

# **MARINE SCIENCE MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL**



**2021-2022**

**GUIDE TO POST-SECONDARY  
PLANNING AND COLLEGE  
APPLICATIONS**

# **A LETTER FROM THE MSMHS SCHOOL**

## **COUNSELING OFFICE**

Dear Class of 2022,

Welcome to the craziest ride of your life to date: post-secondary planning! The good news is that although this is uncharted territory for you, your support system has just significantly increased. This is an opportunity for you to become closer with your family, friends, and of course school counselors!

As your school counselors, we are here for you and your family every step of the way during this process. Some of you may never have had a reason to come down to see us before, or perhaps you come down all the time for one reason or another. Regardless, you will quickly come to find that this is one of our absolute favorite aspects of our job. The bond that we build with you during this process is something we as counselors cherish. We ultimately have a front row seat as you set forth to achieve your goals and begin to grow into a more independent young adult.

The biggest take away that we want to deliver to you before you dive into reading this very long, very information packed, comprehensive packet is this: you never have to figure out anything alone. It is important that you do the work on your end by taking the time to read through what we have compiled, schedule time to follow up and talk to us about aspects that you may not understand, and keep in communication with us. There is no question too small, and never a time we will not be willing to connect and meet with you. Like we stated before, we LOVE helping you through this.

We are proud to be your school counselors and are grateful that we are able to guide you through the coming weeks and months. Our goal is to make the time that you have left at MSMHS a positive experience. We are always here for you (not in the way people just say it to say it) we MEAN it. We want the phone call, the email, the meeting. Anything that is weighing on you, reach out. We will put the hard work in together, because there is much to be done. However, we will try our best to remind you that there are always silver linings (especially in stressful situations) and to laugh a bit along the way because before you know it you will be walking across that stage thinking to yourself "is it really over?"

We are beyond excited to officially start this journey to your future together! So, without further ado, buckle up and enjoy the "light" reading that is about to come. You are all amazing, all unique, and there is a program for each of you out there that we will work diligently to help you find.

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# **COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE**

## **JUNIOR & SENIOR YEAR**

### **MARCH 2021**

- ☐ Create a spreadsheet to keep track of all post-secondary related passwords
  - Naviance, Collegeboard, Common Application, FAFSA, ACT, etc.
- ☐ Complete the following Naviance assessments/activities (*Must be done before your Junior Meeting*):
  - Do What You Are
  - Career Interest Profiler
  - College SuperMatch
- ☐ For prospective Division I or II student-athletes, register with NCAA

### **MARCH/APRIL 2021**

- ☐ Use Naviance and Collegeboard to research information about colleges
- ☐ Visit colleges/college websites
  - *If you can't visit in person, many colleges are providing opportunities to virtually visit. Go to each college's website to find information about virtual visits.*
- ☐ Participate in your scheduled Junior Post-Secondary Planning Meeting
- ☐ Begin or continue creating a list of colleges you are thinking about applying to.
  - *This list should be on the longer side and should have a variety of schools that fall in all three categories: safety, target, reach*
  - *Make sure to add these schools into your "Colleges I'm Thinking About List" on Naviance*
- ☐ Take state-required SAT (April 28<sup>th</sup>)

### **MAY/JUNE 2021**

- ☐ Register for and take the SAT or ACT, as needed, through the Collegeboard or ACT websites
- ☐ Take AP Exams (if applicable)
- ☐ Ask two teachers to write you letters of recommendations and complete the LOR form for each teacher.
- ☐ Begin to brainstorm topics for your college essay
- ☐ **Continue to:**
  - Use Naviance and Collegeboard to research information about colleges
  - Visit colleges/college websites
    - *In person or virtually through individual college website*
  - Work on updating your list of colleges you are thinking about applying to
    - *This list should be on the longer side and should have a variety of schools that fall in all three categories: safety, target, reach.*
    - *Make sure to add these schools into your "Colleges I'm Thinking About List" on Naviance*

### **SUMMER 2021**

- ☐ Review your social media for appropriate content
- ☐ Write your 650 word college essay
  - *It's a good idea to write a few essay drafts using different topics*
- ☐ Narrow down your long college list of good match schools to a *shorter list* of best match schools, with varying degrees of admission difficulty
  - *Remember to have schools that fall in all three categories: safety, target, reach*
  - *Update this list in Naviance under College's I'm Thinking About*
- ☐ Continue college visits (in person or virtually)
- ☐ Update and/or create resume
- ☐ Develop a portfolio, if applicable (*Usually only needed if you want to major in visual arts*)
- ☐ Create a Common Application Account

## **SEPTEMBER 2021**

- ☐ Students schedule individual post-high school planning meetings with school counselor
- ☐ Parents/Guardians attend *College Application Presentation* (Date/Time TBD)
- ☐ Register for SAT and/or ACT, if appropriate
- ☐ Meet with college representatives that visit MSMHS; visit dates posted on Naviance
- ☐ Schedule remaining college visits and interviews
- ☐ Finalize college list and update in Naviance
- ☐ Finish writing personal essay and seek feedback from teacher and/or school counselor
- ☐ Connect in person with teachers writing Formal Letters of Recommendation. Inform them when your first deadline is. Provide them with the "Letter of Recommendation" form. Then request the teacher in Naviance.
- ☐ Review your transcript for accuracy
- ☐ For prospective Division I or Division II athletes, register with NCAA and send official transcript and test scores
- ☐ Complete and send college applications for any schools with an *October 15<sup>th</sup>* deadline!

## **OCTOBER 2021**

- ☐ FAFSA Application Opens on *October 1<sup>st</sup>*! Complete this application as early as possible!
- ☐ Attend *Financial Aid Application Presentation* (Date/Time TBD)
- ☐ Check if your colleges require CSS/Profile Form for financial aid and complete if required
- ☐ Take School Day SAT (TBD)
- ☐ Complete applications and essays for early action deadlines (*first one is usually November 1<sup>st</sup>*)
- ☐ Finalize resume
- ☐ Finalize portfolio, if applicable (*Will mostly pertain to art majors*)
- ☐ Begin to look and apply for National Scholarships
  - You can find National scholarships through various websites we have listed in the scholarship section of the *MSMHS Guide to Post Secondary Planning & College Applications*

## **NOVEMBER 2021**

- ☐ Finalize and send college applications that have a deadline in November
  - First deadline in November is November 1<sup>st</sup>
- ☐ Request official SAT and/or ACT scores to be sent to the colleges you're applying to (*through collegeboard.org or act.org*)
- ☐ Early action and early decision applicants: *confirm colleges have received all of your application materials*
- ☐ If required, ask school counselor to send 1st quarter grades to early decision/early action/rolling colleges
- ☐ Continue to work on applications & essays for any schools with regular decision deadlines in December and January.
- ☐ Complete FAFSA (*and CSS Profile-if college requests it*) if you haven't done so already

## **DECEMBER 2021**

- ☐ Finalize and send applications with a deadline in December
- ☐ Inform your school counselor of early admission decisions
- ☐ Update your admission decisions in Naviance
- ☐ If admitted to your early decision college, withdraw other applications
- ☐ Write thank you notes to MSMHS staff who have written your letters of recommendation
- ☐ Continue to work on applications & essays for any schools with regular decision deadlines in January.

## **JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022**

- ☐ Finalize and send applications with a deadline in January

- ☐ Your school counselor will send your mid-year report (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter final grades) to all colleges you have applied to.
- ☐ Continue to look and apply for National Scholarships
  - You can find National scholarships through various websites we have listed in the scholarship section of the *MSMHS Guide to Post Secondary Planning & College Applications*
- ☐ Check your email and the Scholarship List in Naviance for information and applications for local scholarships!

### **MARCH/APRIL 2022**

- Review your admission decisions and financial aid offers with parents and school counselor
- Visit or revisit any college campuses you have been accepted to
- If you have been placed on waitlist, follow up appropriately
- Inform colleges that you will not be attending
- Complete local scholarship applications

### **MAY 2022**

- ☐ Make final decision & send deposit by May 1st
- ☐ Take AP exams, if applicable
- ☐ Complete Post-High School Information Survey on Naviance

### **JUNE 2022**

- ☐ GRADUATION!!!! YOU DID IT!



# **IMPORTANCE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

It is most important for every student to take an appropriately rigorous and personally challenging academic program. One reason is that the high school transcript is the single most important factor in the college admission process.

Admission committees assess a student's transcript based on their course selection, rigor of courses, grades earned, and their GPA (grade point average).

Admission standards vary based on the type of institution and its level of selectivity. Generally, the more selective an institution, the more that institution will demand from its applicants. Colleges may change admission requirements from year to year; obtain specific information directly from the college about its standards and policies.

## **MSMHS TRANSCRIPT & GPA**

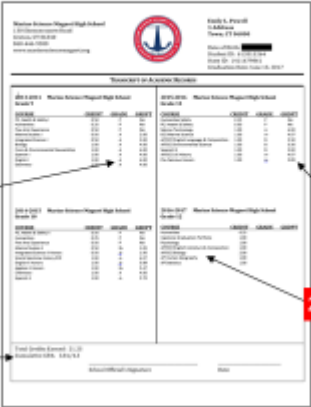
The MSMHS transcript displays final grades of all completed courses. Courses in progress are also listed on the transcript, without a grade. The transcript also contains a student's overall cumulative. The GPA is weighted and calculated on a 4.30 scale. Full details can be found on the MSMHS Profile.

Through the end of junior year, the GPA is calculated based on final grades for completed courses. Courses in progress are also listed on the transcript, without a grade. Since all courses at MSMHS are a full year, a student's GPA will not be recalculated until after graduation. However, we do send colleges your quarter 1 and quarter 2 final grades in mid-January. MSMHS does not assign class rank (with the exception of valedictorian and salutatorian).

### Understanding the MSMHS Transcript

Colleges will use your MSMHS transcript as one of the few deciding factors for your acceptance. Your transcript tells the following story:

1. GPA
2. Senior year courses currently being taken
3. The course grades for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> grade
4. The grade points earned





# MSMHS PROFILE

The School Profile is a comprehensive document describing MSMHS statistics, our grading system, and course offerings. Below is a sample of the MSMHS Profile. It is updated each fall and, along with your transcript, is sent to colleges by your school counselor.



## MARINE SCIENCE MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL 2021-2022 MSMHS Profile



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CEEB CODE: 070252 www.msmhs.com

**Tara Amaturo**  
Principal

**Colleen Hardison**  
Assistant Principal

**Jenna Schumacher**  
School Counselor

**Jennifer Janssen**  
School Counselor

### School and Community

MSMHS, established in 2011, is a 9-12, public magnet school operated by LEARN with 271 students who are accepted through an open, non-merit based, blind lottery that currently draws from 32 different middle schools. In 2018, MSMHS was awarded the CT State Department of Education School of Distinction Award for the Highest Overall Performance for a state record 5th time. MSMHS has ranked tops in the state amongst all public high schools on state standardized exams: Science CAPT (1st in '17) and SAT ELA (1st in '18). MSMHS has been recognized by US News & World Report as a 2018 Gold Medal High School, by Washington Post as the 2nd most challenging private or public high school in Connecticut and Newsweek ranked MSMHS as one of the top 500 high schools in the nation. In August 2016, MSMHS received full accreditation with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). MSMHS offers an extensive array of marine science themed programs and opportunities, as well as academically rigorous college preparatory opportunities that meet the needs of all students. Freshmen are heterogeneously placed in college-prep only courses with the exemption of AP Government for the class of 2023. Sophomore year, advanced levels of study are offered in Honors Algebra II and ECE Advanced Writing, ECE World Maritime History, and AP Environmental Science. Junior year, students enroll in AP and UConn Early College Experience (ECE) courses. Students must take foundational science courses that prepare them for AP and ECE science courses offered junior and senior year. Students participate in CIAC athletic programs at their sending district's high school.

### MSMHS Highlights

- 99% of all MSMHS graduates have gone on to a two/four year college/university. 75% - four-year, 25% - two-year
- MSMHS offers 19 AP and ECE courses in American Studies®, AP Art History, AP Biology, AP Calculus AB®, AP Calculus BC, AP Chemistry, AP Computer Science Principles, AP English Language®, AP English Literature®, AP Environmental Science®, Horticulture & Design®, Marine Science®, Maritime History®, AP Microeconomics, AP Psychology, Sea Around Us®, AP Spanish Language®, AP Statistics, AP US History (UConn credit)
- MSMHS received the DOE School of Distinction Award for Overall Performance in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, & 2018
- National Merit Scholarship Winner & 5 Semi-finalists since '16
- MSMHS awarded a Gold Medal by US News & World Report
- CoverCAn ranked MSMHS #1 high school in CT
- #2 overall most challenging private or public school in CT by Washington Post's Jay Matthews 2019 National Challenge Index
- Named a US News & World Report Gold Medal High School
- 5th Most Challenging Public HS in CT by Washington Post

### MSMHS Core Values and Beliefs Statement

MSMHS is a safe, respectful and nurturing environment. The MSMHS Family believes that *effort creates ability* and that *all students can succeed*. Our learning community is committed to innovative instruction that promotes effort and ensures academic rigor through a curriculum responsive to our diverse student body. Furthermore, the MSMHS community collaborates with all members to prepare students for post-secondary education by supporting the personal, academic, and career goals of every student. MSMHS inspires students to develop the mindset and character needed to be active stewards of the ocean and contributing citizens in a global community.

### Graduation Requirements: Total 25 credits

English	4.0	Aquaculture	1.0
Social Studies	3.0	PE/Health	2.0
Mathematics	4.0	Senior Portfolio	1.0
Science	5.0	Spanish	1.0
Marine Science	2.0	Arts/Electives	2.0

### Grade Point Average/Class Rank

Students are not ranked except for valedictorian and salutatorian. GPA is measured each semester and weighted according to the chart below:

Letter	Points	GPA	Honors	AP/ECE
A+	97-100	4.3	4.52	4.73
A	93-96	4.0	4.20	4.40
A-	90-92	3.7	3.89	4.07
B+	87-89	3.3	3.47	3.63
B	83-86	3.0	3.15	3.30
B-	80-82	2.7	2.84	2.97
C+	77-79	2.3	2.42	2.53
C	73-76	2.0	2.10	2.20
C-	70-72	1.7	1.79	1.87
D	65-69	1.0	1.05	1.1
F	Below 65	0.0	0.0	0.0

### Class of 2022 Students Taking AP/ECE Courses



### 2021 Student AP Test Score Distribution

5	4	3	2	1
13	32	45	73	56

AP courses are available to juniors and seniors. In May 2021, 91 students took a total of 219 AP exams in 14 AP subjects. Moreover, 42% of student scores were 3 or higher. All AP students are required to take AP exams.

### 2022 Best Magnet High Schools in Connecticut

Total # Magnet High Schools in CT: 34

Marine Science Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut

Connecticut IB Academy

The Academy of Information Technology & Engineering

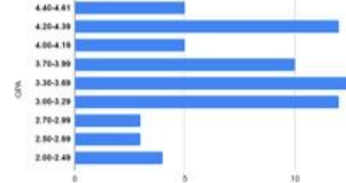
### MSMHS Class of 2022 SAT Scores to State Average

Spring 2021 of Junior Year

SAT Section	Score Average	State Average
Language Arts	570	509
Mathematics	543	494

### Class of 2022 Weighted Cumulative GPA through Junior Year

Total # Students: 67 Highest GPA: 4.81



College admission counselors use the school profile to understand the rigor of the school the applicant is currently attending in order to better understand their academic achievement in relation to applicants at other high schools.



# **TYPES OF POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS**

## **Two-Year Colleges**

You may choose to earn an associate's degree at a two-year institution, which is designed to prepare you for a job in fields such as business, health, technology, or public service, or to transfer after your first two years to a four-year institution. Graduates of Connecticut's community colleges who earn an associate's degree and have at least a 3.0 grade point average are guaranteed admission to any UConn campus through the Guaranteed Admissions Program (GAP). Connecticut Community College's also offer the CScU's Pathway Transfer Degree program that provides a direct pathway for transfer to Connecticut State Universities (Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western) and Charter Oak State College without losing any credits or being required to take extra credits in order to complete a bachelor's degree in that same discipline. Our local community college is Three Rivers, which is based in Norwich. There are also private two-year colleges where you can earn an associate's degree.

## **Four-Year Colleges & Universities**

Four-year colleges and universities lead to a bachelor's degree in a specific area of study, which can prepare students for a profession or graduate study. There are generally more extensive admission requirements than two-year colleges. Some four-year institutions are focused on visual and performing arts or technical areas.

## **Private Vocational Trade & Technical Schools**

A number of privately-owned schools provide vocational training. Areas of specialization include automotive, culinary, plumbing, electrical, cosmetology, and medical and technical training. These schools help students develop skills for a specific career. The Connecticut Technical College System offers a wide range of career-oriented courses. Primarily for commuters, none of Connecticut's Community or Technical Colleges offer campus housing. An example of a technical school that MSMHS students have applied to in the past is Lincoln Technical Institute which has a few different locations including New Britain, Shelton, and East Windsor.

## **The United States Service Academies & ROTC**

The U.S. service academies represent some of the country's best colleges, and all tuition, fees, room, and board is paid in exchange for five years of active duty upon graduation. If you're considering applying to an academy, there is a thorough procedure you must follow. Because of the extraordinary competition for academy selection, students are encouraged to apply to other less competitive colleges as well and inquire about any ROTC opportunities. There are five US Service Academies: *The United States Military Academy, The United States Naval Academy, The United States Coast Guard Academy, The United States Air Force Academy, and The United States Merchant Marine Academy*

ROTC stands for Reserve Officer Training Corps. It's a college program offered at thousands of colleges and universities across the United States that prepares young adults to become officers in the U.S. Military. To students who qualify, the ROTC programs offer scholarships that cover the cost of their education. In exchange, there is an expectation that students fulfill active duty services in their chosen branch of the Armed Forces.

## **Postgraduate (PG) Year**

A postgraduate year is also considered a transition between high school and college. During a PG year a student is typically provided with the academic resources and post-secondary guidance of boarding school quality. The students who generally benefit the most from a PG year are those that need to boost their academic skills, GPA, or gain more experience in athletics should they want to compete competitively at the next level. A PG year gives the student an opportunity to mature both academically, physically, and socially. Over 150 schools worldwide offer PG programs. Admission standards vary, as do the objectives of the programs themselves.

### **Gap Year Programs**

A gap year allows students another opportunity for personal growth after high school before settling into a four-year program. Successful gap year experiences start with a well-developed plan and include personal goals. Some exciting and valuable programs include internships in the community, leadership training, and structured travel/education. It is advisable to complete the college application process and defer matriculation for one year.

### **Armed Services**

Opportunities in education and training are available in all branches of the Armed Services. Your options include the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard, and U.S. Merchant Marines. Recruiters from all branches of the armed services are eager to explain the advantages of receiving either career training or an education through the armed services. Students who choose to serve in the military first can receive funding toward educational expenses in return for an active duty tour. Additionally, students can serve part-time in the Reserves and receive educational funding in return for their commitment.

### **Employment/Apprenticeships:**

Some students may choose to go directly into the work force. A successful example of this is a work training program through Millstone that offers on the job training. The training can then be followed by an offer of full-time employment (so long as the candidate successfully meets the required skill level and commitment at the end of the training period).

There is no right or wrong path to take. It is just important to think about your life & career aspirations and choose a path that is right for YOU.

## **RESEARCH & SELECTION OF A COLLEGE**

The most important part of this process is researching and ultimately selecting an institution that offers you the best opportunity to achieve your goals and is the right match for you.

One of the most common misconceptions held by students is that there is one “perfect” college. This is not true. There are many colleges or universities that may be right for you.

Steps in selecting a post-secondary school are:

1. Evaluate your goals.
2. Determine your selection criteria.
3. Discover your best fit, academically, socially, financially, and geographically.

On the following page is a sample of an organizational chart that you may find useful in your college search process. If you would like a virtual copy, please ask your school counselor to email it to you.

## **CREATING A COLLEGE LIST**

### **Action Steps to Create A List of Colleges that “Fit” Your Needs and Interests:**

1. When you use college search databases such as those in Naviance, the first step is to reflect on the criteria that are important to you. Use Naviance to create a list of colleges and schools to research further and pare them down as you learn more about each school. College Board is another great resource to use when researching colleges and finding your fit.
2. Use the self-assessments on Naviance, such as “Do What You Are,” “Career Clusters Finder,” “Career Interest Profiler,” and “Strengths Explorer” to learn more about your personality, values, needs, and interests and what careers may suit you best. Discuss your values, needs, and interests and results of these assessments with your School Counselor.

### **3. Categorize colleges into: **Reach, Target, and Safety****

#### **REACH:**

- GPA and/or SAT Scores fall below the college’s average of student’s they accept, but you believe this school is still a good match and want to try this “long shot” application.
- You should apply to ~3 “Reach” Schools

#### **TARGET:**

- GPA & SAT scores fall within the college’s average of student’s they accept. These colleges should have numerous features that the student wants/loves. The majority of the schools on your list should fall in this category.
- You should apply to ~3 “Target” Schools

#### **SAFETY:**

- GPA & SAT scores are above the college’s average of student’s they accept. This isn’t a “throw away” school, however. Make sure it is one you want to attend if need be.
- You should apply to ~3 “Safety” Schools

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR COLLEGE SEARCH

[illegible]

# Naviance

## What is Naviance?

Naviance is a comprehensive college and career readiness platform that enables self-discovery, career exploration, academic planning, and college preparation for millions of students across all ages and around the globe.

## Naviance at MSMHS

MSMHS uses Naviance to help students explore their interests and strengths and search for colleges and careers that best suit them. We begin introducing Naviance to students as early as their freshman year through advisory lessons that begin with learning styles, personality assessments that can lead to potential career interests, and more. Here is the MSMHS-specific link to access Naviance:

<https://student.naviance.com/msmhs>

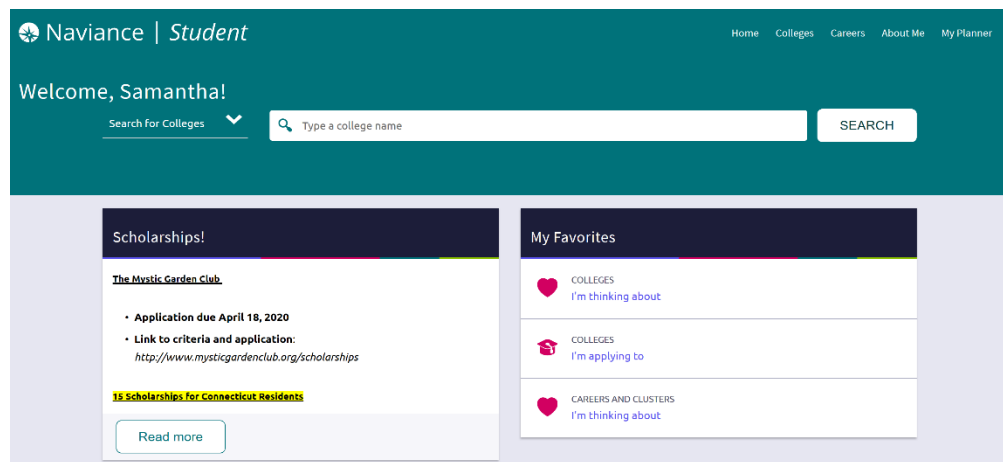
**We have created a list of the most important ways students can research colleges through their Naviance account. This list also explains how the school counselors utilize Naviance when working with college admissions once you start applying.**

Naviance allows students and families to:

- Perform a college search and create college lists
- Access college profiles and websites
- Compare GPA, standardized test scores, and other admission statistics between student's current academic standing and different post-secondary programs across the nation
- Review results from assessments such as Do What You Are and Career Interest Profile
- View when college representatives are scheduled to visit MSMHS
- View scholarship information
- Complete required surveys created and distributed by the school counseling department

★ MSMHS also uses Naviance to electronically send supporting documents to all colleges on your list that use the Common Application!

*\*If you need help resetting your password or have technical questions, please contact your school counselor.*



## **COLLEGE VISITS**

The purpose of the college visit is to assess whether that institution is a good fit for you. Visit as many of the colleges on your list as possible. Check the college website or call the admission office for instructions regarding scheduling a visit, including tours, information sessions, and interviews. In addition to the official admission visit, we encourage families to leave time to explore the nearby area and talk informally with students on campus.

### **Aspects to Consider When Visiting:**

- Academic programs
- Accessibility of the teachers
- Availability of support services
- Career services
- Class size
- Cost and financial aid
- Dining options
- Distance from home
- Diversity
- Extracurricular activities and sports
- Graduation rate
- Housing
- Location and setting
- Percentage of students from out of state
- Percentage of students living on campus
- Percentage of students who remain on campus on the weekends
- Retention rate of freshmen (percentage of freshmen returning for a second year)
- Study abroad opportunities
- Weekend activities and social life

### **If You Cannot Visit:**

Sometimes it is not realistically possible for you to visit a college campus. Check the college website for an online tour. You can also inquire about alumni interviews, college fairs, regional events, and meet college representatives when they visit MSMHS in the fall. Be mindful of any colleges that track a student's demonstrated interest in the admission process, and if you cannot visit campus, take advantage of other opportunities to learn about the college and demonstrate interest.

**NACAC is offering virtual college fairs - <https://virtualcollegefairs.org/events>**



## **TYPES OF APPLICATION PLANS**

Colleges and universities have varying admission practices. Current information pertaining to the policies of an individual college are found on its website and in its publications. Application plans include the following:

### **Early Action**

Early Action is an application process in which students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Application deadlines are typically in October, November, or December. Students who are admitted under Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit prior to May 1. Under Early Action, a student may apply to other colleges.

### **Restrictive Early Action (Single Choice Early Action)**

Restrictive Early Action, offered by only a small number of institutions, is an application process in which students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Application deadlines are typically in November. Institutions with Restrictive Early Action plans place restrictions on student applications to other early plans. Institutions will clearly articulate these restrictions on their applications and websites. Students who are admitted under Restrictive Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit prior to May 1.

### **Early Decision**

Early Decision is an application process in which students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. While pursuing admission under an Early Decision plan, students may apply to other institutions, but may have only one Early Decision application pending at any time. The institution will notify the applicant of the decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time after the Early Decision deadline. If accepted to an Early Decision college, the student must withdraw all other pending applications. There are some colleges that offer Early Decision I and Early Decision II. The only difference is deadline dates; Early Decision I deadlines are typically in November, and Early Decision II deadlines are typically in January.

### **Regular Decision**

Regular Decision is an application process in which a student submits an application to an institution by a specified date and receives a decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time. A student may apply to other institutions without restriction. Many Regular Decision deadlines are in January or February, but could be earlier in the admission cycle.

### **Rolling Admission**

Rolling Admission is an application process in which an institution reviews applications as they are completed on a first come, first served basis and renders admission decisions to students throughout the admission cycle. A student may apply to other institutions without restriction.

### **Open Admissions**

Students are accepted upon application in Open Admissions (usually community colleges).

★ *A great resource to check to see the early decision and regular decision acceptance rates of various colleges* ★  
[Application Rates Spreadsheet](#)



# **TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS**

In order to have your school materials (including transcript, secondary school report, counselor recommendation, and school profile) sent to colleges, complete the following steps at least four weeks prior to your first college application deadline:

## **I. Common Application Account Matching and FERPA status:**

1. Create or log into your Common Application account at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).
2. In the Education section, select Marine Science Magnet High School as your current school.
3. Add at least one college to your 'My Colleges' list.
4. In 'My Colleges,' under any one college's section, click on 'Recommenders and FERPA' on the left of the page, then the blue underlined 'release authorization' link in the center of the page under the FERPA heading. This will lead you through a series of questions to answer. Colleges prefer that you waive your right to access so that more credibility is given to the letters of recommendation.
5. Log into Naviance, click on 'colleges,' then 'colleges I'm applying to.'
6. Click on 'Match Accounts' on the right of the pink banner across the top of the screen.
7. Enter the same email address being used for your Common Application account and your date of birth, then click 'Match Accounts.' Once you match accounts, it is very difficult to change your FERPA status and you cannot unmatch your account.

## **II. Student schedules an appointment with his or her school counselor and brings the following items:**

1. MSMHS Transcript Release Form: This form is required in addition to the Privacy Notice completed online and can be downloaded from our school website or Naviance. Complete only one MSMHS Transcript Release Form regardless of how many colleges to which you are applying.
2. Print-out of 'colleges I'm applying to' from Naviance (use screenshot to print on a single page) Highlight or circle the colleges for which you are requesting transcripts.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA is a law that protects the privacy of education records. High schools must have permission to send transcripts and other school records to a college admission office. By electronically signing the FERPA Release Authorization through Naviance and Common Application, students and parents/guardians grant this permission to MSMHS. In the college admission process, students are expected to waive their right to access letters of recommendation. This communicates to colleges that the letters are confidential, candid, and truthful. Some recommenders may not be willing to write a letter for students unless they waive their right to access.

# **TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS**

## **Understanding Naviance Submissions Symbols**

On your list of colleges on Naviance, you will see one of five symbols identifying whether the college requires its own application, the Coalition Application, and/or the Common Application and whether it accepts online transcripts or transcripts must be mailed:



School-specific application; accepts paper transcripts only



School-specific application and/or *Coalition Application*; accepts online transcripts



*Common Application*; accepts online transcripts



College accepts *Common Application* or school-specific application; student has indicated using school-specific application



College accepts *Common Application* or school-specific application; student must indicate which application will be used

## **Important Additional Information**

- Once the initial request has been made, additional transcripts may be requested by submitting an updated print-out of your college list from Naviance with additional colleges highlighted.
- First quarter grades, if required or requested by the college, will be sent on the report card separate from the transcript. Instructions for requesting first quarter grades will be provided to seniors in October.
- It is the policy of MSMHS that mid-year grades will be sent to all colleges for which you have already completed a transcript request, whether or not they are required by the college. Midyear grades will be sent automatically; no additional request is necessary. If you are accepted early decision to a college, we will only send mid-year grades to that college.
- A final transcript will be sent automatically to the college you have indicated you will attend.
- For the Coalition Application, there is nothing additional that students need to do within MyCoalition for transcripts and recommendations to be sent through Naviance. Materials are sent electronically in the same way as for any other college once the steps on the previous page are completed.

## **TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The college application process often requires one or two letters of recommendation from academic teachers. Read each college's application instructions carefully to determine recommendation requirements. The purpose of the teacher recommendation is to describe their experience with the student in their class and give colleges an idea of how a student is likely to perform academically. Colleges are interested in various qualities including a student's work ethic, motivation, creativity, and capacity for growth.

*Teacher recommendations are confidential and not shared with students or parents.*

### **Junior Year or Beginning of Senior Year:**

1. Any student planning to apply to a four-year college should ask one or two teachers for a recommendation in spring of junior year. Choose teacher(s) who know you well to write recommendations for you, preferably junior year teachers. Take the time to schedule an appointment and ask the teacher in person.
2. Students should complete for each teacher either the MSMHS Recommendation Form or the teacher's own questionnaire. It is also helpful if you provide each teacher with an up to date resume. The student's college list does not need to be set until senior year; only background information about the student and his/her experience in the class is provided through these forms.

### **Senior Year:**

1. Be sure the FERPA Release Authorization for Common Application is completed in Naviance.
2. Four weeks before your first application deadline, you must connect with the teacher(s) you have asked to write your letter of recommendation and let them know of your approaching deadline so that they can have your letter of recommendation ready by then. Complete the MSMHS Recommendation form or the teacher's own questionnaire if you have not already done so.
3. A written thank you note to your teacher is most appreciated.

## **COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION**

The college application process often requires a letter of recommendation from your school counselor. Whereas the purpose of the teacher recommendation is to focus on your individual experience in a specific class, the counselor recommendation discusses your personal qualities, character, background, activities, and your broad academic profile. Counselor recommendations are confidential and not shared with students or parents. In order to write a thorough recommendation, your counselor will need completed Counselor Recommendation Questionnaires from the student and an updated résumé.

### **Counselor Recommendation Questionnaire**

The purpose of the student's Counselor Recommendation Questionnaire is to provide detailed information to your counselor that he/she can utilize when writing your college recommendation. This document must be completed as a survey in Naviance prior to the transcript request. Only your school counselor will access this document. The Counselor Recommendation Questionnaire requires thoughtful responses to a series of open-ended questions that take time to complete thoughtfully. Students should also be sure that their résumé is updated with co-curricular activities, employment, community service, and summer experiences and must email their updated resume to their school counselor.

★ *We encourage parents/guardians to fill this questionnaire out either instead of or in conjunction with the student. Parents/guardians provide a different & unique perspective and we value and appreciate their insight!* ★

## **SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Most admitted students submit only what is required of them. Some colleges will accept a supplemental recommendation beyond what it has required. This extra letter should provide different or additional context beyond what is required and is rarely from a third MSMHS teacher. A supplemental letter might come from a coach, employer, club advisor, or anyone who might know you as a result of a unique talent or from an outside activity. Students may assign a recommender through the Common Application or the recommender can email or mail a hard copy of their recommendation directly to the colleges. (If being mailed, it is the student's responsibility to provide the recommender with a stamped and addressed envelope.)

## **STANDARDIZED TESTS**

*Many colleges and universities require candidates to submit scores from the SAT or the ACT. Both tests give colleges an indication of potential success at the post-secondary level and provide a way to assess current academic level.*

*Standardized testing is only part of the information that represents you and your accomplishments. Test titles and descriptions are below.*

### **PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)**

The PSAT/NMSQT test is administered by College Board and given in October to juniors nationwide. The PSAT is a useful indicator of scholastic aptitude as well as the basis for eligibility toward the National Merit Scholarship program. Also, the PSAT is the source of some college mailings that you will receive. Students receive scores in Evidenced-Based Reading & Writing and Math, a total (sum) score, and Selection Index, which is used exclusively for National Merit competition. PSAT scores are not used in the college admission process.

### **ACT**

The ACT consists of tests in the academic areas of English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. The ACT offers an optional writing test, which colleges may require. Students receive a separate score for each section plus a composite score (average of the four required sections, rounded to the nearest whole number). ACT recently announced changes to take effect in September 2020 allowing students to retake selected sections and submit “superscored” score reports to colleges that list the strongest section scores across multiple test administrations. Check with individual colleges to understand their policy in relation to these changes.

### **SAT**

The SAT consists of tests in the areas of Evidenced-Based Reading & Writing and Math. The SAT offers an optional writing test, which colleges may require. Through Score Choice, students may be able to choose which test administration date to send to colleges. Each individual college has its own policy and may require all scores to be submitted. Check with individual colleges to understand their policy.

### **Advanced Placement (AP) Tests**

AP Tests are three-hour exams given at the high school based on college level courses. AP Tests are given once a year in May. Starting in 2019-20, registration takes place in the fall. In most cases, there is no need to send official AP scores from College Board to the college until after the student has made his or her final decision where to enroll. The scores are primarily used for college placement, credit, or advanced standing. Students may choose to self-report scores on their applications. Check with each individual college regarding their policy.

### **TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)**

The TOEFL, administered by the College Board, provides an alternative test for students who have been speaking English for less than five years. The test is used to evaluate the English proficiency of these students. Colleges may require students to submit both SAT and TOEFL scores.

# **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

As a general guideline, if you are planning to apply to college, you should take the SAT and/or the ACT twice. The best preparation for scoring well on college entrance examinations is to read regularly, do your homework, and take a strong high school program.

## **Test Registration**

In order to register for the SAT, go to College Board: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). In order to register for the ACT, go to: [www.my.act.org](http://www.my.act.org). Be sure you use your full legal name when registering.

***\*SAT day for juniors will be held on Wednesday, April 28th. They will take the SAT in school at MSMHS again in October as seniors. Students do not need to register or pay for these school day tests.\****

## **Reporting Scores**

During senior year, students request to have their scores sent from the testing companies ([www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)) when required by colleges to which they are applying. MSMHS does not release official test scores, and they are not reported on the transcript. Colleges set their own testing requirements, which can be found on their respective websites.

## **Test-Optional Colleges**

There are many colleges that do not require standardized test scores in their application process. A complete list of those colleges can be found at [www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org).

# **COLLEGE APPLICATIONS**

There are three main types of applications: **The Common Application**, **Coalition Application**, and **school-specific applications**. The college's website will list which application(s) it accepts. If a college offers a choice of applications, we encourage students to speak with their school counselor about which to use.

## **Application Tips**

- Begin well in advance of the deadline.
- Set up an appropriate email address to be used for college correspondence.
- Follow directions and complete all steps.
- If you have an intended major, you can list it. Otherwise, "Undecided" is an appropriate choice.
- When asked to list activities, remember to also include out of school commitments.
- Describe activities clearly including purpose, commitment, and level of participation.
- If the application you are using does not provide adequate space to thoroughly explain your activities or achievements, you may also wish to use the "Additional Information" section. Consult with your school counselor as to what information, if any, to include.
- Use Google Docs or Microsoft Word to complete your personal essay and writing supplements, then copy and paste into the appropriate box on the online application.
- Don't rely on spell-check. Proofread yourself, then have the application proofread by an adult.
- Review your entire application and/or have your school counselor or other adult before you submit the final version.
- Be sure to send any supplemental material if required.
- After submitting your application, look for email confirmation that your application has been received.



## **COMMON APPLICATION**

The *Common Application* is a single application that students can use to apply to multiple colleges. There are over 800 participating colleges, and they will not differentiate between use of the application developed by the college itself and the Common Application.

MSMHS submits your school materials online through Naviance, so it is essential that your Common Application and Naviance accounts match.

**To ensure your accounts match, follow the instructions below:**

1. Create or log into your Common Application account at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).
2. In the Education section, select Marine Science Magnet School as your current school.
3. Add at least one college to your 'My Colleges' list.
4. In 'My Colleges,' under any one college's section, click on 'Recommenders and FERPA' on the left of the page, then the blue underlined 'release authorization' link in the center of the page under the FERPA heading. This will lead you through a series of questions to answer. Colleges prefer that you waive your right to access so that more credibility is given to the letters of recommendation.
5. Log into Naviance (<https://student.naviance.com/msmhs>), click on 'colleges,' then 'colleges I'm applying to.'
6. In the blue box, enter the same email address being used for your Common Application Account and click 'match.' Once you match accounts, it is very difficult to change your FERPA status and you cannot unmatch your account.

If you are applying to a *Common Application* college, it must be listed on **both** your Common Application "My Colleges" list and "colleges I'm applying to" in Naviance.

Students need to remain organized and be aware of necessary supplements and deadline dates including an *Early Decision Agreement* if applying **Early Decision**. Please note that more specific and detailed information is shared on the Common Application website.

## **COALITION APPLICATION**

The *Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success* is also an application that can be used for multiple colleges. There are over 140 member colleges and universities. Some colleges accept the Coalition Application in addition to its own application, while a few colleges require students to use the Coalition Application.

School materials will be sent through Naviance for any college that a student applies to through the Coalition Application. There is nothing additional that students need to do within MyCoalition for transcripts and recommendations to be sent through Naviance. Materials are sent electronically in the same way as for any other colleges.

## **PERSONAL ESSAY**

On most applications, students respond to one of several open-ended essay questions. Application essay questions have no right or wrong answers. It is the content of the essay and how you organize and support your thoughts that are most important. Your essay should serve as a reflection of who you are and provide evidence of your personality and experiences that are not reflected in other parts of your application.

ESSAY DOs	ESSAY DON'Ts
<p><b><i>Write in the voice of a teenager.</i></b> This is what the colleges expect and want.</p>	<p><b><i>Don't use gimmicks.</i></b> Gimmicks are risky and often not appreciated.</p>
<p><b><i>Answer the question.</i></b> Write an essay that explicitly addresses the question asked.</p>	<p><b><i>Don't write about what you think admission officers want to hear.</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>Conform to guidelines, including length.</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Don't just write about where you have been or what you have done.</i></b> Reflect on what your experiences say about you as a person.</p>
<p><b><i>Write about a topic you care about,</i></b> not simply one that "sounds impressive." It will not come across as sincere.</p>	<p><b><i>Don't complain about your circumstances or make excuses.</i></b> It is acceptable to write about a challenge or obstacle. However, what is important to your reader is how you were shaped by the experience in a positive manner.</p>
<p><b><i>Describe feelings</i></b> as well as actions. Be thoughtful and reflective.</p>	<p><b><i>Don't submit an essay that contains any individual college's name.</i></b> Proofread carefully.</p>
<p><b><i>Use examples, anecdotes, and/or specific details.</i></b></p>	
<p><b><i>Share your essay with your school counselor</i></b> prior to submission in a timely manner.</p>	

## **2021-2022 Common Application Essay Prompts**

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
- Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAY'S & SCHOOL-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

We all know the personal statement is a huge part of the college application, but school specific supplemental essays are just as or more important. Take the time to answer these questions thoughtfully. Carefully proofread your responses.

College admissions officers report that supplemental essays play an increasingly important role in the college application process.

These essays help to determine how much the applicant knows about and wants to go to the school & allows colleges to ask specific questions of the applicant that the general application and prompts do not cover.

Colleges sometimes like to hide their supplements. These essays are not always in the writing section. Sometimes colleges call them questions — — with 250 word answers :) Be sure to check the different sections of the Common App for where they might be!

### **DEMONSTRATED INTEREST**

Be mindful of any colleges that track a student's demonstrated interest in the admission process, and if you cannot visit campus, take advantage of other opportunities to learn about the college.

- Some ways that colleges track interest:
  - College Rep Visits
  - Campus visits you make and campus info sessions/tours you attend (in person or virtual)
  - Whether you apply early (early action or early decision)
  - Any "Why Us?" essay reflecting enthusiasm and thoughtful research on how that particular school fits your interests
  - Speaking with alumni or students who may share information about your interest with the admission office
  - An interview with admission reps or alumni (if available)
  - Attendance at an overnight program (if available)
  - Any contact with admission reps

### **Words of Wisdom About Demonstrated Interest From An Admission Officer**

*Reon Sines-Sheoff, Director of International Admissions at College of Wooster*

"This is an interesting time in higher education. Technology has encouraged students to apply to a larger number of colleges and at the same time, more colleges now use technology to track students' demonstrated interest. Colleges know that students may have applied to ten or fifteen schools- so how do they figure out if the student is really interested in them? An admission officer sitting at their computer can see if a student has been opening our emails, responding to them, or skipping them. When they read an application, they can easily find out whether a student has completed an interview, attended a high school visit with an admission officer from our school, or has reached out with questions. And many schools ask "Why are you interested in \_\_\_\_ college/university?" This is an important response. Students who know something about the college or have connected with it in some way (even by looking at the program website for their academic interest and mentioning a great program we have) can really add another dimension to their applications and stand out from the crowd. I work with international students and they often ask if there is a penalty if they can't visit campus or if they're not able to meet me on the road; my answer is certainly not! Easy and free ways to connect include virtual interviews, emailing an admission officer to express interest and ask good questions (questions that are not easily found online), or even simply writing back to say thank you when you receive an email from your admission officer. Engaging in any way you can certainly bring rewards!"

*Quote found in "College Admission Essentials" By Ethan Sawyer*

# **PERSONAL RESUME**

While it is typically not required to submit a formal résumé as part of your college application, you will provide information regarding your activities, experiences, and accomplishments throughout high school on your application as well as be required to complete a résumé for your school counselor. A strong one-page résumé can be valuable as it provides admission representatives and prospective employers with a concise overview when you interview for colleges, jobs, or scholarships.

## **WHAT SHOULD GO ON A COLLEGE RESUME:**

Any of the sections below could appear on your resume for college applications.

- Heading with your name, address, and e-mail
- High school information with your anticipated graduation date, GPA, and SAT/ACT scores
- Academic awards, publications, honors, and other achievements
- Coursework (summer programs, college courses, or other specialized workshops that do not appear on your high school transcript)
- Extracurricular activities (athletics, clubs, etc.)
- Community service (you should all have 40 hours of community service before you graduate!)
- Work experience
- Hobbies
- Special skills (ex. foreign language fluency or coding experience)

## **TIPS FOR COMPOSING YOUR RESUME:**

### *1. Keep it concise.*

- Pare down the activities you showcase to the most brag-worthy and most representative of you as a candidate. Do colleges need to know that you were on the field hockey team for one semester in Grade 9? Probably not. The standard rule of thumb is to stick to one or two pages.

### *2. Focus on depth and length of commitment.*

- When deciding which activities and accomplishments make the cut, keep in mind that colleges would much rather see you excited about one or two key experiences than sporadic involvement in 20 clubs. If having an after-school job limited your ability to participate in clubs or sports, make sure your resume plays up your work responsibilities, training, and on-the-job skills.

### *3. Provide detail whenever possible.*

- The details are what set a resume apart from a list of extracurricular activities on a standard college application. For example, when describing your involvement in the Yearbook Club make sure to include:
  - Your role
  - School years/hours per week you participated
  - Specific contributions (ex. "Photographed all school events")
  - Unique details that will make you stand out

### *4. Highlight things you weren't able to write about in your college essays or short answers.*

- Use your high school resume to show colleges something new. If your devotion to photography didn't make it on the application but is a big part of who you are, then showcase your photography on your resume.

### *5. Formatting is key.*

- Make your resume easy to scan. Divide information into sections with clear headings, bulleted lists, and a consistent font. Use a system of organization that works for you. (Chronological, by importance of activity, or by time commitment are a few options.) Don't forget to proofread!

### *6. Be honest and accurate.*

- Colleges know how to spot inconsistencies in your application materials, and they won't hesitate to call your counselor to verify information that doesn't seem right. So don't tell them that you have practice for the school play for 30 hours per week—unless drama club is somehow your full-time job!

# **PERSONAL RESUME**

We have provided a brief sample below that outlines the information that is important to include. This is one format option; you should develop your résumé according to your individual needs and preferences.

## **JANE DOE**

123 Marine Street & Groton, CT 06340  
(860) 123-4567  
[jdoe@msmhs.net](mailto:jdoe@msmhs.net)

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### **EDUCATION:**

Marine Science Magnet High School, Groton, CT

August 2013 to Present

**GPA:** 3.75 | **SAT:** 700 ELA, 640 MATH

#### **Academic Achievements:**

- High Honors throughout entire high school career
- May 2016 Student of the Month
- 2015 Siena College book for academic achievement in AP courses and leadership within the school
- Course load has included 7 University of Connecticut courses and 8 AP courses

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

#### **Student Council Member**

- Promote MSMHS with tours to prospective students and parents at open houses
- Organize and facilitate Freshman Orientation and American Red Cross Blood Drives
- Arrange multi-events for the Anti-Bullying Campaign and other school initiatives

#### **MSMHS Student Improvement Committee**

May 2014 to Present

- Committee charged with creating policy and procedural change that improves the climate and culture

#### **Diversity Club**

May 2014 to Present

- Team of students committed towards cultural equity and social awareness

### **ATHLETICS:**

#### **MSMHS Varsity Girls Crew Team, Groton, CT**

Fall 2013 to Present

- Founding student of the MSMHS Crew Team
- Named Captain for the 2016 and 2017 seasons

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE:**

#### **Youth Ambassador, Mystic Congregational Church**

Summer 2013 to Present

- Volunteered for a week at a variety of location throughout the nation including: building a homeless shelter in Maine; repairing a child daycare center in New York; spreading awareness at a Black Lives Matter and LGBT convention in Cleveland;

#### **Volunteer, University of California, Berkeley/National Science Foundation, 2015 White House Easter Egg Roll**

- Assisted children with STEM activities during the annual White House Easter Egg Roll

#### **Youth Ambassador, Global Leadership Adventures, Guanacaste, Costa Rica**

Summer 2016

- Spent two weeks working in schools teaching children English and supervised afterschool activities.
- Improved the school infrastructure by cleaning the schools, repainting desks, and fixing desks.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE:**

#### **Flower Designer, Hana Floral Design, East Lyme, CT**

Fall 2015 to Present

#### **Fuel Dock Assistant, Noank Shipyard, Noank, CT**

Summer 2015

# **COLLEGE INTERVIEW**

The purpose of an interview is to enable you to make a direct personal impression on an admission representative. It is a chance for the college to learn about you and for you to learn about the college. Check with each college to determine if interviews are required or recommended.

## **Interview Tips**

- Research the college before your interview.
- Be prepared to both answer and ask questions. Having a list of questions with you is suggested. Avoid asking obvious questions that have answers contained on the website.
- Bring a copy of your transcript and/or résumé if you have one available.
- Arrive a few minutes early. Manners and appearances matter – dress appropriately.
- Be sure to shake the interviewer's hand and maintain good eye contact.
- Be yourself at all times.
- Follow up with a thank you note or email to your interviewer.

### **Questions You Could Be Asked:**

1. Why are you interested in this college?
2. What do you do for fun?
3. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?
4. Which one of your activities has given you the most satisfaction?
5. What would you say your three best qualities are?
6. Where do you see yourself in five years?
7. What have you enjoyed most about your high school years?
8. What would you change about your school if you had the chance?
9. What book have you enjoyed the most in the last year and why?
10. Which academic course has been your favorite? Your least favorite? Why?
11. Is your academic record an accurate gauge of your abilities and potential?
12. Have you ever had a job? For how long and what were your responsibilities?
13. Describe the community in which you live.
14. What do you plan to study?
15. Are you involved in any community service/volunteer activities?

### **Questions You Could Ask:**

1. Does social life revolve around the campus?
2. What do your students do on the weekends?
3. What is the availability of professors to students?
4. What are the living arrangements for first year students?
5. What are the opportunities for undergraduate research?
6. How do you help freshmen get adjusted to your college?
7. Is there a core curriculum of classes or distribution requirements that students must take?
8. Who would my advisor be?
9. What do the majority of your graduates do?
10. What type of career services exist?
11. Do you have internship programs available?
12. Are there community service opportunities?
13. Tell me about your study abroad program.
14. At what point do I have to declare a major?
15. How easy is it to change majors?

## WHO SENDS WHAT

### Student Sends:

Application  
Application Fee  
Personal Essay  
Writing Supplemental (if required)  
Portfolio (if required)  
SAT/ACT Scores (if required)  
UConn Transcript (if applicable)

### School Counselors Electronically Sends School Materials Through Naviance:

Transcript (includes senior classes)  
MSMHS Secondary School Report  
Teacher Recommendations  
Counselor Recommendation  
School Profile  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Grades (if requested)  
Mid-Year Grades (sent automatically)  
Final Transcript



## CHECKING APPLICATION STATUS

Students may submit their application when completed even if other materials haven't yet been sent.

It is ultimately the student's responsibility to be sure that all application materials have been received by the colleges. In order to allow time for the college admission offices to process materials, we recommend the following protocol 2 weeks after the deadline has passed.

1. Check student portal (if available). This will be emailed to you directly from colleges you applied to. Make sure to be checking your email frequently.
2. If the college does not have a portal or the portal indicates that materials are missing, call the admission office to verify the information is up to date.
3. If an email is received from the college indicating materials are missing, call the admission office to verify the information is up to date.
4. See your school counselor with any questions.



# **TYPES OF ADMISSION DECISIONS**

## **Accepted**

The student is admitted to the college. Most colleges need a response and deposit by May 1.

## **Denied**

The student has not met the criteria of accepted students.

## **Deferred**

The college determines that more information (including first semester senior year grades) is needed to make a final decision, and the student's application is now part of the regular decision pool.

## **Waitlisted**

The college deems that the student is admissible; however, due to enrollment size, the student cannot be offered admission at that time. It is critical for a student to express his/her interest directly to the institution.



*All acceptances are contingent upon successful completion of high school, and colleges expect students to maintain a consistent level of performance throughout senior year.*



# **NCAA ELIGIBILITY**

The [NCAA](#) establishes rules on eligibility, recruiting and financial aid. There are three membership divisions: Division I, II and III. Institutions are members of a division according to the size and scope of their athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships. For more detailed information, please view the [NCAA's Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete](#). *(If you are reading this is hard copy form and can't click the link, you can find this guide by going to NCAA.org and clicking on the Student-Athletes tab.)*

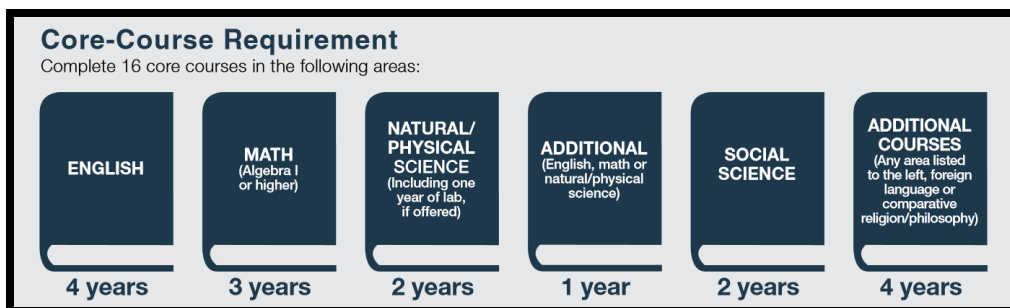
## **Division I and Division II**

If you wish to participate in Division I or II athletics, you must be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

### **Students must:**

1. Starting in the spring of junior year, register online with the NCAA at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org).
2. In the fall of senior year, submit an NCAA Transcript Release Form to your school counselor. This form is available for download on the NCAA website.
3. In the fall of senior year, submit SAT/ACT scores to the NCAA through College Board/ACT.
4. Your final transcript will be sent to the NCAA automatically once you've made the request in the fall.

All student-athletes must have completed 16 core courses in high school. Seven out of the 10 core courses must be in English, math, or natural/physical science.



For *Division I*, Students must earn at least a 2.3 GPA in their core course and earn an SAT combined score or ACT sum score matching their core-course GPA on the Division I sliding scale, which balances their test score and core-course GPA. If a student has a low test score, they need a higher core-course GPA to be eligible. If a student has a low core-course GPA, they need a higher test score to be eligible.

For *Division II*, students must earn a minimum GPA of 2.0 in core courses and a combined minimum SAT score of 820 or sum ACT score of 68.

*More information about Test Score& GPA sliding scale can be found on the NCAA website!*

### **All MSMHS Courses have been approved by NCAA except the following:**

- Aquaculture & Resource Management, Aquarium Science, Aquatic Husbandry, ECE Horticulture & Design, Marine Studies I, Marine Studies II, Advanced Aquarium Research Honors, AP Computer Science Principles, Senior Internship

## **Division III**

It is not necessary to be certified by the NCAA if you are playing Division III athletics.

## **VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS**

Students who plan to major in art, music, dance or drama programs at colleges, may need to prepare supplements during the application process, such as portfolios or auditions. Because auditions and portfolios require a lot of time for planning and preparation, if you think there is a possibility you want to pursue music, art, drama or dance at the college level, begin researching school-specific application requirements early! It's very likely you will need to dedicate time during the summer between your junior and senior year to prepare audition or portfolio materials, determine an audition schedule, find and work with an accompanist, record CDs or DVDs, etc.

- **Visual Arts Degrees:** Art schools, or art programs at liberal arts colleges, usually specify what kind of work they want to see during the admissions process. Carefully read the requirements on the art school or college's website. If the instructions are not clear, contact the school directly. Drawings are usually essential, especially drawings done from observation. Some art schools want to see a variety of media, while others prefer to see a lot of the particular media in which you specialize. Many art schools also like to see drawings that show a degree of "problem solving" which often means an imaginative twist or particular point-of-view on a particular subject. Art schools like to see that you have an imagination, can think visually, and can observe.
- **Performing Arts Degrees:** Prepare a resume of your specific performance experience and achievements. Drama, vocal, instrumental music and dance programs, whether at a liberal arts college or conservatory, will specify what kind of work they want to see. Expectations for every school can differ, and guidelines can be rigid and detailed. If you are unsure about something, or if it is unclear, contact the admissions office, head of the department or specific teacher directly. Students should plan ahead and prepare so they can communicate their passions to colleges in a way that effectively showcases their abilities. Your audition is likely to be the most important component for admission and scholarship consideration at most institutions. Make sure you leave adequate time to practice and prepare your audition material during audition season.

The following websites also may be helpful to you in your search and application process:

- Performing & Visual Arts Fairs: [www.nacacnet.org/pva](http://www.nacacnet.org/pva)
- National Portfolio Day: [www.nationalportfolioday.org](http://www.nationalportfolioday.org)

## **U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES**

The U.S. service academies represent some of the country's best colleges, and all tuition, fees, room, and board are paid in exchange for five years of active duty upon graduation. If you're considering applying to an academy, there is a thorough procedure you must follow. Because of the extraordinary competition for academy selection, students are encouraged to apply to other colleges as well and inquire about any ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) opportunities.

- United State Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs, CO): [www.usafa.af.mil](http://www.usafa.af.mil)
- United States Coast Guard Academy (New London, CT): [www.cga.edu](http://www.cga.edu)
- United States Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point, NY): [www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)
- United States Military Academy (West Point, NY): [www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)
- United States Naval Academy (Annapolis, MD): [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)

### **Preparation**

Not only are the personal and academic demands extraordinary at the academies, they are also among the most selective colleges in the country. Therefore, it is important to start preparing in three key areas well before the time of application in order to be competitive for admission:

1. **Academic Preparation:** Take a strong college preparatory program including four years of English (AP/ECE English Language and Composition & AP/ECE English Literature and Composition recommended), four years of math (Pre-Calculus Honors and AP Calculus are recommended), each of the core sciences (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics), and relevant courses in computer science, social studies, and world language.
2. **Physical Fitness Preparation:** Improve your physical strength and endurance by participating in competitive sports, running regularly, and performing strenuous conditioning exercises.
3. **Leadership Preparation:** Participate in extracurricular activities to gain leadership experience.

### **Application Process**

Service academy applicants must be at least 17 years old, but no more than 23 years old, as of July 1 of the year of admission, must be a U.S. citizen, and must be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no legal obligation to support any dependents.

As with most colleges, the application process at the academies begins junior year. Starting in the junior spring as information becomes available online, fill out the Pre-candidate Questionnaire for each of the academies to which you are interested in applying. At the same time you begin the application process to the academy itself, request information about a nomination from a Connecticut congressional representative or other eligible nominator.

### **Nominations**

A nomination is required for each of the service academies besides the Coast Guard Academy (where appointments are made on the basis of a nationwide competition). There are several nomination sources, including U.S. Senators from Connecticut, our district's U.S. House Representative, and the Vice President for extremely qualified candidates nationwide. There are also various military affiliates with nominating authority if one of your parents is on active duty or retired from the military, a deceased or disabled veteran, or a Medal of Honor recipient.

Since competition for nomination and appointment is stiff, candidates should apply to all possible sources and for all academies in which they have a genuine interest. A candidate may be nominated by more than one source and/or to more than one academy.

Each house representative and each senator is allowed a maximum of five persons (called “charges”) toward her or his quota at any one time at each of the academies. When a “charge” either graduates or leaves school, a vacancy is created.

Candidates are directly appointed to the Merchant Marine Academy on a statewide basis. Each year, Connecticut has five vacancies. Each congressman nominates ten candidates who compete with nominees from the rest of the state to be appointed. For the Military, Air Force, and Naval Academies, each of the Connecticut congressmen uses the competitive method of nominating. Nominations are determined based on scholarship, personal character, extracurricular activities and athletics, physical aptitude, and leadership. Each congressman gives a list of ten nominees to the academy for each vacancy, and the academy’s admission committee selects the most qualified candidate, who becomes the congressman’s “charge.” Other nominees may still be considered for appointments, but won’t be the congressman’s “charge.”

Interested candidates should download nomination application materials from the congressman’s web site during spring of junior year. The *completed application* is due in **October** of senior year, and by December, each congressman submits his or her list of nominees to the respective academies. Keep in mind that separate documentation must be submitted to the nomination sources and to the academies themselves, as information is not shared by the congressmen.

Each Connecticut congressman has his own web site for applying to academies:

- Senator Richard Blumenthal: [www.blumenthal.senate.gov/services/academy-nominations](http://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/services/academy-nominations)
- Senator Christopher Murphy: [www.murphy.senate.gov/services/academy](http://www.murphy.senate.gov/services/academy)
- Congressman Joe Courtney: [www.courtney.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations](http://www.courtney.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations)

# **STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

It is a family decision as to whether or not to disclose that their child has special needs. If you choose to do so, it is the responsibility of the student to self-identify, provide accurate and thorough documentation, and request reasonable accommodations. Documentation requirements and criteria for determining eligibility for services may differ from college to college. Specific documentation requirements should be explored at each college's website. Accommodations at the college level are based on the colleges' review of documentation, not necessarily what the high school has provided on 504 plans or IEPs.

## **Understanding the Differences between High School and College Services**

It is important to know that colleges and universities provide accommodations (not modifications) under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. Neither act requires post-secondary institutions to provide accommodations. In contrast, high school IEPs are governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA, which is a K-12 law.

Colleges by law have the right to employ their own eligibility standards or guidelines. The burden rests on the student to self-identify, provide accurate and thorough documentation, and request reasonable accommodations. The student must become his/her own advocate. Documentation requirements and criteria for determining eligibility for services may differ from college to college. Specific documentation requirements should be explored at each college's website.

Accommodations at the college level are based on the colleges' review of documentation NOT on what 504 plans or IEPs dictate at the high school level. There are a number of more subtle differences between services offered to students in high school and college that are outlined on the following pages.

## **Determination of the Level of Support Needed at the College Level**

The single most important factor in determining services appropriate for a given student in college should be the level of support that the student needs to be successful. The academic support that a student receives in college is directly related to the functional limitations and rationale described in his/her provided documentation. Specifically, for programs resulting in a college degree, students must otherwise qualify for university admission, which means they must meet general university admissions criteria.

In order to determine the level of support necessary at the post-secondary level, the family may consider the following:

1. Student's level of independence in completing course work both in school and at home
2. Amount of modifications provided in classroom (e.g., are modified grades used?)
3. Student's independent living skills and emotional maturity

The level of support needed at the post-secondary level by a student may change as the student matures throughout the high school experience. Therefore, a student's apparent needs as a freshman may be more intensive than those required when he/she graduates from MSMHS.

## **Transitional Programs that Incorporate College and/or Work Experiences/May Not Result in a Degree**

Some students may not be ready to manage the academic and social expectations of a typical college, even with structured support in place. For those students, a "transitional" experience that provides academic and/or vocational skills may be more appropriate. These transitional programs may provide housing and independent living skills as well. Only by visiting websites and the actual program settings can an appropriate match be made and the most up to date information obtained. In cases such as these, please work with your child's special education teacher.

## **Levels of Services Available to Students with Learning Differences**

**1. Comprehensive/Structured** – Comprehensive/structured programs in which extensive support is offered to students with disabilities; a student's disability may be considered and given special consideration during the admission process

- Proactive, structured, and comprehensive support is offered to the student
- Separate application to the structured program often necessary
- Student progress may be monitored
- Low student/staff ratio in the office for disabilities
- Number of students is usually limited
- Additional cost - often referred to as fee for service programs because they usually charge an additional fee to the student
- Documentation needs to be current
- Students generally receive a two or four-year college degree out of these programs
- Program is individualized and laid out for each student
- Level of selectivity of the programs differs from college to college

The following is a list of some of the Comprehensive/ Structured Programs that we are aware of:

- Adelphi, NY (Learning Disabilities Program)
- American, DC (Academic Support Center)
- Barry, FL (Center for Advanced Learning or CAL)
- Beacon College, FL
- Concordia, NY (The Concordia Connection)
- Curry, MA (PAL Program)
- Dean, MA (2 year college; ARCH)
- Fairleigh Dickinson, NJ (Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities)
- Hofstra, NY (PALs)
- Iona, NY (CAP)
- Landmark, VT
- Lincoln College, IL (ACCESS program for ADHD)
- Lynn, FL (Institute for Achievement and Learning, Comprehensive Support, Metamorphosis)
- Manhattanville, NY (HELP)
- Marist (Learning Disabilities Support)
- Marshall University, WV (HELP for students with Asperger's Syndrome)
- Marymount Manhattan, NY (Program for Academic Success)
- Mercyhurst, PA (Learning Differences Program)
- Mitchell, CT (Learning Resource Center)
- Muskingum, OH (PLUS Program)
- Northeastern University, MA (LDP)
- Schreiner U, TX (LSS)
- St. Thomas Aquinas, NY (Pathways)
- University of Arizona (SALT)
- University of Connecticut (FAST)
- University of Denver, CO (LEP)
- University of Hartford, CT (If ineligible for 4 year, admitted to 2 year program at Hillyer College)
- West Virginia Wesleyan, WV (Learning Center)

**2. Moderate/Coordinated Services/Self-Directed Programs** – Less structured support is available to the student through the office for disabilities; the disabilities office reviews documentation of admitted students only

- Less structured and less comprehensive services offered
- Student progress is not monitored
- Additional fees for specific services may or may not apply
- Varied but generally higher student/staff ratio in disabilities center
- Documentation needs to be current
- Consideration of disability is usually not part of the admission process to the college
- Services are sought after admission to the college – self referral by student



The following is a list of some of the college programs with Moderate Support:

*As a reminder, students must meet the admission criteria of the college AND actually be admitted before being considered for services/accommodations. Also, parents and students should consider staff/student ratio of specific programs.*

- Catholic University, DC (Disability Support Services)
- Clark University, MA (Disability Services Department)
- Coastal Carolina, NC (Disability Services)
- Colby Sawyer, NH (Academic Development Center)
- East Carolina, NC (Disability Support Services)
- Eastern CT State, CT (Office of AccesAbilty Services) no this is NOT a typo!
- Eckerd College, FL (Disability Support Services)
- Florida Atlantic, FL (Office for Students with Disabilities)
- Franklin Pierce, NH (Academic Services)
- Hartwick, NY (Academic Center for Excellence/Learning Support Specialist)
- High Point, NC (Academic Services Center)
- Indiana University, IN (Disability Services for Students)
- Ithaca, NY (Academic Support Services for Students with Disabilities)
- Johnson State, VT (Academic Support Services)
- Johnson and Wales, RI (The Center for Academic Support)
- Lynchburg, VA (Support Services)
- McDaniel College, MD (Academic Skills Program)
- Menlo College, CA (Academic Success Center)
- Mary Washington, VA
- Monmouth University, NJ Mt. Ida, MA (2 year college) (Learning Opportunities Program or LOP)
- New England College, NH (Academic Advising and Support Center)
- Northeastern, MA (Disability Resource Center or DRC)
- Ohio Wesleyan, OH (Learning Disabilities Assistance Center)
- Pine Manor College, MA (Brown Learning Resource Center)
- Rider University, NJ (Education Enhancement Program)
- RIT, NY (special program for hearing impaired) (Learning Development Center)
- Southern CT State (Disability Resource Office or DRO)
- Springfield, MA (Office of Student Support Services)
- St. Andrew's Presbyterian, NC (Disability and Academic Support Services)
- Syracuse, NY (Office of Disability Services)
- Temple, PA (Disability Resources and Services)
- Towson, MD (Disability Support Services)
- University of Hartford, CT (Learning Plus or LP)
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Disability Services)
- University of Pittsburgh, PA (Disability Resources and Services)
- University of South Carolina, Columbia (Disability Services)
- University of Vermont (ACCESS program)
- Western New England, MA (Student Disability Services)
- Xavier, OH (Learning Assistance Center)

**3. Minimal/General Tutorial Services** – Least comprehensive of the three categories and often available to all students on campus. Services are requested on a voluntary basis by student. Documentation needed if accommodations are requested. Offered through office for disabilities, writing, and/or tutoring centers on campus

# Differences between High School and College for Students with Disabilities

## *Applicable Laws*

High School	College
IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title 11)
Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
IDEA is about <i>SUCCESS</i>	ADA is about <i>ACCESS</i>

## *Required Documentation*

High School	College
IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan	High school IEP and 504 are not sufficient. Documentation guidelines specify information
Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in IDEA.	Documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations, and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations.

## *Self-Advocacy*

High School	College
Student is identified by the school and is supported by parents and teachers.	Student must self-identify to the Disability Resource Center.
Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.	Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.

## *Parental Role*

High School	College
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process.	Parent does not have access to student records without student's written consent.
Parent advocates for student.	Student advocates for self.

### ***Instruction***

High School	College
Teachers may modify curriculum and/or alter curriculum pace of assignments.	Professors are not required to modify instruction or alter assignment deadlines.
You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed and often re-taught in class.	You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing that may not be directly addressed in class.
You seldom need to read anything more than once; sometimes listening in class is enough.	You need to review class notes, text, and material regularly.

### **Grades and Tests**

High School	College
IEP or 504 Plan may include modifications to test format and/or grading.	Grading and test format changes (i.e. multiple choice vs. essay) are generally not available. Accommodations to HOW tests are given
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material.
Makeup tests are often available.	Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.

### **Study Responsibilities**

High School	College
Tutoring and study support may be a service provided as part of an IEP or 504 Plan.	Tutoring DOES NOT necessarily fall under college disability services. Students with disabilities must seek out the tutoring resources that are available to all students.
Your time and assignments are structured by others.	You manage your own time and complete assignments independently.
You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute preparation.	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.

Table adapted from College of St. Scholastica 2011, Institute from Community Inclusion 2004, Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education and Training 2007, University of North Carolina and University of New Hampshire 2011.

# **FINANCIAL AID**

**1. Free Application for Federal Aid (FAFSA):** The FAFSA form is at [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov). All information is available in Spanish as well as English. The FAFSA website explains how to complete the FAFSA and provides answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs). If you have additional questions, you can call the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-433-3243 or contact a financial aid administrator at any college or university.

**There are three categories of federal student aid:** Grants, Loans and Work-Study.

- **Grants** provide financial aid that does not have to be repaid.
- **Loans** provide borrowed money that must be repaid with interest.
- **Work-study** allows students to earn money to help pay for education expenses while enrolled in school.

You can begin completing the FAFSA on **October 1<sup>st</sup>** of your child's senior year. *The earlier you fill it out, the better!* You will have to fill one out every year your child is in college.

Completing and submitting a FAFSA is **free**. The FAFSA requires information from 1040 tax returns, but the tax return does not have to be completed in order to apply. Print the completed application for your records.

- **Unusual circumstances** (for example: unreimbursed medical bills, disability, loss of job, caring for older parents) that affect a family's income or expenditures should be communicated directly to the Financial Aid Offices at the individual colleges under consideration.
- **Merit-based and athletic-based financial aid or scholarships** may still require the FAFSA or CSS PROFILE. Some colleges and community organizations also require the FAFSA in order to receive any type of funding.

**2. The CSS / Financial Aid PROFILE** is an *INSTITUTIONAL* financial aid form required by **some** colleges. The CSS / Financial Aid PROFILE is found at [www.profileonline.collegeboard.org](http://www.profileonline.collegeboard.org)

- Some colleges require the **CSS PROFILE** for *Early Decision or Early Action applicants*. The CSS PROFILE typically requires more extensive financial information from one's family. Financial aid deadlines for early decision and early action align with the application deadlines and are earlier than typical financial aid deadlines. **Check each college's website for details.**

## **DIDN'T GET ENOUGH MONEY FROM YOUR DREAM SCHOOL?**

### **NO SHAME IN OUR GAME!**

Once accepted, we recommend that you schedule a meeting with your top school's financial aid office with your family to inquire about additional merit/scholarship opportunities. You never know, if you don't ask.

## **Financial Aid Tips**

- 1.** Discuss your family's financial situation in regards to paying for college early in the post-high school planning process.
- 2.** Identify colleges where you might receive aid and make sure to include a range of affordable colleges on your list.
- 3.** Check out the FAFSA Forecaster on the [FAFSA web site](#). It is a tool to help students and families estimate their potential eligibility for federal student aid.
- 4.** Use the Net Price Calculator to estimate the full, four-year cost of attending particular colleges (found on the financial aid office website for each participating college or [College Board](#) website).
- 5.** Research the deadlines and required forms for each college to which you are applying.
- 6.** Complete the FAFSA online as soon after October 1 as possible. Use your most recently completed tax returns. For example, if your child is applying for federal aid to pay for college beginning in the fall of 2021, you will be submitting your tax returns from the 2019 fiscal year in October of 2020.
- 7.** In addition to the FAFSA, some colleges (mostly private) also require the submission of the [CSS/Profile](#).
- 8.** Ultimately, all financial aid decisions are made by the individual college; therefore, it is necessary for you to work with the financial aid office at each college to which you are applying.

*If the fees for submitting college applications, taking standardized tests, or sending test scores presents a true financial hardship for your family, please have your child see their school counselor.*

# **SCHOLARSHIPS**

There is no single source for all scholarship information available. Therefore, it is important to reach out to your place of employment, clubs, and organizations, which may also provide awards.

## **Information about Local Scholarships**

Scholarships that the MSMHS School Counselors are aware of are posted on Naviance. MSMHS typically receives local scholarships in *February & March* that seniors are eligible for. We *encourage* all students to apply to the **Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut** when it becomes available (typically in March). Students will only need to fill out ONE application and that will be submitted to up to **50** different scholarships that they are eligible for.

## **Information about National Scholarships**

There are various scholarships that are available nationally. These scholarships are typically accessible to students starting in the summer before their senior year (and sometimes earlier). If students are interested in applying to national scholarships, it is up to them to research scholarships they are eligible for and interested in applying for.

The following are websites that students can use to find national scholarships:

[Big Future](#), [Broke Scholar](#), [Career One Stop](#), [Student Scholarships](#), [Unigo](#)

## **Information about Institutional Scholarships**

Colleges may have an earlier priority application deadline to be considered for scholarships. Search the college's financial aid page for information/deadlines – check specific departments within the college. When applying to colleges, be sure to apply by any scholarship priority deadlines.

Institutional scholarships may be based on academic merit (grades, test scores), athletic ability, special skills/talents (performing/visual arts, etc.)

For example, below are the **University of New Haven's** scholarship opportunities:

- To be considered for one of their academic scholarships, all students need to do is apply for full-time undergraduate admission. If accepted, students will automatically be considered for an academic scholarship.
- Students who apply under [Early Decision](#) or [Early Action](#) and are accepted, are given priority consideration for all merit-based scholarships.
- Award decisions will be based upon the student's academic credentials at the time of their admissions decision.
- Awards are based upon the availability of funds.
- The following awards are renewable for a maximum of eight semesters and are applied only to tuition. The amounts indicated for the merit awards are based on awards offered per academic year.
  - [Presidential Scholarship • \\$20,000 - \\$24,000](#)
  - [Distinguished Scholar Awards • \\$15,000 - \\$18,000](#)
  - [Dean's Scholarships • \\$2,000](#)
  - [Charger Award • \\$10,000 - \\$14,000](#)

★ **A college scholarship resource that can help students & families find the best affordable colleges** ★  
[Merit Scholarship List](#)

# CREATIVE WAYS TO REDUCE THE COST OF

## ATTENDING COLLEGE

- Apply to colleges where your *academic profile fits the criteria for merit scholarships*
- **UConn Early College Experience** – earn credits while enrolled in ECE courses offered at MSMHS; credit is inexpensive, and no cost for students who have free or reduced lunch certification. Research what colleges will take ECE credits at [http://web2.uconn.edu/ece/credit\\_transfer\\_database/index.php](http://web2.uconn.edu/ece/credit_transfer_database/index.php)
- **AP Exams** – some colleges and universities award credit for AP Exam Scores – research at: <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/creditandplacement/search-credit-policies>
- **Military Programs** – ROTC scholarships, military reserves, enlist first attend college second, U.S. military academies
- **Apply to become an R.A. (Resident Assistant) in your dorm** – if you are a social, mature and responsible person, this is an ideal way to save on room and board at your college or university.
- When researching colleges, keep track of those *that meet 100% of demonstrated need*.
- **The New England Regional Student Program** offers tuition breaks for certain majors at state universities in New England for out of state residents. Find out more at: <http://www.nebhe.org/programs-overview/rsp-tuition-break/overview/>
- Begin with **two years at a community college** – save on tuition
- **Live at home and commute** to a local four-year college – save on living expenses
- Apply to as many ***scholarships*** as possible!





## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

*There is a wealth of information relating to the college search and admission process on the internet. We have done extensive research on which site are the most applicable to rising seniors and the MSMHS community. Below are websites that students and/or parents can reference.*

### **Post-High School Planning**

[www.commonapp.org/](http://www.commonapp.org/) The Common Application for Undergraduate College Admission.

[www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/) Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success.

[www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org/](http://www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org/) Offers college and career search tools as well as detailed planning resources for students and parents.

[www.collegegreenlight.com/](http://www.collegegreenlight.com/) Matches students with scholarships and predicts their college admissions chances based on their grades and standardized test scores.

[www.collegenavigator.gov/](http://www.collegenavigator.gov/) College statistics generated by the U.S. Department of Education.

[www.collegedata.com/](http://www.collegedata.com/) Calculates students' college admissions chances based on several criteria.

[www.collegeresults.org/](http://www.collegeresults.org/) The Education Trust database of graduation rates.

[www.inlikeme.com/](http://www.inlikeme.com/) General information on college planning, application, and financial aid processes.

[www.knowhow2go.org/](http://www.knowhow2go.org/) Offers advice on various aspects of the college process.

[www.ucan-network.org/](http://www.ucan-network.org/) Features an advanced college search tool.

[www.goseecampus.com/college-trip-planner/](http://www.goseecampus.com/college-trip-planner/) Useful guide for planning college visits.

[www.unigo.com/](http://www.unigo.com/) Extensive college and scholarship search tool.

[www.collegeconfidential.com/](http://www.collegeconfidential.com/) Interactive forums on a wide range of college-related topics.

[www.collegeexpress.com](http://www.collegeexpress.com) Provides detailed college profiles and scholarship matching.

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com) General college search site.

[www.collegeweeklive.com](http://www.collegeweeklive.com) Matches students to colleges and scholarships and hosts live online events.

[www.nextstepu.com](http://www.nextstepu.com) Addresses topics related to college exploration, admissions, and scholarships.

[www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh) Occupational Outlook Handbook allows students to research hundreds of careers.

### **Standardized Testing**

[www.actstudent.org/](http://www.actstudent.org/) ACT test information

[www.collegeboard.org/](http://www.collegeboard.org/) SAT, SAT Subject Test, AP, and PSAT information.

[www.fairtest.org/](http://www.fairtest.org/) List of test-optional colleges and universities.

[www.compassprep.com/admissions\\_req\\_subjects.aspx/](http://www.compassprep.com/admissions_req_subjects.aspx/) SAT Subject Test requirements by college.

[www.toefl.org/](http://www.toefl.org/) Test of English as a Foreign Language.



## **Standardized Test Prep**

[www.khanacademy.org/sat](http://www.khanacademy.org/sat) Thousands of practice questions, videos, lessons, and hints plus study and testtaking tips and strategies.

[www.actstudent.org/onlineprep/index.html](http://www.actstudent.org/onlineprep/index.html) A comprehensive guide to the ACT, including timed practice tests.

[www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com) Free ACT prep.

[www.4tests.com](http://www.4tests.com) Helps students determine whether the ACT or SAT is a better fit for them and also provides online practice tests.

[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) Provides online tutoring for the SAT and ACT.

[www.majortests.com/sat/](http://www.majortests.com/sat/) Offers practice questions and helpful tips pertaining to each of the SAT sections.

[www.testprepreview.com](http://www.testprepreview.com) Provides practice tests and general overviews of several standardized tests.

[www.prepme.com/](http://www.prepme.com/) Offers online courses and practice tests for the PSAT, ACT, and SAT.

<https://www.kaptest.com/sat/free/sat-practice> Quizzes, SAT questions of the day, 20-minute practice tests.

<https://blog.prepscholar.com/printable-sat-practice-tests-4-free-official-tests> Provides printable SAT practice tests with accompanying answers and explanations.

[https://www.powerscore.com/sat/help/content\\_practice\\_tests.cfm](https://www.powerscore.com/sat/help/content_practice_tests.cfm) Offers numerous printable practice tests for the ACT and SAT.

<https://www.test-guide.com/free-sat-practice-tests.html> Offers SAT practice tests and quizzes with answers and explanations.

<https://sat.magoosh.com/flashcards/vocabulary/decks> Provides online vocabulary flashcards divided into decks based on level of difficulty.

## **Financial Aid**

[www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/) Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

[www.cssprofile.collegeboard.org/](http://www.cssprofile.collegeboard.org/) CSS Financial Aid Profile.

[www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college](http://www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college) College Board financial aid information.

[www.salliemae.com/](http://www.salliemae.com/) Private student loan database.

[www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/) Estimates eligibility for federal student aid.

[www.studentaid.ed.gov/](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/) Offers a multitude of resources regarding the financial aid process.

[www.collegegoalsunday.org/](http://www.collegegoalsunday.org/) Local assistance with completing FAFSA.

[www.ctohe.org/SFA/pdfs/SFABrochure.pdf](http://www.ctohe.org/SFA/pdfs/SFABrochure.pdf) CT Office of Higher Education "Paying for College" brochure.

[www.wrightslaw.com/info/fin.aid.index.htm](http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/fin.aid.index.htm) General financial aid information.

[www.tuitioncoach.com/collegecost/index.jsp](http://www.tuitioncoach.com/collegecost/index.jsp) Tips on the financial aid process.

## **Scholarships**

[www.fastweb.com/](http://www.fastweb.com/) Scholarship search tool.

[www.scholarships.com/main.aspx/](http://www.scholarships.com/main.aspx/) Scholarship matching service.

[www.collegescholarships.org/](http://www.collegescholarships.org/) Scholarship application resource.

[www.studentscholarshipsearch.com/ebook/](http://www.studentscholarshipsearch.com/ebook/) Scholarship search and financial aid information.

[www.questbridge.org/](http://www.questbridge.org/) Scholarships for low-income students.

[www.gatesfoundation.org/topics/Pages/scholarships.aspx/](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/topics/Pages/scholarships.aspx/) Scholarships for low-income students and students of color.

[www.uncf.org/forstudents/scholarship.asp/](http://www.uncf.org/forstudents/scholarship.asp/) Scholarships for African-American students.

[www.scholarships.hispanicfund.org/applications/](http://www.scholarships.hispanicfund.org/applications/) Hispanic College Fund scholarships.

[www.disaboom.com/scholarships/all-general-disability-scholarships/2/](http://www.disaboom.com/scholarships/all-general-disability-scholarships/2/) Scholarships for students with disabilities.

## **Students with Disabilities**

[www.idaamerica.org/parents/](http://www.idaamerica.org/parents/) Learning Disabilities Association of America offers support and resources for parents of students with disabilities.

[www.thinkcollege.net/](http://www.thinkcollege.net/) Lists college options for students with intellectual disabilities.

[www.heath.gwu.edu/](http://www.heath.gwu.edu/) The HEATH Resource Center is an online clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities.

[www.ldonline.org/indepth/college/](http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/college/) Offers advice on creating a successful post-secondary education experience for students with learning disabilities and/or AD/HD.

<https://www.ncld.org/> National Center for Learning Disabilities.

[www.greatschools.org/special-education/health/college-resources-for-students.gs?content=798/](http://www.greatschools.org/special-education/health/college-resources-for-students.gs?content=798/) Offers resources for students with learning disabilities and/or AD/HD.

[www.autism.lovetoknow.com/Asperger\\_Colleges](http://www.autism.lovetoknow.com/Asperger_Colleges) Provides general information and links to other websites on autism and Asperger's syndrome and the college process.

[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org) An excellent resource for students with AD/HD.

[www.ahead.org/students-parents/transitions](http://www.ahead.org/students-parents/transitions) The Association on Higher Education and Disability provides numerous resources to aid with the transition out of high school.

[www.ldpride.net/ldlinks.htm%23OnlineResources](http://www.ldpride.net/ldlinks.htm%23OnlineResources) Lists links to a plethora of resources for students with learning disabilities and/or AD/HD.

## **Other Considerations and Special Populations**

<https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> Helpful information regarding NCAA eligibility.

[www.d3sports.com/landing/index](http://www.d3sports.com/landing/index) Tracks Division III sports including soccer, basketball, football, and baseball.

[www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org) For students considering playing for a college that is part of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

[www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org) National Junior College Athletic Association.

[www.campusstarter.com/](http://www.campusstarter.com/) Canadian colleges and universities.

[www.ucas.ac.uk/](http://www.ucas.ac.uk/) The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service is a clearinghouse for attending university in the UK.

<http://hbcuconnect.com/colleges/> Provides detailed profiles of all historically Black colleges and universities.

[www.hillel.org/index/](http://www.hillel.org/index/) A guide to Jewish life on college campuses.

[www.campusprideindex.org](http://www.campusprideindex.org) National tool measuring inclusivity of LGBTQIA youth on college campuses.

[www.ctcl.org/](http://www.ctcl.org/) Colleges that Change Lives, an organization devised by Lauren Pope, promotes college access for all students.

[www.ope.ed.gov/security](http://www.ope.ed.gov/security) Explores campus safety issues.