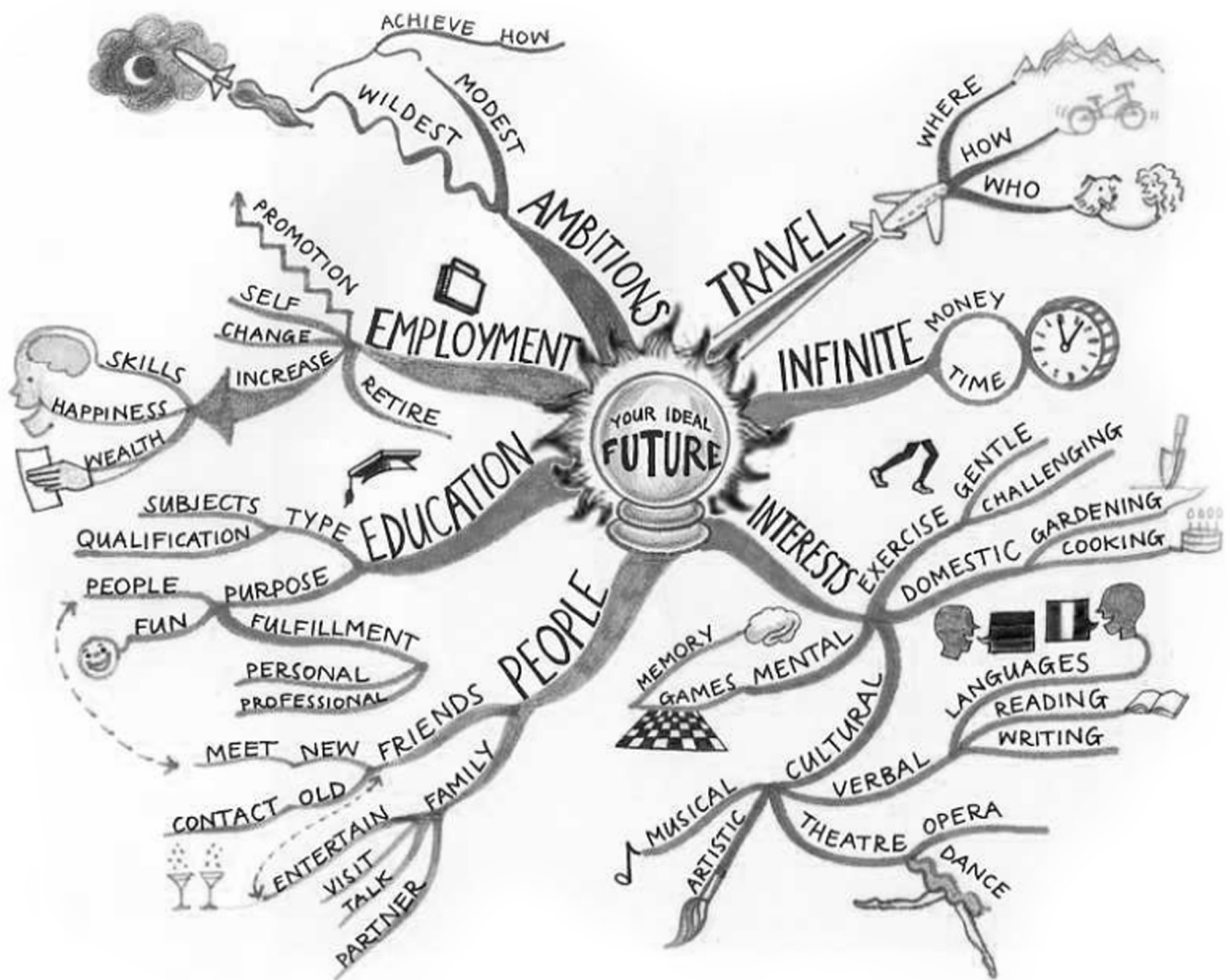


Amherst Regional High School

Class of 2021 Junior Life After ARHS Planning Handbook



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INTRODUCTION TO COLLEGE & CAREER HANDBOOK FOR JUNIORS

Breathe. Welcome to the process. This handbook has been created by the ARHS College & Career Advisor to help you and your family begin navigating the college admissions adventure. Please read it thoroughly and share it with your parents/guardians. It is power-packed, with lots of information for you to absorb. Take your time and use this resource frequently. Many of the questions you'll have will be answered within these pages.

"Where do I start?"



- First and foremost, establish solid, frequent, and consistent **communication** within your family. Use the organizer on the next page to map out and discuss together what is important to you in a college or career.
- Introduce yourself to your friendly neighborhood College & Career Advisor, Ms. Cuffee-Gray. You can start booking meeting with her starting in February!
- Detach the calendar on the back page of this book and begin marking dates for important events in your planner.
- Log in to Naviance and begin playing with the tools and resources. Take the "2021 Questionnaire for Junior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting" under "My Surveys."
- Sign up for a standardized test! Most students will take the SAT or the ACT twice; once in the spring of junior year, and once again in the fall of senior year. Practice tests are available in the Guidance Office. See the "Standardized Tests" section for more info.

Sections of this book are dedicated to specific goals. Looking to play sports in college? Check out "Things Every Athlete Should Know." Concerned about money? Look at the "Financial Aid Overview." Confused by Naviance? Read the "Naviance Quick Guide" to get started.

Still feeling uneasy? Here are some tips from past ARHS seniors:

Sign up for challenging classes!

Don't do things just to add to your resume—do them because you want to!

Start researching and visiting colleges ASAP. It's never too early to start!

Be flexible and willing to expand your options.

Learn to study effectively! It matters, regardless of your post-high school plans.

Find people to read and critique your writing.

Plan ahead! Prepare for SAT/ACTs and take them early. Start your college applications in the summer. Apply Early Action to as many schools as you can. Set up your college interviews early!

Ready?



IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

What are your personal goals and values?

-
-
-
-
-

What steps do you need to take to get there?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What post-high school plan(s) are right for you?

- ☐ 2-year college
- ☐ 4-year college
- ☐ Technical School
- ☐ Service Program (PeaceCorps, AmeriCorps, etc)
- ☐ Start a career

Will you take time off, or go straight into college?

- ☐ I will go straight to college
- ☐ I will go to college, but also work
- ☐ I will take a gap year, and my plan for that is...

Brainstorm some ideas on how to pay for your plans

-
-
-
-



Getting Started

You might be wondering, “How do I get into a good college?” There are so many good colleges out there- what you need to be wondering is “How do I find the college that is the **best fit** for me?” The following pages highlight things to consider as you start creating your list of priorities.



- What works well for me right now?
 - Do I prefer **larger, lecture-based** classes or **smaller, discussion-based** classes?
 - Do I work better with **structure** or with **freedom**?
 - What **extracurricular activities** will I want to continue in college?
 - What **social aspects** are most important to me?
- What type of college is best for me?
 - **Liberal Arts Colleges**
 - Focus on undergraduates
 - Smaller than universities; lower enrollment, smaller student: teacher ratios, more personal attention
 - Students encouraged to study across disciplines in addition to classes needed for their Major
 - Many employers value well-rounded applicants from liberal arts colleges.
 - **Universities**
 - Have undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as some professional programs
 - Larger enrollment; most intro level classes taught as lectures in large halls
 - Offers a wider variety of programs of study and more classes
 - Often have more resources (libraries, athletic facilities, labs)
 - Some classes taught by graduate students. Professors often conduct research.
 - **Technical Institutes and Professional Schools**
 - For students who have made clear decisions about what they want to study.
 - Prep and training for specific careers, such as music, engineering, or mechanics.
 - Fewer course offerings but all classes tailored to a specific career and goal.
 - **Community or junior colleges** generally offer the first two years of a liberal arts education, in addition to specialized occupational preparation.
 - Two year schools that offer associate degrees. Many students transfer after two years to pursue a 4-year degree.
 - Offer liberal arts education and professional programs
 - Tuition is less expensive
 - Some offer room and board; others do not.



➤ Could an identity-based college be a good fit?

○ **Historically Black Colleges and Universities**

- Originated in the time when African-American students were systematically denied access to most other colleges and universities.
- Unique opportunity to experience an educational community where students of color are the majority.



○ **Women's Colleges**

- Unique opportunity to experience a woman-centered community with women in power; most faculty and administrators are women, as well as campus leadership
- Offer a supportive environment to thrive in all fields, including ones that are often considered to be largely male-dominated, such as STEM

➤ What kind of location am I looking for?

○ **How far from home do I want to be?** Many folks like the idea of getting out of the area where they grew up and experiencing new things, and some don't. To think about location in terms of distance, ask yourself:

- How often do I want to visit family and friends at home?
- How often can I afford to drive, bus, or fly home?
- If I'm staying local, what kind of living experience do I want? Do I want to continue living with my family? Will I want to live in a dorm? Can I afford to get my own apartment by myself or with friends?

○ **Am I looking for a city, a town, or something in-between?**



- **Cities** offer a great deal of resources, including more frequent public transportation. It's easier to find organizations and companies for internships and projects. Colleges in cities tend to be more spread out. They often do not guarantee housing on-campus after the first or second year, and meal plans are often not required. There are more local entertainment options as well.

- **Rural or suburban** colleges often have tighter-knit communities, and many resources on-campus. There tends to be more open spaces for outdoor activities. Campuses usually offer room and board for the full four years, and if you choose to move off-campus, the costs of living are more affordable than in cities.

○ **Should I consider going to school abroad?** Schools outside the US offer a very different college experience. If you're thinking about attending college in another country, consider:

- **Do I like learning about other cultures and languages?** Even places that speak English will have their own cultural and dialectical differences; how will it feel to you to be in a place that feels very different than what you've grown up with?
- **Will the school structure be a right fit?** Research what schools are like in the different places you're considering. Some schools have very structured education, while others offer more flexibility. Do you feel self-sufficient enough to find resources to help you as an international student?



- What size college will work best for me?
 - Check out this ACT infographic on the difference between school sizes!



- What are things that I should consider if I have an IEP or 504 Plan?
 - Review your plan with your family and your liaison (IEP) or guidance counselor (504 Plan) to better understand your disability and its effect on your learning.
 - Ask the following questions: *What is my disability? How does it affect how I learn? What are my academic strengths? How do I learn best?*
 - **Become a “self-advocate” while still in high school –**
 - Understand how you learn best and what accommodations you need to be your best academic self.
 - Know how your disability impacts your learning and get comfortable talking about your needs.
 - At the college level, you will be responsible for identifying and requesting support services. Generally, parents and guardians cannot advocate for you in college.
 - **Investigate what schools have for Student Support Services on campus during your college search –**
 - Most colleges have systems of support for their students and they range from writing centers, teaching assistants/tutors, to programs that focus on students with disabilities for an extra fee.
 - Do your homework and find out what each school on your list provides.
- What aspects of campus life matter for me?
 - **Sports** You can play sports at many different levels in college. Some schools recruit athletes from high school to play on highly competitive college sports teams. Most colleges also offer some club sports, which usually have tryouts and compete against other clubs sports from other colleges. There are also intramural sports, which are open to anyone and are an easy way to play sports and make friends.
 - **Clubs and Organizations** Many of the extracurriculars you love in high school are available at the college level. You also have an opportunity to join chapters of national organizations on campus.
 - **Greek Life** Do you want to join a fraternity or sorority? While it can cost a lot to keep up with dues, many students choose to join Greek life for the networking opportunities, opportunities to do charitable work, and close-knit communities. If you pursue membership, it’s important to research the different chapters available and consider if they would be good fits for you.
 - **Resources** What do you want in a campus? A huge library where you can tuck yourself away to study? An on-campus café for morning coffee? Do you want to live in a co-ed dorm, or a substance-free hall? Are there campus museums or galleries? What are the best spaces to study, socialize, or feel at home? Consider what parts of the physical campus are most important to you.



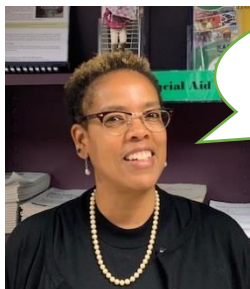
- What kind of culture am I looking for?
 - **Heritage and identity culture** Are you seeking a more diverse or monocultural school? Consider how many other students may share your identity, and how many students may be different from you. Race, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion, and ability play a large part in how we see the world and how we feel we belong.
 - **Political Culture** Are politics important to you? Would you prefer a more liberal or a more conservative school, or would you like to see political diversity? Consider whether or not the schools you’re looking for have political student groups or activist groups.

- **Atmosphere** Try to get a sense during college visits or conversations with current students or alumni for the overall feel of the culture. Are people competitive or collaborative? Are most people outgoing and friendly, or reserved and keep to themselves? Does it have a party culture, or a more low-key vibe?
- What can I and my family afford?
 - Most all colleges work very hard to ensure that academically-qualified students from every economic circumstance can find the financial aid that will allow them to attend.
 - Look beyond the price-tag to financial assistance that may be available. Decide the value of a desired educational experience and how much sacrifice (in terms of work and loan) you are willing to make to obtain your goals. Work closely with financial aid officers at colleges to which you apply.



ARHS College and Career Advising Program Overview

ARHS has a College and Career Advisor, Deidre Cuffee-Gray who helps guide students through the process of thinking about life after high school.



Hello! I'm your Friendly
Neighborhood College
and Career Advisor!

The overall goal of the College and Career Advising Program is to help each student and their family with major aspects of the college planning and admission processes, as well thinking about career preparation. In conjunction with school counseling staff and community resources, the college advisor assists students and their families with a broad range of activities including: early college planning; academic preparation for college; identifying appropriate colleges; application and financial aid procedures; essay planning; testing; recommendation requirements; and transition issues.

- ❖ College planning strategies are designed to meet the individual needs of each student as s/he explores higher education options. This is done primarily via individual conferences with students and their families that are held during the junior and senior years.
- ❖ After-school or evening workshops for students and their parents explore a variety of college admission topics such as early college planning, SAT/ACT preparation, early decision options, essay writing, athletic recruitment, financial aid, services for students with disabilities, etc.
- ❖ The college advisor e-mails group information to juniors and seniors and their families as needed during the admissions cycle.
- ❖ Comprehensive handbooks are distributed to juniors in January and to seniors in August.
- ❖ College admission and financial aid information is posted on the ARHS website (www.arhs.arps.org/academics/guidance_office/college_and_career_planning/).
- ❖ ARHS PGO posts reminders of important dates in their weekly newsletter.

Ms. Cuffee-Gray starts the process with Juniors in the 2nd semester.

- ❖ **Late January**- presentations to social studies classes about starting the process
- ❖ **Late January into February**- juniors fill out the Naviance survey "2021 Questionnaire for Junior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting."
 - If you need your Naviance password reset, contact Crystal Garrity in the Guidance Office in person or by email! garrityc@arps.org
- ❖ **Early February**- students and their families can begin booking meetings with Ms. Cuffee-Gray *after* the Junior Survey has been completed. Contact Crystal Garrity to book your appointment!
- ❖ **February-Early May** – meet with Ms. Cuffee-Gray and begin working on the process! This includes:
 - **Attending Events**- Several events are held in the evenings for Juniors. Some of these are trips to local community colleges, a MEFA presentation about the admission process, and a presentation from soon-to-graduate Seniors about their experiences with applying to college
 - **Taking the SAT or ACT for the first time**- Students generally take SAT/ACT tests twice, once in the spring of junior year and once in the late summer/early fall of senior year. If you are on free/reduced lunch or have other circumstances that qualify you for a fee waiver, see Crystal Garrity!
- ❖ **April**- Start the teacher recommendation process! Informational packets will be handed out before the April vacation on how to go about requesting letters of recommendation. If you're applying Early Decision or Early Action, schedule a meeting to meet with your counselor about their recommendation for you!

- ❖ **All spring and summer-** Juniors should begin researching colleges and visiting some that seem interesting. Some college admissions representatives will be visiting ARHS in the spring; students can attend these informational visits and ask questions.
- ❖ **Summer-** Juniors should begin drafting their college application essays. Juniors who plan on applying early might even want to start their Common App when it opens on August 1st. Remember, the more you do in the summer, the easier your fall semester will be!
 - **Note: Ms. Cuffee-Gray is not available during the summers, but if you have general questions or need help with Naviance, Miss Garrity will be available in the main office.**



Seniors will hit the ground running as soon as school starts in the fall!

- ❖ **August-** Seniors will receive the Senior College and Career Advising Handbook in advisory on the first day of school.
- ❖ **Early September-** presentations to social studies classes about the next steps as seniors. Seniors should update their surveys with information gathered over the summer. Seniors who did not fill out the survey as juniors should fill it out and plan to meet with Ms. Cuffee-Gray, **especially** if they are unsure of what they want to do with their future!
- ❖ **Mid-September- December-**
 - Seniors should be meeting with Ms. Cuffee-Gray with their families
 - Seniors should be meeting with their counselors and touching base with their teachers about their recommendation letters
 - ARHS college visits will be happening in the Guidance Office. They are open to juniors and seniors alike. For seniors, it's a good way to show demonstrated interest and ask specific questions. Students get 3 "free" absences from classes to attend these visits.
 - Most seniors will apply to college between November and January! Seniors can utilize ARHS events such as the College Admissions Presentation featuring college admissions counselors, Financial Aid Night, or FAFSA night.
- ❖ **February-April-** Seniors apply for scholarships. ARHS releases our annual Scholarship Book in February and students apply through April. However, many scholarships are available throughout the year in Naviance as well.
- ❖ **May-** Seniors make their decisions and request final transcripts in Naviance if they are attending college. All seniors should fill out their exit surveys in Naviance regardless of their post-high school plans.
- ❖ **June-** Senior Awards and Graduation!

Information about specific events can be found on the back page of this book!

College and Career Advising Contact Info

Deidre Cuffee-Gray- College and Career Advisor- Guidance Office Room 101

- ❖ Contact for specific, individual questions about colleges and the process
- ❖ Email: cuffee-grayd@arps.org
- ❖ Guidance Direct Line: 413-362-1720
- ❖ During lunches, Ms. Cuffee-Gray offers “College in the Caf” for impromptu questions!
 - 1st Lunch Monday
 - 2nd Lunch Wednesday & Friday
 - 3rd Lunch Tuesday & Thursday

Crystal Hope Garrity- Guidance Office Secretary- Guidance Office Room 101

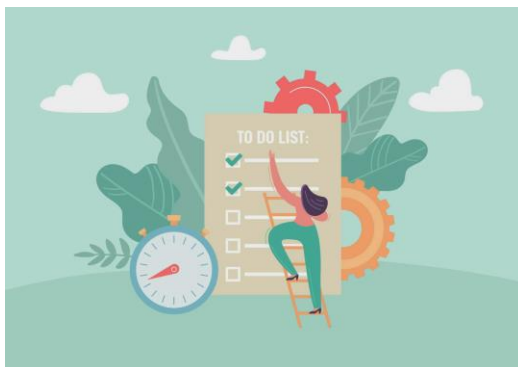
- ❖ Contact for help with scheduling appointments with Ms. Cuffee-Gray or your Guidance Counselor; Naviance or Common App questions; transcript requests; scholarships
- ❖ Email: garrityc@arps.org
- ❖ Guidance Office Direct Line: 413-362-1720
- ❖ Also available during the summers in the main office

Cathy Tracy- Guidance Office Secretary – Assistant Principal’s Office Room 309

- ❖ Contact for help with Naviance and Common App; questions about testing accommodations
- ❖ Email: tracyc@arps.org
- ❖ Direct Line: 413-362-1715

Things to Do in your Junior Year

- ☐ Attend your classes and work hard for good grades! These things matter!
- ☐ Review your transcript when you meet with Ms. Cuffee-Gray. Look for errors or discrepancies and talk to the registrar if there is a mistake.
- ☐ Think about expanding your learning beyond the classroom. Join a new club, look for an internship, volunteer in your community, pick up a part-time job! Colleges and scholarship sponsors like to see well-rounded candidates, plus it's great experience!
- ☐ If you don't already, begin checking your email at *least* once a day. Incredibly important communication comes through email from the College and Career Advising team!
- ☐ Practice making sure your name is correct on all forms. It can cause serious issues! Avoid nicknames, use your entire last name, and check to make sure any spaces, apostrophes, accents, or hyphens are in the right place.
- ☐ Meet with Ms. Cuffee-Gray in the spring.
- ☐ Create a resume! It will come in handy with applying to jobs and colleges, and will get you started thinking about your experience and skills.
- ☐ Attend an event (or several!) hosted by the ARHS College Advising Program.
- ☐ Visit a college or two (or more!) and attend college admissions visits at the high school. Add schools to your "Colleges I'm Thinking About" list in Naviance to get alerts about when a school is visiting.
- ☐ Take the SAT or the ACT. You can register for these online. If you need a fee waiver, see Crystal Garrity in the Guidance Office.
- ☐ Attend a college fair and start gathering information from different colleges so you can compare them later. There are usually several college fairs per year throughout the Pioneer Valley.
- ☐ If you are:
 - An Artist looking to attend specialized arts programs- talk to your art teachers about putting together a portfolio or audition. Start choosing your best pieces.
 - An Athlete looking to play at the college level- talk to your coaches and the Athletic Director about recruitment. Reach out to the coaches of schools you're looking at. Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- ☐ Start thinking about teachers who might write a strong recommendation letter for you. You'll begin requesting in April.
- ☐ Take time to breathe!



Naviance Student Quick Guide

Welcome to Naviance Student (**student.naviance.com**).

You will become very familiar with Naviance over the next year. You can use it now to research careers and colleges and you will use it to manage your teacher recommendations and college applications as a senior.

To login, use the e-mail address you used when creating your account in Advisory last year (likely your arps.org address) and the password you chose. If you do not yet have an account, tell your advisor or contact Guidance.

AMHERST REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
Welcome to Naviance Student

Email

Password

☐ Remember me [Forgot your password?](#)

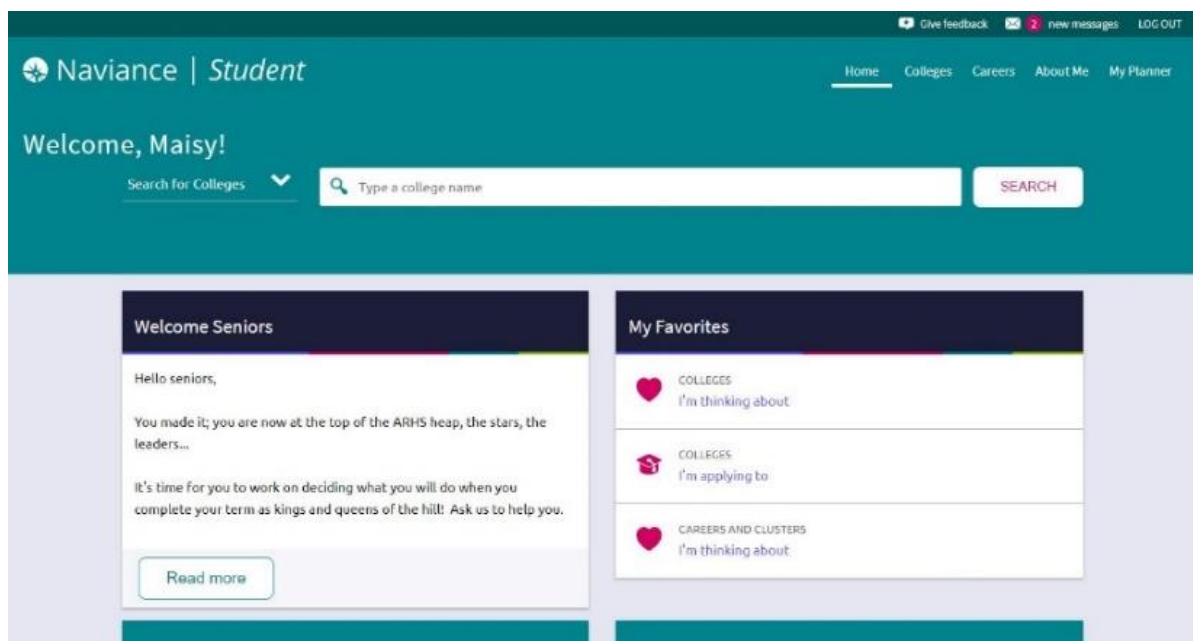
[Login](#)

[Need additional help?](#)

Are you new here?
[I need to register](#)

Amherst Regional High School
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p: (413) 362-1701
www.arps.org/HS/
[Privacy Policy](#)

Once you have successfully logged in, you will be brought to your Naviance home page:



Below are the Naviance assignments for juniors:

1. Update your information.

On your Home Page, go to the “About Me” Tab and select “My Account” from the drop-down menu. Check that all information is correct, and edit contact info if anything is not correct. Use an email address that you will **check frequently**.

Ms. Cuffee-Gray will use Naviance to communicate important college admission information to you.

2. Complete the “2021 Questionnaire for Junior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting” under “About Me” → “My Surveys” → “Surveys Not Started.” This will take about thirty minutes and will provide information that will help guide your meeting with Ms. Cuffee-Gray.

- Use “save and return later” at the bottom of the questionnaire if you do not have time to complete it in one session. If you do not “save,” you will lose the information you have entered.
- Choose “Save and Finish” when you are done.

3. Schedule your college appointment.

After February 3rd and after completing the survey, see Miss Garrity in Guidance to make your junior college and career appointment with Ms. Cuffee-Gray. Be sure to have your family in attendance! They’re a big part of the process!

OPTIONAL (and useful!):

❖ **Work on Resume (under “About Me” Home)**

❖ **Begin to investigate colleges:** Go to “Colleges” and do the College Search and the Supermatch College Search, which has more categories. If the search yields too many schools, select more factors. If you end up with too few schools, deselect some factors.

❖ **Pick at least 5 colleges to ADD TO “COLLEGES/Colleges I’m Thinking About.”** You can do this by clicking the heart next to the school names! When these colleges are in your list, you can get alerts about when these schools visit ARHS.

❖ **Prepare for tests** (Twenty hours of preparation often yields substantial improvement.)

- You can find links under “From My School” at the bottom of your Naviance homepage.
 - Method Test Prep- gives 15-minute modules for SAT or ACT prep
 - Khan Academy - connects to your PSAT and provides a study plan for the SAT
 - Academy.act.org- provides a diagnostic ACT, study plan and practice tests

❖ **Explore Careers and Interests in Naviance**

- Explore careers. Get information about thousands of careers.
- Find personality type survey, career interest inventory, and career cluster finder which relate careers to your personality and interests.

College Admissions Tests

Overview:

Some four-year colleges require some kind of standardized admission testing. However, more and more selective colleges and universities have become test-optional, or test flexible (see the next section). Generally, ARHS students take the SAT and/or the ACT once in the spring of the junior year and again the next fall. Each test is about three hours long plus an optional 50-minute essay.

The SAT Suite of Assessments yields scores in Evidence-based Reading and Writing, and Math. There are four separate sections -- Reading Test, Writing and Language Test, Math, with and without calculator Tests. There is an optional Essay. SAT dates will be in August, October, November, December, March, May and June. The SAT is offered at ARHS except in May.

The ACT is an equal alternative that many ARHS students take in addition to or instead of the SAT. It yields a composite score and individual scores in English, Math, Reading and Science. It also has an optional essay. The ACT is offered in September, October, December, February, April, June and July. It is not offered at ARHS, but you can sign up and take the ACT at another school in the area.

For both the SAT and ACT, the optional essay is not *required* by many colleges, even some of the most selective. Do your research, because when a college *recommends* it, you should do it! The College Board website has a comprehensive list. For best information, check individual college websites. UMass Amherst requires the SAT or ACT, but the nine Massachusetts public universities are now test-optional.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT SENIORS SEND SCORES THEMSELVES TO THE SCHOOLS THAT REQUIRE IT!!!



Register for SAT tests AND SEND SCORES at www.collegeboard.org.

Register for the ACT AND SEND SCORES at www.actstudent.org.

➤ What's the Difference between the tests?

- The SAT Yields two scores, "Evidence-Based Reading and Writing" (EBRW) and "Math." Although the reading section is almost twice as long as the writing section, the two sections figure equally into the EBRW section score. Reading passages cover literature, history and science. The writing section asks you to read passages and fix contextual mistakes in grammar, organization and punctuation. The SAT minimizes geometry. It is reading-intensive, requiring synthesis of concepts. It tests realistic problem-solving, concentrating on the use of algebraic concepts. There are some open response questions. There is a section where students cannot use a calculator as well as a longer section in which they can. Both the EBRW and Math sections yield scores between 200 and 800.
- The ACT yields four scores --- English, Math, Reading, and Science, which are averaged for a composite score. The sections are equal in length. There are many questions so speed is very important. The test has only multiple-choice questions. The math section allows calculators for all problems. It covers algebra, geometry and trigonometry and is straight-forward. The science section requires synthesis of written information and charts and graphs. The individual section and composite score range is 0-36.

➤ **What do the tests cost?**

- SAT and ACT reasoning tests cost \$49.50 without the essay (and \$60 or more including the essay) if you register on time. Consult the test company websites for registration deadlines and waiver policies. A major credit card or fee waiver is required for online registration.

➤ **Fee Waivers for the SAT or ACT**

- Full fee waivers are available for SAT and ACT testing and college applications to anyone who is registered for the free/reduced price lunch program. Students can get a total of two ACT waivers, two SAT waivers and two subject test date waivers while in high school. Students should see Crystal Garrity in Guidance for a waiver.

➤ **What about accommodations for students with disabilities?**

- Students with an IEP or 504 plan who use extended time or other accommodations at school and who wish to have those accommodations on the PSAT, SAT Reasoning or Subject Tests, AP tests or the ACT need to apply directly to the testing companies. You should complete our information packet (see links on your Naviance home page) so we can apply at least three months before a test date to ensure adequate lead time in case an appeal is needed. You can get a packet from your Special Education Liaison or a Guidance secretary (Ms. Garrity or Ms. Tracy). There are links to the packet in the Naviance Document Library. The testing agencies make the final determination regarding accommodations.
- Students with diagnosed learning disabilities are usually entitled to a waiver of the testing requirement at MA public universities if they submit diagnostic documentation and their IEP or 504 Plan.

➤ **Are tests required for admission?**

This varies from college to college:

- Most colleges, including almost all public universities, require either the SAT or the ACT. (U Chicago, Wesleyan University, Temple University, Smith College, UMass Boston and Lowell and Salem, Bridgewater, Worcester, Framingham and Fitchburg State Universities are examples of schools that do not. It is important to check individual programs like nursing, computer science and business). UMass Amherst and Dartmouth and Westfield State and MCLA are currently the only public institutions in Massachusetts that do require the SAT or ACT.
- Many private colleges at all levels of admission selectivity are now “test-optional,” meaning that they place no importance on an applicant’s test scores. These colleges have differing policies regarding testing so it is important to read their websites carefully. Students should prepare for and take appropriate tests; then they can decide whether to send the scores. See fairtest.org for a complete list of test-optional colleges. (See also the condensed list later in this handbook.)
- Highly selective colleges often require either the ACT or the SAT and two or three SAT Subject tests, rarely three! Many of them including Amherst, Columbia, Haverford, Vassar and Williams have dropped the subject test requirement. It is wise to check the requirements of colleges in the junior year to ensure that you take the appropriate tests.

DePaul University – Test-Optional Policy

DePaul engages in a holistic review of applicants and the test-optional alternative allows us to consider your strengths that may be demonstrated in areas other than your ACT or SAT score. Both our internal and external research show that your high school record, in particular your grades in challenging core subjects, is the most important academic component in the review for admission. By allowing you to determine how to best showcase your academic performance, DePaul is emphasizing that four years of perseverance, motivation and effort during high school bear a direct relationship to successful college-level work.

➤ **When do students take the SAT/ACT?**

- Juniors generally begin their testing with the March SAT or the April ACT. Athletes hoping to be recruited often begin earlier. Students who wish to also take SAT Subject tests usually take the SAT in March and two Subject tests in May or June. It is possible to take up to three Subject tests on one day, but two is the optimal maximum. It is not possible to take both Reasoning and Subject tests on the same day.
- Many seniors retake the SAT and/or the ACT in the fall. Subject tests are rarely repeated by ARHS students.

➤ **Which Subject Tests are best?**

- ARHS students most commonly find success with Subject tests in Math (level I or II), literature, foreign language or a science (Biology or Chemistry).
- Students taking Global History Honors should consider taking the World History subject test. They will need to use review books for material pertinent to before 500 CE, which is about 25% of the test.
- Sophomores earning a B+ or better in Honors Biology or Honors Chemistry should seriously consider taking that subject test in June. Independent study of a few chemistry units is necessary.
- Students should wait to take other tests until the junior year.
- Our US history curriculum does not align with the tests very well, but students with a high interest who read a lot about US history on their own sometimes do very well on the U.S. History test.
- Students who are considering a major in engineering should consider taking the Math Level II Subject test and also chemistry or physics, as a physical science Subject test is required by a few highly selective engineering programs.

➤ **What happens to the scores?**

- **SAT:** Once a student has taken an SAT Reasoning or Subject test, an official cumulative record is created. (The PSAT is not part of the cumulative record.) Students will be able to choose to send the best SAT Reasoning administration or individual Subject test scores to most colleges. Some colleges will require that all scores be sent. Almost all colleges will consider a student's highest Reasoning Test sub-scores (super-scoring) so it is usually wise just to send all of them. Sophomores and most juniors should not send scores to any colleges on test registration forms. Seniors should send them, when college choices and scores are better known. Four SAT reports can be sent free within a week of the test administration. There is a fee for each additional college. Students on free/reduced lunch get an unlimited number of sends free.

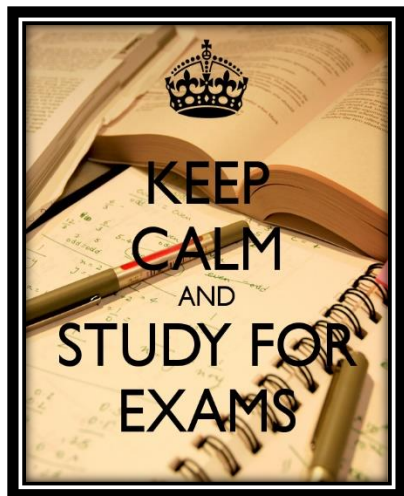


STUDENTS MUST SEND THEIR SCORES DIRECTLY TO COLLEGES!
THE FIRST FOUR SCORES ARE FREE OF CHARGE - THIS IS ONLY WITHIN A SHORT WINDOW
AFTER THAT A FEE PER SCHOOL IS CHARGED

- **ACT:** If students take the ACT more than once, they can choose the score that they would prefer to send to colleges. The ACT record is not cumulative so there are separate fees for sending scores from each administration. Super-scoring is not as common for the ACT. Students can send scores free to four institutions when registering for each test. Students who use fee waivers do not need to pay sending fees.
- **Self-reported scores:** Many colleges will now accept SAT and ACT scores as reported by applicants on the Common and Coalition Applications. Official confirmation from the testing companies is required only upon enrollment. Check with your colleges before paying to send official score reports.

➤ **How can students prepare for tests?**

- As with athletics, academics, music, theatre and many other pursuits, standardized test performance improves with practice for most students. It is in your best interest to be well-prepared. These tests are challenging. Students who prepare for them know what to expect and know how to plan their time. A minimum of twenty hours of preparation is a good idea for most students. There are several ways to prepare free.
- If you took the PSAT you have access to free score analysis and a test prep plan – (<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10/scores>). Khan Academy has partnered with the College Board to provide comprehensive free SAT test preparation. You can link to it from psat.org, or go directly to khanacademy.org/sat.



- Download the free, official [SAT QOTD Mobile App](https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/practice/daily-practice-app) (<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/practice/daily-practice-app>) from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Make practice a part of your routine, any time any place! Take a practice test and score it using your phone's camera.
- Use the comprehensive site [academy.act.org](https://www.act.org) to prepare for the ACT.
- Use the official ACT Online Prep, which includes a mobile app for \$39.95 for one year.
- If you prefer paper, you can purchase study books for all tests. We have some donated study materials for the ACT and subject test. Borrow them!
- Through your Naviance account, you can link free to Method Test Prep for comprehensive test prep with both the ACT and SAT. It is a series of short modules. Start now and you can cover everything before your test! They also have iPhone and Android apps.
- For a cost, Kaplan offers test prep for both tests at <https://www.kaptest.com/>

and Princeton Review at <https://www.princetonreview.com/>. Method Test Prep, Kaplan and Princeton Review offer comprehensive fee-based "live online" and classroom-style prep courses. See [kaptest.com](https://www.kaptest.com/) or [princetonreview.com](https://www.princetonreview.com/).

- The best way to determine which test will better match your strengths is to take free untimed practice tests, available on many websites.
- Look for the Princeton Review's hybrid diagnostic test available online several times per year.

➤ **What is the [TOEFL](https://www.toefl.org)?**

The [Test of English as a Foreign Language](https://www.toefl.org) is for non-native English speakers. It tests reading, writing, listening and speaking. Some students may need to take it in addition to the SAT or ACT. Because testing requirements differ from college to college, students whose first language was not English should always read college websites for international students, even if they have a green card or are U.S. citizens. UMass requires the TOEFL from all students who were not educated in English for all four years of high school. Discuss whether you should take this test with the college advisor and the ELL teachers before registering for it, best in the fall of twelfth grade, because it costs \$195. Fee waivers cover only half. The Internet-based TOEFL (IBT) is given at various sites in Massachusetts, Holyoke being the closest. Registration materials and information about the test are available at www.toefl.org.

Test Optional Colleges

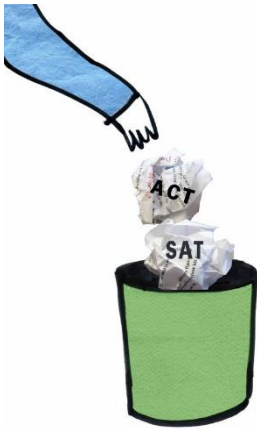
More and more colleges are making the switch to becoming SAT/ACT test optional. This means that they minimize or eliminate the importance of standardized tests in the admissions process.

There are over 1,000 colleges and universities that are test optional or flexible. You can find the list of all of these schools at www.fairtest.org. Schools offer different levels of test flexibility; some schools consider scores if you send them and others will ignore them if they do not enhance your application; other may be test optional for general admission but require them for specialized programs.

Due to NCAA requirements, athletes hoping to participate at Division I and II colleges **must** submit SAT or ACT scores to all colleges.

Why do colleges choose to go test optional?

- **Bates College** has been a national leader in the test-optional movement for three decades. In October 1984, the faculty voted to make standardized testing, such as the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and the ACT, optional for all students applying to Bates. Concerns about diversity, the effects of coaching and the impact of the SAT on secondary education and students all had roles in leading Bates to begin conducting research about its admissions policies in the late 1970s, then move to make the SAT I optional in 1984, and, finally, to make all tests optional for admission in 1990. One study, for example, found that students' evaluations of their "energy and initiative" in high school added more to the ability to predict performance at Bates than did either Verbal or Math SAT scores.



- **Brandeis University** has a test-optional policy and no longer requires citizens and permanent residents of the US or Canada to submit SAT or ACT scores. This policy allows applicants to decide for themselves whether their test results accurately reflect their academic ability and potential and is consistent with recommendations from the National Association for College Admissions Counseling.
- **Smith College** doesn't rely solely on grades and test scores to select new students; we choose people, not statistical profiles. Just like your daughter, each Smith student has unique strengths and some weaknesses. The Admission Committee reads every part of your daughter's file and carefully considers her high school program, performance, experiences and potential for success at Smith.
- **Hampshire College** is test-blind. Unlike 'test-optional' institutions, we will not consider SAT/ACT scores regardless of the score. Even if it's a perfect score, it will not weigh into our assessment of an applicant. Many colleges have adopted test-optional policies to compensate for the gender, class, racial and ethnic biases that have been found with standardized testing. In this case students can decide whether or not to have them considered as part of their application. We are test-blind because we found through our own internal research that in addition to being biased, these standardized tests are poor predictors of success at Hampshire.

Financial Aid Overview

General Advice



Discuss college finances with your parent(s). Get a sense of what they can pay and what they might expect from you. Remember that the sticker price at colleges does not apply to many families and that, depending on the college, financial aid awards can make the absurdly expensive become suddenly affordable. Look for colleges that fit your interests and other needs, and then apply to colleges in various price ranges. In the end, when you receive your financial aid awards after admission, you will be able to choose the place that's best for you.

➤ Key terms:

- ❖ **COA:** Cost of attendance; total cost of college, including tuition, board, meals, fees, books, travel, etc.
- ❖ **CSS PROFILE:** College Board financial aid form required by some private colleges for institutional aid. Fee required.
- ❖ **EFC:** Expected Family Contribution; family's share of college costs per federal/college calculations.
- ❖ **FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid; required application form for all federal grants, loans, work-study and some institutional, including merit aid. File electronically.
- ❖ **Financial Need:** What each school determines as your family's cost. COA minus EFC
- ❖ **GAP:** When college aid award packages do not meet full financial need.
- ❖ **PPY: Prior, prior year –the fact that for financial aid purposes, colleges consider financial information from two years prior to the enrollment year.**
- ❖ **SAR:** Student Aid Report; report emailed to students after FAFSA completion; contains all information about family's "ability to pay."

➤ Resources:

- ❖ College websites: They contain critical information about deadlines, application procedures and merit awards. Each college must also offer a "**Net Price Calculator.**" Once you know you are applying to a particular college, carefully read everything they post.
- ❖ **MEFA** (mefa.org) the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority: They provide free, credible and comprehensive information about college financing, as well as a financial aid calculator and links to many important websites. You can sign up for free timely reminder e-mails.
- ❖ US government sites: fafsa.ed.gov contains free application for all federal aid; fafsa4caster.ed.gov provides reliable prediction of federal EFC and federal aid eligibility; Studentaid.ed.gov is a comprehensive informational college admissions and financial aid site; collegescorecard.ed.gov contains information on college costs, graduation, and post-college earnings.
- ❖ The College Board website (COLLEGEBOARD.ORG) has a lot of helpful information, a financial aid calculator and a scholarship search
- ❖ Other helpful financial aid/scholarship websites are: www.finaid.org; www.fastweb.com; www.scholarsnapp.org
- ❖ **Beware of any websites or financial aid counseling services that charge you for financial aid or scholarship information. Everything you need to know is available free.** There are many scams out there.



➤ **Questions to Ask About a College's Aid Policies:**

1. **Are you “need-blind” in your admission policy?** A college that is “need-blind” makes admission decisions without regard for the student’s ability to pay. The “need-blind” college does not review financial circumstances until after an admission decision is reached. Some colleges, when considering students with equal academic records, will give preference to the student who is able to pay. This practice is “need aware” or “need sensitive.” Ask what the policy is for each school you are considering. Both systems can be advantageous to families depending on financial circumstances.
2. **Do you meet 100% of demonstrated need?** Some schools meet 100% of your “demonstrated need, determined by formula, with an aid package including grants, loans and work-study. Others include parent loans and claim to meet need. Proportions of grants and loans vary among these colleges. Most schools do not meet full demonstrated need. This is “gapping.”
3. **What percentage of your students receives financial aid? Do you award merit scholarships?**
4. **What is your “packaging policy”?** You want to know:
 - a. The average undergraduate federal indebtedness upon graduation
 - b. The percentages of your aid package that are grant vs. self-help (loans, work-study).
 - c. How the aid package changes over four years? Some colleges entice freshmen with large grants for the first year and then switch to a much heavier loan burden in sophomore and subsequent years. Some increase in loans is expected year to year, but you want to avoid a “bait and switch” situation.
 - d. Whether they have a “preferential packaging” policy; For example, if two students have equal demonstrated financial need, do they give a better overall aid package to the student who has a stronger academic profile, or to students entering certain fields of study? Is aid comparable under early and regular decision programs?
 - e. Whether there are merit-based scholarships for students with high academic profiles regardless of financial circumstances; How many? What are the criteria? How does one apply?
 - f. What is your policy regarding outside scholarships? Colleges deduct money earned in outside scholarships from financial aid packages. It’s better if schools reduce your loan burden or work study award rather than grants.



➤ **Finally:**

1. If you think you may need aid at any time over the next four years- - apply! (Some colleges do not let students apply for aid subsequently if they did not apply as a freshman. Some merit scholarship and low interest loan programs require the FAFSA.)
2. Students who need significant aid should remember that many colleges, including UMass, give larger need and merit-based aid packages to strong students. Keep those grades up!
3. Make sure your college list includes at least one that meets your academic and personal needs and is affordable. For many students this is an in-state university or community college.
4. Apply for local scholarships in March of the senior year. A list of local scholarships, with application instructions will be e-mailed to you in mid-February.

➤ Financial Aid Forms:

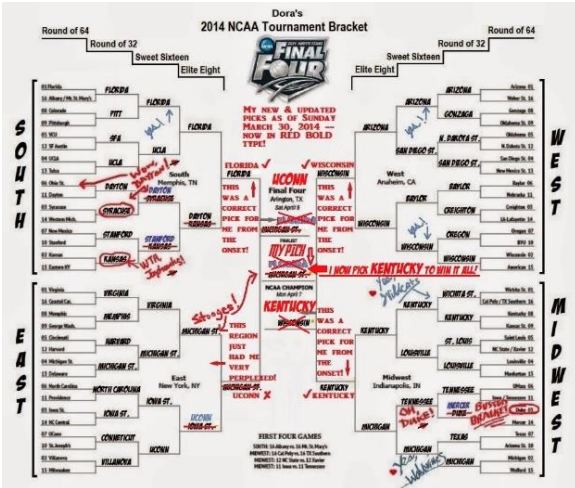
Financial aid is now awarded on the basis of financial information from the “Prior-Prior” year. That means two calendar years before you will enroll at college – 2019 for you.

1. **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** – All colleges require this. It determines eligibility for all forms of Federal Aid, including Pell grants, work study and loans, and the Mass grant program. File the FAFSA at fafsa.ed.gov after October 1st of the senior year and before your earliest financial aid deadline. Many colleges require it before awarding merit scholarships.
2. **The CSS (College Scholarship Service) PROFILE** – Many private colleges, some scholarship programs and a few public colleges require this form. Available on October 1, it is accessible online only, at collegeboard.org. Check individual college websites and the Profile website to see which colleges require it and which also require the Non-custodial Profile in cases of divorce. There is a fee for filing the Profile, but most low-income families get an automatic fee waiver.
3. **Institutional Forms** – Some colleges have their own aid forms in addition to those listed above.
4. **Verification Letter** - Sometimes colleges send students a request for the forms associated with the FAFSA and or CSS Profile. They are verifying that the information you submitted is accurate. Do not ignore this communication or you risk losing your financial aid award.

➤ Loan Repayment:

- ❖ Families should discuss financing college, including loans, beginning in the junior year so they can plan their college lists according to their financial situation. Many students must borrow substantially to attend a four-year college. think about repaying the loans you will take. The interest rate for the government’s Direct Stafford Loan program changes each year. It is currently 5.05%.
- ❖ There are limits on the amount that can be borrowed under the direct loan program each year, and the loans are available for a total of only 12 full-time semesters.
- ❖ Freshmen can borrow up to \$5,500; sophomores \$6,500 and juniors and seniors \$7,500, bringing the total to \$27,000 over four years.
- ❖ Depending on a family’s financial profile, interest on these loans is either subsidized by the federal government while a student is in college, or it is unsubsidized and must be paid by the borrower or rolled into the loan principal. The standard repayment period is ten years. Each monthly payment on the \$27,000 bill would be close to \$300. (For each \$10,000 borrowed, expect to pay about \$100 per month for ten years.)
- ❖ Students who need more than the maximums above must get additional, cosigned, higher interest, loans through MEFA or banks. If parents are found to be ineligible for a loan, colleges are permitted to add an unsubsidized \$4,000 each year. For these students, the total borrowed under the direct Stafford loan program in four years can be up to \$43,000.
- ❖ Students who take federal loans must pay them back even if they did not complete the courses they borrowed the funds for. Students who drop or fail classes use some of their Pell grant and/or federal loan eligibility with no college credit earned. Federal student loans do not disappear with bankruptcy.

Things Every Athlete Should Know



A word to the wise... Failure to communicate meaningfully with your high school and college coaches is the biggest mistake that ARHS students make in the recruitment process. ***Start early. Do not assume anything.***

Ask questions of coaches and do not be afraid to hear the answers. Coaches will express interest in many athletes. They have definite preferences among potential recruits. You have a right to know, and should ask, where you fit in the coaches recruitment queue. If you are not a top recruit, you should know it and continue to vigorously pursue other programs. Students who remain unaware that they are not a top recruit because they didn't ask the difficult questions often find that they have to find a college at which they can "walk on."

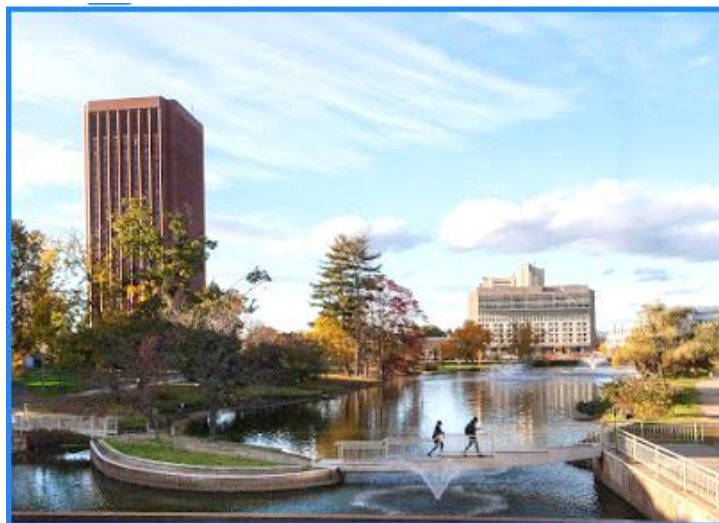
College is more than athletics. When looking for colleges at which to participate in athletics, consider far more than the team. Look for the right academic and social fit first. Does that college have majors or programs that interest you? Consider whether you would want to be enrolled at that college if you were no longer able to play due to injury. Hopefully, you will be making a 4-year decision.

Establish NCAA eligibility. All students who apply to DI and D2 colleges hoping to participate in athletics must be approved by the NCAA Eligibility Center. College coaches need to be certain that a student will meet the qualifications under the NCAA guidelines. Consult www.eligibilitycenter.org for complete information about eligibility. Download the [Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete](#). The NCAA considers only grades from a core of 16 academic courses, using a sliding scale between GPA and standardized test scores to determine eligibility. Standards are higher in Division I where a minimum GPA of 2.3 is required. Only whole letter grades are considered, no plus and minus grades. The ARHS GPA will not resemble the NCAA GPA!

Apply for eligibility at www.eligibilitycenter.org during the spring of junior year.

- There is a registration fee. Fee waivers are available for students on the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. You may request one when registering with NCAA. **You must notify a guidance secretary that you have requested a waiver in order for it to be processed.**
- **NCAA registration involves several steps:**
 - a) On eligibilitycenter.org:
 - 1) Complete the registration
 - 2) complete the amateurism survey.
 - b) In Naviance: request that we send your transcript to the NCAA (“colleges/transcripts/request transcripts for scholarships or athletics).
 - c) Send your SAT or ACT scores officially from the testing companies to the NCAA (code 9999).
 - d) At the end of your senior year, complete a second amateurism survey and request that we send your final transcript to the NCAA after you graduate.

Massachusetts State Schools and UMASS Minimum Admissions Requirements



This section will give you a good idea of average state requirements for college. Many schools throughout the country will be more selective; others will be less selective. Regardless of what kind of schools you believe you'll pursue, give this section a read to get thinking about the kinds of requirements you might see as you apply to colleges.

The minimum undergraduate admissions standards for the state universities and UMass campuses were established for several primary reasons: first, to emphasize the importance of successfully completing a rigorous academic course of study in high school (example MassCore, a recommended program of studies that includes specific numbers and types of courses across academic subjects); second, to ensure that students are well prepared to begin college courses and their path to degree; and third, to increase consistency of undergraduate admissions across the state universities and UMass campuses.

Again, these standards are **minimum requirements**. Eligibility for undergraduate admission is not an entitlement of admission for any applicant; as such, meeting the minimum standards does not guarantee admission, since admissions officers consider a wide range of factors when reviewing students' applications, and the state universities and UMass campuses can establish additional requirements. For information about any additional requirements, please contact the admissions office at the institution(s) to which the student is interested in applying.

Note: These standards do not apply to the community colleges, which implement open admissions and enrollment policies. For additional information about admissions policies at the community colleges, please contact the admissions office at the institution(s) to which you are interested in applying.

FRESHMAN APPLICANTS

The admissions standards for freshmen applicants at Massachusetts' public four-year institutions have three primary components:

1. Successful completion of required academic courses in specific subjects; and
2. A minimum average and weighted grade point average (GPA) earned in high school level academic courses; and
3. The submission of SAT or ACT scores. For Fall 2016 and 2017 a small number of Massachusetts State Universities and UMass campuses are participating in a TEST Optional pilot. Bridgewater and Salem State Universities, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, UMass Boston, and UMass Lowell are participating in a SAT TEST Optional pilot. For further information, contact the admissions office at these institutions.

ACADEMIC COURSE REQUIREMENT

All freshman applicants are required to successfully complete the following courses in each academic subject over their four years of high school. Beginning with the Fall of 2017 and beyond, applicants are required to have completed 17 courses.

- English: 4 courses
- Mathematics: 4 courses (Algebra I & II and Geometry or Trigonometry, or comparable coursework) including mathematics during the final year of high school
- Sciences: 3 courses (from Natural Science and/or Physical Science and/or Technology Engineering), including 3 courses with laboratory work
- Social Sciences: 2 courses (including 1 course in U.S. History)
- Foreign Language: 2 courses (in a single language); note: American Sign Language (ASL) is a foreign Language
- Electives: 2 courses (from the above subjects or from the Arts & Humanities or Computer Sciences)

If a high school designates a course as a comparable mathematics course or designates a science course as a science laboratory course, college admissions officers must accept that the course meets the above requirements. Technology and Engineering course should be identified and High school transcripts should clearly indicate that the course(s) are mathematics or science courses.

MINIMUM GPA REQUIREMENT

The minimum average GPA for freshman applicants, weighted for accelerated (Honors and Advanced Placement) courses, is 3.0 for both the state universities and the UMass campuses. Detailed information about calculating the weighted GPA is presented in the Appendix, pages 13 - 18. Calculating the weighted GPA is a process conducted by admissions office and does not reflect policies and practices in place in high schools.

This GPA is based on all academic courses completed and grades received for courses in which the student is currently enrolled (for example, mathematics courses in which the student is enrolled during the senior year of high school).

SAT/ACT SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

All freshman applicants who are within three years of their high school graduation must submit their SAT scores (for Critical Reading and Mathematics) or ACT scores.

Note: A small number of Massachusetts State Universities and UMass campuses are participating in a test optional pilot. UMass Boston, UMass Lowell, Bridgewater State University, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, and Salem State University allow SAT test optional. For further information, contact the admissions office at these institutions.

All freshman applicants (including international) who meet the minimum average weighted GPA of 3.0 and are within three years of their high school graduation must submit their SAT scores or ACT scores. International freshman students may be exempt if it is not possible to take these tests due to extreme hardship.

For freshman applicants (including international) who do not meet the minimum weighted 3.0 GPA requirement, they must earn the following SAT or ACT scores in order to be eligible for admission.

NOTE: AN APPLICANT WITH A HIGH SCHOOL MINIMUM WEIGHTED GPA BELOW 2.0 MAY NOT BE ADMITTED TO A STATE UNIVERSITY OR UMASS UNDERGRADUATE CAMPUS.

SAT TOTAL SCORE SLIDING TABLES FOR STATE UNIVERSITIES

SAT Score Sliding Scale Tables for University of Massachusetts

Table 2: SAT Test Administration After March 2016

Required SAT or ACT scores for first-year applicants to UMass

Campuses Weighted Average GPA	Combined SAT Score (Evidenced Based Reading & Writing and Mathematics)	ACT Score
2.51 - 2.99	1030	20
2.41 - 2.50	1070	21
2.31 - 2.40	1110	22
2.21 - 2.30	1140	23
2.11 - 2.20	1180	24
2.00 - 2.10	1220	25

SAT Total Score Sliding Scale Table for State Universities

Table 3: SAT Administration After March 2016

Required SAT or ACT Scores for first-year applicants to State Universities

Campuses Weighted Average GPA	Combined SAT Score (Evidenced Based Reading & Writing and Mathematics)	ACT Score
2.51 - 2.99	990	19
2.41 - 2.50	1030	20
2.31 - 2.40	1070	21
2.21 - 2.30	1110	22
2.11 - 2.20	1140	23
2.00 - 2.10	1180	24

EXCEPTION ALLOWANCES

➤ APPLICANTS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

An English language learner or limited English proficient student is defined as a student who does not speak English (or whose native language is not English) and is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English, or a student who was identified as an English language learner or limited English proficient student at any point during his or her high school career. Students who were English language learners during high school must complete all required high school level academic courses with two exceptions:

- They may substitute up to two academic electives based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for the two required foreign language courses; and
- They may substitute up to two years of English as a Second Language courses for English courses.

➤ APPLICANTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES

Applicants with professionally diagnosed and documented learning disabilities (documentation must include diagnostic test results) are exempt from taking standardized tests for admission to any public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth. However, these applicants must complete all required academic courses and earn a minimum average GPA of 3.0 or present other evidence of the potential for academic success.

Note: an applicant with learning or other disabilities may substitute two academic electives based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for the two required foreign language courses if s/he has submitted to the high school the results of an evaluation, completed within the past three years, that indicates a specific diagnosis of a learning disability that affects the ability to learn a foreign language.

This policy frames minimum standards for admission to Massachusetts state universities and UMass. Meeting minimum standards for admissibility does not guarantee admission for any applicant. The final decision on accepting an applicant rests with the individual campus.



Resources

The College Board provides valuable tools to help you improve your test scores, make a plan for the next few years, and learn a great deal about college in general as well as admissions and financial aid.

Look at collegeboard.org to connect to Khan Academy for SAT practice and support and to see how “Big Future,” can be useful to you.

BIG FUTURE (www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org) is a comprehensive College Board tool at which you should take a look. You can look through the useful written and video information provided and create a personal profile by answering a few simple questions. Below is the list of links available on this website.

➤ **Find Colleges:**

- College 101
- Finding Your College Fit
- Scholarships and Grants
- Campus Life
- Academic Life
- Campus Visit Guide
- College Search
- Compare Colleges

➤ **Explore Colleges**

- College Majors
- Careers
- Major and Career Search

➤ **Pay for College:**

- Financial Aid 101
- College Costs
- Scholarships and Grants
- Paying Your Share
- Financial Aid Awards
- Loans
- Tools and Calculators
- CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®

➤ **Get In**

- Applying 101
- Your High School Record
- Testing
- Essays
- Interviews
- Making A Decision



Planning Resources on the Web		
FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIPS		
CSS Profile	Financial aid application required by many private and some public colleges	css.collegeboard.org
FAFSA	Free Application for Student Aid – required application of federal and college based financial aid	Fafsa.ed.gov
FAFSA4caster	Predict Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for college costs. Provides instant calculation of an estimated federal EFC, early information about student's potential to receive a Federal Pell Grant, automatic transfer of student information to reduce time needed to complete the FAFSA during senior year.	www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov
FastWeb Scholarship Service	Database of 180,000 private scholarships. Free search using online profile	www.fastweb.com
Federal Student Aid Gateway	U.S. Dept. of Education. Federal Student Aid Gateway: comprehensive site containing links to publications and informational sites and the FAFSA.	www.studentaid.ed.gov
High Five Scholarship	A website created to help you find free money for college	www.highfivescholarships.com
MyinTuition	Quick College Cost Guide – Designed by a Wellesley College Economics Professor	https://myintuition.org/
My Scholly	College scholarship app created by a high school student, Christopher Gray. He WON Shark Tank!!! Now 'Lil Nas X is a sponsor.	https://myscholly.com/
Net Price Calculator	Search for each college's Net Price Calculator - Net price calculators are available on a college's or university's website and allow prospective students to enter information about themselves to find out what students like them paid to attend the institution in the previous year, after taking grants and scholarship aid into account.	https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price
Scholarsnap	Database with a common application form created in conjunction with the Common Application	www.scholarsnapp.org
Student Guide to Financial Aid	The most comprehensive source of student financial aid information, advice and tools.	www.finaid.org
GAP YEAR		
AmeriCorps	AmeriCorps offers a variety of service opportunities, as near as Greenfield as far as Los Angeles from the classroom to the outdoors. No matter what you're passionate about, AmeriCorps is your chance to be the greater good. Check out this video for a quick rundown, share with your networks, and encourage others to find an AmeriCorps opportunity. Earn a low interest education loan after your term of service.	https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/what-ameriCorps
GapYear	Information about Gap Year Cultural Exchange Voluntary Work Abroad	yearoutgroup.org
Gap Year Fairs	National circuit of events that bring together reputable Gap Year organizations, interested students and parents. Events provide students with a broad exposure to Gap Year Programs and the opportunity for conversations with the people who work in the field.	usagapyearfairs.org
Internship Year	Hands-on gap year program for students who want to learn differently. Array of real-world activities -- adventure challenge; full-time internships; residential life	dynamy.org

GENERAL College & Career Planning		
Best College Fit	Excellent weekly blog by the author of The Admission Game. Peter VanBuskirk	BestCollegeFit.Com
College Board	Comprehensive collection of information. Allows you to calculate ballpark figure for expected parent contribution. Online CSS PROFILE. Free SAT Learning Center. College and scholarship search. Practical advice on the college application process.	www.collegeboard.org
Cappex.com	Create a profile to find your college match. Get messages about unique college opportunities. Instantly learn your chances of being admitted to almost any college in the country. It is free.	www.cappex.com
Campus Tours	This site links you to virtual tours, interactive campus maps, webcams, videos, and campus pictures of hundreds of U.S. colleges and universities.	www.campustours.com
Campus Pride Index	The free online tool allows prospective students, families/parents and those interested in higher education to search a database of LGBTQA-friendly campuses who have come out to improve the academic experience and quality of campus life.	http://www.campusprideindex.org/
College Confidential	College-bound community on the web with pertinent articles and discussion forum. TAKE IT WITH A GRAIN OF SALT!	www.collegeconfidential.com
College Essay Guy	Great website that outlines the college process, college essay, early decision and early action, financial aid, etc. Wonderful podcasts and resources. Lots of free resources. Some for fee.	https://www.collegeessayguy.com/
College Greenlight	Great college access site for First Generation College Students	https://www.collegegreenlight.com/
Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success	Website application to 90 elite colleges and universities.	www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org
College Navigator	US government site -- offers information about colleges and universities. Get data from the National Center for Education Statistics on expenses, aid, enrollment, admissions and graduation rates, majors, along with a Google map pinpointing location. Export data into Excel. College Scorecard	http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/
Chetty College Mobility (New York Times)	Economic Diversity and Student Outcomes at America's Colleges and Universities.	https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/ NYT Article https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/opinion/sunday/american-great-working-class-colleges.html
College Guide for Undocumented Students	There are many national programs and state laws that allow undocumented students to attend the college of their choosing. The following guide aims to help these students navigate the many exciting options available to them, in order to reach their educational goals.	https://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/undocumented-students-guide/
Colleges That Change Lives	Contains articles about forty mostly liberal arts colleges selected for excellence by the late NY Times Loren Pope	ctcl.org
College Score Card Federal Government	Compare colleges by graduation rates, earnings, costs.	collegescorecard.ed.gov

GENERAL College & Career Planning (con't)		
CollegeWeekLive.com	Virtual Booths for 200+ colleges and universities. Live video presentations from college admissions experts, Chats with current college students discussing their school experience Archive and live. Registration is free.	www.CollegeWeekLive.com
Diversity Fly-In Programs	Travel assistance for getting to campuses – apply in the spring and summer.	https://getmetocollege.org/what-colleges-look-for/2019-fall-diversity-visit-programs
The Dream US	A list of links, toolkits, guides, references and other information pertinent to DREAMers	https://www.thedream.us/resources/education/
EdTrust	An interactive, user friendly Web tool designed to provide information about college climate and graduation rates for nearly any four-year college or university in the country.	http://www.collegeresults.org/
Get Me to College	GET ME TO COLLEGE provides all kinds of college admissions and college success advice. College survival tips too!	https://getmetocollege.org/
Hispanic Serving Institutions	Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are defined in Title V of the Higher Education Act as not-for-profit institutions of higher learning with a full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25 percent Hispanic. The federal definition can be found here.	https://www.hacu.net/assnfe/CompanyDirectory.asp?STYLE=2&COMPANY_TYPE=1,5&SEARCH_TYPE=0
HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities)	"...any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary [of Education] HBCUs offer all students, regardless of race, an opportunity to develop their skills and talents.	https://hbculifestyle.com/list-of-hbcu-schools/
University of Massachusetts	Listing of programs for MA state universities and colleges.	https://www.massachusetts.edu/
MEFA (MA Educational Financing Authority)	Best site for one-stop shopping. An excellent comprehensive site about the admissions process, financial aid, loans, debt management, includes calculator, parent-email sign-up and links to many important sites.	www.Mefa.org
National Association for College Admissions Counseling	Multiple excellent resources on all aspects of the college admissions process.	www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/ForStudents/
NCAA Eligibility Center	Students planning to participate in Division 1 or 2 athletics must register here. This site also contains a guide that lists eligibility and core-course requirements, plus recruiting regulations, graduation rates for athletes and academic support services available at colleges.	www.ncaaclearinghouse.net/NCAA/student/index_student.html
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: International Student sites about funding:		
http://www.InternationalStudent.com http://www.InternationalScholarships.com http://www.IEFA.org http://www.InternationalStudentLoan.com		

SUMMER PROGRAMS:		
Coops/Internships on the Web	Provides list of summer opportunities, many paid, in STEM fields, particularly life sciences	https://people.rit.edu/~gtfsbi/Symp/highschool.htm
Summer program finder	Includes search for opportunities in multiple fields	http://summerprogramfinder.com/find-a-summer-program/
UMass pre-college summer programs	List of varied summer academic opportunities at UMass for day and residential students	https://www.umass.edu/summer/programs/academic-programs
Other pre-college summer programs	Varied list of summer opportunities, described, chosen in part by cost.	https://www.valuecolleges.com/ranking/best-pre-college-summer-programs/
Comprehensive, annotated listing		http://www.internationalcounselor.org/summer2/Summer_Omnibus/Academic_programs.html
TESTING:		
ACT Academy	Official free, comprehensive test preparation site of the ACT	academy.act.org
ACT	Contains everything there is to know about the ACT college admission test – registration, dates locations	actstudent.org
Brian Leaf	Local author and test preparer offering workshops	brianleaf.com
Kaplan Test Prep	Free and fee test preparation products and classes and many college guidebooks	www.kaptest.com
Method Test Prep	Free SAT and ACT online test prep, available through Naviance account	www.mtp.com
Princeton Review	Free and fee test preparation products and classes and many college guidebooks	princetonreview.com
SAT/ACT Prep Program	An online free SAT/ACT prep program	www.number2.com
SAT/KHAN Academy	Partnership for test prep.	www.khanacademy.org/sat

2020 SCHEDULE OF IMPORTANT EVENTS FOR JUNIORS

ARHS CEEB and ACT Code:220015

STUDENTS MUST SEND SCORES DIRECTLY TO COLLEGES THEMSELVES USING ACT.ORG OR COLLEGEBOARD.ORG

SAT Test Dates 2020 (U.S.)			
Test Date	Normal Deadline	Late Registration	Online Scores
March 14, 2020 @ ARHS (no subject tests)	February 14, 2020	Feb 25, 2020	March 3, 2020
May 2, 2020 @ Northampton HS	April 3, 2020	April 14, 2020	April 21, 2020
June 6, 2020 @ ARHS	May 8, 2020	May 19, 2020	January 27, 2020
August 29, 2020 @ ARHS	TBA	TBA	TBA

ACT Test Dates 2020 (U.S.)			
Test Date	Normal Deadline	Late Registration	Scores release begins online
February 8, 2020	January, 10 2020	Jan 17, 2020	Feb 18; March 3, 2020
April 4, 2020	February 29, 2020	Mar 26, 2020	April 14; April 28, 2020
June 13, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 25, 2020	June 23; July 7, 2020
July 18, 2020	June 19, 2020	Jun 29, 2020	July 28; August 11, 2020

2020 Fall Anticipated SAT Dates

- August 29, 2020
- October 3, 2020
- November 7, 2020
- December 5, 2020
- March 13, 2020

2020 Fall ACT Dates

- September 11, 2020
- October 23, 2020
- December 11, 2020
- February 5, 2020

- ❖ **Students on free/reduced lunch can get SAT fee waivers through the late registration period. For the ACT, they must pay late fee, but registration fee is waived through late registration.**
- ❖ Photos must be uploaded as part of SAT and ACT registration.
- ❖ Registration for SAT Online “waitlist status” begins after late registration and continues until five days before test date.
- ❖ ACT Online registration for “stand-by” testing begins after late registration and continues until eight days before test date.
- ❖ Both waitlist and stand-by have large extra fees and no guarantees!
- ❖ All test dates are Saturdays. You have nine days from the test date to send your scores for free.
- ❖ Multiple choice scores released before essay scores.
- ❖ **STUDENTS MUST SEND SCORES DIRECTLY TO COLLEGES THEMSELVES USING ACT.ORG OR COLLEGEBOARD.ORG**

End of January	Complete the Class of 2021 Questionnaire for <i>Junior & Senior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting</i> in Naviance (title). Students may have a school counselor or liaison who assign a different survey – generally for those who are not considering four-year schools.
End of January	Juniors considering applying to four- and two-year schools - Complete the Corsava College Card Sort FIRST to think deeply about what is important to you for college! Corsava College Card Sort https://cloud.corsava.com/student/setup?id=ey18643
End of January	College & Career Advisor, Deidre Cuffee-Gray - Visits to Junior Social Studies Classes – College and Career Exploration
February	Advisory – Introduction to college and career search process
February 6th	Earliest date to schedule your Junior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting. Required: Class of 2021 Questionnaire for <i>Junior & Senior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting</i>
February 17 –21	February vacation – great time to begin college visits. Choose variety of institution-types to experience contrasts. Consider carpooling and/or the 5 College & Springfield/Worcester Areas if you cannot travel far.
February 8	ACT (not at ARHS)
February 26 6-8pm	Class of 2021 – College Planning Roundtable – ARHS Library
March 14	SAT at ARHS (Subject tests not offered)
Considering Applying Early Decision or Action?	Schedule a school counselor recommendation meeting for April or May. <i>Please Note: You might receive an email from the ARHS College and Career Advisor, Ms. Cuffee-Gray if she is going to write your school counselor recommendation.</i>
April 6 (Monday)	Springfield National College Fair; Big E, W. Springfield (6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.). Over 200 colleges attend. Register at gotomyncf.com/nacac.asp - avoid filling out registration cards at tables!
April 4	ACT (not at ARHS)
April 13-21	School vacation – great time to visit researched, targeted colleges.
April 25 (Thursday)	Teacher recommendation information distributed via e-mail to juniors. Advisory about recommendations
May 2	SAT & subject tests (Northampton HS)
May 6 (Wednesday)	Evening meeting for juniors and families. Current seniors will share their experiences in planning for college admission/financial aid. ARHS auditorium, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. BE THERE!
May 4-8	Teacher recommendation request week – not first come, first served
May 11-15	Teachers respond to recommendation requests
June 6	SAT and Subject Tests (at ARHS)
June 13	ACT (not at ARHS)
Summer vacation	Great time to visit many colleges. Schedule interviews at those of high-interest. Narrow your list. Apply for Diversity Fly-Ins or Travel Vouchers (https://getmetocollege.org/what-colleges-look-for/2019-fall-diversity-visit-programs) Draft college essays (https://www.collegeessayguy.com/college-essay-resources).
July 18	ACT (not at ARHS)
August 29	SAT and Subject tests at ARHS.
Summer Before Senior year	Update Class of 2021 Questionnaire for Junior & Senior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting . This update is required for the Senior Family College/Life After ARHS Planning Meeting! Important: Parents and Guardians are encouraged to complete their survey as well.
Early senior year	Handbook and other important materials distributed to seniors.