

## COLLEGE COUNSELING SPRING TIMELINE FOR JUNIORS (Class of 2019)

### Testing

- In general, students should take college entrance exams in the spring of the junior year and re-take the exams in the fall of the senior year. Seniors should finish testing by December at the latest.
  - Use results from your junior year PSAT to help prepare you for the SAT. You may also use paper publications (*Official Student Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT*, *The SAT Preparation Booklet*), the College Board website (*My College QuickStart\**, *Preparing for the SAT*), and test prep programs to assist your preparation (AMHS SAT prep classes, Princeton Review, Kaplan, Sandweiss, etc.). The standard SAT is comprised of 3 tests: Reading, Writing and Language, & Math. Most colleges use only the scores from Reading, Writing and Language, & Math in their admission evaluations; however, many colleges do look at the optional Essay score (SAT with Essay) and compare it to the quality of the submitted application essay.
  - The ACT is another option for submitting required standardized test scores to colleges. Information about this test can be found at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). The ACT is a curriculum-based achievement test so it is more closely aligned with what you are actually learning in school. The ACT is comprised of 4 tests: English, Reading, Math & Science plus an optional Writing test.
  - When registering for the ACT, we recommend that you include the Writing test which will require an additional fee. Although not all colleges use the writing score as part of their criteria, some do and others would simply like to see the score.
  - Check testing requirements for all the colleges you are considering on applying to and see if they require or recommend the SAT Subject Tests in addition to the SAT. These are single subject, one-hour achievement tests. **Please note:** you cannot take the SAT and SAT Subject Tests on the same day.
  - At the time you register for the SAT, you can select 4 colleges (or other organizations such as the NCAA Eligibility Center or scholarship programs) where you would like to send your scores; this is included in the cost of the exam. Any additional score reports &/or score reports sent after testing will require an additional fee.
  - College Board offers an option called Score Choice for submitting SAT scores to colleges. This option, at no additional cost, allows students to choose the SAT scores by sitting (test date) and SAT Subject Test scores by individual test that they send to colleges. Scores from an entire SAT test will be sent—scores of individual sections from different sittings cannot be selected independently for sending. Students can send any or all scores to a college on a single report—it will not cost more to send one, multiple or all test scores. (Please note: typically, when colleges receive multiple scores for the student, they will select your best individual scores. But some, like the University of Washington, take your best sitting. There may still be a few schools that average your scores. Also, some universities might require that you send all of your scores from multiple test dates.)
  - It is the student's responsibility to have all test scores sent to colleges directly from College Board (SAT) and ACT. Test scores are not included as part of the AMHS transcript.
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- ACT website [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).  
Remaining 2017-2018 Test Dates: April 14, June 9, & July 14  
**2018-2019 Test Dates:**

April 14	(Reg. Deadline: March 9th)
June 9	(Reg. Deadline: May 4th)
July 14	(Reg. Deadline: June 15th)
Sept. 8	(Reg. Deadline: Aug. TBA )
Oct. 27	(Reg. Deadline: Sept. TBA )
Dec. 8	(Reg. Deadline: Nov. TBA )
Feb. 9	(Reg. Deadline: Jan. TBA)

- SAT website [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).  
Remaining 2017-2018 Test Dates: May 5 and June 2

**2018-2019 Test Dates :**

- May 5 (Reg. Deadline: April 6th)
- June 2 (Reg. Deadline: May 3rd)
- Aug. 25 (Reg. Deadline: July TBA )
- Oct. 6 (Reg. Deadline: Sept. TBA )
- Nov. 3 (Reg. Deadline: Oct. TBA )
- Dec. 1 (Reg. Deadline: Nov. TBA)
- March 9 (Reg. Deadline: Feb. TBA)

Typically, SAT tests are offered for all of the above dates

Typically SAT Subject Tests are offered for all dates excluding March

**SAT Answer Reporting Services**

College Board offers one or the other of the following services for every SAT test taken (not available for SAT Subject Tests). You may order either of these services at the time you sign up for the SAT, or up to 5 months after you have taken the SAT.

- The **Question-and-Answer Service (QAS)** is a test disclosure service offered for testing scheduled in October, January and May. It includes a booklet copy of the test you took, with a table of correct answers and scoring information. For each question, it also tells you about the type, level of difficulty, what your answer was, and whether it was correct, incorrect or omitted. There is a cost for **QAS**.
- The **Student Answer Service (SAS)** is a service that provides you a report with information about the type of questions on your test, their level of difficulty and whether your answers were correct, incorrect or omitted. There is a cost for **SAS**. It is offered for any SAT test for which **QAS** is not offered. **Please Note:** Actual test questions and answers are not included.

**My College QuickStart \***

- Because you took the PSAT in 2016, you have access to My College QuickStart, a personalized college and career planning kit designed by the College Board. To sign in, you will first need to create a free College Board account with a user name and password. You will also use this account to register for the SAT and to send scores to colleges.
- To open My College QuickStart, you will need the access code printed on your PSAT/NMSQT paper score report. (You may also get the code from your counselor.)

**My College QuickStart includes these features:**

- My Online Score Report – An enhanced score report that allows you to review each test question, your answer, and the correct answer with answer explanations.
- My SAT Study Plan – A customized SAT study plan based on your PSAT/NMSQT test performance, highlighting skills for review and practice.
- My College Matches – A starter list of colleges based on your home state and indicated choice of major. Access to My College Matchmaker which includes information on all of the two and four-year colleges in the U.S.
- My Major & Career Matches – Personalized lists of majors and careers plus access to a personality assessment that suggests other compatible possibilities.

**College Search during spring of Junior Year**

- Attend the **PNACAC Spring College Fair** at Seattle University Connolly Center on Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 12:00 to 3:00 PM.
- **Visit college campuses.** This allows you to introduce yourself to admissions counselors and to see how you feel on the campus and in the environment. Make a list of questions beforehand that you want answered. (**See Talking with College Admission Representatives and Visiting College Campuses** online in the AMHS Senior

- Other resources include: checking out individual college web sites; visiting the College Board and ACT websites; consulting college guides such as *Peterson's*, *College Board*, *The Princeton Review*, *Fiske Guide to Colleges*; looking for articles in publications such as *U.S. News & World Report* including their annual college edition published in the fall.
- **Before the end of the school year, make an appointment with your counselor** to talk about the colleges you are considering. Ask your counselor if the schools appear to be good fits for you based upon admission decisions made in 2016 and 2017. Make a list of 5-10 schools, all of which you would be happy to attend. Make sure that you have one or two schools on your list where you are sure to be accepted. Don't be afraid to stretch yourself in terms of selectivity and geographic location.
- Be aware that colleges frequently seek students to round out their community. They may be trying to balance gender, increase racial or geographical diversity, recruit students for special programs like athletics or performing arts. They will look for desirable qualities such as leadership, faith life, community service, and most importantly, good character.
- **College search should begin with introspective reflection. You should spend time thinking about your academic interests and defining your educational goals. By asking yourself reflective questions, you will gain a better understanding of your likes and dislikes, your needs and values, your strengths and weaknesses. Choosing a college to attend goes beyond meeting academic needs; you must also consider your personal needs. Factors to consider include geographic location, nature of the student population, clubs and athletics, opportunities for internships and study abroad, spiritual organizations, housing options, cost, and options to fulfill your personal interests and hobbies.**

### Athletics

Students who are interested in participating in athletics at the Division I or Division II level must follow the NCAA guidelines. Information is available at the NCAA Eligibility Center. (Go to [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) and click on the Eligibility Center tab.) A transcript through the end of your junior year is required by the Eligibility Center in order to determine "initial eligibility." **Please Note:** You will be required to order an electronic copy of your transcript from Parchment ([www.Parchment.com](http://www.Parchment.com)) and have it sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center at the end of your junior year. In addition, students are responsible for ordering their test scores to be sent to the Eligibility Center from College Board or ACT, or they can code their registration for the SAT or ACT with 9999 to have scores sent directly.

### Activities, Community Service, & Summer Plans

- An important aspect of your college application is involvement in school activities and commitment to community service. Colleges will look with favor upon students who go over and beyond their required AMHS service hours, and who participate in school activities. Remember to complete and submit SPIN hours to Campus Ministry by May 1!
- Juniors often receive information in the mail pertaining to summer workshops related to leadership, medicine or law. Please see your counselor for guidance if you are interested in attending any of these offerings.
- Listen to the school bulletin for information about Girls and Boys State, Business Week and other summer leadership opportunities.
- Part-time jobs and summer travel are also ways to enhance personal growth and demonstrate responsibility.
- Look for opportunities to experience diversity—cultural, socio-economic, racial and geographic.

### Military Academy & ROTC Scholarship Applicants

- If you are interested in applying to a military academy and/or ROTC scholarship programs, make an appointment this spring to discuss the process with your counselor.
- Students applying to the **Military Academies** are required to submit pre-candidate questionnaires. This should be done by June. Details of the application procedure are available on the website of each military branch. Remember that all branches of the military recommend that you apply to all Academies.
- In most cases, you must receive a **nomination** in order to complete your application to a **Military Academy**. This will require you to contact the offices of our 2 U.S. senators and your congressional representative for nomination application packets. Nominations are also available from the Vice-President. [Please Note: sons &

daughters of career military personnel (active or reserve), deceased veterans, or 100% disabled veterans are eligible for military service connected nominations.] Nomination application packets should be completed no later than September of your senior year.

- If you plan to apply for **ROTC Scholarships**, access the websites of the military branch you are considering to check for application procedure and deadlines. Although December 1 is typically the final application deadline, each branch has earlier boards that begin making decisions. Applying early will enhance your chances of receiving a scholarship.

### **Looking Ahead to the College Application Process**

Please Note: Counselors will be meeting with Juniors in the spring to help you complete your senior profile in Family Connection. Also additional details of the college application process will be given to you next fall. Following are components of the application process which you might be interested in now.

#### *Senior Profile*

- The **AMHS Senior Profile** (located online in Family Connection) is required in order to obtain letters of recommendation from your teachers and counselor. The purpose of the **Senior Profile** is to assist those who will be writing college and scholarship recommendations for you. It includes information about your college choices, future goals, academics, activities, personal development and values. The effort you put into answering the questions and the insight you provide will help your recommenders to highlight your strengths and the qualities that distinguish you from other students.
- This spring, you will begin the process by personally asking two teachers to write recommendations for you. On the **Senior Profile**, you will be required to fill in their names and the required course information including your semester grades in courses you took from each teacher.
- Complete the **Senior Profile** which is available in Family Connection. It must be submitted in Family Connection no later than **October 1<sup>st</sup>** of your senior year. **While we encourage you to begin completing the Senior Profile this spring, please do not select "submit" in Family Connection until you include your summer activities.** (Please note: you may submit a preliminary version of your Senior Profile this spring if you are applying for summer programs or current scholarships that require recommendations.)
- Although not all colleges require recommendations (particularly 2-year colleges and most 4-year **public** colleges/universities), almost all seniors will need recommendations for at least one college or scholarship so plan to complete the **Senior Profile** by **October 1<sup>st</sup>** so that you won't be behind as application deadlines approach.

#### *Application Procedure*

- Completing the "Common Application" ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)) will save you a lot of time if you are applying to 2 or more of the 620+ colleges and universities that use the Common App. You will only need to complete one application, including one personal statement, and it can be sent to any of the participating schools. (**Please Note:** Some schools require supplemental information.) You will submit your portion of the application electronically. As part of the application process, you will make online requests to your counselor and the 2 teachers you listed on your Senior Profile to complete recommendations for you electronically. (**Please note that requests must be made through Family Connection Only**)
- Your **transcript** for colleges that you have specified in Family Connection will be sent electronically. Therefore it is very important that you keep your college selections up to date in Family Connection.
- **You will be responsible** for ordering official copies of your **SAT and/or ACT scores** to be sent to the colleges & universities you apply to. (For SATs, go to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org); for ACTs, go to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).)
- Keep in mind that colleges and universities charge application fees. These can mount up if you are applying to a lot of schools, so be discerning in your choices. Try to keep your list to 3-8 schools.

### *Personal Statement Essay or Required Topic Essay*

- The personal statement option provides an important opportunity to share a significant experience or relationship that has helped shape you into the person you are today and how this will impact your future.
- Required essay topics are frequently more abstract such as: an analysis of a person or event of historical importance & how this is relevant to you; a discussion of your philosophy regarding an ethical position or an issue of global concern; or an assignment requiring you to use both creative and analytic intelligence to solve a problem and then write about it.
- The topic and quality of your essay are important. Understand that admissions representatives read hundreds of essays. Get a head start by going to the Common Application website and college websites to identify required topic essays and personal statement options used as part of this year's applications.
- If you will be completing multiple styles of applications that require essays, choose a topic for your essay and short answers that you can use for most if not all of your schools. Remember that the college's purpose in requiring the essay is to learn about YOU.
- **In evaluating your essay, the college will listen for your voice. Your readers expect you not only to "illuminate" a decisive moment but also to "reflect" on it and "discern the impact" that this person, event or belief has had and will continue to have on your life.**

### **College Selection**

- If you apply to a college under the **Early Decision** plan, and if you are accepted, the acceptance is **binding** which means that you must then withdraw your applications to all other colleges you have applied to and attend the college where you were accepted **Early Decision** unless released by that institution.
- If you apply to a college under the **Early Action** or **Regular Decision** plans, you will have until **May 1 of your senior year** to make a decision about where you will attend college and to submit your deposit. This gives you a lot of time to consider your options including the amount of financial aid and scholarships you are offered.
- In your junior year, try to visit colleges you are considering during vacations or on non-school days. You may also arrange visits during fall of your senior year.
- Take advantage of special Open Houses for prospective students.
- **Realize that there is no single "perfect" school for you. Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each option and make an informed decision. The path we take in life is never linear; there are crossroads, divergent paths & curves with unlimited opportunities every step of the way.**

JUNIOR-SOPHOMORE PARENT COLLEGE NIGHT  
Wednesday, May 8, 2017  
7:00-8:50 PM  
AMHS Cafeteria