

## SENIOR TIMELINE

~ Fall 2020 ~

- Make sure you have met all of your graduation requirements. This includes required courses and testing requirements (NJSLA, PARCC, PSAT, SAT, ASVAB). If you think you may be missing a requirement, please check with Ms. Sheets.
- Think about your future plans! Do you want to go to college? Will you go into the Military? Or, will you go right into the workforce? It's important to have a postsecondary plan so that you can begin to establish your life as an adult after high school!
- If you are interested in going to college, there are several things you'll need to take care of, so please read the following information carefully...
- Establish a list of colleges you intend to apply to. Be sure to research each college's statistics to find out what kind of SAT/ACT scores, GPAs, and academic classes they are looking for in applicants. Most of this information can be found on college websites. Information can also be found on the College Board's "Big Future" College Search platform. Shoot for a list of 5-10 schools, including at least one in each of the following categories:
  - Safety schools: A school where you are very confident that—barring some sort of catastrophe—you are going to be accepted. Your GPA, SAT and class rank exceed all the requirements. This isn't a "throw away" school, however. Make sure it is one you want to attend if need be.
  - Target schools: A target school is one where your academic credentials (grades, SAT or ACT scores, and class rank) fall well within the school's average range for the most recently accepted class. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to expect to be accepted to several of your target schools.
  - Reach schools: Think about a reach school as that dream school. This is a more selective school that you would love to attend but maybe you just don't make the grade in one or two areas. Maybe your GPA and

transcript are stellar, but you didn't quite hit the mark on your SAT. Or perhaps you rocked the ACT, but that one C- in freshman English has your GPA hovering a bit below the standard. It might just be worth a try.

- Take the SAT and/or the ACT if the colleges you want to apply to require it. You may also need to take the SAT with essay if your colleges require it. ***Many colleges have gone test optional for the class of 2021, so be sure to check.*** You can find each college's admissions and testing requirements at each college's respective website. Also, be sure to check if your college requires any SAT subject tests. An SAT and ACT testing schedule is attached. You will need to register online.
- Request letters of recommendation from two teachers. First, ask them verbally or via email. **Then you must submit your official request in Naviance.** A Naviance handbook is available on our Guidance website that demonstrates how to do this. Most colleges require two letters or recommendation from teachers only, because they want to hear about your character and performance in the classroom. Other recommenders like coaches, bosses, priests, mentors, etc, are considered secondary recommenders. Some colleges do not allow/consider letters of recommendation from secondary recommenders. A
- If you are completing applications on your own, be sure to start early. College applications take time. College application season opens on August 1.
- There are a few different types of applications that you will see or hear of:
  - Common Application (online)
  - Coalition Application (online)
  - Universal Application (online)
  - Proprietary & Direct to Institution (apply directly on college's website)
  - The Common Application, Coalition Application and Universal Application are all similar in that they each serve a specific purpose: they allow students to use one application to apply to many schools. The Common Application is, by far, the most widely used college application platform. It is accepted by 884 colleges. **Be sure to check if your college accepts the Common Application prior to opening an account.**

- Write your college application essay if your college requires it. Do this on a google doc or on a Word document so that you can copy and paste it onto your college applications. Have it reviewed by a teacher or counselor before you submit it.
- Submit all college applications at least 10 business days prior to deadline to be sure that your documents arrive on time. Note the application deadlines for each college on a worksheet. Some deadlines are as early as November 1, others can be as late August 2021. *It is your responsibility to keep track of all deadlines.*
- Request transcripts only **after** you have submitted your applications. *Transcripts must be requested at least ten business days prior to application deadline. All Transcript requests for current seniors must be submitted through Naviance. A Handbook is available on our website to walk students through the process. Transcripts will not be processed or mailed on weekends or over holiday breaks.*
- You must send your official SAT and/or ACT scores electronically to the colleges you have applied to. This is done through each exam's website. The Guidance Office cannot do this for you.
- File your FAFSA (free application for federal student aid) as early as October 1<sup>st</sup> (the earlier the better)
- Keep your grades up. Poor grades senior year can be a deal breaker with colleges. Colleges WILL rescind acceptances due to poor senior year grades.

~ Winter ~

- Check the Guidance office regularly for local scholarship applications. Search online scholarships as well. Most local scholarships begin posting in February.
- Bring a copy of all college acceptance letters, athletic agreements, scholarship offers and scholarship awards to the guidance office. Colleges do not share this

information with high schools. Do not email this information to the Guidance Office. Emailed items will not be addressed.

- Don't get senioritis! Stay focused and stay out of trouble. Significant slip ups will cause a college to rescind an acceptance.

**~ Spring ~**

- Finish strong!
- National Decision Day is May 1<sup>st</sup>. Make your deposit!
- Request your final transcripts for the college you will be attending

## COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCEDURES (step by step)

(put this on your fridge 😊)

1. Be sure to check the exam requirements for all of the colleges you intend to apply to. In addition to the SAT or ACT, some colleges will require the SAT w/ essay or ACT w/ writing, and/or SAT Subject Tests. Many colleges have even gone test optional all together this year. Know your plan.
2. Verbally ask two teachers to write letters of recommendation for you. Do this early! Good letters of recommendation take hours to write, and teachers often receive dozens of requests. **All letters of recommendation must also be requested via Naviance. There is a handbook on our website to help you through this process. Ask Ms. Sheets if you have any questions or if you do not know your username/password.**
3. Complete and submit college applications (including essays) ***at least ten business days prior to the deadline*** to ensure that all documents get to the college on time. It is your responsibility to keep track of your applications and deadlines. Bring questions about your application to Ms. Sheets.
4. After you submit your application to a college, **you must request your transcript in Naviance.** There is a handbook on our Guidance website to walk you through this process. ***Emailed transcript requests will not be processed.*** Transcripts must be requested at least ten business days prior to application deadline. Your transcript will not be sent out without a transcript request. Transcript requests will not be handled on weekends or over holiday breaks.
5. Send your official SAT/ACT scores electronically to the colleges that you applied to. You must do this on the College Board and ACT websites. Look for “send your scores.” There is a small fee associated. **Do not wait until the last minute to do this.** During prime application season it can take up to three weeks for schools to receive your score reports due to high demand and internet traffic.
6. Submit your FAFSA (fee application for federal student aid) online. You can do this as early as October 1<sup>st</sup> this year. This application determines if you are eligible to receive federal grants or financial aid based on your family’s income.
7. Submit a CSS Profile (College Scholarship Service Profile) if required by your college. The CSS Profile is an application for non-federal financial aid from colleges and scholarship programs

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## 2020-2021 SAT Exam Dates

**Register at:** <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>

SAT \$52 (prices subject to change)  
SAT With Essay \$68

SAT Exam Dates 2020-2021	SAT Subject Tests Available	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline (fee \$30)	Deadline for Changes (fee \$30)
September 26, 2020	SAT Subject Tests not offered this date	August 26, 2020	September 15, 2020	September 15, 2020
October 3, 2020	<a href="#">SAT Subject Tests available on this date</a>	September 4, 2020	September 22, 2020	September 22, 2020
November 7, 2020	<a href="#">SAT Subject Tests available on this date</a>	October 7, 2020	October 27, 2020	October 27, 2020
December 5, 2020	<a href="#">SAT Subject Tests available on this date</a>	November 5, 2020	November 24, 2020	November 24, 2020
March 13, 2021	SAT Subject Tests not offered this date	February 12, 2021	March 2, 2021	March 2, 2021
May 8, 2021	<a href="#">SAT Subject Tests available on this date</a>	April 8, 2021	April 27, 2021	April 27, 2021
June 5, 2021	<a href="#">SAT Subject Tests available on this date</a>	May 6, 2021	May 26, 2021	May 26, 2021

**turn over for ACT test dates**

## **2020-2021 ACT Test Dates and Deadlines**

Register at <https://www.act.org>

ACT \$55 (prices subject to change)  
ACT with writing \$70

<b>ACT Exam Dates 2020-2021</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>	<b>Late Registration Period (fee \$30)</b>	<b>Deadline for Changes (fee \$32)</b>
October 10, 2020 October 17, 2020 October 24, 2020 October 25, 2020	September 17, 2020	September 18-25, 2020	September 17
December 12, 2020	November 6, 2020	November 7-20, 2020	November 6
February 6, 2021	January 8, 2021	January 9-15, 2021	January 8
April 17, 2021	March 12, 2021	March 13-26, 2021	March 12
June 12, 2021	May 7, 2021	May 8-21, 2021	May 7
July 17, 2021	June 18, 2021	June 19-25, 2021	June 18