

Information for Post-Secondary Planning



Hingham High School
School Counseling Department

Hingham High School
School Counseling Department
17 Union Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Jessica Gawel, School Counselor
jgawel@hinghamschools.org

Bianca George, School Counselor
bgeorge@hinghamschools.org

Cathleen Savery, Post-Secondary Planning Coordinator
csavery@hinghamschools.org

Erin Krall, School Counselor
ekrall@hinghamschools.org

Kelly McPeck, School Counselor
kmcpeck@hinghamschools.org

Cheryl Rapoza, School Counselor
rapozac@hinghamschools.org

Heather Rodriguez, Director of School Counseling
hrodriguez@hinghamschools.org

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The Post-Secondary Planning Office

The purpose of Hingham High School's Post-Secondary Planning Office is to provide students a place to search for colleges, complete applications and to explore future career options. Please make an appointment with your counselor in order to become familiar with the services available. The Post-Secondary Planning Office includes:

Naviance—internet based college search program
Online college applications
Military careers information
A job-listing board a
College and career DVD library
Reference materials

Careers in the Military: Representatives from the Armed Forces visit the high school regularly. Brochures, videos, pamphlets, and additional information regarding the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, R.O.T.C. and National Guard may be found in the Career Center.

Job Board: Employers in the community post local job opportunities for students. Weekend, summer, and afterschool opportunities are updated on a weekly basis. Examples of current and previous opportunities include babysitting, clerical work, retail work, and yard work.

Please contact our Post-Secondary Planning Coordinator, Cathleen Savery, by email at csavery@hinghamschools.org or by phone at 781-741-1560 x1125 with any additional questions.

Advising through high school

9th Grade

When a student becomes a freshman, everything starts to “count.” Freshman grades are used in determining GPA. Freshman activities, honors, and awards can be listed on college and scholarship applications. Freshman courses, grades, credits, and attendance become part of each student’s transcripts.

1. Attend Freshman Parent Night hosted by Hingham High School guidance counselors. Freshman Parent Night is held in late September or early October and reviews important material pertinent to freshmen.
2. If your son or daughter is having any problems adjusting to high school, if classes are too easy or too difficult, or if any other problems arise, contact your child’s assigned school counselor immediately.
3. Monitor academic progress. Make sure that you see all mid-term progress reports and report cards. Provide encouragement and support, making certain that your son or daughter understands that freshman grades are vitally important. Stay in touch with teachers and school counselors
4. Encourage your son or daughter to become involved in a wide variety of activities. In addition to asking students to list their high school activities, many college and scholarship applications ask for evidence of leadership. Encourage your son or daughter to participate in activities outside of school. (i.e. church, scouting, recreational sports). Meaningful community service is always impressive on an application. Involvement in co-curricular activities will enhance your son or daughter’s personal growth.
5. In the spring, review your son or daughter’s four-year plan, making certain that he or she has selected the most appropriate courses for sophomore year.
6. Help your child choose meaningful activities for the summer months. Many excellent summer programs are available on college campuses. There are also a wide variety of more traditional summer activities. For example, your son or daughter could join an athletic team, take a course, mow lawns, baby-sit, perfect a skill, take lessons, develop a hobby, read, and/or volunteer at a local hospital or nursing home.

10th Grade

The sophomore year should be a year of personal growth. In addition to working hard in school and being involved in activities, students need to identify personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests. They also need to look for ways to further develop their talents and skills.

1. Continue to monitor academic progress.
2. Continue to encourage your son or daughter to be involved in a variety of activities and to develop leadership skills. Again, the sophomore year should be a year of personal growth.
3. Have your son or daughter sign up for the PSAT administered by Hingham High School. For more information on the PSAT, see Standardized Testing in the handbook or visit the school counseling website at hinghamhighschoolcounseling.weebly.com.
4. Attend Navigating High School, an evening for sophomores and their parents, typically held in November and hosted by the School Counseling department.

5. Start to explore and discuss post-high school options. If college is in your son or daughter's future, begin to gather information, make informal visits to colleges, and attend college fairs. Discuss your son or daughter's aptitudes, interests, and abilities, and begin to view these in terms of college majors and career options.
6. In the spring, review your son or daughter's four-year plan, making certain he or she has selected the most appropriate courses for junior year.
7. Help your son or daughter choose meaningful activities for the summer months.
8. At the end of the year, update the "Activities and Awards" file

11th Grade

The junior year is the time when a student seriously begins to consider his or her post-secondary options. If college is an option, this is the year to take the PSAT and SAT's or ACT's, make college visits, and to start scholarship searches.

1. Continue to monitor academic progress.
2. Continue to encourage your son or daughter to be involved in a wide variety of activities and to develop leadership skills.
3. Make certain that your son or daughter registers for the PSAT. Registration will take place by the beginning of October; the test is administered in mid-October. For specific details regarding the PSAT, see the Standardized Testing section of the handbook or the school counseling website at hinghamhighschoolcounseling.weebly.com.
4. Attend College Kickoff typically held in January of the junior year. Hosted by the Counseling Department, this evening will provide a great deal of information regarding the college search, alternatives to college, and financial aid.
5. Talk about college options. The junior year is a time to gather and sort through information. Consider what is important to you and your son or daughter: location, size, cost, facilities, available majors, reputation, competitiveness, etc.
6. Early in the college selection process, you should have frank discussions with your son or daughter regarding the amount of money you are able and/or willing to contribute to his or her education.
7. In the spring meet with your son or daughter's school counselor to discuss post-secondary options. The school counselor is a most valuable resource who knows your son or daughter well and will have meaningful suggestions that are most appropriate for your son or daughter.
8. In March or April, make certain your son or daughter has registered for the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT. For detailed information on the SATs, including registering students with disabilities, see the Standardized Testing portion of the handbook or visit the counseling website at hinghamhighschoolcounseling.weebly.com.

9. Make college visits in the spring. If you cannot arrange visits in the spring, be sure to visit colleges in the summer. Plan to revisit those colleges you are seriously considering. It is important to get a feeling for what the college is like when it is in “full swing.”

12th Grade

1. Carefully select courses for the senior year. Be certain that senior courses meet all requirements for graduation as well as for the colleges he or she may attend. Encourage your son or daughter to continue taking the most challenging courses, even though he or she may express an interest in “taking it easy” during senior year.

2. Continue to monitor your son or daughter’s academic progress. Seniors sometimes feel that their senior grades are not important. They need to know that Hingham High School sends a transcript after the first term, second term, and fourth term to each college to which your son or daughter has applied. Colleges consider this entire year a very important indicator of future success and may revoke an offer of admission if there is a significant decline in performance.

3. If necessary, have your son or daughter retake the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT. Speak to your son or daughter’s school counselor if you have a question about whether or not your son or daughter should retake a test or take any SAT Subject Tests.

4. Attend The Application Process, Keeping it all in Perspective, an evening for seniors and their parents held in mid-to late September. School counselors will review graduation requirements, the college search process, the college application process, standardized testing, etc.

5. Obtain and complete applications in the fall. For a detailed description of what to do once the application is complete, speak to your son or daughter’s school counselor. He or she can provide you with a full, written step-by-step process.

6. In early December, attend Financial Aid Night hosted by the School Counseling Department. Representatives from well-respected colleges will lead parents through the financial aid application process. Hingham’s local scholarship application will be posted on the website hinghamhighschoolcounseling.weebly.com and available by mid-January.

7. If applying for financial aid, be certain to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after January 1st as possible. All colleges and universities have, in addition to college application deadlines, financial aid application deadlines; be aware of these deadline dates! In addition to the FAFSA, some colleges require an additional financial aid application called the CSS/PROFILE. Check with your son or daughter’s counselor to see whether or not the schools to which you are applying require both the FAFSA and the CSS/PROFILE.

8. Upon submitting all application materials as well as financial aid information, you and your son or daughter must now patiently wait. During this time, or upon receiving notification from each college, don’t hesitate to speak with your son or daughter’s school counselor with issues that arise.

9. Inform your son or daughter’s school counselor of the decisions you have made regarding college choice and financial aid.

10. ENJOY GRADUATION!

Hingham High School--School Counseling Department College Search Checklist

- You will be using many websites, keep a list of usernames and passwords

- Visit Naviance often
 - connection.naviance.com/hingham
 - Complete a college search

- Complete the following forms and return them to your counselor by June 1st
 - Student Questionnaire
 - Parent Information Form
 - Activity Sheet
 - 2 Informal Teacher Sheets (Student Descriptive Summary)

- Ask teachers for formal recommendation
 - These will be sent to each of your colleges. Follow the instructions for each school to which you are applying. Some may specify which teachers they want to write for you. Most want two teachers usually from the junior year. Teachers will need:
 - A list of schools with each deadline
 - If the teacher does not submit recommendations electronically or if your school does not accept electronic submission-- stamped addressed envelopes to each college

- Register for the SAT, SAT Subject Tests (if required by your school), or the ACT
 - Collegeboard.org; Actstudent.org
 - May and/or June

- Request that your SAT or ACT scores be sent by the testing company
 - **SAT or ACT scores are not part of your official transcript and will not be sent by Hingham High School**
 - You may want to do this senior year if you will be taking more than one SAT or ACT—you get to send scores to 4 schools for free each time you register for a test with the College Board

- Familiarize yourself with ways to apply
 - Most schools take the Common Application. You may create an account at commonapp.org beginning in August. Most schools not on the Common App. have their own online applications or you may request information and an application through each school's website.

- Visit colleges
 - Call admissions offices to set up information sessions and tours
 - You may request an interview if offered

- Schedule an individual meeting with your school counselor in person or by email

Factors to Consider When Choosing a College

Students should review the coursework, extracurricular activities, or community service that they have found most interesting throughout their high school years. Academic records, standardized testing, special awards, and feedback from teachers, coaches, club advisors, and other adults can help students assess activities. Students are encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor to explore all these factors.

The following factors are some which student may want to consider before beginning their college search:

Type of institution--two or four year, coed or female

Geographic location --region, state, distance from home

Majors offered/curriculum--liberal arts, technical, business

Setting--urban, rural, suburban

Size of institution--small, medium, large, very large

Selectivity --very difficult, difficult, moderately difficult, open enrollment

Cost--tuition, room and board, books, fees, transportation, financial aid

Diversity --race, religion, national, international, age

Extracurricular activities--sports, entertainment, culture, religious, educational, internships, coop programs, community service

Housing--on or off campus, coed, single sex, special interest, size of room, food, meal plans, rules, roommates

Facilities --buildings, architecture, libraries, student unions, classrooms, lecture halls, labs, recreational/athletic offerings, stores, laundry, handicapped access

Specialized Programs--programs and services for students who are learning disabled, physically challenged, or who have English as a second language

About Naviance

The Hingham High School Counseling Department is using a fantastic web-based college and career counseling program by Naviance. The program enables students and families web-based access to do college and career searches and to see college-admissions data from Hingham High School as well as national statistics.

Naviance has extensive data on each school and can provide a wealth of information to the student in the college search and application process. The College Search module allows students to enter criteria for their desired types of schools and to generate a list of schools which meet these criteria. A student can then follow links to general information about a college as well as to an individual college's web page for deeper investigation. Students can then compare their personal profiles to national as well as Hingham High School data and compile a list of prospective schools.

Together students and their counselors can share lists of prospective colleges. The data available, along with a student's personal interests, will help counselors, students, and their parents investigate the sometimes overwhelming number of post-secondary options available.

Through junior seminars and ongoing individual meetings, counselors continue to introduce our students to the Naviance software. By entering the site with your username and password, you and your student will be able to access his or her personal data page including GPA, all standardized test scores, the college search function and much more.

connection.naviance.com/hingham or [Link to Naviance](#)

Reach, Target, and Safety Schools

By the beginning of senior year, your son or daughter should have interviewed and/or visited several colleges. From these visits they should have further refined their criteria as to what type of college is most closely suited to their academic, extracurricular, and social needs. With this information in mind, each student needs to develop a final list by the beginning of October. This final list should have about seven colleges that range in selectivity from “reach” to “safety”. Your son's or daughter's school counselor is the best source of advice about which colleges fall into which selectivity categories.

Reach:

Generally, your son or daughter should not apply to more than two reach colleges for two reasons; 1) The applications to the more selective institutions are usually time consuming and 2) more applications to reach colleges do not as a rule generate more acceptances. With too many reaches, your son or daughter could be setting himself or herself up for unnecessary disappointment in the spring of senior year.

Mid Range/Target:

Your son or daughter should have approximately three mid-range colleges, since these are perhaps the most appropriate matches for him or her. Although the chance for admissions to these colleges is good, there is no guarantee. The number of applications received by colleges each year changes, making selectivity challenging to predict.

Safety:

Your son or daughter also needs to include two appropriate colleges to which the chances for admissions are quite safe. In general, a balanced list will guarantee choices, and students will be proud of the fact that they have been chosen. As your son or daughter awaits responses from colleges, he or she will be able to go into the winter and spring knowing that there are secure options. Thus, they will not have to worry unduly about the acceptance process. As a rule, Hingham High School students submit applications to a broad range of colleges; the challenge is to make sure that every college on your final list is a good match for your son or daughter regardless of its selectivity.

Admissions Options

Because there are many admissions options, it is important for you to understand the various plans and deadlines and to discuss with your child's school counselor which one is appropriate for your son or daughter. Some of the more common options are briefly reviewed:

Regular Admissions: Many colleges establish an application deadline by which all applications must be received or postmarked, such as January 1, January 15, or February 1, etc. All students are then notified of the colleges' decisions at a uniform response date, typically on or before April 1.

Early Action:

This is a plan for the strongest students to apply early and receive an admissions decision, usually by December 15. Applications are usually due in November. A decision will be made, but the student does not have to commit to the college until the May 1 common reply date, at which time he or she may elect to go to any college applied to regardless of when. This option is particularly competitive, and generally the most selective colleges offer this type of plan. Some colleges will reject students whom they foresee as being weak in the later, regular admission pool; other students are deferred in the early round and may be considered later in the context of the entire regular admission.

Restrictive Early Action

Same as early action, but college adds restrictions regarding how many additional institutions a student may also apply to early.

Early Decision

This is a plan for a student who has a first choice college and is a reasonable candidate for that institution. Many colleges have more than one early decision deadline. If admitted, the student is expected to attend that college and withdraw other regular decision or early action applications that have been filed. The student is required to sign a statement of this intent. A student should only pursue this option if he or she is absolutely certain about his or her choice; it should not be used as a means to simply complete the process early. Obviously, a student cannot file more than one early decision application. Again, deferred students will be reconsidered in the later rounds.

Rolling Admission:

This is the practice of processing applications as soon as the candidate's files are complete and notifying the applicant as soon as the decision is made. It is to a student's advantage to submit applications early to colleges with rolling admission. Ordinarily it takes at least two weeks to process a completed file and notify the applicant. However, colleges will sometimes wait longer to evaluate more of the applicant pool if a candidate is marginal. Sometimes financial aid may be used up before a rolling admissions cycle is complete.

Deferred or Delayed Enrollment: Most colleges allow an accepted candidate to postpone enrollment in a college, generally for one semester or one year. The accepted student must send a letter to the college of his/her choice requesting deferred enrollment and must send in a deposit by May 1, to hold his/her place.

Candidate's Reply Date May 1 is the common date by which accepted applicants must indicate their intention to enroll at the college they choose to attend. By use of a common reply date, students may evaluate all notices of admission and financial aid awards before deciding on any one college, allowing students to make informed decision.

Checklist for your Applications (Who Does What?)

Student Responsibilities

- By the end of Junior Year, provide your counselor with all the materials she will need to write your recommendation:
 - Student Questionnaire (your responsibility)
 - Activity Sheet (filled out by you)
 - Parent Information Form (completed by one or both parent)
 - Descriptive Summary Sheets (ask 2 teachers)
- Create a Common Application account. The new Common Application form is usually available in early August.
- Sign FERPA agreement and complete the list of “Colleges I’m Applying to” in Naviance.
- Ask Teachers for recommendations and ensure they are aware of all application deadlines. (Note: Some teachers send via Naviance while others send via mail. Check with each teacher to understand what their requirements are. If they send by mail they will ask you for stamped/addressed envelopes.)
- Give Record Release Forms to your Counselor at least 10 school days before application deadline (one form for each of the schools you plan to apply to).
- Complete the Common App (and any other applications) including Essay and Supplements (if required; you must check for each school).
- Request that Test Scores be sent (from The College Board for SATs or from ACTstudent.org) and pay fees. Note if schools require SAT IIs/Subject tests).
- Pay the application fee
- Check that each school to which you have applied has received all of the information you and your counselor have sent before the application deadline. Many schools, once you have applied, will assign you an account so that you can track the status of the application materials.
- Complete local Scholarship form and give to your counselor (form available in early January; deadline for submission is early March).

Counselor Responsibilities

The following items are sent to each of the Colleges you’ve chosen to apply to by your Counselor.

- Secondary School Report
- School Profile
- Counselor Recommendation
- Your transcript through the end of Junior Year
- 1st Quarter grades (unless you request that they not be sent)
- Mid-Year grades
- Final grades (sent only to the school at which you plan to matriculate)

Parent Responsibilities

- At the end of Junior Year, complete the Parent Information Sheet (give to your student and/or their counselor so that counselor may use the information in their recommendation).
- For Financial Aid, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and the CSS Profile, in required (only some schools require this form). Check deadlines for submission.

About the Common Application

The Common Application is the application for admission used by most colleges and universities to evaluate potential candidates. More than 400 institutions are members. The application gives you the opportunity to describe yourself, your academic achievements and your extracurricular activities.

Guidelines

The new form is available online in early August. You can create a login ID and password before this and look at last year's form to see what information is required. You will be assigned a Common App ID Number.

Some changes in the form may occur from year to year. Here is the current structure:

- Profile Basic data including name, address, phone numbers, demographics, etc.
- Family Parent employment and education and sibling information.
- Education Secondary school(s) attended, Counselor name and contact information, list of any college courses taken, Senior Year Courses, Honors
- Testing Self -reported GPA & Test Scores (optional)
- Activities List with with associated information such as year of participation, time spent, positions, honors, etc.

Finally, there are currently 2 opportunities to write something about yourself:

1) Personal Essay (250-650 words) Currently there are 5 topics. As of August 2013, "Topic of your Choice" has been eliminated.

2) Additional Information Use this if you have special circumstances or additional qualifications that have not been addressed elsewhere.

Within your account you create "**My Colleges**," the list of colleges you plan to apply to. Each school then has its own "record" with the following items and status updates for each item :

- Questions
- Assign Recommenders
- Submission – Common App
- Writing Supplement
- Submission – Writing Supplement

Special Note about Supplements

Once you have selected colleges to which you are applying, the Common App will prompt you to let you know if there is a school supplement. **You should determine early in the application process whether you have to answer additional essay questions. Many schools have multiple additional questions and you'll need to invest time and effort to complete them.**

Special Note about Test Scores

You must go to the College Board website to request sending your test scores to each of the colleges to which you are applying. Note that the College Board says to allow up to **10 business days** for your scores to arrive at the schools so build this into your timing.
commonapp.org or [Link to the Common App](#)

College Essays & Supplements

In early August, before Senior Year, logon to the Common App website and review the main essay question options. Start thinking about the one or two that you feel you can best address. You may even want to begin drafting an essay.

Early in your first semester English class, you will be assigned to write your college application essay. Your English teacher will be a valuable resource. You may also want to ask your counselor, another trusted teacher, or a parent or family member for their counsel.

Note that many colleges also ask students to write supplements (shorter essays or statements). Start exploring the application supplements (also typically available via the Common App) to learn more about what types of questions you will need to answer.

See links below for some tips:

[Tips for Writing Your College Essay](#)

[NACAC Helpful Tips for College Essays](#)
[Connecticut College Essays that Worked](#)

Teacher Recommendations

Most schools require at least 1 teacher recommendation. Some schools may require 2 or more. Review each school's requirements on The Common App website or at the school website (if the school is not a member of The Common App organization). The Common App has a standard format they ask teachers to use.

Seniors should ask teachers late in their Junior year and follow up early in their Senior year. Consider teachers who you think will write a favorable recommendation and ask them in person if they are willing to recommend you.

Students must ensure that the teachers are aware of the earliest application deadline so that the recommendation can be completed on time.

Some teachers will fill out the form and send it directly via Naviance. Other teachers may ask you for envelopes (stamped and addressed) to send the forms to the schools you are applying to. Ask your teacher how they plan to submit the information.

Once teachers have completed your recommendations, thank them in person and in writing.

Counselor Recommendations

Most colleges will require a school counselor letter of recommendation. Letters of recommendation provide the opportunity to convey a student's character and any personal qualities that test scores and grades alone don't reveal.

Please complete the following forms and return them to your counselor by June 1st:

- [Student Questionnaire](#)
- [Parent Information Sheet](#)
- [Activity Sheet](#)
- [Student Descriptive Summary \(Teacher Questionnaire\)](#) (Two required)

For a more detailed description of these forms, please visit the Downloadable Department Forms section of the handbook or the resources tab on the counseling website hinghamhighschoolcounseling.weebly.com.

The Student Transcript

A transcript is a portion of the student's cumulative record. A transcript from Hingham High School contains the following information:

1. Courses, final grades, and credits for each grade level completed, beginning with grade 9
2. Cumulative GPA marked at the 6th, 7th and final semesters
3. Graduation date

All college applications and many scholarship applications request that a transcript accompany the application. A student's transcript provides the college admissions and scholarship committees with important objective data. Most colleges and scholarship committees request an official transcript, which means that the transcript includes the school counselor's signature as well as Hingham's school seal. An unofficial transcript is exactly the same as an official transcript, except there is no official signature or seal. A student or parent can request an unofficial transcript for personal use, such as a college visit, by calling or stopping by the high school counseling office.

Students must complete and hand in a "Records Release Form" for every school they intend to apply to the **School Counseling Office at least 10 school days prior to the school's application deadline.**
[Records Release Form](#)

The School Profile

In addition to the transcript, Hingham High School has a school profile. This document includes pertinent information on the community and the school such as the size of the school, the percentage of students who go on to college, the average SAT scores of the previous graduating class, and information on how GPA is calculated. While the transcript provides colleges and/or scholarship committees with information about the student, the school profile provides information about Hingham High School.

2014-2015 HHS School Profile

Building an Activities Resume

Many colleges, employers, and other institutions like to know about a student's activities. This helps the college or employer paint a more comprehensive picture of the student. The first step in creating an activity resume is listing the things you have done and this can include in and out of school activities, paid or volunteer work, short-term or long term duration. See the list below to help categorize your list.

Academic Honors:

- Departmental Awards
- National Honor Society
- Global Citizenship Certificate
- Other--title, grade received, description

Athletics:

- Sport - Grade in school, position, leadership (if any)
- Honors and Awards - title, grade, description

Co-Curricular Activities

- (List in order of significance, either in terms of time commitment or achievement)
- Position, grade, activity, time (hours/week), special honors or awards

Co-Curricular Activities Outside of School

- Volunteer or community service (activity, grade in school, number of hours, brief description)

Work Experience

- Job title (list most recent first), duration, position, responsibilities, grade in school, year

Summer Experiences

- (Non-work, Outward Bound, summer camps, enrichment courses) experience description, duration, grade in school, year

Travel

- Location, duration, brief description, grade in school

Interests and Hobbies

- Skills acquired, duration, level of involvement, grade in school

Standardized Testing

221000 is Hingham High School's CEEB Code. This number will be needed for all test registration forms and for college applications. If you give this number on forms, your scores will be sent to Hingham High School. Scores are helpful in predicting admission to colleges

Testing Requirements

It is important to know the testing requirements at the colleges to which you apply. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of registration deadlines and in the senior year to have test scores sent directly to colleges from the testing service. This can be done when registering by phone, online, or by filling out a card available in the School Counseling Office. Students may register for the SATs online line at www.collegeboard.com or the ACT at actstudent.org. Students with disabilities in need of extended time will need their SSD code number in order to register online for the SAT. Remember: The SAT Program does not even begin to measure motivation, creativity, artistic skills, kindness, decency, sense of humor, and other human qualities that colleges take into account when admitting students.

Standardized Testing Timeline

General Testing Sequence for Hingham High School Students

PSAT / NMSQT (October of Sophomore and Junior Years)

The PSAT/NMSQT is a national test, which is administered by all high schools in October. The PSAT is divided into three sections--verbal, math, and writing--and takes two to three hours to complete. College bound sophomores and juniors should take the PSAT for a number of reasons:

- 1) It is good practice for it gives the SAT and students an indicator of how they will score on the SAT.
- 2) Students can see how they compare to other college bound juniors.
- 3) Students can determine if there is an area in which they need additional study.
- 4) Students in their junior year whose scores are exceptionally high are recognized by the National Merit Foundation. Students will receive information about this test in the fall. When registering for the PSAT, students are given a Student Bulletin, which contains test-taking tips and a practice test. The results of the test are available in mid-to-late December. When students receive their scores, they also have their original test booklet returned to them. In addition to the actual scores, each student receives a score report, which provides a detailed picture of one's performance on the test, question by question. School counselors and teachers will help you interpret this data.

MCAS (Spring of 10th Grade ELA and Math and upon completion of Biology)

The law requires that students earn a Competency Determination as a condition for high school graduation.

The Competency Determination will be awarded to students who pass the grade ten MCAS English language arts, mathematics, and science tests. If your child needs additional chances to pass any section, he or she will be able to take the tests up to four more times before the end of twelfth grade, and will have additional opportunities after high school as well. Students who perform very well on the MCAS and in other academic areas may receive a Certificate of Mastery or may even qualify for a scholarship from the Commonwealth granting free tuition at Massachusetts' state colleges.

SAT Reasoning Test May or (June of Junior Year)

The SAT Reasoning Test is comprised of three sections: Critical Reading, Math, and Writing. Scores range from 200 to 800 for each section. The highest possible combined score is 2400. Since the addition of the Writing section is fairly new (2006), many colleges have not yet determined how they will evaluate scores on the writing section. Students should check with each college or university in which they are interested to determine how the institution will use the Writing score. Since = there is a slight penalty on all sections for each wrong answer, a student should leave a question unanswered if he or she has no idea what the answer is. If one or more answer choices can be eliminated, however, the student should make an “educated” guess. Students should take the SAT once in junior year (May or June) and if necessary, once in senior year (October or November).

ACT (Spring of Junior Year, Fall of Senior Year)

The ACT is a national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in: **English, Mathematics, Reading, Science**. The ACT Plus Writing includes the four subject area tests plus a 30-minute Writing Test. ACT results are accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the U.S.

The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete, including a short break (or just over four hours if you are taking the ACT Plus Writing). Actual testing time is 2 hours and 55 minutes (plus 30 minutes if you are taking the ACT Plus Writing).

The ACT is administered on six test dates within the United States, U.S. territories, Puerto Rico, and Canada—September, October, December, February, April, and June. In other locations, the ACT is administered on all of the above dates **except** September, and the ACT Plus Writing is not available on the February test date. Students typically will take the ACT in April or June of their junior year and perhaps again in September or October of their senior year. Currently, Hingham High School is not a test site for the ACT.

Click here for the ACT testing [calendar](#)

SAT Subject Tests (May or June of Junior Year)

SAT Subject Tests are tests which some of the more competitive schools require. The SAT Subject Tests test a student’s knowledge in 18 subject areas including: English, math, science, history, and world languages. Students generally choose two or three. Students should check to see if any of the colleges they are considering require Subject Tests for admission or placement. Students should see their school counselor for registration forms and additional information. The general recommendation for the sequence of SAT Subject tests is as follows:

Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics): at teacher recommendation after course completion;

Languages: at teacher recommendation after third year level;

Math Level IC: after Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II;

Math Level IIC: after Pre-calculus;

U.S. History: at recommendation of teacher

Testing Sign-Up Information to Remember

Name: You need to use the exact same name each time you sign up for a test or request reports. Using different initials or names will create two or more files with the testing programs, creating confusion when you want your scores sent to colleges.

Numbers: for identification purposes, it is important to use your social security number and Hingham High School's CEEB CODE 221000 on all forms and applications.

Student Questionnaire: This is optional, but it can be very useful in providing information about colleges that may not yet have been suggested to you.

Which Colleges to Send Reports To: As a junior, you can send the free reports to colleges that interest you. As a senior, have your scores sent after the administration which you feel reflects your best scores.

Deadlines: You MUST have the registration postmarked by the regular deadline or you will have to pay a late fee.

Students with Disabilities: A student who has a diagnosed learning disability AND regularly takes additional time for school subject tests can apply to take the SATs with extended time. In addition to the regular SAT registration form a second form is required of all students requesting additional time. See your school counselor for details.

Helpful websites:

[ACT-SAT Concordance: A Tool for Comparing Scores](#)

Standardized Testing FAQs

When can a student take the PSAT?

The PSAT is typically offered in October of the sophomore or junior year. The PSAT must be taken in the junior year in order to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Competition. School Counselors will visit sophomore and junior English classes in late September or early October to provide information and to register students.

When do you recommend a student take the PSAT?

The PSAT should be taken in October of the junior year. At that point most students have covered the requisite content in their courses in school to be prepared for the test. Taking the test as a junior is the only time that a student can qualify for the National Merit Scholarship program. The PSAT is offered to sophomores as well.

Why is the PSAT important? Do the scores count?

The PSAT serves as a practice test for the SAT. It is important for students to be exposed to the format and content in order to practice for the SAT. Scores do not count and a great deal of information is available with a student's score report to help them interpret their results and prepare for the upcoming SAT. Scores are only reported to the student and to the student's school counselor. Scores are not shared with any colleges or outside entities. Scores are available about the second week in December.

What is the difference between the PSAT and SAT?

The PSAT does not contain the 25 minute essay that students are asked to complete on the SAT and the test has fewer sections than the real SAT.

When is the optimal time for juniors to take the SAT or ACT?

Juniors should take the SAT or ACT in the spring of their junior year. Many students will take the SAT or ACT for a second time in the fall of their senior year. (Please see collegeboard.org or actstudent.org for administration dates and to register.) This allows them to cover as much content as they can in school. Most students will take the SAT or ACT in May. There are other test dates offered as well so students should have a conversation with their school counselor to see when it is the best time for them to take the test.

Who should take the SAT Subject Tests?

Most students will find that they do not need to take an SAT Subject Test. Only the most competitive colleges recommend or require them. Tests are offered in a number of areas including biology, chemistry, physics, math, literature and languages among others. When required or recommended, typically students are asked by colleges to take two subjects that they feel are their strongest. Score Choice is available so if a student does choose to take a Subject Test, but is not satisfied with their score, they do not need to report it to any colleges. Each college will report whether they require or recommend SAT Subject Tests in the admissions section of their website.

When should SAT Subject Tests be taken?

Subject Tests should be taken upon completion of the course, usually in June. Most Subject Tests are taken in June of the junior year.

Is there preparatory material for students taking the SAT subject tests?

Yes, the College Board develops the tests and serves as the best resource for test preparation. There are a number of test prep books available at the public library, in book stores, or online at collegeboard.org. Their website is a great resource for test formats, sample tests and test content. Students are encouraged to ask their teachers about the tests and some students may feel more prepared than others to take an SAT Subject Test. Often students will have to complete independent preparation in order to be well-prepared for a Subject Test.

What is 'score choice'?

Score Choice allows students to choose which test administration dates to send to colleges. If a student performs better the second time they take the SAT or ACT, they only need to send the second administration scores to colleges and can choose not to send their first test date scores. However, if one section was stronger during the first test administration and another section was strongest during the second test administration, a student should send both sets of scores. Colleges will see all scores in this case, but most will evaluate students on the highest score regardless of test date.

What is the difference between an SAT Subject Test and an AP exam?

An AP exam is a culminating exam created by the College Board and taken in May after a year-long course in a given subject. The curriculum is college level and standard throughout the country. The exams are scored from 1-5 (5 being highest) and may be applied for college credit depending on the college and the score achieved. HHS offers 16 AP level courses. Please see the Program of Studies for a complete list of AP courses offered.

An SAT Subject Test is a one-hour subject-specific test created by the College Board. It is typically taken in June at the end of a particular course. However Subject Tests are offered at almost every test administration the College Board offers. Go to collegeboard.org for a current testing schedule. Subject Tests can be taken to demonstrate aptitude in a particular subject to supplement the general reasoning ability tested by the SAT.

When should you send SAT scores and AP test scores to a college?

During the college application process scores should be sent to colleges when a student feels they are an accurate reflection of their abilities (or when required). Scores can be sent when a student registers for a test or after the scores have been received. Most students will wait for results before reporting scores to colleges; however this incurs a fee for score reporting from both the College Board and/or the ACT Corporation. Scores must be requested by the student directly from the College Board or ACT Corporation. They are not part of a student's transcript and are not considered official unless sent by the testing entities themselves.

AP scores are not a required part of the college admissions application process. Most students take AP exams in May of their senior year so they do not have scores to submit during the college application process. If a student wishes to submit an AP score for credit designation or to place out of a particular college course, he or she should do so after being admitted to the college. If a student has taken an AP exam earlier than the senior year and wishes to submit a score to a college for consideration in the admissions process, he or she must do so before the admissions application deadline. Instructions for sending AP scores to colleges are in the student pack given to all students when they sit for an AP exam. Please note it is a different process than submitting SAT scores.

How do you know whether or not to send test scores?

If you feel the scores are an accurate reflection of your abilities, you should send the scores to your colleges. Students should have conversations with their school counselors to make these determinations. Your school counselor will help guide you through the test taking process.

When should seniors have completed all of their tests (ACT, SAT, APs) for college?

Taking all tests (except AP exams which are only given in May, please see question above) by November of the senior year is recommended as most college application regular decision deadlines are between January 1st and February 1st. If a student is choosing to apply under Early Decision or Early Action with deadlines in November, the October test is typically the last to have scores available for the admissions deadline. Remember that it is the student's responsibility to have the College Board or ACT Corporation send test scores to colleges (collegeboard.org or actstudent.org). Scores are generally available online about three weeks after the test administration. If a student waits to request that scores be sent until they have seen the scores themselves, score reports may need to be rushed which incurs additional fees. Colleges will not consider an application complete until all parts have been received. If all other parts of the application are in and a college is waiting on test scores, they will not begin to review the application until scores have been received and matched with a student's file.

What does it mean when a college is 'test optional'?

When a college is test optional, they do not require a student to submit standardized test scores as part of the admissions process. That school may believe that standardized testing is not the strongest indicator of potential successful performance at the college level. The college will use all of the other information included in the application to evaluate the student. If a student believes that standardized tests scores will benefit them and does report test scores to the college, the college will use them to evaluate the student in the admissions process. Keep in mind that a test optional college may ask students to submit test scores once they have been admitted. Most colleges will still use students' scores to report average test scores of admitted students or for other data analysis.

HHS College Visits

Each fall (late September through early November), Hingham High School offers students the opportunity to meet with representatives from over 100 college and universities. Juniors and Seniors are eligible and must sign up at least 24 hours in advance via Naviance. Sessions are offered at different times throughout the day, so students must get permission from their teacher to leave a class to attend a session.

The purpose of the sessions are varied: students can get general information about schools they may be interested in, they may have specific questions to ask, or they may want to follow up with a rep if they have already made a campus visit and want to express continued interest.

College Fairs

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) offers College Fairs throughout the country. See link for details on dates and locations locally.

[Link to NACAC website](#)

Campus Visits

Visiting college campuses is a great way to see a campus in action and learn more about what the school has to offer. Note that students are allowed 3 excused absences during the junior year and 3 during the senior year. Documentation from the college is required (e-mails are not acceptable).

Developing a List of Colleges to Consider: Where to begin and what to consider

- Areas of Academic focus; Breadth of Majors and Minors
- Size
- Location
- Statistics (SAT/ACT and your GPA relative to Naviance database)
- Private vs. Public
- Religious affiliation
- Cost and availability of scholarships and aid

Visiting Colleges

Students and parents should start to visit colleges some time during the Junior Year. A list of considerations is provided. It is by no means exhaustive, but it covers many of the major factors that students (and parents) consider when evaluating schools for a good fit.

If students know some of the factors that are very important to them, they should focus on those as they start to compare different schools. If students are less sure about what they are looking for, noting major likes and dislikes after a few visits, may help them focus their search.

Campus information sessions and tours are both valuable in helping you to learn as much as you can about the college you are visiting. Typically, these visits can be scheduled online via the college website. Information sessions are usually led by members of the admissions staff (sometimes students also speak during these sessions). Tours are typically given by student volunteers.

Some Advice

- Don't try to visit more than 2 colleges in one day. It can be overwhelming and things may blur.
- Take notes while you are on campus. Note major likes/dislikes; pros/cons. This will be invaluable later when you are trying to decide which schools you want to apply to. You may also refer back to these impressions if you are asked to write an essay about why you want to attend a particular school.
- Pick up a copy of the school newspaper, try out the cafeteria, sample a day in the life of a student.
- Plan in advance for February and April break and other long weekends. Many other people are also visiting colleges at these times and sessions may fill up.
- If you are particularly interested in a certain program, set up time to meet with a professor or sit in on a class.
- Ultimately, what's most important is your overall impression. Can you see yourself on the campus? And will the school offer you whatever is most important to you in terms of academics and student life?
- Use the guidelines from the school (GPA and test scores) and Naviance to evaluate whether the schools you are most interested in are realistic choices for you.
- Stop by your counselor's office and ask for the contact information of the Hingham High students currently attending the school or schools you are planning to visit. They can be a great source of information even if you only connect via email.

[College Visit Checklist](#)

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Many colleges and universities offer programs and services to meet the special needs of students with identified physical or cognitive disabilities. These programs include, but are not limited to, tutorial support, academic advising, special accommodations or other programs for students to be successful in their classes.

Students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) should begin to discuss the level of support they will need in college with their team during junior year. While some students may want to submit their IEPs and supporting documentation along with the application, others may choose to wait until after the admissions decision has been made.

As students explore post-secondary options, they should also research the availability of special services such as tutorial support, academic advising, reduced course loads, and study skills programs. These services can range in support under the requirements of the Federal law (section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act).

The College Board Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is committed to providing services and reasonable accommodations appropriate to a student's disability and the purpose of the exam. SSD provides Advanced Placement® (AP®), PSAT/NMSQT®, and SAT® testing accommodations for students who have documented disabilities.

For more information go to: [College Board Services for Students with Disabilities](#) or see your counselor for more information.

Student Athletes

If your son or daughter is going to play sports in college...

Before an athlete can play a sport or receive an athletic scholarship at a Division I or II college, he or she must meet specific academic criteria as set forth by the NCAA. A student must have at least a 2.0 GPA based on a 4.0 scale in sixteen core courses. A student must also achieve a minimum combined SAT score of 820 or a minimum combined ACT score of 68. To be eligible at a Division I school, the student with a minimum GPA will need a higher test score, and the student with a minimum test score will need a higher GPA. Students must take specific courses in order to meet NCAA eligibility requirements. These include a certain number of college preparatory English, science, social science, and math courses, with at least one year of algebra and one year of geometry. Because the NCAA has such specific requirements, and because these requirements can be confusing, it is very important that athletes meet with their school counselors to obtain information on all of the NCAA requirements.

Athletes should take the ACT or SAT no later than the spring of their junior year in order to have time to retake the tests if necessary. In order to initiate the eligibility process, athletes must complete an NCAA Clearinghouse Student Release Form. This form should be submitted after completion of the junior year.

Division III Sports: Students interested in playing Division III athletics are not required to initially register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. Instead, interested student athletes should contact the Division III coach directly expressing an interest in that particular college and team. Division III colleges are unable to award athletic scholarships.

Quick References NCAA Eligibility Guide:

http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Quick_Reference_Sheet.pdf

NCAA Eligibility Center:

www.eligibilitycenter.org

Visit the links above and the NCAA website to familiarize yourself with the important information presented there.

Student Artists

Applying to college with the goal of majoring in a fine art (music, studio art, dance, theater) is a bit different from applying for a traditional liberal arts degree. Explore both liberal arts schools and conservatories. To help assess the strength of the program you can review the careers of alumni and the backgrounds and resumes of the college instructors. Be sure to check the admission requirements for each school, as you will find many similarities, but also key differences. In most cases, you will need to apply to both the college and the specific arts program. Some programs will review your applications simultaneously, while others will accept you first to one program (the general college) and then to the arts program. Many of the arts schools have early deadlines, so be prepared to approach most of your applications as if they are early applications, i.e. November and December deadlines.

Depending upon your area of interest, you will need to schedule an audition, provide photos, submit recordings and/or a portfolio of your work, as well as essays explaining what you hope to gain from admittance to their program. You will need recommendations from your high school counselor and academic teachers, and one or two instructors from your specialized area of interest (e.g., voice/dance/theater/music/etc.). The web site for each school has details about what specific requirements they have for both the recording/portfolio and for the live audition. Generally, the arts program will review your written application and submitted recordings/photos, and if viewed favorably, invite you to come to the campus for a live audition. These auditions usually take place in January and February, so plan on taking several days out of school for these. It is best to give yourself plenty of time for these auditions; don't schedule your flight to arrive on the day of your audition – you'll want to be relaxed and focused for your audition and not worried about traffic! Your private teacher should also be able to guide you in the process of applying to college for the arts, and provide helpful tips to better prepare you for what to expect. Contact your school counselor for a list of HHS alumni who are willing to talk with you about your school or major choices. Alumni can give a great deal of insight about the fine arts college application process and they specific school they are attending.

Alternative Options

If your son or daughter is heading into the military...

The military trains young men and women to protect the interests of our country. In order to do this, the military offers qualified high school graduates a good salary and free job training. The military provides discipline and structure, as well as opportunities for career advancement and travel. The United States military is the nation's single largest employer. It offers training and employment in over 2,000 job specialties, 75% of which have civilian counterparts.

There are four major branches of the military: the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Opportunities for students also exist in the Coast Guard, the National Guard, and the reserves. College students who take ROTC will enter the military as officers, while academically gifted students will find excellent educational opportunities at the four military academies

In order to enlist in the military, students generally must be high school graduates, earn a minimum score on the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery), and be of good moral character. They must also be healthy, in good physical condition, and able to pass a physical exam given by the military. Through the delayed entry program, high school students can be sworn in during their junior or senior year and delay entry until after graduation. This enables students who want to receive training in a particular career field to have an opening reserved for them.

Students who are interested in the military should start by gathering information. The school counseling office has brochures and pamphlets available on military opportunities. In addition, local recruiters are always happy to provide information. Because the various military branches each provide different career, training, and educational opportunities, it is a good idea to talk with more than one recruiter. Recruiters can discuss opportunities with you over the phone or they can set up a time to meet with you.

ASVAB

Students who are serious about exploring opportunities in the military should take the ASVAB. The ASVAB is a ten part, three hour test which identifies a student's aptitudes and strengths although a minimum score on the ASVAB in no way obligates a student to the military. Hingham High School offers the ASVAB once each year, typically in February.

Obligations and Benefits

When students enlist, they obligate themselves from two to six years of active duty. Enlisting in the military is a serious, long-term commitment. High school students need to understand that it is very difficult to leave the military before the enlistment period is over. In addition to basic pay and free education/training, the enlistee also receives free housing and free medical and dental care. Basic pay is determined by rank and years of service. Most new enlistees begin at pay grade E1 and receive about \$800 a month. The Montgomery GI Bill provides enlistees with an excellent opportunity to earn money for college while they are in the military. Enlistees contribute \$100 a month into a college fund for the year. The government then matches this \$1,200 with over \$14,000.

Basic Training

Basic training consists of six to ten weeks of intense physical and mental preparation in which enlistees receive classroom instruction, field training, and exercise. Enlistees learn how to take orders and how to live and work in close quarters with a wide variety of people. They also learn discipline, self-control, physical endurance, and respect for authority. Once enlistees finish basic training, they receive two to twelve months of job training called Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

The Reserves and the National Guard

Reservists are part-time members of the military. They go through basic training and job training, but they don't go on active duty. They train for two days a month and two weeks once a year. They are paid for the days they work and they also receive educational benefits. Reservists can be called to active duty in the event of a conflict or in the event of a national emergency. In addition to responding to the needs of the federal government, the Army and Air National Guards also help state governments deal with natural disasters and conflicts.

The Academies

The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard each has its own academy (West Point, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Coast Guard Academy). These academies offer a free four-year college education to the students they accept. After graduation from the academy, these students enter the military as officers. The application process is somewhat involved; therefore, students interested in applying to one of the academies should start the process in the spring of their junior year. Applicants should have a high GPA in a strong college prep program and must be in excellent physical condition.

Armed Services

[U.S. Army](#) Recruiting Station
1604 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
617-773-6045

[U.S. Marine Corps](#) Recruiting
1604 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
617-472-6650

[U.S. Navy](#) Recruiting Station
1604 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
617-479-2000

[U. S. Air Force](#) Recruiting
1604 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02169
617-479-7950

[Air National Guard](#)

National Guard
96 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043
781-741-8349

[Army National Guard](#)

[U.S. Merchant Marine](#)

[U.S. Army Reserve](#)

[U.S. Coast Guard](#)

Colleges Affiliated with the Military

[Norwich University](#)

Military College of Vermont
Northfield, VT 05663
802-468-NORWICH

[Mass Maritime Academy](#)

101 Academy Drive
Buzzards Bay, MA 02532
800-544-3411

[Maine Maritime Academy](#)

Pleasant Street
Castine, ME 04420
800-227-8465

Other U.S. and Canadian Maritime Colleges

[California Maritime Academy](#)

200 Maritime Academy Drive
Vallejo, CA 94590
800-561-1945

[Canadian Coast Guard College](#)

1190 Westmount Road
Westmount, NS B1R2J6
Canada
902-564-3660

[Great Lakes Maritime Academy](#)

[Northwestern Michigan College](#)
1701 East Front Street
Traverse City, MI 49686
800-748-0566 x1200

[Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland](#)

155 Ridge Road
St. Johns, NF A1C5R3
Canada
800-563-5799

[Seattle Maritime Academy](#)

4455 Shilshole Avenue, NW
Seattle, WA 98107
206-782-2647

[State University of New York Maritime College](#)

6 Pennyfield Avenue
Throggs Neck, NY 10465
718-409-7200

[Texas A&M Maritime](#)

200 Seawolf Parkway
Galveston, TX 77553
800-850-6376

Service Academies and ROTC Scholarship Programs

While all juniors should begin exploring possible educational programs following graduation, those interested in the Service Academies and the R.O.T.C. scholarship programs must begin as soon as possible to insure that they receive full consideration.

SATs should be taken by May of the junior year. Open houses can be visited during the summer.

The **first step** in securing an appointment to one of the academies is to request a Pre-Candidate questionnaire. See [Sample Letter A](#). Addresses follow:

The Academies

Admissions Office:

[U.S. Military Academy](#)

Building 606

West Point, NY 10996-1797

845-938-4041

Admissions Office:

[U.S. Naval Academy](#)

117 Decatur Road

Annapolis, MD 21402-5018

410-293-4361

Admissions Office:

[U. S. Air Force Academy](#)

2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 200

U.S.A.F. Academy, CO 80840-5025

800-443-9266

Admissions Office:

[U.S. Merchant Marine Academy](#)

300 Steamboat Road

Kings Point, NY 10024

800-732-6267

The **second step** is to write to each of your senators and your congressman and ask that they consider you as one of their nominees. In this letter you should indicate your first, second, third, and fourth choices for academies as well as:

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Date of birth and Social Security Number
- High School Name and year of graduation
- Names of your parents

Your request for consideration should be sent to:

Congressman Bill Keating

2 Court St.

Plymouth, MA 02360

Senator Elizabeth Warren

2400 JFK Federal Building

15 New Sudbury Street

Boston, MA 02203

Deadline for applications is November 1st. [See Sample Letter B.](#)

The Coast Guard Academy has an admissions procedure similar to other highly competitive colleges. However, there is no nomination process involved. Write directly for an application:

Admissions Office

[U.S. Coast Guard Academy](#)

31 Mohegan Avenue

New London, CT 06320-4195

860-444-8500

Preparation While in High School:

- English 4 years
- Math (Through Calculus) 4 years
- Foreign Language 2 years
- Laboratory Science 2 years
- American History 1 year

R.O.T.C. scholarship programs involve a competitive application process as well. In addition to the written application, candidates must undergo a physical examination, formal interview, and a physical abilities test. The first step in the process is to contact the local recruiting station for an application:

If your son or daughter is getting a G.E.D.

If your son or daughter does not graduate from high school, he or she should get a GED (General Educational Development). A GED, or high school equivalency diploma, is issued by the state of Massachusetts rather than by Hingham High School. In order to receive a GED, a student must pass the five-part test measuring skills and knowledge in writing, social studies, science, literature, the arts, and mathematics. Each of the five tests takes between 1-2 hours, and, except for the essay part of the Writing Skills test, all of the questions are multiple choice. In order to pass the GED test, a minimum score on each of the five tests is needed, as well as a total minimum score.

Before taking the GED, your son or daughter should attend GED classes or at least go through a GED study guide. Student guides are available at bookstores and libraries, and free GED classes are offered at local agencies and community colleges. Information on local GED classes can be obtained in the Hingham High School Counseling Office or call the GED Hotline at 1-800-62-MY-GED for local phone numbers and GED information.

The GED will enable you to do most things that a high school diploma will. For example, with a GED you can apply for admission to a community college or to a four-year college. As for the military, talk to your local recruiter to find out if it's possible to enlist with a GED. Get your GED as soon as possible, but never feel that you are too old or that too much time has passed. A GED can definitely open important doors for you!

Other Programs

Americorps 800-942-2677: This is an opportunity for students to earn money for college in exchange for 1-2 years of community service. Projects may include restoring national parks and coastlines, renovating low- income housing, assisting crime victims, etc. Students receive a living allowance and health coverage.

Americorps NCCC 800-942-2677: This is a ten-month residential service program. Participants live in one of four regional campuses and focus on a large variety of issues.

Americorps VISTA 800-942-2677: This program is similar to Americorps NCCC; however, participants live in the disadvantaged communities they serve.

Center for Interim Programs 617-547-0980: This is a consulting service for students wishing to take a “sabbatical” between high school and college. Students choose to travel to various parts of the world and participate in activities of identified interests. Examples include outdoor conservation work in Australia, architecture and ecology work in Arizona, wilderness emergency care and rescue in New Hampshire.

City Year 617-927-2500: This is a national service organization where participants devote one year to community service. The program focuses on building leadership skills and civic responsibility. Participants are paid a weekly stipend and receive health coverage. Examples of service include coordinating after-school programs, renovating houses for the homeless, or serving as a teacher’s aide.

Class Afloat 403-255-5300: This program is designed to have students work as a crew member aboard the S/V Concordia and sail the world for one academic year. In addition to the responsibilities of being a crew member, students also complete an academic curriculum.

Dynamy 508-755-2571: This program is a full academic year beginning with three weeks of outdoor adventure followed by three nine-week internships in career fields of interest. Interns live in one of three multi-apartment residences in Worcester, MA.

International Honors Program 617-267-0026: Students travel internationally and study in many different countries. They live with families in various cultures and are taught by faculty of the program.

Ithaka-Collegiate, Mentor, and Cultural Studies Programs 617-868-8547: Students complete a flexible curriculum while immersing themselves in Greek life. Two of the three programs are designed specifically for high school students and recent high school graduates. The Mentor Program emphasizes Greek archeology and the Cultural Studies Program focuses on Greek culture.

Nature’s Classroom 508-764-8321: Students work as interns, teaching children ages 8–14 about the world around them. The focus is on environmental education, cognitive learning, and social dynamics. Time is spent in educational and recreational activities such as feeding animals or taking field walks and in special interest classes such as math, science, or humanities. Interns receive a small stipend and room and board in return for their services.

New Alchemy Institute 508-564-6301: Emphasizing community systems and agriculture, students spend their days working on various projects which include operating a solar and composting greenhouse, regulating pest control in a garden, operating a roadside stand, etc.

New England Aquarium 617-742-8830: This volunteer program offers many different experiences from performing research to feeding the fish. Some positions pay a small stipend.

Outward Bound 800-243-8520: With outdoor courses in various parts of the United States and overseas, this program has students participate in activities of their choice: sailing, desert trekking, sea kayaking, dog sledding, etc.

The School of Field Studies 508-927-7777: Students may spend either a summer, semester, or winter break training for environmental work. Students spend a few hours a day in a classroom with the remainder of the day devoted to field research projects.

Sea Semester 508-540-3954: This program consists of six weeks of classroom instruction and six weeks at sea aboard either a 125-foot schooner or a 134-foot brigantine. Candidates need to have taken an Advanced Placement Science Course.

Up With People 602-327-7351: Students travel the world performing for local schools, community groups, civic organizations, etc. In this eleven-month program, students live in youth hostels or in private homes. The itinerary generally includes 5-6 countries with students taking five courses and receiving a transcript from Bard College

The Wait List: Questions and Answers

Should I ask to remain active on the wait list?

Only if you are seriously interested in attending that college. If you are, then you should indicate in writing or by returning the postcards many colleges provide for that purpose as soon as possible. If you definitely will attend if admitted, tell the college that.

When will I learn if I will be admitted from the wait list?

The very earliest you can expect to hear from colleges is late April, but usually not until after the first week of May. Most colleges will finalize the status of students by June 1. Occasionally colleges will extend to students the opportunity to remain on a wait list throughout the summer

Should I call the college?

No! Colleges will only ask you to indicate your position in writing. Until the first week or so of May, colleges rarely have any information that will be helpful to you as you try to calculate your chances.

What are my chances?

Until early May this is an impossible question for even the colleges to answer. Colleges must wait to hear from all of the students to whom they have extended an offer of admission. Those students have until May 1 to respond. Often times those responses, mailed on April 30, do not arrive until May 3 or 4. Colleges' past records regarding their wait lists are not important. One year a college may take 50 students from its wait list, the next year it may not be able to take any. It will all depend on how many admitted students decide to enroll before May 1.

How many applicants usually end up on a wait list?

Wait lists vary from school to school. Remember, not everybody who is offered a position on a wait list will wait to be considered. The initial number placed on a wait list is usually reduced significantly.

How can I find out what my "rank" is on a wait list?

Colleges will not rank their wait list until after they have heard from both admitted candidates and wait list candidates (May 1). Most colleges will not inform you of your rank on the list.

What can I do to improve my chances?

If your grades since mid-year are good ones, sending them along to the colleges may help. If you have earned any honors, taken on responsibilities or in any other way distinguished yourself since you applied, don't hesitate to let the colleges know. Remember, even if you have completely turned things around, this will not make a difference if the college does not go to its wait list.

Should I try to set up another interview?

Colleges rarely permit second interviews, particularly before May 1. If you happen to be in the area, it doesn't hurt to stop by and express your continuing interest in the school but a major investment of time and money to visit a college where you have been placed on a wait list is probably not worth the effort. Consult with your counselor regarding this matter.

What should I do while I wait?

Assume you are not going to get in from the wait list. Statistics clearly indicate the chances are quite a bit less than 50/50. The most important thing for you to do at this time is to focus on the options you do have and make an informed, rational decision regarding those options. Should I make an enrollment deposit at

my second choice college? YES! Unfortunately this fee is normally not refundable, but it is important for you to guarantee that you have a place in a college next year. Make your deposit before May 1.

What should I do if I have been placed on several wait lists?

There is nothing wrong with remaining on more than one wait list as long as each one of them is a school that you are more interested in than the options you currently have.

You Have Been Accepted--Now What?

How to choose a college

If you've received acceptance offers from more than one college, congratulations! Your hard work has paid off, and now you get to choose which college is best for you.

Don't worry about choosing that one perfect college — there's no such thing. The bottom line is that college is what you make of it: What you do while you're there matters more than the college name on your diploma. Here's how to make your decision.

You don't have to decide overnight, but don't miss the reply deadline.

Get More Information. You already have a lot of information about each college, but digging a little deeper can help you make the best choice for you.

Ask questions. Create a list of any questions you still have about the colleges you're considering. You may want to get answers to questions like these:

- How many students return after freshman year? How many graduate?
- Does the college offer a lot of majors I'm interested in?
- What can I do for fun?
- What kinds of students feel at home at this college?

Get answers. The best place to get an answer depends on the question. Here are some of the resources that can provide information:

- People who work at the college
- Current students at the college
- The college's official website and its [College Search](#) profile

As you search for answers, it's important to use only trustworthy sources of information and to recognize the difference between fact and opinion. A college's official website and its admission officers are often the best sources of factual information about that college.

Visit — or revisit — the campuses. If possible, [check out a college's campus](#) to get more information. If you can't visit a campus, call or email the admission office with your questions. Ask if someone there can put you in touch with current students and recent graduates. Your high school counselor and teachers also may know students who graduated from your high school and now attend the college.

Think things over. You've done research and asked questions. Now it's time to check your own thoughts and feelings. Ask yourself questions like these:

- How did I feel when I was on campus at each college I visited?
- Which colleges best match my list of must-haves?
- At which colleges can I imagine myself as successful and happy?

Compare the colleges. Use your new information to sort the colleges by what they offer and what you want. Make a list of the pros and cons for each college. You can also use [College Search](#) to compare up to three colleges side by side.

Compare Financial Aid Awards. This is an important step for many students. [The Compare Your Aid Awards tool](#) lets you compare up to four offers side by side. Talk to your family about which colleges work best financially. You should make decisions about financial aid, such as whether you should take a student loan or work-study job, together.

Make Your Decision. You don't have to decide overnight. Many colleges don't expect your final decision until May 1, so you have some time to make up your mind. But remember that colleges are serious about reply deadlines. If you don't send your deposit in time, you risk losing your place.

Respond to the Colleges. Once you've decided which college you want to attend, inform all the colleges that accepted you about your decision.

Respond to the college you've decided to attend. Make sure to send in the following items by the deadline:

- Your acceptance letter
- A deposit
- A separate acceptance letter for financial aid, if required
- Any other required items

Respond to the colleges whose offers you're declining. Send a brief note to the other colleges to thank them and turn down their offers. This frees up places for other students.

Financial Aid Overview

What is Financial Aid?

- Financial aid is money money to help students pay for college
 - Three main types
 - Grants and scholarships (gift aid)
 - Work-study
 - Student loans

Sources

- Federal-Grants, work-study, loans, tax incentives
- Massachusetts-Grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, loans –osfa.mass.edu
- College/University(institutional aid)–Grants, scholarships, loans
- Other Agencies–Scholarships, loans

Merit-Based Aid

- Awarded in recognition of student achievements (academic, artistic, athletic, etc.)
- Applicants often compared against one another
- May or may not be renewable
- Not offered at every school

Need-Based Aid

- Based on family's financial eligibility (“need”)
- Eligibility determined by a standardized formula
- Includes grants, loans, and work-study
- Most financial aid is need-based
- Must meet certain GPA for renewal

FAFSA

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)–Required by all colleges for federal and MA state aid

- Open January 1st:FAFSA.gov
- Meet all deadlines!
- Sign with a PIN:PIN.ed.gov
- IRS Data Retrieval Tool – available February 1st

**Must be completed every year

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®

- Required by some colleges
- \$25 for 1st school, \$16 for each additional
- Online application:CollegeBoard.org
- Noncustodial Parent PROFILE often required
- MEFA PROFILE webinar recording on MEFA.org

After you Apply

1. Colleges & state receive data electronically
2. You will receive (electronically or by mail):
 - Student Aid Report (SAR)
 - CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® Acknowledgement
3. Contact the Financial Aid Office with any special circumstances
4. Colleges may request Verification documents. Your financial aid application may be incomplete until you submit these documents.
5. Colleges review applications and determine your financial aid

From *MEFA's "Guide to College Financing,"* 2015

For more information, please see <http://www.mefa.org/uploadedFiles/GuidetoCollegeFinancing.pdf>

Valuable Internet Sites

College Search Process:

connection.naviance.com/Hingham
fairtest.org (test optional schools)

Standardized Testing Websites:

actstudent.org (ACTs)
collegeboard.org (PSATs, SATs, & APs)
kaplan.com (Kaplan)
review.com (Princeton Review)
revolutionprep.com (Revolution Prep)
doe.mass.edu

Links to College Homepages:

allaboutcollege.com
connection.naviance.com/hingham

Taking a College Tour–Virtually:

campustours.com

Financial Aid Websites:

mefa.org
finaid.org
smartmoney.com/college

Scholarship Search Services:

finaid.org
collegeboard.org/fundfinder/html/ssrctop.html
freschinfo.com

Applying for Financial Aid:

fafsa.ed.gov (FAFSA forms)
collegeboard.org/finaid/fastud/html.proofrm.html

Focusing on Scholarships:

fastWeb.com
collegenet.com

On-line Applications:

applyweb.com
commonapp.org
weapply.com
collegequest.com

Considering the Military:

defenselink.mil/faq
(ROTC headquarters)
myfuture.com/OUTPUT/moneycol.htm(military
info)

Considering Community Service:

cns.gov (Corp. for Natl. Service)
city-year.org

Athletes:

ncaa.org.eligibility/cbsa
njcaa.org (junior colleges)

Downloadable Department Forms

You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader (or in some cases Microsoft Word) to download the following forms. If you do not have Adobe, click on the logo to download it to your computer for free. [Adobe Reader](#)

[Record Release Form](#) This form must be submitted to the school counseling office at least 10 days prior to each college application deadline

[Student Questionnaire](#) The information you provide in this questionnaire can be of great importance in college planning. This questionnaire will help your school counselor recommend appropriate colleges and assist you in completing applications. This form provides the opportunity for the student to tell their counselors about themselves (beyond what is on the Activity Sheet)

[Activity Sheet](#) The purpose of the activity sheet is to capture all the activities, service, and work you have participated in during your high school career. In addition, you should record any honors or awards associated with your activities. Begin during your Freshman year and keep adding to it. Your counselor will ask you for this form at the start of your Senior year and will use the information in your recommendation. In addition, The Common App requires you to highlight this information, so it will be helpful for you to have it recorded on one document. Finally, the teachers whom you ask to write recommendations for you may also ask for the activity sheet.

[Parent Information Sheet](#) - Adobe Format

[Parent Information Sheet](#) - Microsoft Word Format

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give parents a tool with which they can share information about their child with the Counselor. This information may be used by the Counselor in the college recommendation. The form should be completed by the Parent and delivered to the counselor before the end of the Junior year. This form provides useful information for the guidance staff. The form itself is NOT sent to colleges.

[Student Descriptive Summary \(Teacher Questionnaire\)](#) - Adobe Format

[Student Descriptive Summary \(Teacher Questionnaire\)](#) - Microsoft Word Format

Students should choose 2 teachers during their Junior year who they feel know them well enough to provide input that will be used in the Counselor recommendation. Students should ask teachers to complete the forms and give them to the Counselor before the end of the Junior year. These teachers should be different from the ones chosen to write the teacher recommendations at the start of your Senior year.

[Sample Letter to Request a Pre-Candidate Questionnaire for the Service Academies](#)

[Sample Letter to senators and members of Congress requesting a nomination to the Service Academies](#)

