Fee waivers are available for students with financial need.
  - Register for the Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> ACT *if interested*. Deadline to Register is Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>. Although, it is recommended that you choose a SPRING test date.
- Finish semester courses and mid-year exams with high grades.
- If you have not already, take an interest inventory and use the results to consider careers: see pg. 24-29 in this guide or visit studentaid.ed.gov/prepare-for-colleges/careers, mapyourcareer.org, or careerbridge.wa.gov.
  - Additionally, Explore careers and their earning potential with the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) search tool. Or, for a fun interactive tool, try this [career search](#).
- Along with your family, do some research about how to obtain financial aid:
  - Read the U.S Department of Education's *Funding Your Education* (about federal aid programs).
  - Use the College Board's *Scholarship Handbook* and *Getting Financial Aid* as well as the financial aid calculator at bigfuture.org to estimate how much aid you might receive.

## **FEBRUARY**

- Meet with your counselor to carefully review your records; plan an appropriate program of studies for senior year (make sure your course of study is rigorous) and research your post high school plans.
- Receive your PreACT results via ACT.org. Create an ACT account if you have not done so already. Read the materials provided with your scores. Consider a test-prep course if necessary.
- Develop your individual ACT testing schedule with your school counselor. Remember to register at the appropriate time via ACT.org. ACT Fee waivers are available for students with financial need.
- Register for the March 13<sup>th</sup> SAT if interested. Deadline to register is Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> Although, it is recommended that you choose a SPRING test date.

## **MARCH**

- Begin thinking about the teachers you want to approach for recommendations.
- Take the SAT (March 13<sup>th</sup>) - if fully prepared.
- Register for the April 17<sup>th</sup> ACT. Deadline to Register is March 12th.
- Meet with your school counselor to begin preparing a list of colleges to explore (at least 10). Use online college search resources like CollegeBoard's "BigFuture", ACT's "Act Profile", Naviance's college search tools, and view/request materials from colleges on your list: catalogs/viewbooks/campus videos, application forms, scholarships, financial aid, etc.
- Find out if the schools you are interested in attending require the SAT or ACT. Also look at SAT II (Subject Tests) policies. Determine when these tests are offered and register approx. 6 weeks before the exam date.

- You should take the SAT Subject Tests while course material is still fresh in your mind. You can download *Getting Ready for the SAT Subject Tests*, which offers test prep advice, from [www.SATSubjectTests.org](http://www.SATSubjectTests.org).
- Attend College Fairs to speak with college representatives and refine your list.

## APRIL

- ACT offered April 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Attend the **New Jersey National College Fair** at the Meadowlands Exposition Center (TBD based on COVID-19)
- Make visits to college campuses for tours, open houses, etc. Get a feel for what works for you.
- If you are considering Military academies or ROTC scholarships contact your school counselor.
  - If you want a four-year ROTC scholarship, you should begin the application process in the summer.
- Take the ASVAB- If interested in enlisting in the Military- talk to your recruiter.
- Register for the May 8<sup>th</sup> SAT. Deadline to Register is April 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Create your Activities Resume- a record of your accomplishments, activities, and work related experiences since you started high school (See pg. 19).
  - Continue to participate in enrichment and leadership opportunities.
- Start to research tips for writing your college essay. Utilize your English teacher to review topics and look at drafts.

## MAY

- SAT (May 8<sup>th</sup>) and SAT Subject Tests offered.
- Register for the June 5<sup>th</sup> SAT. Deadline to Register is May 6<sup>th</sup>. If you have not taken the SAT yet- this is the last test date to do it!
- Register for the June 12<sup>th</sup> ACT. Deadline to Register is May 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Take Advanced Placement (AP) examinations if appropriate.
- Continue to add to your Resume.
- Add schools to the **“Colleges I’m Thinking About”** in Naviance and continue to refine your list.
- Create a CommonApp Account.
- Keep your grades up.

## JUNE

- SAT (offered June 5<sup>th</sup>)- Last one before summer.
- ACT (offered June 12<sup>th</sup>).
- Register for the July 17<sup>th</sup> ACT. Deadline to Register is June 18<sup>th</sup>. If you have not taken the ACT yet- this is the last test date to do it!
- If you haven’t already, take the ASVAB (joining the military after high school).
- Continue visits to colleges during the summer- note differences between large and small campuses, rural and urban schools, etc. Speak to local college students who are home for the summer.
- Ask your teachers, coaches, and counselor, in person, to write you letters of recommendation. Then request them via Naviance. Make sure **your Brag Sheets are complete and submitted to your counselor-** the more detail you provide the more great things your counselor and teachers can write about you!



## JULY

- ACT (offered July 17<sup>th</sup>)- Last one before fall.
- If your Spring SAT/ACT scores have revealed any weaknesses, plan a program of self-improvement
- Visit colleges. Take tours and have interviews. Open communication lines with coaches and/or other representatives of special talent areas.
- Continue to refine your college list- update your “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list in Naviance. Complete the “**Group My Colleges**” worksheet.
- Review your testing plan for SAT or ACT. If appropriate register for one or more test dates in the fall- September or October (keep application deadlines and test-optional schools in mind).
- Begin to search and apply for scholarships. Some deadlines fall as early as the summer between 11th and 12th grades, so prepare now to submit applications soon.

## AUGUST

- If appropriate, and you have not done so already, register for one or more SAT and/or ACT test dates in the Fall. There is now an August SAT and September ACT, reminder registration is typically one month prior.
- Narrow down your colleges into their three categories: Reach, Target, and Safety. Download applications from colleges to which you’ll apply- check application deadlines (large universities may have early dates or rolling admission).
  - Be aware of Early Action/Early Decision deadlines.
  - Early Decision candidates: finalize plans and prepare application materials for an October submission.
- Update your CommonApp Account- Preview college application essay questions.
- Write drafts of your personal essays based on the CommonApp or specific college application prompts. It is suggested you complete one good draft of your personal statement and 2-3 of the standard college application essays.
- It is important to remember that your transcript request must be submitted to Mrs. DiBenedetto in guidance at least 10 business days (not counting weekends) before your application deadline.
- **Financial Aid (see pg. 58):**
  - Create a username and password called an *FSA ID* that you’ll use to confirm your identity when accessing your government financial aid information and electronically signing your *federal student aid* documents. [Learn about the FSA ID, and create yours.](#) **Note: You must create your own FSA ID; if your parent creates it for you, that’ll cause confusion later and will slow down the financial aid application process ([watch a video about creating an FSA ID](#)).**
  - Use the *FAFSA4caster* financial aid estimator (found in the “Thinking About College?” section on the home page of [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov)), and compare the results to the actual costs of the colleges to which you will apply. Be sure to apply for scholarships. Your goal is to minimize the amount of loan funds you borrow so you have less to pay back later.
  - Find out what government financial aid you can apply for: [Federal Student Aid at a Glance](#).

## TYPES OF EDUCATION AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

**PRIVATE VS. PUBLIC-** all higher education institutions are either privately or publicly run.

**Private-** Run by a board of trustee with no special affiliation or may be church-related: some church-related institutions with strong affiliations have religious curriculum and campus regulations. Private tends to be more expensive, but they also typically have larger endowments which means more financial aid from grants and scholarships which can help with the higher tuition costs.

**Public-** Controlled by the state, county, or municipality. Often less expensive and tends to give preference for admittance to in-state applicants. Tuition is usually lower for in-state students than for out-of-state residents.

### COLLEGE VS. UNIVERSITY

**College-** Institution of higher learning offered beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> grade that offers a wide-range of degree programs at the associate and/or baccalaureate level. Some colleges also offer graduate programs.

**University-** Institution of higher learning offered beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> grade that offers a wide-range of degree programs at the baccalaureate and/or graduate level. Universities are typically made up of several individual colleges and professional schools (i.e. College of Arts & Sciences, College of Business, School of Law, etc.). Their Academic buildings often include hospitals and grant-supported facilities

### TYPES OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

**Two-Year Colleges-** A junior college (usually private) or a community college (supported by the local county and the state- such as County College of Morris- usually accepts all high school graduates). Both types of colleges offer Associate degrees in the Arts, Sciences, and Applied Science. Two-Year Colleges aim to do the following: **1.** Provide preparation for transfer to a 4-year college or university, **2.** Provide general education to those not seeking a baccalaureate (bachelor) degree, **3.** Provide specialized training for a career in specific fields.

**Nursing Schools-** the following avenues can lead to preparation in nursing:

- **Junior and community colleges** in conjunction with local hospitals offer 2-year nursing programs leading to an Associate of Science degree with Registered Nurse (RN) state certification
- **Some Hospitals** offer 3 years of intensive training leading to state certification as a RN.
- **Colleges and Universities-** offer a 4-year program of liberal arts and nursing training leading to a Bachelor of Sciences degree with RN state certification.

**Career Schools**- generally private non-college professional schools that provide highly specialized training for specific careers such as: music, photography, dramatics, cosmetology, culinary arts, court reporting, etc. Career programs generally take 1-3 years and a certificate of completion is awarded at the end. Some career schools emphasize business with training in areas such as secretarial work, others offer technical programs such as air conditioning, heating and refrigeration, automotive repair, steam and diesel engine repair, electronics and computer technology.

### **Four-Year Colleges and Universities (three categories):**

**1. General Baccalaureate Institutions**- offer bachelor's degrees in a wide variety of majors along with providing students with a broad foundation in the liberal arts. Most offer study at the graduate level as well. Almost half of the 4-year institutions across the country fall into this category.

**2. Liberal Arts Colleges**- Rather than emphasizing a specific course of study or professional training, these colleges aim to expose students to a wide breadth of courses in the humanities, physical, and social sciences. Tend to be small and graduates are successful in many careers due to their advanced ability to think and read critically, analyze, reason, and process complex ideas. These schools make up 15% of all 4-year institutions in the country.

**3. Specialized Schools**- Specialized education includes technological institutions, which train students in the sciences, mathematics, engineering, agriculture, and other mechanical fields. Art, drama, and fashion institutes also fall into this category. Unlike the general baccalaureate and liberal arts categories, specialized schools emphasize a specific career path and are best suited for students who are positive about what they want to study.

**Service Academies**- four years of tuition-free college leading to a baccalaureate degree. Primary purpose is to develop officers for the military. Curriculum is geared toward math and applied science. Admission is highly competitive- strong leadership capability is valued. To secure an acceptance at a service academy (except the Coast Guard) you must also secure a nomination from your state senator or congressman. The application is very complex- the process should begin in the spring of your junior year. Graduates receive a Bachelor of Science degree and are required to fulfill a military service obligation after graduating depending on the academy.

The Service Academies are as follows:

- United States Air Force Academy (Colorado)
- United States Coast Guard Academy (Connecticut)
- United States Merchant Marine Academy (Long Island)
- United States Military Academy (New York)
- United States Naval Academy (Maryland)

## TEST OPTIONAL SCHOOLS

There are more than 1000 accredited Colleges and Universities that **do not use ACT/SAT scores to admit students into their school**, instead they place greater importance on your GPA, rigor of course load, extracurriculars, and personal essay.

You can find a listing on the websites below:

- <http://fairtest.org/schools-do-not-use-sat-or-act-scores-admitting-substantial-numbers-students-bachelor-degree-programs>
- <http://fairtest.org/sites/default/files/OptionalPDFHardCopy.pdf>
- [Test-Optional Colleges](#)

## STANDARDIZED TESTING INFORMATION

**Standardized Tests:** Standardized tests are an important part of the college admissions process and are used by colleges and universities to predict your ability to be successful in their collegiate environment.

- **PSAT/NMSQT:** The Practice SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a standardized test administered to freshman, sophomores and juniors. The PSAT/NMSQT provide preparation for the SAT and is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship, which is available to all students who meet the eligibility criteria determined yearly by the College Board.
- **SAT:** The SAT is a standardized test, which measures the critical thinking skills students need for academic success in college. Students typically take the SAT once in the spring of Junior Year and once in the fall of senior year. Registration is completed online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- **SAT Subject Tests or SAT II:** The SAT Subject Tests measure achievement in more than 20 content areas. Subject tests are required by select colleges and universities and are used as a predictor of achievement in a particular area.
- **ACT:** The ACT Assessment is a standardized, curriculum-based test designed to measure college readiness and academic achievement in English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. Students typically take the ACT once in the spring of Junior Year and once in the fall of senior year. Registration is completed online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)
- **SAT or ACT?** Colleges and universities will accept either SAT scores or ACT scores. There is no need for all students to take both tests. Check the school's website for details on which tests they accept.
- **ASVAB(Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)-** A multiple choice test that helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. It is used to determine qualification for enlistment in the United States Armed Forces by assessing which Army jobs a student is best suited to perform (Military Occupational Specialties).
- **AP (Advanced Placement):** These are exams given at the high school specifically for students taking AP/college level courses. AP exams are given once a year in May. These scores are primarily used for college placement, credit, or advanced standing. Check with each individual college regarding their policy.
- **TOEFL (Test of English as a foreign language):** The TOEFL, administered by the College Board, provides an alternative test for students who have been speaking English for less than 5 years. The test is used to evaluate the English Proficiency of these students. To register for the TOEFL go to [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org).
- **Support for Students with Disabilities (SSD):** Students who currently have an IEP or 504 Plan may be eligible for testing accommodations. Accommodations provided for a student in school does not mean it automatically applies to the PSAT, SAT and ACT. Accommodations for the PSAT and SAT are approved by College Board. Please refer to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) for more information. Accommodations for the ACT are approved by Educational Testing Services (ETS). Please refer to [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org) for more information.

## WHEN TO TAKE THE TEST

### What level math have you completed?

- Students need to at least **get close to completing Geometry and Algebra II in order to be fully prepared for the SAT**. If you are taking Algebra II during junior year, you may want to wait until the late spring to begin your standardized test journey. If you are an advanced math student who already has these courses under their belt by the commencement of junior year, you could consider sitting for a fall test date (of junior year). However, exposure to trigonometry and statistics will also help with some of the more advanced questions featured on the exam

### Are you currently enrolled in AP Courses?

- If you are enrolled in multiple AP classes junior year, then early-to-mid May is going to be a hellish time already full of intense prep-work and exam-taking. Students in this situation are wise to sit for the SAT for the first time during the fall of junior year, or in March to avoid standardized-testing overload when AP tests are administered. This typically works out fine for such individuals because those on the AP track have typically covered the vast majority of the math subject matter by this juncture.

### How much time do you need to study?

- Students should begin to study during the summer prior to the start of their junior year, brush up on skills over winter break, and then use the summer prior to senior year to engage in targeted practice on any areas of relative weakness. \*Utilizing the [Khan Academy](#)'s cost-free SAT prep courses and [ACT Academy](#)

### Superscoring?

- Students who take the SAT in spring of their junior year and elect to retake the test the following fall improve their overall score by an average of 40 points on the SAT. This can be immensely beneficial, especially in light of what is known as [Superscoring](#) — where colleges take the best combined subject scores across multiple test administrations.
- The vast majority of colleges Superscore the SAT (for a complete list [click here](#)). ACT Superscoring policies are more variable (for a complete list [click here](#)).
- Superscoring gives you a great strategic advantage because it allows you to focus solely on the areas where you want to improve. For example, if you take the SAT in April of your junior year and score a 650 verbal and a 510 on math, you can, in effect, “bank” your verbal score and focus 100% of your attention on sharpening your math skills. For example, if you take the ACT in April of your junior year and score a 30 on the English test and a 23 on math, you can, in effect, “bank” your verbal score and focus 100% of your attention on sharpening your math skills.
- Those who wait until senior year miss out on the opportunity to maximize their opportunities to sit for the test, engage in meaningful study, and retake the test, thus missing out on the full benefits of Superscoring.

### **Summary & COVID-19 Considerations:**

- COVID-19 has changed the standardized testing landscape for the 2020-21 school year.
- Stay on top of pandemic-related shifts in both SAT/ACT test dates and test-optional policies at colleges.
- Take the SAT/ACT for the first time during the first or second semester of your junior year
- Factor in AP and SAT Subject Test requirements to avoid standardized testing burnout
- Leave yourself room to take the test again summer before senior year and a third time, if necessary, the fall of senior year.
- Put in the time studying. Research shows that studying for the SAT (Kahn Academy) and ACT ([ACT Academy](#)) produces results.
- Superscoring is your friend. Plan on sitting for the test two or three times.

**\*\*Standardized Test Fee Waivers\*\***

SAT and ACT fee waivers are available for economically disadvantaged students who are on free or reduced lunch. **See your counselor if you want a waiver and receive free or reduced lunch.**

Students using a fee waiver for the SAT or ACT will also qualify for College Application Fee Waivers. **See your counselor for more details.**

**SAT & ACT REGISTRATION/TEST DATES**

<b>2020-21 SAT Administration Dates and Deadlines</b>				
<i>*Deadlines expire at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, U.S.</i>				
<b>SAT Date</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>	<b>Late Registration Deadline:</b>		<b>Deadline for Changes</b>
		<b>By Mail</b>	<b>By Phone/Online</b>	
<b>September 26 2020</b>	Aug 26, 2020	Sept 15, 2020	Sept 15, 2020	Sept 15, 2020
<b>October 3, 2020</b>	Sept. 4, 2020	Sept. 15, 2020	Sept. 22, 2020	Sept. 22, 2020
<b>November 7, 2020</b>	Oct. 7, 2020	Oct. 20, 2020	Oct. 27, 2020	October 27, 2020
<b>December 5, 2020</b>	Nov. 5, 2020	Nov. 17, 2020	Nov. 24, 2020	Nov. 24, 2020
<b>March 13, 2021</b>	Feb. 12, 2021	Feb 23, 2021	March 2, 2021	March 2, 2021
<b>May 8, 2021</b>	Apr. 8, 2021	Apr. 20, 2021	Apr. 27, 2021	Apr. 27, 2021
<b>June 5, 2021</b>	May 6, 2021	May 18, 2021	May 26, 2021	May 26, 2021

Get more Information at: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register/dates-deadlines>

**2020-21 ACT Administration Dates and Deadlines:**

<b>Test Date</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>	<b>(Late Fee Required)</b>
<b>September 2020: 12, 13, 19</b>	August 31	No late fees
<b>October 2020: 10, 17, 24, 25</b>	September 25	No late fees
<b>December 12, 2020</b>	November 6	November 7 - November 20
<b>February 6, 2021</b>	January 8	January 9 - January 15
<b>April 17, 2021</b>	March 12	March 13 - March 26
<b>June 12, 2021</b>	May 7	May 8 - May 21
<b>July 17, 2021*</b>	June 19 - June 25	June 19 - June 25

Get more Information at: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration-information.html>

## THE FACTS ON STANDARDIZED/ADMISSION TESTING

Since high schools across the country are very different in their academics and grading, the college entrance exams (SAT & ACT) were developed to provide a common yardstick to measure students' readiness to do college-level work. This test is not to keep you out of a specific school; it is to help you fit in where you will be the most successful. It is important to find out as early as possible what tests the colleges on your list require and what their deadlines are for receiving these scores.

**The PSAT/NMSQT:** the college application process really begins in October of junior year with the PSAT/NMSQT. This test helps identify areas of strength and weakness for the SAT. The test measures critical reading skills, math problem solving skills and writing skills. Junior year PSAT scores are also used to determine criteria for the National Merit Scholarship Program- the largest national search for academically talented students. The highest PSAT scores from each state become Semifinalists. Semifinalists become Finalists based on an equivalent performance on the SAT. Merit Scholars are eligible to receive financial awards. Additionally, Semifinalists, Finalists, and Merit Scholars are recruited by colleges and other scholarship agencies across the country.

**The SAT:** The test measures reasoning and thinking skills and includes two sections: Critical Reading and Math with a third option Writing section- check with your colleges to determine if they require the SAT Writing Exam. Scores on each section range from 200-800 for a total composite score of 1600. Generally, students take the SAT in spring of their junior year. Often students will retest once or twice more in the fall of senior year. There is usually no advantage to persistent test taking (3 or more), but there is evidence of improvement upon retaking the test a second time. Most colleges will look at all test results and take the highest scores for each section when evaluating your application (this is called "Super Scoring"). Be fully aware of the registration deadlines and fees. If financial matters make SAT fees a problem be sure to consult your school counselor. It take about 4-6 weeks for your results to become available online and sent to colleges- be sure to choose test dates that will allow enough time for scores to be received by application deadlines.

**SAT SUBJECT TESTS (SAT II):** These tests are scored on a grading scale of 200-800. It is recommended to only send scores to colleges if you score at least a 700- especially if the school is Ivy League. Unlike the SAT's which measure more general abilities, the Subject Tests measure your knowledge of particular subjects and your ability to apply that knowledge. Find out directly from the college as early as possible if they require SAT Subject Tests (not common). If it is recommended, only take the test and send the scores if you score very well. Be aware that some subject tests are only given on certain dates.

**The ACT:** All colleges accept the ACT just like the SAT. This test measures student learning in four different areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Natural Science. Each area is scored on a scale of 1-36. The ACT also offers an optional Writing Test that complements the English component. Check with your colleges to determine if they require the ACT Writing Exam. Students can prepare for the ACT by taking the Pre-ACT typically during their sophomore year. Colleges that "Super Score" the ACT:  
<http://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/colleges-superscore-act>

**Advanced Placement Exams (AP)-** This test gives students the opportunity to earn college credit. AP exams are intensive subject-matter tests given in May by student enrolled in Advanced Placement courses. Each test is scored on a scale of 1-5. Colleges usually award credit for a score of 3, 4, or 5. Check with the individual college for its Advanced Placement Policy.

**College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** Another route to obtaining college credit (like the AP Exams). Not all colleges offer credit for this exam- check collegeboard.org to check which college awards credit for CLEP.

## WHICH TEST IS RIGHT FOR ME?

	SAT	ACT
<b>Why Take It</b>	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
<b>Test Structure</b>	<p><b>2 Sections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Reading/Writing and Language</li> </ul> <p>Essay (Optional)</p>	<p><b>4 Sections:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Science</li> </ul> <p>Essay (Optional)</p>
<b>Length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 hours (without essay)</li> <li>• 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay)</li> <li>• 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	5 reading passages- Reading Comprehension, Words in Context, Evidence-Based	4 reading passages- Reading Comprehension
<b>Science</b>	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)- Analysis, Interpretation, Evaluation, Basic Content, Problem Solving.
<b>Math</b>	<p>Covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Algebra I &amp; II</li> <li>• Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis</li> </ul>	<p>Covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Algebra I &amp; II</li> <li>• Geometry and Trigonometry</li> </ul>
<b>Tools</b>	Some math questions don't allow you to use a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
<b>Essays</b>	Optional. The essay will test your comprehension of a source text. It is scored on a 2-12 scale. It is not included in the overall score.	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues. It is scored on a 2-12 scale. It is not included in the overall score.
<b>How It's Scored</b>	<p>Scored on a scale of 400–1600</p> <p>Each Section is scored on a scale of 200-800</p> <p>No penalty for wrong answers</p>	<p>Scored on a scale of 1–36 (Avg. of all 4 sections)</p> <p>Each Section is scored on a scale of 1-36</p> <p>No penalty for wrong answers</p>

**\*Since both the SAT and ACT are widely accepted by colleges your particular strength should determine which one you should take: Students who are strong academically will often have to prepare less for the ACT since the test is better aligned to high school curriculum and the questions are more direct. If you are strong in the sciences, your performance on the ACT science reasoning section could boost your overall score significantly. On the other hand, the SAT offers more room for practice and scores can be improved through test preparation techniques (if you are a skilled test-taker the SAT may be the test for you).**



## ACT to New SAT Concordance Table

ACT Composite Score	New SAT Total (400-1600)
36	1600
35	1570
34	1540
33	1500
32	1470
31	1430
30	1400
29	1360
28	1320
27	1290
26	1260
25	1220
24	1180
23	1140
22	1110
21	1070
20	1030
19	990
18	950
17	910
16	870
15	830
14	780
13	740
12	680
11	590

\*For lower score points, there is not enough data to produce a valid concordance between the new SAT and ACT.

## SCORE REPORTING, TEST PREP, & WHEN TO TAKE THE TESTS

**Score Reporting:** It is the student's responsibility to have the scores from all admission testing sent to the colleges to which they are applying. Most colleges require an official score report sent directly from the College Board or the ACT. Students are responsible for knowing college deadlines and registering for the appropriate test date.

**Test Preparation:** The best way to prepare for college entrance exams is to take a competitive academic program during all four years of high school- develop math skills and build your reading and vocabulary skills. Additional help can be found through free practice exams online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) and [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) and their "Questions of the Day" apps and downloadable PDFs. As well as purchasing SAT and ACT Study Guides (paper and online) or paying for local test-prep courses or tutors-many students benefit from the test-taking strategies stressed in these programs rather than the acquisition of any additional academic knowledge.

### **When To Take Tests:**

- **SPRING of 11<sup>th</sup> Grade-** SAT and/or ACT, SAT Subject Tests (if required), & AP Exams (if appropriate)
- **FALL of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade-** SAT and/or ACT, SAT Subject Tests (if required)
- **SPRING of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade-** AP Exams (if appropriate)

### **Admission Testing Terminology:**

- **College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB)-** More commonly called the "College Board", this organization regulates the Admission Testing Program, which includes PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests, AP Exams, and CLEP exams.
- **Educational Testing Service (ETS)-** This organization creates, administers, scores and reports results of the Admission Testing Program of the College Board.
- **Secondary School Code (SSC)-** The identification number of your high school used for CEEB and ACT tests. **Boonton High School CEEB code: 310130**
- **Student Search Service (SSS)-** A service provided by the College Board which collects information about student's interests, aspirations and activities, the SAT Questionnaire response sheet is returned when a student registers for the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT or SAT Subject Tests, enabling colleges to directly contact by mail those students in whom they might be interested.

# RESUME

When deciding which extracurricular activities to pursue, keep in mind that quality is far more important than quantity, both in terms of your enjoyment of the experience and from the college admissions end.

The following criteria highlight what types of activities will hold actual weight when included on a college application:

- 1) It is aligned with your future academic/career goals.
- 2) It helps to demonstrate your ability to lead and get results (titles matter less than your actual duties/responsibilities).
- 3) It shows evidence of distinction such as placing in a local, state, or national competition (this is of greater importance to applicants to elite schools).

## If you have not done so already- create a resume on Naviance:

1. Log onto **Naviance**
2. Click on **“About Me”** in the upper right-hand corner of the page
3. Select **My Stuff >**. Then select **Resume**
4. Click on- **Add/Update Sections**
5. Click on- **Add a new entry: Education**
  - a. **School:** Boonton High School
  - b. **Location:** 306 Lathrop Ave. Boonton, NJ
  - c. **Degree/Grade Level:** Grade 11 GPA 3.2 (example)
  - d. **Start Date:** September 2014 (unless you're a transfer student)
  - e. **End Date:** Present
  - f. **Description:** Anticipated Graduation Date June of 2018
6. Click on- **Add a new entry: Extracurricular Activities**
  - a. **Activity:** List student club/organization (i.e., Key Club)
  - b. **Start Date:**
  - c. **End Date:** Leave Blank
  - d. **Avg. hours per week:** 4 (example)
  - e. **Total hours:** List total hours you committed to this organization
  - f. **Grades Participated:**
  - g. **Description:** List positions/roles (EX: Secretary)
7. **Complete Add Entry** for all other categories that apply to you.
8. **How to print:**
  - a. Click on- **Print/Export Resume**
  - b. Click on **Create a New Print Format**
  - c. **Enter a name** for your resume version
  - d. **Click on the format** (Style 1 or Style 2) that you prefer
  - e. **References:** Click on Do Not Include
  - f. **Arrange your resume** (look at sample resume as reference)
    - i. Education
    - ii. Skills/Academic Achievement (move test scores to top)
    - iii. Awards/Certificates
    - iv. Music/Artistic Achievement, Athletic Achievement,
    - v. Extracurricular Activities
    - vi. Volunteer Service
    - vii. Work Experience
    - viii. Additional Information
    - ix. Click on Save and Close
  - g. **Click on View/Print and PRINT**

**Add new entries to your resume by selecting a type of entry from the drop down menu. If you're not sure what information to provide, you can select an entry type and read the tips displayed. When printing your resume, you can choose which entries you want to display, so we encourage you to add as much information as possible throughout your time at BHS.**

## RESUME TIPS

### 1. Objective:

- a. Your resume objective should provide a short, simple and clear statement about the kind of position you wish to obtain. An objective is not required for your resume, but it can help show the reader how the job position or program relates to your personal goals.
- b. Ex: "Summer internship in the Biology Lab", "Obtain a position in which I can learn more about business and finance", "Part-time sales position in retail"
- c. If you're not sure about your objective, think about jobs that use skills and talents that you have or positions that could help you learn more about areas that interest you. You can record as many objectives as you want here and choose a specific one to print later.

### 2. Summary:

- a. A summary statement is a quick way to highlight the most significant accomplishments and skills on your resume. It helps the reader quickly understand what sets you apart and puts your best foot forward right away. The best format is a series of short sentences that contain actual accomplishments or skills
  - **Ex:** Excellent communication skills, Proven leadership skills with multiple leadership positions, Three years of retail sales experience, National Merit Scholarship finalist
- b. Ideally the summary contains items that relate directly to the most important skills required for the job or program. You can create multiple summary statements here so you may want to create several versions that emphasize particular strengths depending on the situation.

### 3. Work Experience:

- a. One of the keys to writing a good resume is to learn how to write short "snippets" that demonstrate what you did (**action**) and what you accomplished (**result**). You can make your work experience a lot more relevant and informative to the reader if you use this style.
  - **Ex:** Organized records into an online database for easier administration, Consistently sold more than monthly quota, Tutored students in math to improve SAT scores by an average of 200 points
- b. Look up Action Words to use in your resume writing:
  - **Ex:** Accomplished, Achieved, Assisted, Completed, Gathered, Managed, Planned, Represented, Scheduled, Searched, Served, Solved, Started, Succeeded, Supported, Supervised, Utilized.
- c. For work experience, make sure you list any job that gave you useful experience or skills. Even if you didn't get paid, you worked for a parent or relative, or you worked for yourself, you probably still gained valuable experience and accomplished something meaningful.

### 4. Education:

- a. Include coursework related to your job objective, internships, workshops or seminars.
- b. Even if it does not directly relate to a job, it can be helpful to list other interesting things you have studied to show that you are a well-rounded person.
- c. Note any significant accomplishment such as a high GPA or a leadership position.

- 5. Volunteer Service:**
  - a. Note any special accomplishments or leadership positions with your volunteer service.
  - b. As you look for volunteer service opportunities, think about something that you would enjoy committing to on a regular basis. Spending more time on fewer activities can provide you with an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution and demonstrate your commitment.
- 6. Extracurricular Activities:**
  - a. Don't worry about listing only the "right" activities. Try to note everything you've done and you can always select just a few items for a printed resume.
  - b. Include anything where you have taken a leadership position, developed a significant skill or accomplished something.
- 7. Awards/Certificates:**
  - a. Think of anything you've earned, even if it seems small.
  - b. If you have started something and expect to earn a certificate within a certain time period, it may be worth noting.
- 8. Skills/Academic Achievement:**
  - a. Do you have technical skills such as computer programming or proficiency with word processors and spreadsheets? Make sure you list specific languages or programs.
  - b. If you have accomplished specific things with your skills, make a note of it (e.g. developed a website for a local band using Microsoft .NET)
  - c. Have you developed any skills on your own? This shows initiative and a willingness to learn, which is valuable to any employer.
- 9. Music/Artistic Achievement:**
  - a. Musical and artistic achievement requires a lot of hard work. Emphasize the work that has gone into your achievements.
  - b. Note any recognition or advancement (e.g. was promoted to first soloist, etc.)
- 10. Athletic Achievement:**
  - a. Make sure you note any leadership positions or awards.
- 11. References:**
  - a. Make sure you have permission from each person listed to use them as a reference.
  - b. Verify with each reference how they would prefer to be contacted.
  - c. References can make a big difference. When you start a job, always think about how your supervisor would describe you to others. Don't be afraid to ask them how they see your strengths and weaknesses. If you show a willingness to listen and to learn, they may end up being a really strong reference for you.
- 12. Leadership:**
  - a. List any leadership experience you may have.
  - b. Examples may be positions, offices, or experiences you can point to.
- 13. Additional Information:**
  - a. Use this section to make a note of anything that does not quite fit into the other sections.
  - b. You can choose which items go onto each printed resume, so it's always best to make a note of as many things as you can.

# Action Words for Resume Building

## **Worked with Others**

Advised  
Aided  
Assisted  
Chaired  
Coached  
Collaborated with  
Consulted with  
Helped  
Instructed  
Interacted with  
Mentored  
Met with  
Participated in  
Motivated  
Partnered with  
Referred  
Served  
Supported  
Taught  
Teamed with  
Trained  
Worked with

## **Communicated**

Addressed  
Advertised  
Answered  
Briefed  
Corresponded with  
Debated  
Explained  
Facilitated  
Informed  
Interpreted  
Interviewed  
Persuaded  
Presented  
Publicized  
Responded to

## **Created or Revised Something**

Authored  
Built  
Composed

Conceived  
Conceptualized  
Corrected  
Created  
Designed  
Developed  
Drafted  
Edited  
Enhanced  
Expedited  
Generated  
Implemented  
Improved  
Initiated  
Instituted  
Invented  
Modified  
Originated  
Planned  
Restructured  
Reorganized  
Revamped  
Simplified  
Streamlined

## **Analyzed Data or Processes**

Assessed  
Appraised  
Audited  
Calculated  
Computed  
Estimated  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Forecasted  
Inspected  
Investigated  
Measured  
Monitored  
Researched  
Surveyed  
Tested

## **Operated Equipment**

Installed  
Maintained

Programmed  
Ran  
Serviced  
Utilized

## **Worked with Money or Contracts**

Administered  
Appropriated  
Authorized  
Balanced  
Controlled  
Directed  
Dispersed  
Enforced  
Financed  
Funded  
Governed  
Invested  
Monitored  
Negotiated

Oversaw  
Purchased

## **Organized Something**

Arranged  
Assembled  
Catalogued  
Compiled  
Coordinated  
Filed  
Invoiced  
Itemized  
Organized  
Routed  
Scheduled  
Stocked  
Staged  
Tracked

# SAMPLE RESUME

Sample resume for college visits or college/scholarship applications; this is an example, include information that highlight YOUR STRENGTHS!

**Name**  
**Address**  
**City, State Zip**  
**Phone #**  
**Email Address**

**College Major/ Career Goal:**  
(include this only if you have one)

G.P.A.: (only if good)  
ACT: same  
SAT: same

## Honors and Awards

- National Merit Semi-Finalist, (11)
- Lamp of Learning Academic Achievement Award (9, 10, 11)
- Missouri All State Choir, (10,11)

## High School Activities

- Pioneer Yearbook Staff (10, 11, 12)
  - Editor in Chief (12)
- KHS Swim Team (10, 11, 12)
  - Varsity Team Captain (12)
- KHS Choir (9, 10, 11, 12)
- Spanish Club (9, 10, 11)

## Community Activities

- Meals on Wheels Volunteer (Summers, 2004-Present)
  - Deliver 3-5 meals to senior citizens every Saturday throughout the year.
  - Approximately 10 hours per month.
- Church Youth Group (9, 10, 11, 12)
  - Coordinated over 100 youth members for a 2-week mission trip.

## Work Experience

- Kirkwood YMCA Summer Gymnastics Camp Instructor (2004-Present)
  - 20 hours per week during the school year and 45 hours per week in the summer.
- Kirkwood Library (2004-06)
  - Approximately 10 hours per week during the school year.

## Interests

- Diving – Greenbriar Pool Dive Team (6 years)
- Dancing – Ballet, tap, jazz (10 years)

(“In our file room there’s a saying that’s sort of mean, but also true: the thicker the file, the thicker the kid. If you’re padding your application with letters or with copies of every little prize you won since junior high school we’re going to wonder if you’re a weak applicant.”)

Rachel Toor  
Former Duke Admissions Officer  
Author of Admissions Confidential

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

What are your likes and dislikes? Think carefully about these questions and statements. A thorough understanding of yourself is the first step to your future.

**I would list the following qualities as my greatest strengths:**

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**My friends would use the following words to describe me:**

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**I really enjoy the following academic subjects:**

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**I learn best under the following conditions:**

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**I consider my finest accomplishments to be:**

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**I am most passionate about doing these activities in my spare time:**

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**I have demonstrated leadership in the following ways:**

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**The biggest challenges I am facing right now are:**

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**I would like to improve my academic and social skills in the following areas:**

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**If I could have three wishes granted they would be:**

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### **NAVIANCE RESOURCES:**

**Complete the Naviance "Do What You Are" inventory:** Located under [Careers > Careers Home](#). Learn about your personality, your strengths, your blindspots and more! You will also see suitable careers and majors.



## GOALS ASSESSMENT

One of the most important areas to explore in self-evaluation is your goals- why do you want to go to college? What do you hope to gain from a college education? Your answers may change over time, that's fine. Record those changes as well.

Define your idea of success:

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---

List three reasons you would like to attend college after high school

1.

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2.

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3.

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What do you see yourself doing:

...5 years from now

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...10 years from now

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What are the most important things you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?

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## ABILITIES INVENTORY

Put an X next to those categories that best describe your abilities. This will help guide you in selecting careers that match your personality.

### \_\_\_\_\_ ARTISTIC

Do you enjoy music, art, or literature? Is self-expression important to you? Would you describe yourself as independent, original, unconventional? Artistic careers might include performing in drama, dance or music; using your hands to create or decorate; working in writing, advertising, media, communications or computer graphics

### \_\_\_\_\_ CONVENTIONAL

Are you accurate and organized? Do you prefer structured environments? Would you describe yourself as dependable, stable, well-controlled and responsible? Careers matching this profile include working in a bank, library, insurance agency, business office at such careers as computer operation, record keeping, financial analysis, statistics, and accounting.

### \_\_\_\_\_ ENTERPRISING

Would you describe yourself as energetic, enthusiastic, adventurous, and self-confident? Are you good at persuading people and prefer social tasks where you can assume leadership? Careers in this field might include business executive, buyer, hotel manager, realtor, sports promoter, political consultant, or working in any facet of sales.

### \_\_\_\_\_ ENVIRONMENTAL

Do you like working outdoors? Do you enjoy caring for animals or doing physical work? Careers in this field include forest ranger, veterinarian, agricultural researcher, landscaper or working in fishing, farming or ranching.

### \_\_\_\_\_ INVESTIGATIVE

Do you most enjoy your science or math courses in school? Would you describe yourself as task-oriented? Would you want a career that involves research and discovery? Do you enjoy abstract problem-solving and have a need to understand the physical world? Career options include computer systems engineer, biologist, social scientist, research laboratory worker, physicist, technical writer or meteorologist.

### \_\_\_\_\_ SOCIAL

Do you get satisfaction from helping others? Would you be described as responsible, humanistic and concerned about the welfare of society? Careers matching this profile include teaching, therapy (vocational/physical/psychological), healthcare, human welfare (social worker/parole officer/police officer/fire fighter), legal services, the clergy or customer service.

### \_\_\_\_\_ TECHNICAL

Do you enjoy applying mechanical principals to solve practical problems? Do you like “tinkering” with machines, tools, or vehicles? Do you enjoy creating things with your hands or find that you are good at fixing things that are broken? Careers in this field include certain kinds of engineering (civil/electrical/industrial), vehicle operation and repair, equipment repair, architectural design and web design.

### **NAVIANCE RESOURCES:**

**Complete the Naviance “StrengthsExplorer” assessment:** Located under About Me > My Assessments- Identify your talents and see related careers and majors.

**Complete the Naviance “MI Advantage” assessment:** Located under About Me > My Assessments- Explore your abilities and preferences in different areas.

## INTERESTS INVENTORY

Put an X next to those areas that best describe your interests. This will help guide you in selecting careers where you have strong potential for success.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **AGRICULTURE, FOOD, NATURAL RESOURCES**

Creating and distributing food and other natural resources, including various plant and animal products. Employment opportunities range from farm workers to bio-scientists.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **ARCHITECTURE & CONSTRUCTION**

Designing, constructing, and maintaining buildings and structures. Employment opportunities range from construction workers to architects to engineers.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **ARTS, AUDIO/VIDEO TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATIONS**

Includes performing arts, journalism, entertainment as well as developing and producing multimedia content. Employment opportunities range from actors to newscasters to website developers.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION**

Planning, launching, and/or running a successful business. Employment opportunities range from receptionists to CEOs.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **EDUCATION, TRAINING**

Involves educating and training people of all ages. Employment opportunities range from preschool teachers to university professors.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **FINANCE**

Handling money for individuals and businesses. Employment opportunities range from bank tellers to personal financial planners to economists.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Running a nation, state, county, city or town by planning, protecting, and managing people and resources. Employment opportunities range from court clerks to city managers to the president.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **HEALTH SCIENCE**

Developing and providing medical diagnoses and treatment. Employment opportunities range from home health care aides to doctors, nurses and bioscientists.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **HOSPITALITY, TOURISM**

Providing for the needs and comforts of restaurant or hotel guests. Employment opportunities range from cooks to tour guides to hotel owners.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **HUMAN SERVICES**

Caring for people's personal needs and/or problems. Employment opportunities range from hairdressers to social workers to counselors.

### \_\_\_\_\_ **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Developing and maintaining computers, software, and network systems. Employment opportunities range from help-desk technicians to database security experts to systems architects.

## INTERESTS INVENTORY CONTINUED

### LAW, PUBLIC SAFETY, CORRECTIONS, SECURITY

Protecting people and enforcing the laws. Employment opportunities range from EMTs to police officers to lawyers.

### MANUFACTURING

Creating products from raw materials. Employment opportunities range from welders to industrial engineers.

### MARKETING, SALES, SERVICES

Selling a wide range of products or services. Employment opportunities range from cashiers to sales agents.

### SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS

Using science and math to understand and/or change the world. Employment opportunities range from nutritionists to geoscientists to nuclear physicists.

### TRANSPORTATION, DISTRIBUTION, LOGISTICS

Moving people or things from one place to another. Employment opportunities range from bus drivers to auto mechanics to air traffic controllers.

### NAVIANCE RESOURCES:

**Complete the Naviance “Career Interest Profiler” assessment:** Located under Careers > Careers Home- discover the types of work activities and careers that match your interests.

Be sure to take your **Holland CODE (RIASEC)** results from the Career Interest Profiler and search your matching career results at: <http://www.onetonline.org/explore/interests/Realistic/>

**Complete the Naviance “Cluster Finder” assessment:** Located under Careers > Careers Home- learn what career clusters may be a good match for you based on activities that interest you, personal qualities that you have, and subjects that you enjoy studying in school.

**Use the Naviance “Explore Careers and Clusters” tool:** Located under Careers > Explore- Career clusters are a way of grouping careers with common features and skills. Careers grouped into the same cluster typically require similar education and training. Exploring clusters can be a useful way to find a good career match, especially if you have general areas of interest but are not sure what specific careers match those interests. Career clusters can also help you better understand how your coursework in school can prepare you for certain types of careers.

## VALUES ASSESSMENT

Values define your philosophies, principles and lifestyle choices. Rank the following items in order of importance to you. Number 1 being the most important. Examine your values can help you make better decisions about possible career areas.

\_\_\_\_\_ **ALTRUISM**

Your life satisfaction comes not from what you do for yourself, but from the act of helping others.

\_\_\_\_\_ **CREATIVITY**

You would like to have a career in which you can use your imagination and be inventive.

\_\_\_\_\_ **EARNINGS**

You would place money ahead of other considerations such as job satisfaction and personal interests.

\_\_\_\_\_ **ECONOMIC SECURITY**

You are not an adventurous type of person and prefer a career that offers steady income with little risk.

\_\_\_\_\_ **INDEPENDENCE**

You are a self-starter and like being in control of your daily activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ **INTERACTION**

You have a friendly and outgoing personality and enjoy working with other people rather than by yourself

\_\_\_\_\_ **POWER**

You enjoy having a direct impact on other people's lives and actions.

\_\_\_\_\_ **RECOGNITION**

You would enjoy being famous and respected for what you do.

\_\_\_\_\_ **VARIETY**

You do not like to do the same thing all the time. You are most happy when your activities are diverse.

**OTHERS:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **NAVIANCE RESOURCES:**

**Complete the Naviance "Learning Styles" Inventory:** Located under About Me > My Assessments- discover your learning and working style.

## 10 COMMON MYTHS WHEN SELECTING A COLLEGE

- 1. All Colleges are alike, so there is no point in doing any research**
- 2. There is only one college that is exactly right for me**
- 3. If I don't recognize the college's name, it's probably not a good school**
- 4. Only those students from prestigious institutions gain entrance to graduate or professional schools**
- 5. You have to be wealthy in order to attend college**
- 6. Schools that cost more provide a higher quality education**
- 7. It is better to avoid more challenging classes in order to maintain a strong high school grade point average (GPA)**
- 8. Test scores are the most important criteria in college admission**
- 9. I don't need to worry about the application essay or my extracurricular activities**
- 10. If I make the wrong college choice, it is irreversible**

The facts are that every college is distinctive in its own way, and you can be happy at many institutions. Also, financial aid programs are readily available to help with college costs.

## IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

The first step in selecting a school is to know what's important to you. While everyone's priorities may be different, consider the following when making your choice:

### Curriculum

- Does the school offer the courses and majors you want?
- Are you interested in a career that requires professional certification?

### Quality of Education

- Does it matter to you whether professors or graduate students teach your courses?
- How involved do you want to be in research and in learning outside the classroom?

### Size

- Do you want to be on a big campus with many majors, an impressive library, lots to do?
- Or do you prefer a small college where you know everyone's name?

### Location

- Which part of the country would you like to experience?
- Do you want an urban or small-town setting?
- Do you want to stay close to home?

### Admission Requirements

- What does the school require for admission?
- What does the school look for in prospective students?
- What are your chances of being accepted?

### Cost

- How much can you afford?
- What types of student financial aid are available?

### Campus Life

- How is life outside the classroom?
- What special interest group, activities, and fraternities/sororities do you want to be involved in?

### Campus Security

- What measures does the school take to ensure your safety? How safe is the campus?
- What's the surrounding community like?

### Facilities

- What would you like to see on or near your college campus?
- Are restaurants, stores, and health clubs important to you?
- What about transportation on and around the campus?

### Housing and Resources

- Check out the quality of dorm life
- Find out if housing is guaranteed for returning students
- Can the schools meal plan accommodate special diet needs?

### Retention and Graduation Rates

- What is the schools retention rate (percentage of students who stay for four years)
- What is the graduation rate (percentage of students who graduate within four years)

### Additional Considerations

- Percentage of applicants accepted?
- Average test scores of the students
- Job placement service

## COLLEGE CRITIQUE

Now that you have a better understanding of your goals, interests, and values you are in a better place to find a college that is a good fit. It's time to begin your search. Once you determine the type of school you plan to attend, narrowing down the many choices can be easy.

Use the following checklist to decide which factors are important to you in selecting a college. Remember these factors will not be the same for everyone and should reflect your own personal wants and needs.

Put an X next to your preference in each of the categories below. Fill in the blanks where appropriate:

**CURRICULUM-** Even if you are certain about a particular field of study that may change once you get to college and discover the wide range of choices open to you. In fact, college students change their major an average of three times before graduation.

I would like to major in \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ I am currently undecided about my field of study

**GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION-** Be realistic about how far away from home you really want to be.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Mid-Atlantic** (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Midwest** (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin)

\_\_\_\_\_ **New England** (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)

\_\_\_\_\_ **South** (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Southwest** (Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)

\_\_\_\_\_ **West** (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming)

**SETTING-** Do you want the energy and excitement that a city school can offer? Are you more comfortable with a campus located outside the city limits? Are you a nature-lover who prefers a campus in the woods or mountains?

\_\_\_\_\_ **Urban (Large city setting)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Suburban (Outskirts of city setting)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Rural (Country setting)**

**SIZE-** 45% of freshmen consider size a key factor in deciding where to attend college

\_\_\_\_\_ **Small (1,000-5,000 students)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Medium (5,000-10,000 students)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Large (10,000-15,000 students)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Very Large (over 15,000 students)**



**STUDENT BODY-** The types of students found on campus are responsible for creating the academic, cultural and social environment

\_\_\_\_\_ **Single-Sex**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Coeducational (male and female)**

**ADMISSION POLICY-** Take a personal academic inventory noting your grade point average, number of honors and/or AP classes you've taken, and your highest SAT or ACT scores

\_\_\_\_\_ **Most Competitive** (Accept fewer than 25% of applicants)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Highly Competitive** (Accept between 25%-40% of applicants)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Very Competitive** (Accept between 40%-60% of applicants)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Competitive** (Accept between 60%-75% of applicants)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Less Competitive** (Accept 75% or more of applicants)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Open** (all high school graduates accepted)

**CAMPUS LIFE-** select schools that offer plenty of activities that match your interests

**List the extracurricular organizations events or activities in which you will want to participate (ex: Student Government, Radio/TV station, Band, Newspaper, Fraternities, Sororities)**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**ATHLETICS-** Do you want to compete at Division I, II, or III? Do you simply want to play for fun and recreation?

**List the intercollegiate, intramural or recreational sports in which you will want to participate (Ex: Football, Softball, Lacrosse, Bowling).**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS-** these opportunities can significantly enrich your college experience and deserve strong consideration.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Honors Program** (a program offering special enrichment opportunities for students with high academic ability)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Independent Study** (a program where the student works on special topics of interest without attending scheduled classes or fulfilling regular class assignments)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Internships** (a program where the student gets college credit and work experience while attending school)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cooperative Education** (a program where the student gets college credit and a salaried work experience while attending school. The two most common programs are: student alternates between semesters of school and work or student studies and works during the same semester)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Study Abroad** (a special arrangement where the student completes part of the degree program in a foreign country)

\_\_\_\_\_ **ROTC Reserve Officers Training Corps** (a scholarship and training program offered by the US Army, Navy, and Air Force on many campuses; students must fulfill a service obligation upon graduation)

**SERVICES-** one or more of these services may be especially important to you

\_\_\_\_\_ **Staff and Peer Tutoring** (writing and math centers)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Counseling** (Individual or group counseling addressing personal and/or social issues)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Career Development** (Individual or group counseling addressing decision-making and career planning skills)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Job Placement** (services offered to help students secure employment during college or after graduation)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Support for Learning Disabled or Physically Challenged** (special course scheduling and tutorial assistance)

**NAVIANCE COLLEGE RESEARCH RESOURCES:** Located under “Colleges” on the upper right

<b>SuperMatch College Search</b>	<b>College Resources</b>
<b>College Match</b>	<b>College Maps</b>
<b>College Compare</b>	<b>Scattergrams</b>
<b>College Lookup</b>	<b>Acceptance History</b>
<b>College Search</b>	<b>Enrichment Programs</b>

# FIVE STEPS TO RESEARCH COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:

## STEP ONE: SELF ANALYSIS

You must be honest with yourself. Determine your strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes, and preferences. Once you know what you want, even if it is in the most general terms, you can find the colleges and universities that best match your interests and goals. You can also utilize the assessments and inventories in this guide.

(Naviance → Careers Link → “Explore”)

The screenshot displays the Naviance Student interface. At the top, there is a teal header with the Naviance logo and 'Student' text. Navigation links for 'Home', 'Colleges', 'Careers', 'About Me', and 'My Planner' are visible. A dropdown menu is open over the 'Careers' link, showing options: 'CAREERS Home', 'CAREERS I'm thinking about', 'EXPLORE Careers, Clusters and Pathways', and 'ROADTRIP NATION Interview archive'. Below the header, the main content area is titled 'Explore Careers and Clusters'. On the left, a 'Quick Links' sidebar includes 'EXPLORE CAREERS' (with sub-links for 'Favorite careers and clusters' and 'Explore careers and clusters'), and 'WHAT ARE MY INTERESTS?' (with sub-links for 'Career cluster finder' and 'Career interest profiler'). The main area features a 'Career Lookup' section with four search methods: 'Look up by keyword' (with a text input and 'Go' button), 'Look up by category' (with a dropdown menu showing 'N/A' and a 'Go' button), 'Look up by Holland Code' (with a dropdown menu showing 'No Preference' and a 'Go' button, and a 'Learn More' link), and 'Look up by career name' (with an alphabetical index from A to Z). At the bottom of the main area, there is a section titled 'Find Clusters and Pathways'.

## STEP TWO: RESEARCH

Once you have identified the college characteristics that are important to you, you need to seek advice, do some research, and familiarize yourself with important resources!

**Seek your School Counselor's Assistance:** Your school counselor is a great resource that will help you with:

- College research and planning sessions
- Creating a list of schools that fit your needs
- Arranging for college representatives to visit the high school
- Publicizing opportunities such as local college fairs
- Providing information on standardized tests
- Assisting with the college application process (during senior year)
- Writing recommendation letters (during senior year)
- Advising about financial aid and scholarship opportunities (during senior year)

For these reasons, establishing and maintaining a good relationship with your counselor is essential- the more your counselor understands your personality and goals, the better he/she can assist you with your college decisions.

Since no two colleges are exactly the same, you should learn about the variations between them. This stage of research is can be satisfied by utilizing the search links found in Naviance. To accomplish this step, it is recommended that you select 10 to 20 schools to research.

(Naviance → College Link → College Home)

The screenshot displays the Naviance Student interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Naviance logo and the word "Student". On the right side of the navigation bar, there are links for "Home", "Colleges", "Careers", "About Me", and "My Planner". Below the navigation bar, the "Colleges" section is active, featuring a search bar with the placeholder text "Type a college name" and a link for "MORE COLLEGE SEARCH OPTIONS". A dropdown menu is open, showing options: "COLLEGES Home", "COLLEGES I'm thinking about", "COLLEGES I'm applying to", "Find Your Fit", "Research Colleges", "Apply to College", and "Scholarships and Money". Below the search bar, there are two main sections: "Find Your Fit" and "Research Colleges". The "Find Your Fit" section includes links for "SuperMatch®", "College Match", "Scattergrams", "Advanced College Search", and "College Lookup", with a "Show less" button at the bottom. The "Research Colleges" section includes links for "COLLEGES I'm Thinking About", "College Compare", "College Resources", "Acceptance History", "Enrichment Programs", and "College Maps", with a "Show less" button at the bottom.

Additionally, information is available by reading the commercial guidebooks about colleges and universities, visiting college/university websites, and attending campus tours.

**Refer to College Guide Books:** These books can be very helpful in identifying colleges, especially when you have decided on geographic location and the major you want to study. These reference guides are a great way to begin developing your list of prospective colleges.

**There are two basic types:**

1. **Objective factual guides-** a profile of necessary information such as academic programs available, admission requirements, cost of attendance and other data. This is reliable information, but does not give you a feel for the college.
2. **Subjective anecdotal guides-** gives you insight into the college and college life, but may be biased or inaccurate. Therefore, you should use BOTH to get the most comprehensive overview. A list of resources can be found at the end of this guide.

**Use the internet:** Computer search engines and programs (such as Naviance) allow you to conduct personalized search for colleges that meet your criteria, compare and contrast your preliminary college choices, match your academic profiles against admission requirements, send inquiries to colleges and receive responses, and apply to colleges online. There are also internet resources for the Common Application, registering for the SAT and ACT, completing and sending the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and completing the CSS Financial Aid Profile. A list of resources can be found at the end of this guide.

### **STEP 3: ANALYZE THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY NAVIANCE/COLLEGE SEARCHES**

We encourage you to read materials prepared by the colleges online. Read these materials cautiously and take advantage of their virtual tours. Also, compare factual/statistical information about each institution.

**You may receive mail and emails from many colleges and universities without asking- don't throw them out, read all you can! The more you understand the purpose and content of college literature, the more confident you will be as you go on campus visits and start the application process.**

**The Viewbook-** Often the first thing you will receive. Sometimes comes with an application for admission. The college viewbook will typically have more pictures than text- it is designed to give you an overview of the college, provide basic information, and get you interested. Look beyond the pictures and read the text to find out about curriculum, campus facilities, residence life, student activities, expenses, and financial aid opportunities.

**The Catalog-** the official and most comprehensive publication provided by the college. Best source for all information you need to know- more detailed information on things not found in the viewbook. It can be downloaded from the college's website. It will contain the following:

- **Application Procedures & Entrance Requirements-** read this section very carefully. Pay attention to application deadlines and fees. Be aware that the admission criteria (GPA and Test Scores) are averages, not cutoffs- they tend to accept a little above and a little below.
- **College Calendar-** find out when school starts, how long each term is, how many breaks you will get each year, and when the academic year ends. See if there is a freshman orientation program scheduled.
  - **Semester-** most common calendar. Academic year is divided in two equal periods of approx. 16 weeks (Fall and Spring)
  - **Trimester-** Calendar which divides academic year into three equal periods.
  - **Quarter-** similar to the trimester but usually includes a 4<sup>th</sup> summer session

- **4-1-4 System-** Students take four courses during the fall, one course during the January term, and four courses in the spring session.
- **Costs and Financial Aid-** Information on procedures for obtaining financial aid as well as special scholarships from the institution. Look into financial aid before you make assumptions about how much any college will cost.
- **Facilities and Services-** libraries, labs, computer centers, residence halls, recreational and athletic centers, student services like counseling and career development are important considerations.
- **Faculty-** Don't just look for PH.D's- how many of them teach undergraduates? Where did the faculty earn their degrees? What scholarly recognition do they have in their fields? How are they involved in co-curricular activities?
- **Programs of Study-** List of all courses offered at the college and descriptions of the courses. Review it to see the depth and breadth of the program you are interested in.
- **Student Activities and Campus Life-** will give you an idea of the kinds of activities available to you on campus, in the surrounding community, or near the college, and the degree to which they are considered important at the institution.
- **College Retention Rate and Graduation Rate-** a high retention rate means that students stick around- they are very satisfied with the classes, student life and facilities. High graduation rates indicate that the college meets the educational requirements of its students and necessary courses are offered frequently enough for students to complete their degrees in a timely manner.

### STEP 3 Continued: COLLEGE PLANNING CHART VIA NAVIANCE

Search and add colleges to your “**colleges I’m thinking about**” list. Then indicate your level of interest. Naviance will provide the delivery type (whether the college accepts electronic submissions, electronic submissions with only Common App, or only mailed materials). It will also display the various application deadlines for the college/university.

When the time comes (Senior year) , you may check the box next to the desired college and move it to your “**Colleges I’m applying to**” list by selecting the “Move to Application List” button at the bottom of the list. This is where you and your counselor can submit the necessary materials to complete your application process to your college(s).

Naviance → College Link → Colleges I’m thinking about

The screenshot shows the Naviance Student interface. The main content area is titled "Colleges I'm thinking about" and contains a table with the following data:

College	Delivery type	Added By	Expected Difficulty*	Application Deadlines	Interest
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania		Student	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bryant University		Student	N/A	Multiple Deadlines	N/A
Montclair State University		Student	N/A	Multiple Deadlines	N/A
Rider University		Student	N/A	Early Action November 15	N/A
Rutgers University-New Brunswick		Student	N/A	Multiple Deadlines	N/A
Wagner College		Student	N/A	Multiple Deadlines	N/A

#### **STEP 4: THE CAMPUS TOUR**

The campus tour should have two components: An “unofficial” unguided tour and the formal guided tour. The tour is what makes the written material come alive-it is the #1 factor in why students apply to college.

**The following suggestions will help you to make your tour as complete and useful as possible:**

- Visit the library. Is it accessible, quiet or noisy, fully computerized, comfortable? What are the hours?
- Get a copy of the school newspaper. What are the controversial issues on campus?
- Look at the announcement boards and posters. What performers and speakers are coming to campus? What clubs and organizations are promoting their activities?
- Visit the bookstore and dining areas. What are students talking about? Have a meal in the dining hall!
- Is the campus climate conservative or liberal? How culturally diverse is the campus? Is safety an issue?
- Ask questions about workload, methods of instruction (lecture, small group recitation, technology) and methods of evaluation.
- Ask about professors and teaching assistants. Are they available for office hours and one-on-one assistance?
- Visit residence hall facilities on campus. Ask about the different housing options (quiet floors, alcohol-free, honors, and same sex residence halls, etc.)
- Locate the fitness center or sports center.
- How technologically advanced is the campus?
- Are the classrooms/laboratories/studios clean and accessible?
- Do you feel safe walking around? Do you see security staff or well-lit walkways and parking lots?
- What is the accessibility of counseling services? Health services? Tutoring services?
- Demonstrate interest- sign in at the admission office whether this is your first or third visit, request a business card from any college rep you meet (admission counselor, faculty member, coach), ask about special campus programs and attend them- open houses, financial aid workshops, etc.
- Take videos and pictures of the campus- make notes about your feelings and impressions of the campus: what did you like best? Like least? Comments on Campus Facilities, Student Life, Academic Programs, what are other facts you remember about this college?

**If you visit schools during the summer, you may want to revisit during the school year to see the school in “full swing”.**



## COLLEGE COMPARISON CHART

<b><u>Name Of College</u></b>					
<b><u>Location</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance from home</li> </ul>					
<b><u>Size</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Physical size of campus</li> </ul>					
<b><u>Environment</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of school (2rd/4yr)</li> <li>• School setting (urban, rural)</li> <li>• Co-ed, Single-sexed</li> <li>• Religious affiliation</li> </ul>					
<b><u>Admission requirements</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline</li> <li>• Tests required</li> <li>• Avg. test scores, GPA, Rank</li> <li>• Notification</li> </ul>					
<b><u>Academics</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is your Major Offered?</li> <li>• Accreditation</li> <li>• Student-faculty Ratio</li> <li>• Typical Class Size</li> </ul>					
<b><u>College Expenses</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition, Room &amp; Board</li> <li>• Estimated total budget</li> <li>• Application fee, deposits</li> </ul>					
<b><u>Financial Aid</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline</li> <li>• Required forms</li> <li>• % students receiving aid</li> <li>• Scholarships</li> </ul>					
<b><u>Housing, Facilities, Activities</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food plan, Recreation</li> <li>• Clubs, Greek life, Athletics</li> </ul>					



**STEP 5: GROUP YOUR COLLEGES**

When researching your colleges be sure to group them according to your GPA, SAT or ACT scores and their admission requirements (You should apply to a mix of schools)

MY GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

MY SAT: \_\_\_\_\_

MY ACT: \_\_\_\_\_

**Safety:** You can definitely get into these schools. (You exceed the GPA and SAT/ACT scores listed for an average incoming freshman within the same major.)

**ATLEAST 1-2 "SAFETY SCHOOLS"**



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**Target:** These schools are a good balance for you. (Your GPA and SAT/ACT scores are comparable to those of an average incoming freshman within the same major.)



**ATLEAST 3-4 "TARGET SCHOOLS"**

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**Reach:** These schools are *potentially* out of your reach. (Your GPA and SAT/ACT scores may not meet those of an average incoming freshman within the same major.)



**ATLEAST 2-3 "REACH SCHOOLS"**

-----  
-----  
-----

## CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

### 1. School Selectivity and Rank:

**Look beyond the colleges overall reputation-** look at the strengths and weaknesses of the academic department you are interested in: Are there opportunities for independent research, field work or doing research with professors? What percentage of students find relevant careers upon graduation? What percentage seek and gain entrance into Masters programs or professional schools?

***Gaining admission to the “best” college is less important than enrolling at the college that is “best” for you. Acceptance to college is a match to be made, not a prize to be won.***

- **SELECTIVITY-** The percentage of applicants accepted from the pool of students who apply. Schools and Universities fall on a spectrum from noncompetitive/open admission to most competitive.
  - **Noncompetitive/open-** requires only a high school diploma or GED (general equivalency diploma) for entrance
  - **Most Competitive-** admits only 5%-25% of applicants (only a small percentage of schools in the US fall into this category)

***Again, while selectivity is a factor in gaining admission into a particular school, don't be misled into thinking that the most selective/competitive school is the BEST school for you!***

- **RANKINGS-** Every year, books, magazines, and news articles rank colleges according to their own criteria and then publish the results-these are not very reliable or valid. Unfortunately, these rankings tend to be used by parents and students in their college research.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Relying on rankings does not ensure an effective college search- here are some reasons why:

- Most rankings are based on information provided by the schools themselves
- Rankings are usually based on numerical statistics such as acceptance rate, retention rate, etc. These do not say very much about the strengths of their academic programs, what the social environment is like, or what facilities and extracurricular opportunities are available. A college is a lot more than its statistical profile!
- Choosing a college based on where it ranks on a list does not take into account who you are and what you want to become. It is much more important to look for schools that reflect your goals, values, interests, and learning style.

**It is not the prestige of the college that counts, it is what you do when you get there that matters.**

### 2. Your Preliminary List

After you consult your resources you should make a preliminary list of 20-30 schools that match your wants and needs. This list can include schools you have always dreamed about, your counselor's recommendations, colleges that friends and siblings have attended, even schools you have never heard of (be open, these schools may be a good match for you once you look into it further).

Once you have made your list, meet with your school counselor to reduce your list to a workable number in order to prepare for campus visits. The best way to eliminate colleges on your list, or reinforce your interest in them, is by revising your list after each of the following:

1. **Reviewing literature from the school** - college viewbook, catalogs, and application packets. Make sure you read material carefully to ensure the school has what you are looking for.
2. **Visiting College Websites-** look at course offerings, services and costs, and take a virtual tour.
3. **Attending college fairs, college nights, and individual meetings with college representatives**

### 3. Items To Consider When Reviewing Potential Colleges/Universities

- **Admissions requirements and procedures** (criteria, deadlines, fees, required tests, degree of selectivity)
- **Size and location** (on and off campus environment, rural, urban, suburban? Public transportation?)
- **Level of competition** (Selective, Very Selective, Most selective)
- **Graduation requirements and degrees awarded** (Associate, Bachelors, Masters, Doctoral)
- **Costs** (tuition, room, board, books, fees, travel, incidentals, financial aid, academic/athletic scholarships?)
- **Types of academic programs** (programs of study, core curriculum, honors classes, innovative/unique programs, majors, interdepartmental programs, independent study, off-campus and overseas programs (study abroad), co-op study plans, internships)
- **Curriculum** (flexibility, course availability, core curriculum)
- **Faculty** (level of degrees, accessibility to undergraduates)
- **Student body composition** (size, academic level, geographic origins, social/ethnic/economic diversity, what percent are graduate vs. undergraduate, commuting or residential (on campus), full-time/part-time students, the average class size of the freshman class?)
- **Retention and Graduation Rates** (What percentage of freshman return for sophomore year, what percentage of graduates find jobs in their field of study?)
- **Fraternities/Sororities/Honor Societies**
- **Recreational facilities and availability**
- **Campus organization/activities** (how many student organizations are on campus? what is the social, cultural environment and general campus atmosphere? suitcase school- students tend to go home on the weekends? role of Greek life, clubs, concerts, guest speakers)
- **Housing** (variety, availability for all four years, comfort, can you study there?)
- **Calendar** (quarters, trimesters, semesters – special requirements)
- **Health and counseling services** (tutoring or other support services available?)
- **Safety issues**

#### **Key questions to unlock the right answers in researching colleges/universities:**

- **Size of Freshman Class**
- **Number of Applications received**
- **Acceptance Rate**
- **Yield Rate- how many that are offered acceptance actually accept and attend the school?**
- **Graduation Rate- 4 years, 5 years, 6 years**
- **Retention Rate- 1<sup>st</sup> >2<sup>nd</sup> years**
- **Percentage of students receiving Financial Aid- Average Financial Aid Package**

### 4. What is a good College Fit?

- There is a program of study which meets your interest and needs
- The college provides a style of instruction that matches the way you like to learn
- The level of academic rigor is suitable to your aptitude and preparation
- The campus community feels like home
- Values you for what you do well

## 5. Talking to College Representatives

### Questions to ask College Reps:

- What makes this college unique?
- What is a typical freshman year program?
- What are the most popular majors?
- Can students take a double major?
- Can you design your own major?
- What is the student-faculty ratio?
- Do graduate assistants teach classes rather than professors?
- What is the course advisement process?
- What is the course registration process?
- What is the student body like?
- Do students come from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and geographic backgrounds?
- What are the current student issues on campus?
- What are the extracurricular clubs and organizations?
- Does the school host many lectures, concerts, plays, or art shows?
- What do resident students do on weekends?
- What are the opportunities for part-time work and/or community service?
- What opportunities exist for internships, independent study, or study abroad?
- What do current students like most about the school?
- How many students return after their freshman year?
- How many graduate in four years...five years?
- What percentage of graduates obtains employment in their desired field?
- What are the placement statistics for graduate school?

## 6. Examples of Average Admissions Criteria

Please check College Board or the College/University Admissions website for more information!

College/University	New SAT (1600)	ACT (36)	Acceptance Rate (Most Selective to Least Selective )
Princeton University	1460-1600	33-35	5%
Villanova University	1370-1500	31-34	31%
The College of NJ (TCNJ)	1270	28	49%
Penn State University (University Park)	1240-1410	27-33	49%
Rutgers University (New Brunswick)	1130-1520 (major specific)	26-35 (major specific)	60%
University. of Delaware	1180-1340	24-29	66%
Fairleigh Dickinson University	1040-1230	21-26	84%

## Overview of the College Search Process- JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

- Continue to or become familiar with Naviance Student by logging on to: <https://student.naviance.com/boonton>. Naviance Student will be your source for college information and keeping track of the colleges you've applied to
- Register to take the SAT, ACT, and/or SAT Subject Tests in the Spring (April, May, or June). Be sure to check for registration deadlines. Register online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and/or [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)
- Research your colleges/universities through Naviance Student, other internet sources, fellow students enrolled, or family members who have been or are currently attending a college/university.
- Attend some of the many college representative visits to BHS. This is your chance to meet admissions representatives. You can check for these visit dates through Family Connection.
- Attend the **New Jersey National College Fair** at the Meadowlands Exposition Center (Date TBD due to COVID-19)
- Meet with your counselor to refine and focus your college search
- Plan to make college visits in the spring, summer, and fall. Use the College Comparison Worksheet (Pg. 40)
  - Focus your search on the areas/regions of the country you would travel to and include the majors you are interested in.
- Choose and group your colleges based on "Target", "Reach", and "Safety Schools" (worksheet on Pg. 41)
- Update your "Colleges I'm Thinking About" List on Naviance
- Over the summer, finalize your college list (worksheet on pg. 46) and move the desired schools from the Naviance "Colleges I'm Thinking About" list to the "Colleges I'm Applying to" list.

\*Email your counselor if you have any questions or need help!

## **FINAL LIST (6-8 SCHOOLS)**

Fast forward to September- senior year. After completing the college research process, you're ready to create your final list of schools. Your final list should consist of a good mix of 6-8 institutions. The majority of schools on your list should be "realistic" or "target" colleges, schools whose admission standards closely match your qualifications. Select one or two schools that present an admission challenge, typically called "reaches". Finally mark down a "safety" school or two, where your academic achievement exceeds the admission criteria. Use the chart provided below and give careful thought to your choices in these categories. The application process can be costly and time-consuming, NEVER apply to a school that you would not be happy to attend.

REACH  
1-2  
SCHOOLS

- 1.
- 2.

REALISTIC  
3-4  
SCHOOLS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

SAFETY  
1-2  
SCHOOLS

- 1.
- 2.

THE ADMISSION PROCESS

There is a process each college will take in the review of your credentials. The more you know about the way the college makes admission decisions, the less anxious you will be about applying to them!

**The Procedure:** What happens once your application reaches the admission office? Taking into considering the college or university's applicant volume and selectivity level, there is a common review process that may include the following steps:

1. **Once complete, the student's file is assigned to a specific admission officer/counselor.** The assignments may be based on geographic region, section of the alphabet, or who conducted the student interview (if there was one).
2. **The assigned admission counselor reviews the file.** If a decision can be made immediately, the counselor may do so in consultation with the Director or Dean of admissions.

- 3. If a decision is not made immediately, the file will be decided during a committee review process.**  
The assigned admission counselor will act as the representative/spokesperson for the student during the committee meeting.
- a. Some colleges make all decisions by committee review. Others (particularly colleges that receive a large number of applicants) may place more emphasis on objective criteria (GPA, Rank, Test Scores) and use a rating process during evaluation.
- It is suggested that you ask each college how its particular review process works.

## **APPLICATION ITEMS**

**1. Academic Record:** Your academic record in high school is your potential for academic success in college. Your transcript is evaluated to determine:

- **The strength of your course work**
  - Number of Honors and Advanced Placement courses
  - Rigor- challenge yourself- most admission officers prefer to see a “B” grade in an Honors or AP course rather than a “A” in a regular college prep class.
  - Consistency of your course selections (academic vs. non-academic)
  - MATH- students are often limited in their college options because they didn’t take enough math courses during high school.
  - Give yourself a competitive edge with a strong senior year performance in all subjects.
- **Overall performance in courses from grades 9-12**
  - How well did you perform
  - Did you achieve across the curriculum
  - Are you showing preparedness in a specific academic area that you intend to pursue in college?
  - Many colleges will wait to make final decisions based on the challenge of your senior course load and evaluation of your mid-year grades.
- **Your overall grade point average and/or class rank**
  - A cumulative measure from freshman to senior year that provides an indication of your performance relative to your classmates

## **2. Standardized Tests**

- Test scores are not the single most important factor in admission decisions. Scores will be used as one element in the overall assessment of your academic strength and potential

## **3. Honors and Awards**

- List scholarships, academic, or activity-related distinctions and special achievements on this part of the application

## **4. Extracurricular and Personal Activities**

- Quality not quantity
- This area is for admission counselors to find out the way in which you spend your time outside of the classroom and to determine the extent of your involvement in, and commitment to, an activity
  - Positions of leadership held and responsibilities performed
  - Distinctions you received in your activities
  - Degree to which you intend to continue your involvement once in college



- Time could be spent in school activities, out of school activities, hobbies, volunteer work, part-time employment- what you do and how well you do it can have an impact on evaluating your personal side
- Volunteer opportunities/serving your community is considered most impressive

### **5. College Essay**

- Opportunity to express viewpoints, be creative, demonstrate your writing ability, distinguish your application from all the others
- Should provide admission counselors with insight into:
  - How well you think
  - How well you write
  - Who you are in terms of the talents, interests and perspectives that set you apart from your peers
  - If you printed this out without your name on it, and someone who knew you found it, they should be able to know the paper belongs to you just by reading it.

### **6. Recommendations**

- Usually colleges ask for a recommendation from your school counselor and 1-2 teachers
- Recommendations from your principal, coach, employer, supervisor from where you performed an internship or community service, are also appropriate when they add significant information or insights about you
- Provide an understanding of your personal qualities, motivation, ambition, and accomplishments.
- Choose your recommender with care- they should be able to provide information that only they can offer and is not available anywhere else on your application
- Each writer must know you well- it is worth your time to provide recommenders with as much information and updates about you, your activities, and your experiences as possible.

### **7. Personal interview (rare)**

- Notes taken during or after the interview by the admission counselor will be added to your application file.
- See your counselor for interview tips

### **8. Additional information**

- Only submit additional information if you have a particularly impressive interest or talent in a specific area- creative writing samples, photographs, videos or tapes of musical or theatrical talents, artistic talent, recommendations from your coach to the college's coach, video of athletic abilities.
  - Fine arts program usually require a portfolio of work.
  - Likewise admission to dance, drama, theatre or music programs may require an audition
  - Contact the schools early in the process to learn how and when they will receive your portfolio or conduct an audition.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Admission counselors do not look fondly on additional information. Some may interpret it as you not valuing their time. Make sure if you include more than the application requires it is outstanding or do not include it at all.

## WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR/WHAT MATTERS MOST IN THE COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS

### *In order of importance:*

1. **High School Coursework/Strength Of Schedule**- Your **transcript** is a “snapshot” of your academic and intellectual potential. It reflects your overall performance, grade level performance, individual subject performance, and the rigor of your course selections, which are evaluated in the context of what Boonton High School offers and what opportunities were available to you. Admission committees look for a variety of challenging classes, in several academic subjects, in order to get a feel for your passion for learning and your ability to challenge yourself. They also look for meaningful, substantive electives, which reflect your personal interests and/or career goals.
2. **Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA)**- Your individual grades and your overall cumulative GPA are considered in the context of your course selections and the academic rigor of Boonton High School. Weighted GPA’s give extra credit for Honors and Advanced Placement classes. However, it is worth noting that admission committees tend to not take GPA’s at face value- GPA Scales differ across high schools, as do the ways in which high schools count or “weight” their Honors and AP classes. Because of this, it would not be accurate, or fair, for admission counselors to compare the GPA’s directly. Due to this, colleges look to see that you took on academic challenges with difficult course work (See criteria #1 above) and improved/grew over time in addition to receiving grades you are capable of- they will note if a student received straight A’s (GPA of a 4.0) but took no Honors or AP classes. For this reason, it is better to have a slight drop in grades and move up to an Honors or AP class than to remain in College Prep classes and receive all A’s.
3. **Test Scores**- SAT and/or ACT scores are used with coursework and grades as a predictor for academic success at the college level. These standardized test scores allow admission counselors to compare you on a national level with your peers (since they can not do so with your coursework (criteria #1) or your GPA (criteria #2) since all High Schools in the US differ in this regard).
4. **Other parts of the application are important**- depending on the selectivity of the institution, they will place more or less importance on the following:
  - **Special Accomplishments, Honors, and Awards**
  - **Extracurricular Activities**- continuity, depth of involvement, and leadership skills
  - **Essay or Writing Sample**
  - **Letters of Recommendation**
  - **Interview (rarely required)**
  - **Demonstrated Interest:** Campus Visits, College Fairs, College Rep Visits to High School

Colleges want students who demonstrate compassion, perseverance, creativity, maturity, honesty, curiosity, and can articulate their views with reason and passion. These characteristics should come through in your personal essay, your letters of recommendation, and your interview.

## The Language of College Planning

The college planning process has a language of its own. The following list, while not exhaustive, has been included to help you understand the many terms associated with applying to college.

### **Types of Admission Decisions:**

- **Early Decision**- A plan where a student applies to one college in early fall of senior year, usually by October 15, and notification of admission status is sent by mid-December. As part of an early decision plan, students are required to sign a statement agreeing to accept the college's offer of admission and must only apply to one school as Early Decision. If accepted, a commitment to attend and tuition deposit are required. Students must also withdraw applications from other colleges if accepted under early decision.
  - **Note:**
    - If Financial Aid is a concern, this is not the best admission option.
    - There are conflicting opinions regarding early decisions. Although colleges accept a larger percentage of well qualified students during early decision, the competition is generally stiffer.
    - Before applying early decision, ask about college policy. In some institutions, the early decision determination is final. In other institutions, the candidate can get a second review during evaluation of the regular applicant pool.
- **Early Action**-An admissions procedure to notify students of early admission to the college. Students are not obligated to accept the college's offer of admission and may file applications at other universities. **Note:** Early action candidates can be denied or deferred. Similar to Early Decision except that if accepted, the applicant is not committed to attend the institution and other college applications can be made.
- **Regular Admission**- A plan where students make application to a college by a specific deadline date and receive a decision within a reasonable and stated period of time. The student submits credentials typically during November to March, depending on school deadlines. Check the deadlines for each individual school.
- **Rolling Admission** A plan where students submit their application at their convenience through a certain date, usually late in the year. Admission decisions are made on a continuous basis during the admissions cycle and notification is sent within about 4-6 weeks after receipt of completed application material.
- **On-site Admission**- An admissions option in which colleges visit students at the high school or students go attend an on-site admission day event at a college/university. An admissions representative will make an admittance determination during a scheduled appointment with the student.  
**Note:** At BHS this is referred to as Instant Decision Days or IDD.
- **Deferred Admission**- Plan where acceptance to a college or university is granted but student delays enrollment for a semester or year due to special circumstances.
- **Deferral**- The college/university determines that more information is needed to make a final decision about a candidate's application. Often the decision is delayed until first semester senior year grades and/or new test scores are received.
- **Wait Listed**- A response to an applicant indicating that his/her application is acceptable, but the limit of accepted students has already been reached: waitlisted students may be admitted after May 1, if space becomes available. It is critical for a student to express their interest directly to the institution at this time. There is no guarantee that the student will be admitted.

- **Conditional Acceptance-** Admission offered on the condition that the student successfully complete specified requirements such as attending summer school, taking remedial course, or maintaining a certain GPA during the first semester of study.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### College Degrees:

- **Associate Degree-** Degree awarded after the successful completion of a 2-year program, usually at a junior or community college.
- **Bachelors Degree-** Degree awarded after the successful completion of a 4-year program of study at a college or university
- **Masters Degree-** Degree awarded at the completion of the first postgraduate program.
- **Doctoral Degree-** Degree awarded after intensive study in a particular field such as Philosophy (Ph.D), Medicine (M.D.), Education (ED. D), or Law (J.D.).

### College Terminology

- **Common Application-** An admission application-online and in print that student may complete once and submit to any of 650+ member colleges. It can be accessed at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
- **Matriculation-** Enrollment at a college or university into a degree program
- **Credit Hour-** Standard unit of measurement for a college course. Each credit hour requires one classroom hour per week. Most college courses are offered in one-to-five credit hour increment.
- **Full-time Status-** Enrollment at a college or university for 12 or more credit hours per week
- **Part-time Status-** Enrolment at a college or university for 11 or less credit hours per semester
- **Core Curriculum-** Specific liberal arts courses that an institution requires of all students to earn a degree
- **Prerequisite-** Preliminary course required before a student can take an advanced course in a particular subject area
- **Syllabus-** A course outline that lists all the assignments, exam and lecture topics for that course usually distributed at the first class meeting.
- **Three/Two Program-** A program of liberal arts study for three years followed by two years of study in a professional field at another institution or in a professional division of the same institution resulting in two bachelor's degrees or a bachelor's and a master's degree.

### Admission Dates:

- **College Notification Date-** the date by which colleges using regular decision notify applicants: usually by April 15

- **Candidate Reply Date.** The date by which applicants must reply to college offers of admission and submit a tuition deposit to secure a place in the freshman class: usually by May 1. This deadline does not apply to Early Decision candidates.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

**Located on Naviance:** Under the “College” link > “Scholarships and Money”

The screenshot shows the Naviance Student interface. The main heading is "Scholarships and Financial Aid". Below the heading, there is a brief instruction: "The list below contains scholarships or financial aid awards that may be relevant for you. Click the name of a scholarship to view more information. You may also click 'Add to My Applications'." Below this, it says "3 Scholarships". There are filters for "All" and a dropdown arrow. A table lists the following scholarships:

Name	Deadline	Maximum Award	Merit based	Need based
10 Words or Less Scholarship	1/31	500		✓
2019 AXA Achievement Scholarship	12/14	\$25,000		✓
Horatio Alger Scholarship Program	10/25	\$25,000		✓

A dropdown menu is open over the "Colleges" link in the top navigation bar. The menu options are: COLLEGES Home, COLLEGES I'm thinking about, COLLEGES I'm applying to, Find Your Fit, Research Colleges, Apply to College, and Scholarships and Money.

Students are also encouraged to research scholarships using the websites listed on the last page of this packet.

- For other opportunities-, check out [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com), [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com), and [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search)

The scholarship process is free: it requires your time, but NOT your money.

- You should NEVER have to pay for any type of service to receive a scholarship.

**APPLY, APPLY, APPLY!**

## SPORTS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### The Reality of Athletic Scholarships

Consider these facts:

- Only 3% of high school football players receive a scholarship to play in college.
- If you receive a questionnaire from a major college expressing interest in you as a football player, the odds are still as high as 320:1 that you may never receive a scholarship.
- NFL Players Association asserts that players with college degrees last 50% longer in the NFL and receive salaries that are 20% higher than do non-college graduates.

### What do these facts tell you?

Academics are the answer! You may be an amazing athlete, but don't neglect your brain. You should be fierce on the court *and* in the classroom.

## COLLEGE ATHLETICS



### • NCAA REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

- Students interested in playing sports in college at the Division I or Division II level must qualify academically. In order to do so there are certain requirements that should be reviewed by your school counselor or the designated NCAA coordinator (Mr. Jamie Nash). Additionally there are certain procedures that must be followed. Failure to do so could result in a student athlete being ineligible to receive a scholarship and/or play at the Division I or II level. Go to [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) for more information regarding eligibility.
- If you intend to participate in Division I or II athletics at an NCAA School, you must **register and be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center**. Please note that eligibility certification pertains only to whether you meet the NCAA academic requirements for participation as freshman in D-I or D-II athletics- it has no bearing on your admission to a particular college.
- View the NCAA GUIDE FOR THE COLLEGE BOUND ATHLETE at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) to review academic eligibility criteria. It is best to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at the **beginning of your junior year**. Registration forms can be completed at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org).
- At the end of your junior year, request for your counselor to send your official high school transcript. SAT or ACT scores should be sent directly from the testing agency. A final transcript should be sent upon graduation. The Eligibility Center can then process and send your status to any Division I or II college that requests it.
- Additional Important Resources:
  - NAIA: National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (different eligibility requirements than NCAA)- [www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org)
  - NJCAA: National Junior College Athletics Association- [www.njcass.org](http://www.njcass.org)

## **THE COMMON APPLICATION**

Explore [commonapp.org](https://commonapp.org). This site was [designed](#) with specific resources for students, counselors, and [you](#). There are tools for [planning ahead](#) and [paying](#) for college. [The Virtual Counselor](#) will provide you and your child with tips on everything from requesting letters of recommendation and starting the personal essay to searching for colleges to find the best fit.

### **2020-2021 COMMON APPLICATION ESSAY PROMPTS**

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

### **2020-2021 COALITION ESSAY PROMPTS**

1. Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
2. Describe a time when you made a meaningful contribution to others in which the greater good was your focus. Discuss the challenges and rewards of making your contribution.
3. Has there been a time when you've had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged? How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your beliefs?
4. What is the hardest part of being a student now? What's the best part? What advice would you give a younger sibling or friend (assuming they would listen to you)?

5. Submit an essay on a topic of your choice

### **FOR JUNIORS- ACCOUNT ROLLOVER:**

You may create your Common App Account as a Junior. During Senior year, you may notice when you log back in that some answers to questions in the Profile, Family, Education, Activities, Testing, and Writing sections have not rolled over. Remember that some questions change from year to year, so your answers to those questions will not roll over. Don't worry- you're already way ahead of the game! Keep it going...



- Username and password
- My Colleges list
- Answers to questions on the 'Common App' tab



- Changed questions
- College-specific questions
- Recommender activity
- Submission information
- PDFs



## FINANCIAL AID-Parents

### **FAFSA Basics- Free Application for Federal Student Aid**

- The FAFSA is the form students and families complete annually to apply for federal financial aid (i.e. Pell Grant, federal loans, work-study).
- Applicants submit information about their income, assets, and household makeup, which is used to calculate federal financial aid eligibility.

### **Why File FAFSA?**

- The FAFSA is required for accessing all types of federal financial aid:
  - Pell Grants and other grants, which do not need to be repaid
  - Loans, which do need to be repaid
  - Work-study, which must be earned
- It is also used by many colleges, states, and scholarship programs to assess eligibility for their financial aid programs.

### **Changes to the FAFSA**

- Class of 2022 Students will be able to file FAFSA beginning Oct. 1, 2021
- Applicants will use prior-prior year tax information when reporting personal and family income (previously, prior year tax information was used).

### **For Class of 2021:**

To make sure you are considered for federal student aid:

- Complete the FAFSA using 2020 tax information.
- During the 2021-2022 school year, file your FAFSA as soon as possible. The form will be available October 1, 2021. Some financial aid funds (such as work-study) are limited and awarded on a first-come basis. Applying early puts you in the best position to be considered for all available sources of funding.

### **Fall 2020 To Do List:**

- [Create your own FSA ID](#) if you don't have one yet. (The FSA ID is a username and password that you'll use for such purposes as signing your child's *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*.) **Note: You must create your own FSA ID. If your child creates it for you, or if you create your child's, that'll cause confusion later and will slow down the financial aid application process.** (Need help? You and your child should watch the ["How to Create an FSA ID" video](#))
- Take a look at your financial situation, and be sure you're on the right track to pay for college.
- Talk to your child about the schools he or she is considering. Ask why those schools appeal to your child, and help him or her clarify goals and priorities.
- Attend college fairs with your child, but don't take over the conversation with the college representatives. Just listen, and let your child do the talking.
- Take your child to visit college campuses, preferably when classes are in session.
- Make sure your child is looking into or already has applied for scholarships.
- Ask your employer whether scholarships are available for employees' children.

## Reminder for Summer Responsibilities

- ✓ **Complete the student Brag Sheet for letters of recommendation available on the school counselor BHS website. Note: You must first ask the recommender in person and then submit a formal request via Naviance**
- ✓ **Continue visiting colleges**
- ✓ **Refine your “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list in Naviance, complete the “Group My Colleges” worksheet**
- ✓ **Be aware of Early Action/Early Decision deadlines**
- ✓ **Student athletes** aspiring to play Division I or Division II athletics in college must register with the NCAA at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)
- ✓ **Personal Essay/Statement**

Most applications require a brief personal statement, a statement of interest, and/or a traditional essay. This is an opportunity to express yourself, your viewpoints, to be creative, to demonstrate your writing ability, and to distinguish your application from the many others that the Admissions Officer will read. The essay can provide the Admissions Officer with insight into at least three of your personal qualities: (a) how well you think; (b) how well you write and (c) who you are- *What* sets you apart? You have a unique background, interests, and personality. This is your chance to tell your story! It is an important part of your application packet. An outstanding essay can have a very positive influence on the decision. Likewise, a poorly-written, hastily done, or sloppy essay can have a negative influence. It is worth your time to produce your best work.

### **Words to Live By:**

- **Be honest and genuine.** The best way to tell your story is to write a personal, thoughtful essay about something that has meaning to you. Your unique qualities will shine through.
- **Express your personality.** Admissions officers have to read an unbelievable number of essays, most of which are ordinary and forgettable. Many students try to sound smart rather than sounding like themselves. Others write about a subject that they don’t care about, but that they think will impress admissions officers. The most engaging and compelling essays tell a story and have a clear focus with carefully chosen detail.
- **Write about something that's important to you.** It could be an experience, a person, a book, extra-curricular activity, volunteer work, academic status, or even a hardship—anything that has had an impact on your life.
- **Don’t just recount—reflect!** Anyone can write about how they won the big game or the time they spent in Rome. When recalling these events, you need to give more than the play-by-play or itinerary. Describe what you learned from the experience and how it changed you.
- **Being funny is tough.** A student who can make an admissions officer laugh never gets lost in the shuffle. But beware. What you think is funny and what an adult working in a college thinks is funny are probably different. We caution against one-liners, limericks and anything off-color.
- **Start early and write several drafts.** Set it aside for a few days and read it again. Put yourself in the shoes of an admissions officer: Is the essay interesting? Do the ideas flow logically? Does it reveal something about the applicant? Is it written in the applicants’ own voice? Have someone edit your essay—a teacher or college counselor is best! And before you send it off, check, check again, and then triple check!

## HELPFUL WEBSITES

### **COLLEGE BOARD ONLINE**

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

Permits you to use the college search software online (bigfuture), search for scholarships, and register for SAT testing/send scores.

### **ACT**

[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

Register for ACT testing/send scores.

### **COMMON APPLICATION**

<https://www.commonapp.org>

The Common Admission Application for more than 650 colleges.

### **College Scorecard**

[www.whitehouse.gov/scorecard](http://www.whitehouse.gov/scorecard)

Website offered by the White House to estimate real college costs

### **COLLEGE VIEW**

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

College searches, scholarships, database and multimedia tours.

### **FASTWEB**

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

Searchable database of scholarships.

### **FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Provides the ability to file the FAFSA form electronically.

### **NEW JERSEY HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY**

[www.hesaa.org](http://www.hesaa.org)

Information on funding/financial aid and links to other informative websites.

### **PETERSON'S EDUCATION CENTER**

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

Searchable college database.

### **FINAID!**

<http://www.finaid.org/>

Scholarship and financial aid information

### **THE PRINCETON REVIEW**

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

Provides a search and rating of two year, four year, and vocational schools

### **COLLEGE CONFIDENTIAL**

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

Articles and information related to the college application process, standardized tests, and financial aid