Dear Newton South Student and Parent/Guardian:

We are very pleased to introduce the Newton South College Planning Guide for the Class of 2021, a comprehensive resource for the college search and application process for Newton South students and their families. A team of Newton South/North College Counselors as well as parent volunteers collaborated to bring you the latest version of the Guide.

At Newton South, we understand that students take different paths after they graduate. While the majority of Newton South graduates pursue some form of post-secondary education, the Counseling Department has designed this Guide to be relevant to all Newton South students and families contemplating college, whether you have previously navigated the college admissions process or are embarking on it for the first time.

This Guide is reviewed and updated annually. **Access to the document is free and online to all Newton South students and their families through the Newton South website.**

Please remember that our school counselors, college counselor, staff and faculty are all looking forward to supporting you as you embark on this exciting period in your life. As always, thank you for being our partners in this process.

We hope that you find this Guide helpful.

Joel Stembridge  
Principal

Dan Rubin  
Director of Guidance
Class of 2021
College Planning Guide

Newton South High School
Newton, MA

Cover designed & illustrated by Gaby Dozortsev & Emily Zhang, ‘21

The NSHS College Planning Guide may be viewed online through links on the NSHS web page and the NSHS College & Career Center.

Note: Document translation is available through Google Translator
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Chapter 1 - Where to Begin

The Newton South College Planning Guide was designed to help both students, parents/guardians increase their understanding of post-high school options to support navigating them through the college process. We understand that students take different paths upon graduation. Because the majority of Newton South graduates pursue a college education, the Guide focuses on comprehensive information pertaining to the college search and application process. Resources to assist in engaging in career development activities and resources is also outlined.

As with anything in life, applying to college is as much about planning and preparation as it is about patience and persistence. The timeline will be different for each student. There may be some information in this Guide that will be useful for sophomores, but most will be relevant to students at the beginning of junior year.

For an overview of the timing of the college process at Newton South, see Appendix 1 – Newton South Four-Year College Timeline.

For an overview of the tasks directly related to the college application process see Appendix 2 - College Application Timeline.

This Guide is a supplement to the direct and personal support given by your Newton South School Counselors and College Counselor (whose office is in the College & Career Center) through individual and group meetings, discussions, and presentations.

We believe that this Guide will be relevant to all Newton South families, whether you have previously navigated this process or are embarking on it for the first time.

Section 1: How to Start
Congratulations! Welcome to an exciting time in your life!

You are starting to plan for life after Newton South High School, and for the first time, you can choose your path, what kind of education you’d like to pursue and where and how you’d like to pursue it.

Sounds overwhelming? Perhaps, but it is exciting... and manageable. Thousands of high school students have successfully navigated this path and you will as well. If you are prepared with current information, tools and some strategies, this can be a rewarding process. That’s where
this Guide will help. It is designed to give you extensive information about applying to college, controlling your anxiety and giving you the tools to make this a successful experience.

**100 Pages! Are you kidding?**

Don’t worry; it is not necessary to read this Guide from cover to cover in one sitting. Use the table of contents to select the topics that are most pertinent to you at any given time. This document is also available online and individual sections may be printed out.

**How do I start the process?**

You may be wondering how to begin. There is a temptation to dive right into the process and work on several fronts at once. Before you give in to that temptation, we have some advice.

*Stop, sit and think.*

One of the most important things you can do at the outset is to ask yourself some questions that only you know the answers to. This is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers.

Take time to think about what matters to *you*, what *you* want and how to take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead. Set aside an hour or so, without distractions, and think about how you would honestly answer the following questions:

- What are my goals and values with respect to my education?
- What are my personal and academic strengths and weaknesses?
- Why do I want to go to college?
- What do I want from college? (What talents/interests would I like to develop? What new things would I like to try in college?)
- How do I learn? What kind of learning environment am I looking for?
- What kinds of people do I want in my learning environment?
- What degree of academic challenge is best for me? What balance of study, social life and activities do I prefer?
- How involved do I want my parents/guardians to be in the process of applying to college?

Keep in mind that your answers to these questions may change over the course of the process, but your answers at this time will give you a baseline from which to work. They will help guide you in your thinking about what type of college you might apply to, what questions to ask, and help you ultimately choose a college that is the best fit for you.
Parents/guardians, it is also important that you think about some of these questions:

- Are there geographic, financial or other constraints that should be addressed with your child at the outset of this process?
- How do you envision being involved in this process? Are you and your child’s expectations the same?
- Do you have specific expectations of where and what type of college you want your child to attend?

Once you have thought a bit about these questions, compare notes and have a discussion about overall goals and how you might collaborate in this process.

**Section 2: About this Guide**
The Guide covers the entire application process including advice on building a list of colleges, available college resource materials, visiting colleges, standardized testing, completing the college application, financial aid, playing college sports as well as other educational/vocational options. The Guide also gives you access to timelines to help you think ahead and plan your own course of action.

**Keep in mind**, while many issues are addressed in this Guide, it can’t and won’t answer all the questions you may have. This Guide should be used in conjunction with the websites referenced throughout the Guide and the resources available at Newton South. If possible, seek out students and parents/guardians who have been through the process; as “veterans” of the experience they will have valuable information.

Finally, please also note that this is a living, changing document. Since the college process itself changes from time to time, the most up-to-date version of the document may be found on the Newton South website.

**Section 3: Working Together**
Different people will be involved in the process along the way and each has an important role.

**3.1 Students**
As a student, you drive this process and are ultimately in charge of your future.

Whether you have heard a lot about the college process or very little, the prospect of leaving high school in a year or two may be daunting and a bit scary. Some of you may be eager to start thinking about the next stage in your life, and others may need more time to ease into it. Both are normal reactions to a time of transition and change. When you are ready, know that your teachers, school counselor, college counselor in the College and Career Center and administrators are ready to support and help you pursue your aspirations. Grasp this
opportunity, set aside any preconceived notions about the process and **embrace the possibilities.**

You are the decision-maker and executor of your applications. Remember, though, you are not alone; people are here to help you.

### 3.2 Parents/Guardians

As a parent/guardian you are the head cheerleader, advisor, administrative assistant, and the person who can help your child keep things in perspective.

Believe it or not... the planning process can be a time for families to connect with each other. Communicate, make suggestions, support, help your student plan and manage time, encourage self-exploration, and then try to leave these things in your child’s control. Think of this as a time of discovery for all of you and the ultimate teaching moment for your child. Her/his independence, self-awareness and confidence can actually be fostered as you go through the college search.

### 3.3 Newton South Counselors

The Counseling Department guides and supports students as they navigate applying to college. Your school counselor and college counselor work together as a team throughout the college admissions process.

**Role of School Counselor:**

A school counselor is assigned to each student as they enter high school, and this counselor stays with the student throughout their four years at Newton South. As part of college planning, the school counselor works with students on course selection and Newton South graduation requirements. Students begin to meet more frequently with their school counselor throughout the entire search and application process. Seniors should schedule an appointment with their school counselor early in the fall, especially those seniors planning to apply to colleges with early decision/early action deadlines.

Counselors introduce Naviance to students during the winter Sophomore Seminar. Students also attend Junior and Senior Seminars which are led by their counselors, which focus on college planning. All school counselors write a statement on behalf of each of their students as part of the application process.

**Role of the College Counselor in the College & Career Center:**

The College & Career Center is part of the Guidance Department and is staffed by an experienced college counselor. The counselor provides career and college advisement for students in all grades. Students can make college planning appointments beginning in late
January of their junior year. The student’s school counselor and/or parents/guardians may also participate in these meetings. Students should be present. These meetings focus on specific post high school educational plans and how they fit with career and life objectives.

The counselor in the College and Career Center helps students identify the college characteristics that are important to them, develops strategies for exploring colleges, creates a broad list of colleges to consider, and in senior year, helps focus on a balanced final list for application. Advice on all aspects of the college application process is offered. The college counselor works closely with the school counselors to support all students throughout the process.
Chapter 2 – Naviance

The Newton South Counseling Department uses a comprehensive web-based tool for college and career planning called Naviance. This resource contains data on colleges in the US and abroad and tracks college applications, student statistics and admission decisions of recent Newton South students. Naviance is used by school and college counselors, students, and parents/guardians. Students are given access to Naviance during their Sophomore Seminar. At this time, their counselor will give them their registration code and access instructions.

Section 1: Uses of Naviance
Once you have registered as a Newton South Naviance user, you and your parents/guardians may access Naviance as frequently as you wish. Please note that your personal profile is confidential and accessible to you, your parents/guardians, your school counselor and the counselor in the College and Career Center. The data and statistics are most effectively used in conjunction with your school and college counselor. While transcripts and recommendations are sent electronically through Naviance by the Records Office (Main Office), nothing else from students’ accounts accompanies these documents. While your test scores are stored in Naviance, you must send them directly to a college from College Board, ACT and ETS (TOEFL).

Section 2: How to Access Naviance

1. Go to the Naviance Family Connection website: https://student.naviance.com/nshs
2. If you didn’t already register, students should go to the “are you new here?” section of the page and click “I need to register.” Enter the registration code provided to you by your school counselor.
3. Enter your email address (required of all students) and create a password. The only way for parents/guardians to access the system is through the student’s account, although you can get non-student specific information as a guest by using the password NSHS.
4. Complete the registration procedure as instructed.
5. Naviance is also available through the Newton South website. Look for the Naviance Icon under “School Resources”.
6. Note that how information is presented on the Naviance site can change from time to time. The examples below represent the current sample as of the writing of this Guide.
It is helpful to login into Naviance while reading the rest of this chapter. If you are having trouble logging in, please see the section “Helpful Hints for Using Naviance” later in this chapter.

**Section 3: Home Page**

When you log into Naviance Student, you are greeted with the following information:

- **Welcome Box** (upper left)
  - This is where Newton South-related college announcements and information will be posted. Please make sure you click on “Read More” to access all of the information.

- **My Favorites** (upper right)
  - *Favorite Colleges* - This feature allows you to create a list of the “colleges I’m thinking about.”
  - *Colleges I’m Applying To* - This is where colleges will show that you have actually chosen to apply to. Note that colleges only show here after you have submitted a “transcript request form” to the Records Office.
  - *Favorite Careers and Clusters* - This allows you to keep track of careers that might be of interest to you for further exploration.
  - *Important To-Dos and Tasks* - use the planner feature for goal and task management activities.

- **What’s New** (lower right)
  - This is where visitors to the College & Career Center will be posted.

**3.1 “New Messages”**
In the top right corner, you will be notified if/when you receive a new message.
Messages sent to your Naviance account are also sent to the personal email. These messages are often important and time-sensitive from your counselors, the Records Office or other staff members, so be sure to check this regularly.

**Section 4: Tabs**
Once you have entered the Naviance Student page (see the screenshot, below), check the “Home” page for important messages. Then use the tabs on the top of the page to navigate through the various features of the system. These menus are organized into four categories entitled: “colleges,” “careers,” “about me” and “my planner.”
The menus and sections of Naviance are tailored for each grade. We have included the complete listing below. As students progress through Newton South, more tabs and sections will be open to them.

4.1 “Colleges”

This section contains information about colleges and admissions statistics including sections: Find Your Fit, Research Colleges, Apply to College, Scholarships and Money and College Visits.

- **Find Your Fit** – This section contains many tools to search for colleges that match your interests
  - **SuperMatch™ College Search** - This search tool allows you to define your best fit for college based on the criteria that are most important to you. “SuperMatch College search” lets you enter a variety of criteria and gives you a list of schools that are an exact or close match for the criteria you entered. You can compare colleges that you are interested in and save colleges to your “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list.

  - **College Match** - This feature will analyze your information in Naviance and the schools to which you are applying. It will generate a list of other schools that students tend to apply to that may be like those schools.

  - **Scattergrams** – This section shows you the statistics and graphs that represent Newton South applications to specific colleges, and view admissions decisions for each of those colleges from past graduating classes. This data, which includes the SAT/ACT scores and weighted 5.0 scale GPAs of applicants (without names), allows students to see how their statistics compare. A scattergram may be very useful to see the admissions results for other Newton South students at many colleges. When you plot your weighted GPA and SAT or ACT score on the graph, you can get a sense of how students with similar scores fared in admission to a particular college. Green means accepted, red means denied and blue is waitlisted. Of course, there are many other factors that go into college
decisions, but the scattergram will allow you to compare your testing and academic statistics with those of recent candidates and assist you in creating a balanced list of colleges. A sample for UMass, Amherst follows.

- **Advanced College Search** - You can use Naviance’s extensive database of roughly 5,000 colleges to search for colleges based on criteria such as location, size of student body, majors offered, cost, etc. “College Search” is a less complex search tool than SuperMatch. It allows you to see all the criteria and enter it in order, selecting “search matches” anytime to see which schools fit your criteria.

- **College Lookup** - College lookup lets you find a school in Naviance by name or look up all the colleges in a state or in a country. You can find out admissions requirements, majors, activities offered and statistics about the student body at the click of a button. Current college contact information, including the name of the college’s admissions representative for Newton North, is readily available as well as a direct link to every college’s homepage.
• **Research Colleges** - This section contains many helpful tools to search for colleges and admission statistics.

  - **“Colleges I’m thinking about”** is a student-generated list. Students may add colleges to this list at any time.
  - **College Compare** - College Compare allows you to select up to 10 schools to compare with each other, with your own GPA, and with estimated or actual standardized test scores.
  - **Acceptance History** – Here students can access the statistics and graphs that represent Newton North’s history of college decisions since 2010.
  - **College Maps** - “College maps” gives you access to ranking and other lists that help you identify schools of interest such as the 100 Hidden Gems, 440 Great Colleges (Peterson’s), 40 Colleges that Change Lives, etc. When you click on these lists, you see the location of all schools in the list on a map.

• **Apply to Colleges**
  - **“Colleges I’m applying to”** is a list generated only by the NSHS Main Office. Once a student submits a transcript request, colleges will move from the “colleges I’m thinking about” list to the “colleges I’m applying to” list.
  - **“Letters of Recommendation”** is where you manage your invitations to teachers to write a letter of recommendation for you. After you have spoken face-to-face with your teachers again senior year (after asking during your junior spring), and they have confirmed that they are willing to write a letter of recommendation, click on **“Add Request.”** Then select the teacher’s name and write them a short message thanking them for writing a letter of recommendation for you and indicating your first college deadline date. Please allow 4 weeks for teachers to write recommendations.
  - **Test Scores** - This section includes all of your standardized test scores that are reported to Newton South. If your scores are not in this section, please see your school counselor or the college counselor.
• **Scholarships & Money** – This section contains information on national scholarships, if available.

• **College Visits** - This section contains a listing of all of the college admissions representatives who visit Newton South.

### 4.2 “Careers”
This section contains tools and inventories to assess your interests and personal characteristics. You can also explore careers that would be good matches for you. You can use the features listed below, or you can simply use the search bar to explore and read more about a specific career. By clicking on “Careers Home” or using the dropdown menu, you will have access to:

• **Careers and Clusters I’m thinking about**
  - This link will bring you to an array of careers and career clusters you will be able to research and investigate. You can investigate the various career paths based on your cluster finder and personality test results. You can peruse job descriptions, skills required and average wages for selected careers. Careers that are of particular interest to you can be saved by clicking the “My Careers” link.
  - You can then save certain careers or clusters that you are interested in so you stay organized and revisit it later.

• **Career Cluster Finder**
  - This questionnaire will help you learn what career clusters may be a good match for you based on activities that interest you, personal qualities that you have and subjects that you enjoy studying in school.

• **Do What You Are**
  - This personality questionnaire is designed to discover possible careers for you by identifying your personality type.

• **Career Interest Profiler**
  - The assessment helps you discover the types of work activities and career that match your interests.

• **Roadtrip Nation Interview Archive** - The Roadtrip Nation interview archive is a digital career exploration tool that enables you to discover new pathways, interests, and ambitions. The archive includes more than 3,500 full-length video interviews chronicling the diverse personal stories of leaders who have turned their interests into their life’s work.
4.3 “About Me”
This section contains information and statistics specific to you. Examples of the many features in this section include:

- **Account** - This section includes your personal contact information, email, password, and academic information including unweighted and weighted GPA.
- **My Stuff** – This section includes information about yourself including:
  - **Resume** - This section is very useful in that it allows you to keep track of all of your activities so you don’t forget them when it comes time to apply to college, jobs, scholarships, etc. Step-by-step instructions for creating a resume are described in detail in Appendix 3 - Creating a Resume in Naviance.
  - **Test Scores** - This section includes all of your standardized test scores that are reported to Newton North. If your scores are not in this section, please see your school counselor or a college counselor.
  - **Portfolio** - This section will show all areas of Naviance and your results from various activities.
- **Documents Shared With Me** - This section helps you keep track of your documents in Naviance.
- **Journal** - This section allows you to create entries. These entries include:
  - Make comments or notes
  - Upload important files
  - Opt to share information with teachers, counselors or parents.
- **My Surveys** – This section allows you to keep track of your questionnaires and surveys assigned by the Counseling Department.
- **My Assessments** - This section has several different assessment tools.
- **Career Cluster Finder** - This questionnaire helps you to discover career clusters that are most interesting to you. Once you complete the Career Cluster Finder, the top matching career clusters can be added to your Favorite Career Clusters list.
- **Career Interest Profiler** - The assessment helps you discover the types of work activities and careers that match your interests.
- **Do What You Are®** - This personality questionnaire is designed to discover possible careers for you by identifying your personality type.
- **StrengthsExplorer®** - This assessment identifies each student’s three strongest emerging talents. The assessment includes explanations of these three talents, strategies to encourage growth, and action items to help students leverage strengths in the classroom and in life.
4.4 “My Planner”
This section helps you keep track of goals, a to-do list and task organizing features.

Section 5: Bottom Menu
From My School
- Links
  - Newton South H.S.
  - Common Application
  - FAFSA
  - College Board

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Updates
- You school has no updates, check back later

On the bottom of your Naviance Home Page, you also have access to many important websites. These are divided into three sections: “links,” “pages” and “updates.” These websites can be utilized throughout the entire college planning process.

5.1 Links
This section includes current Newton South links, which are subject to change. For example:

- “compare F. Aid Offer”
- “Edupass”
- “1st Gen”
- “College Board”
- “Common Application”
- “ACT”
- “int’l student”
- “American Gap Assoc.”
- “Newton South HS”
- “college locator”
- “college results”
- “Teenlife gap year”
- “college scholarships”
- “ACT”
- “public Univs in MA”

5.2 Pages
This section includes the following Newton South resources:

- Job Openings
- Internships
- Volunteer Openings
- Enrichment Opptys

5.3 Updates
Time sensitive information will be posted about upcoming college and career Events in the area.
Section 6: Helpful Hints for Using Naviance

6.1 I can’t remember my password. How can I sign in?
If you have forgotten your password, click the link on the main page of Naviance Student that reads, “forgot your password?” Enter your email address and click the Reset Password button to receive a new, temporary password. If you receive an error when resetting your password, please contact your counselor to confirm that you have the correct email address listed in the system.

6.2 I entered my email address and password correctly, but I still can’t sign in.
If you have configured your web browser to decline cookies, you must change this setting before signing into Naviance Student. If you still are having problems signing in, see your school counselor or a counselor in the College and Career Center.

6.3 How do I change my email address?
To change your email address, sign in with the email address that you used when you first registered – even if you no longer receive email at that address. Once you have signed in, click on the “About Me” tab and click “My Account.” Click the “Security” tab and click “Edit Username.”
Chapter 3 - Building Your List of Colleges

There is no magic to creating the list of colleges in which to apply. Starting in the winter of junior year, you, your parents/guardians, your school counselor and the college counselor will all work together to find a number of colleges that suit your skills, interests and goals. Ideally this list will be very broad when you begin exploring colleges in the winter of junior years (see

As you learn more about what you want in a college and what the different schools offer, your list will evolve until it is finalized in the fall of senior year. The ultimate goal is to create a balanced list of colleges based on the guiding criteria you have determined. (See Chapter 1 - Where to Begin).

Section 1: Beyond Numbers
Families may feel a great deal of pressure during the college search process. Please try to keep perspective. College admission is more than just a numbers game. A student is not just a 30 ACT, a 1030 SAT or a 3.25 GPA. While colleges may use numbers as a starting point, admissions decisions are not always obvious and involve many factors.

As you begin crafting your list of colleges, you will probably ask yourself what makes a “good” college. Is it the college’s average SAT scores? Is it the rating the institution receives in a national magazine’s report? Is it the college’s acceptance rate? While interesting, these numbers may lead you away from the more challenging work of finding a “good fit.” A college is a “good fit” if it matches well with your academic, extracurricular, social and personal needs and goals.

Of course, you will add your own criteria to your “good fit” definition, such as the quality of academic programs, size, location, cost, etc. Exploring websites and reading the literature received from colleges will help, as well as conversations with your school counselor and college counselor. Research and add at least a few colleges to the initial list that you don’t know that much about, but that might be a good match. It is also important that your initial list is well-balanced in regards to admission selectivity.

Section 2: Creating a Balanced List
Once you have had an opportunity to evaluate a broad range of schools that fit your academic, extracurricular, and social needs, you then need to organize your list based on the selectivity of the schools. You should make sure that your list includes a balanced selection of “reach”, “target” and “likely” choices in terms of your grades and test scores. You should also make sure that your list contains “likely” colleges that are within your financial reach. The point of this list is to
identify schools you would be interested in attending that represent the range of selectivity terms of your grades and test scores.

**Section 2.1: Demonstrated Interest**
Schools want students who are really interested in attending their institution which is why “demonstrated interest” has become an increasingly important aspect of the admissions process. These are the most common ways to show demonstrated interest:

- Visit the campus - attend an information session and take a tour
- Attend college admission representative visits to Newton South High School @ College/Career Center
- Attend Newton College Fair at Newton North High School in October. Visit the tables of schools that interest you and introduce yourself to the representative.
- Email the admissions representative for NSHS; reaching out with questions that are not answered through the college’s website
- Interview, if available, with the college - contact the admissions office to learn each college’s process to interview on campus or with a local alumnus/a
- Regularly check your email for colleges on your list. Many schools are tracking this point of contact and is a relatively easy way to show your interest.
- Once you apply, set up and regularly visit a school’s applicant portal, if available.

The good new is that showing interest is good for you and completely in your control. Remember that schools, like applicants, want to be “chosen” so be sure to use some of the tools available to you to show your interest. Each interaction with a college shows your interest in attending while also giving you additional opportunities to gather more information about the colleges on your list. One last point, DO NOT forget to show some level of demonstrated interest to ALL schools you apply or plan to apply to regardless of whether they are a “reach”, “target” or “likely”.

**Section 3: Individual College Websites**
Looking at individual college websites is the DEFINITIVE way to find detailed information about each school. These websites are easy to find through Naviance, or you can search for the college on the Internet. Once on a college’s website, you can get specific details about academic offerings, extracurricular programs and financial aid. You can also get admission information including application deadlines and requirements, contact information for regional admission representatives, and upcoming admission events. Many colleges offer virtual tours on their websites as well. Often you can fill out an online form with your contact information, which will put you on the college’s mailing list. This is a great way to stay connected with the college and find out about upcoming admissions programs, including regional admissions events that are in the Boston area. Always check individual college websites for specific up-to-date information.
Section 4: College Search Factors
Beyond the guiding criteria you developed in Chapter 1 - Where to Begin, students and families can use more specific considerations to evaluate and ultimately choose a college. Some of these considerations (college size, geographic location, academic environment) are outlined below. Some may be more important than others to you in your search. Please note that the Naviance college search feature will allow you to search for colleges using most of the following criteria.

Major / Career Goals
- What are your areas of academic interest?
- Double majors / minors?
- Special programs (conservatory, nursing, ROTC, etc.)

Size
What is your preferred size? (Keep in mind that a college of 2,000 is very different from a high school of 2,000 classmates you’ve known most of your life...)

Geographical Location
Specific region? Nearest city, airport?
Urban, suburban or rural?
College town?
Ideal weather?

College Type and Setting
- 4 year?
- 2 year/Community College?
- Military Academy?
- Private, public, technical?
- Co-ed, male, female?
- Religious affiliation?
- Historically black colleges and universities (HBCU)?
- Atmosphere: conservative/liberal, Greek life, School Spirit, Artsy, Intellectual, Academically Specific (business, tech, etc.)?

Housing
- Do you want to live on or off campus?
- Percentage of students who live on campus?
- What types of housing options are available? (learning communities, fraternities, single sex living, substance free, etc.)

Admissions Selectivity
- What is your GPA? Standardized test scores?
• Do you want Early Action, Rolling, Early Decision options?
• How does this fit into your balanced list of colleges ("reach," “target” and “likely”)?

**Academic Environment**
• Do faculty teach and/or do research?
• Who teaches courses, especially to freshmen?
• Average class size?
• Is it important that the college offer an honors program?
• What courses are required and are there distribution requirements?
• Are there any unique classes/travel abroad/co-op opportunities you are interested in?
• Are academic support services available?
• Are there career planning services available?

**Activities/Athletics**
• What activities and/or athletics are you likely to participate in?
• Intercollegiate, club or intramurals
• Traditions

**Student Body characteristics**
• What is your ideal ethnic mix / diversity?
• Geographic distribution?
• Female/Male ratio?

**Admission Requirements**
• SAT and/or ACT, SAT subject tests, GPA?
• Essays / Letters of Recommendation?
• Common Application?
• Interview requirement?
• Art portfolio requirements?
• Auditions (music & theater programs)?
• Test Optional?
• Required high school courses?

**College Expenses:**
• How much will it cost? Include tuition, room and board, application fees, deposits.
• Books, additional fees, travel costs to home?
• In-state vs. out-of-state tuition?

**Financial Aid:**
• How important is the availability of financial aid?
• Need-based, merit-based scholarships?
• How much debt do you or your family want to take on?

Using Worksheet 1: College Comparison, consider how your college choices match up against characteristics that are important to you. Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each. A good match is a place where you feel at home and will get the most out of the overall college experience. If you and your parents/guardians are looking at rankings of colleges, keep in mind that these rankings are devised by for-profit entities that are using evaluation criteria that may or may not be important to you and your decision. The ranking of a college is not necessarily a determinant of whether it is a good match for you. During the college search and application process, look at your own needs and preferences, learn more about the many great colleges out there and try to find the colleges that are best for you. Make sure you include a range of selectivity in your working list.

Section 5: Visiting Colleges On and Off Campus

It is very helpful to make some form of contact with each of the colleges you are considering. There are a number of ways you can accomplish this: onsite campus visits, information sessions held locally by admissions representatives, college fairs, admission representatives’ visits at Newton South, and a visit to the college’s website. There are also websites such as www.ecampustours.com and virtual tours found on college websites which offer short videos of campuses.

5.1 Fall College Fair at Newton North

Newton South participates in a district wide college fair called, “College Nights”. These are held on two evenings every October. Approximately 200 colleges (~100 per night) send representatives to speak with parents/guardians and students. College Nights are a great opportunity to get more information about colleges that interest you, to ask questions of the representatives and to discover new colleges. A wide range of colleges participate, and the list of attending colleges is posted on Naviance a few weeks prior to the event.

Getting the most from the College Nights takes some advanced planning, and here are some suggestions:

1. Look over the list of visiting institutions and identify several colleges to contact during the evening. Your school counselor can help with suggestions of colleges in which you may be interested. The colleges are arranged in alphabetical order at the event, so you’ll know where to find each college.

2. Develop a few specific questions to ask each college representative. They shouldn’t be questions that are easily answered in the college’s literature. Questions might include special academic interests, particular sports, support services available, interviewing
opportunities or financial aid procedures. Collect written materials from colleges that look interesting. Also, bring a notebook and a pen to jot down notes, names, addresses, websites, phone numbers and answers to your specific questions. You may also write down some of your general impressions of the college.

3. Get on the college’s mailing list to receive more information. If you have already visited a college or have had an interview, a quick hello to the admissions person visiting Newton South is a good way to be remembered.

4. Be open to colleges that might not have been on your original list, but which seem interesting. Talk to at least three representatives from colleges that you’ve never heard of! You may find yourself interested in a college you never considered.

5. Bring your parents/guardians. No, you don’t have to hang out with them all night. Split up if you like, feel free to hit the same colleges, and then you can compare notes afterwards.

6. Make a good impression. The college reps are going to see hundreds of students and parents/guardians that night, so they probably won’t remember all of them. However, if you plan on meeting with a rep at a college that you are sincerely interested in, and you plan on asking them several well-thought out questions, make a good impression on them. They could be the person who reviews your application and/or the one who conducts your admission interview. A three-piece suit is not necessary, but look presentable. If the representative has a business card, ask for one. You can send them a nice note thanking them for their time.

5.2 Admissions Representative Visits
During the fall and occasionally the spring, the College and Career Center hosts admissions representatives throughout the school day. These visits take place in the College and Career Center in a small group setting and include a brief presentation from the college representative with time for questions from students. These visits will be posted on Naviance. You need to have the teacher of the class you will be missing sign a pass ahead of time. Updated visits from colleges and organizations occur throughout the fall. Check Naviance regularly for the most complete list.

5.3 College Campus Visits
Visiting a variety of colleges is important if you wish to learn firsthand about an institution’s programs and “personality.” Visits are time-consuming, yet they are invaluable to the process. Parents/guardians can play the role of a research assistant during these visits. By comparing
notes, reactions and insights, you and your family can reach more informed decisions. Even if you have strong opinions about size, location, selectivity, programs, cost, etc., it’s good to be able to compare and contrast different colleges.

You can explore just about every type of college within half an hour of Boston. Take advantage of our location and visit local colleges. If you are taking a family vacation, drop by a couple of colleges in the area where you are vacationing. If you’re planning a college trip, plot it out on a map, and don’t try to squeeze in more than two in a day. Include colleges that are on the more likely side of your list as well as the more selective options. You never know where you’re going to end up, and many colleges include “demonstrated interest” as one of their many criteria for admission. See Appendix 4 – College Visit Clusters.

You never know where you’re going to end up and many colleges include “demonstrated interest” see Section 2: Creating a Balanced List.

5.4. Tips for a Successful College Visit

February and April vacations are prime times for juniors to visit colleges. Many colleges host open houses, special information sessions and extra campus tours during this very busy week. Check individual college websites for the dates and times of tours. Some colleges even have online tour registration. Make sure to plan ahead because these weeks fill up - check websites and call early!

Here is some advice for families to help make the campus visit successful and informative.

1. Visit a colleges’ admissions office website to schedule a campus tour and/or information session. Be sure to do this well in advance of your intended visit to ensure that tours are available on the date you prefer. When scheduling the campus visit, you may also be able to make arrangements for the following (this may require a phone call):
   - A personal or group interview
   - A visit to a class of academic interest, a rehearsal, or a sports practice
   - A conversation with a faculty member of a department of interest (academic, athletic, dramatic, etc.)
   - An overnight stay in a dormitory and at least one meal in the campus dining hall

2. February and April vacations are prime times for juniors to visit colleges. Many colleges offer open houses, special information sessions and additional tours during these busy weeks. Check college websites for dates and times of tours. Plan ahead because availability for these tours fills up quickly.

3. College students are very open to offering their opinions and assistance to visiting high school students and families. Take advantage of their availability, especially tour guides to ask questions.
4. Be attentive to the condition of campus buildings, the upkeep of the campus grounds, and how well-equipped are the academic and technology buildings and labs. The library, career center, student union, performing arts and athletic facilities are also areas to consider. Talk to students in the dorms, in the student center, bookstore, or wherever they congregate. If possible, sit in on classes.

5. Pay close attention to what students talk about. Get a sense of what their priorities are at each college. It’s always impressive to see students who are genuinely excited about certain classes, or professors, or an upcoming internship or semester abroad. Yes, college students all want to have fun, but you could be especially impressed by a college whose students clearly know the main reason they are there—getting an education!

6. Ask students about availability of faculty and academic advisors. Many colleges like to boast about close faculty/student interaction and support, but it’s more a fact at some colleges than others.

7. If relevant, ask about academic and/or disability support services.

8. Always ask to see typical freshman housing. Most colleges offer quite a range of housing options. Try to see a variety of housing options from the nicest to the less desirable - often reserved for first-year students.

9. A choice of college is a major decision. Tours often highlight a college’s strengths. Make sure you probe students to also determine some of the college’s drawbacks. Every college has them - make sure they’re acceptable to you.

10. Make some brief notes about each visit and/or take some pictures, including things you liked and things you didn’t particularly like. Fill in your Worksheet 1: College Comparison with information you want to make note of. These notes will be helpful as decision time approaches.

11. At the end of your visit, ask yourself two very important questions:

   *Do I see myself fitting in here? Am I comfortable here?*

5.5. Sample Questions to Ask of Students and on a Campus Tour:

- What makes this college unique?
- How intense is the academic competition in the classroom?
- What is the average class size?
• What do students praise most about this college?
• Describe your typical workload for a night.
• Describe your typical weekend.
• Who is your favorite professor and why?
• What campus events have you attended recently?
• How would you characterize the relationship between this college and the town?
• Name one thing you dislike about this college and how would you change it?
• Why did you choose this college over the other schools where you were admitted?
• What is the biggest campus issue currently?
• What percentage of students live on campus?
• How long did it take you to adjust? At what point did you finally feel comfortable?
• What do you think made your application stand out?
• What traditions does your school have?

5.6 The College Interview
Each college determines its own policy regarding interviews and its importance in the admissions process.

While the majority of colleges do not require an interview, a small number of colleges still do. There are also a few colleges that “recommend” that you have an interview. The word “recommend” usually means that you should do whatever it is that a college is recommending you do. However, if you are not ready or comfortable in an interview setting, don’t feel compelled to interview, if it is not required.

That being said, if you are comfortable in an interview setting and are prepared to discuss yourself and your interests, an interview is an important opportunity to present yourself in a favorable light and improve your chance of admission.

There are two types of interviewing options a college might use:

- The On-Campus Interview
- The Off-Campus Admissions Rep/Alumni Interview

The On-Campus Interview:
This is an interview that is held on campus, typically by appointment only. During the interview you meet with an admissions representative for a conversation about yourself and your interest in the college.
This interview may be evaluative, which means that it is used to help the admissions office determine whether you are the type of student the college is looking for. Your interview becomes part of your application file at that college.

**The Off-Campus Admissions Rep/Alumni Interview:**
This type of interview is similar to the on campus Interview in that it helps the admissions office determine whether you are the type of student the college is looking for. The difference is that these interviews are conducted by traveling admissions representatives or alumni of the college and are held off-campus across the country and world. These people act as representatives of the college and return an evaluation form back to the college with their impressions of their conversation with you.

**A Word About Timing**
Colleges may offer interviews as early as spring of junior year and through the fall of your senior year. Some colleges don’t offer interviews as an option until after you have submitted your application. You may check the college’s website for complete details as to whether, how, where and when interviews are held. Because interview information is not always easily found, it may be more efficient to call the admissions office(s) directly to ask about the college’s interview protocol. You may learn that some colleges do not offer interviews. Keep in mind that slots for interviews may be limited; act as soon as possible to make an appointment.

**5.7. Ten Tips for a Great Interview**
You can make your interviews work to your advantage with the right preparation. Going into the meeting cold and mumbling monosyllabic answers to the interviewers’ questions isn’t a winning game plan. Here are some tips that will help you come across as a strong candidate:

1. **Make an Appointment**
   - Call the admissions office at least six weeks before you plan to visit.

2. **Dress Neatly and Comfortably**
   - Dress in a style natural for you and appropriate for a somewhat formal occasion. Don’t let your attire be distracting. Choose something not too dressy, not too casual.

3. **Display Courtesy**
   - Arrive on time for the interview, deliver a firm handshake and make eye contact with the interviewer.

4. **Don’t Let Your Parents/Guardians Sit in**
   - The interviewer will be trying to gauge how well you can speak for yourself. Having a parent/guardian in the interview won’t work in your favor. The interviewer may, however, come out after the interview to answer your questions.
5. **Know About the School in Advance**  
   ● Access the college website before the interview so that you are well informed.  
   ● **However**, you don’t need to memorize every detail about the college - part of the reason for the interview is to help you learn more!

6. **Present Yourself in the Most Favorable Light**  
   ● Develop a personal strategy beforehand that will help you come across well. Decide which of your qualities, interests and achievements you would like to mention.  
   ● What sets you apart from the other applicants? How do you want the admissions officer to remember you? Be confident! This is your time to shine—practice discussing your strong points or noteworthy accomplishments in a positive, but not boastful manner.  
   ● If you have created a resume, bring it with you to the interview. It gives the interviewer a bit more information about you and allows you to leave something behind.

7. **Formulate Thoughtful Answers to Certain Types of Questions**  
   ● Be prepared to field questions like these:  
     ○ Why do you want to go to college? What do you expect to gain?  
     ○ Why are you interested in our college?  
     ○ What academic areas are you most interested in?  
     ○ What do you like or dislike most about high school?  
     ○ What are your plans for the future?  
     ○ What would you like to tell us about yourself?  
     ○ Tell us about a challenge you have faced and how you dealt with it.  
     ○ How are you doing in school and what are some of your favorite classes? What are your least favorite classes?  
   ● None of the above questions have one right answer, but your responses should show maturity, responsibility and honesty. Ask for clarification if a question is not clear.

8. **Prepare Questions of Your Own**  
   ● The interviewer will be impressed by an applicant who shows enough interest to ask pertinent questions about the college. You’ll also get points for doing your part to keep the conversation moving at a comfortable pace.  
   ● Ask questions that are not easily determined by looking at the website (i.e. do not ask basic questions such as: “What is the size of your student body?”). Instead, you might ask about specific courses or programs, things that relate to the culture of the college or things that are unique to the college.
9. **Be Positive**
   - Be upbeat and talk about your strengths and your accomplishments in and out of school. Don’t be afraid to acknowledge your weaknesses, but don’t focus on them.

10. **Send a Thank-You Note**
    - After the interview, send a friendly written note or an email to the admissions rep (spell his/her name correctly - ask for their business card!). Refer to points you discussed during the interview and share why the college is right for you and why you would be a great addition to the college community.

Please note that if requested, your school and college counselor will work on interviewing skills with students on an individual basis. Please see them for further information.
Chapter 4 - Standardized Testing

CEEB (College Entrance Examination Board) NSHS Code: 221548

Beginning in March 2016, the College Board revamped the SAT. Make sure you are using updated testing preparation and study materials.

Section 1: Important Questions
The majority of colleges require students to submit standardized test scores as part of their application. These may include the SAT, ACT and SAT Subject Tests. No colleges require both the SAT and the ACT. All colleges that require testing will accept either the SAT or the ACT. Understanding the testing requirements and the process involved will hopefully make the experience as stress-free and successful as possible. Keep in mind that it is a student’s academic achievement, not test scores, that is the most important factor in college admission.

Test Optional Schools

There are an increasing number of colleges that do not require standardized tests for admission. A current list of these colleges can be found on www.fairtest.org. For definitive information on a college’s requirements please visit its website.

Some questions that are important to consider when planning your standardized testing are:

- What tests should I take?
- When should I take the tests?
- How should I prepare for the tests?

Also, it is important to understand:

- How to register for the tests
- How to submit scores to college

Section 2: Description of Tests
The SAT, SAT with Writing, SAT Subject Tests and the ACT are tests designed to help colleges assess your academic readiness for college. The PSAT are offered at Newton South. The PreACT is offered at Newton North. For more information, refer to Section 4: Determining When to Take your Tests.
2.1 PSAT

The PSAT is a practice test for the SAT that runs approximately three hours. It is offered only once during the fall. The PSAT covers evidence-based reading, writing and math. The highest score possible is 1520 or 760 for each section.

Newton South recommends that all juniors take the PSAT in the fall of junior year. A high score on the PSAT in your junior year may make you eligible to participate in the National Merit Scholarship program (see www.nationalmerit.org).

The PSAT is normed for high school juniors and presents a good opportunity to prepare for taking the SAT under real test conditions.

Registration

Newton South administers the PSAT and registration is done at Newton South.

Scores

Since this is a practice test, PSAT test results are not shared with colleges and are not used for college admissions purposes.

PSAT scores are sent directly through electronic submission from the College Board. Students should make an appointment to meet with their school counselor to gain a better understanding of their score report and to receive their test booklet to help research wrong and omitted responses.

2.2 SAT

The SAT is a three-hour test covering evidence-based reading, writing and math. The SAT with Writing includes an additional 50 minute essay section.

Registration

Students are responsible for their own registration for the SAT. Registering is done online through www.collegeboard.org. Test sites fill up so it is advisable to register early. Make sure that you will be able to get to the testing site you choose on time on the given Saturday morning. NOTE: Newton South IS a test site for the SAT.

When you register for the SAT test, you may also be able to request the Question and Answer Service, a supplement to your scores which includes details on your correct and incorrect answers. This service has an additional fee. It is not an option for all sittings, but, if available, it
could help you analyze your scores. You must choose this option when you register for the test. See www.collegeboard.org for more details.

**NOTE:** Newton South can be very, very congested getting into the school for drop off on SAT test dates, give yourself plenty of time.

**Note that you cannot take the SAT and the SAT Subject Tests on the same day.**

**Receiving Scores**

It takes approximately two to three weeks to receive your online scores from www.collegeboard.org.

**Sending Scores - NSHS does not put scores on our transcript**

**Students are responsible for requesting their official SAT scores to the colleges of their choice.** Scores are sent through www.collegeboard.org. From the time that scores are officially available to you, it can take up to 10 days for scores to arrive at a college, even if they are submitted electronically. Consequently, it is important to plan carefully so that you can meet your colleges’ deadlines.

**The SAT’s “Score Choice” Option**

The SAT has a policy called *Score Choice*. *Score Choice* gives students the ability to choose which test sittings they wish to send to individual colleges. When sending scores to a college you can either select to send all SAT scores from all sittings or select *Score Choice*, after which you can choose which **test sittings** to send to a given college. When you send your SAT scores, your scores for all sections (from the test sittings selected will be sent. The rules are different for the SAT Subject Tests – see below.

**Not all colleges allow Score Choice and want to see all tests taken.** Refer to individual college websites for more information. College Board has a list of which colleges do and do not allow *Score Choice* at www.collegeboard.org.

**Super Scoring**

Some colleges have a practice of “super scoring” a student’s test scores. This means that they take the highest score for each section from across all the test dates submitted. Therefore, it is often advantageous to send all your test dates to a given college. You can try to check the policy for each college before you send your scores, but this information is not always made public.
2.3 ACT

The ACT is a three hour test consisting of four subject areas: English, Math, Reading and Science. The ACT Plus Writing includes the four subject area tests plus a 40-minute Writing test.

The ACT is not an aptitude or an IQ test. The questions on the ACT are related to what is taught in high school in English, math, reading, and science courses. For more details see www.act.org.

ACT ENHANCEMENTS, FALL 2020

Beginning in September 2020, ACT will offer 3 new options for Testing and Score Reporting:

1. **Section Retesting** - 1 or more individual subject sections (English, Reading, Science, Math or writing) may be retaken to improve specific subject scores. This option is available only if you have already taken a full official ACT on a National ACT test date and only through online testing at designated test sites (To Be Determined).

2. **Superscoring** - After taking an ACT more than once, students will have the option of sending their best/highest individual subject scores to achieve a recalculated ACT composite score.

3. **Online Testing** - Along with paper testing, students will have the option of testing online at designated testing sites. At this writing, it is anticipated that there will be very limited sites offering this.

Review ACT’s information on these changes, here.

Receiving Scores

It takes approximately two to three weeks to receive your scores from www.act.org.

Registration

Students are responsible for their own registration for the ACT, which is done through www.act.org. Test sites fill up quickly, so it is advisable to register early. Make sure that you will be able to get to your test on time.

NOTE: Newton South is NOT an ACT test site. However, Newton North High School is a test site for the ACT and Newton South students can take it there.

Sending Scores - NSHS does not put scores on our transcript

Students are responsible for sending their ACT scores to the colleges of their choice. Scores must be sent through www.act.org.
2.4 SAT Subject Tests

The SAT Subject Tests are each one hour long and cover a specific academic area. Not all colleges require SAT Subject Tests (please check the individual websites for the colleges you are considering). For colleges that do, they often require tests in two-three subjects. Sometimes students interested in specific majors or programs may be required to submit specific SAT Subject Tests. For instance, engineering majors may need to submit a math and/or science Subject Test. Some colleges also use SAT Subject Tests for placement once you are enrolled.

Some colleges will accept the ACT **Plus Writing** instead of the SAT and SAT Subject Tests. Check each college’s website for details.

**Registration**

**Students are responsible for their own registration for the SAT Subject Tests.** Registration is done through [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). Up to 3 SAT Subject Tests may be taken on the same day. Test sites fill up so it is advisable to register early. Make sure that you will be able to get to the testing site you choose on time on the given Saturday morning.

**Note:** you cannot take the SAT and the SAT Subject Tests on the same day.

**Receiving Scores**

It takes approximately two to three weeks to receive your scores from [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

**Sending Scores - NSHS does not put scores on our transcript**

**Students are responsible for sending their SAT Subject Test scores to the colleges of their choice.** Scores are sent through [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). It can take up to 10 days (from the time they are officially available to you) for scores to arrive at a college, even if they are submitted electronically, so plan carefully based on the due dates for your colleges.

**The SAT Subject Test “Score Choice” Option**

*Score Choice* gives students the ability to choose which SAT Subject Test scores they wish to send to individual colleges. When sending scores to a college you can either select to send all scores or select *Score Choice*, after which you can choose which specific SAT Subject Test scores to send. Unlike the SAT, you do not need to send all scores from a given sitting, rather you can pick and you choose which individual SAT Subject Test scores to send from each sitting.
Not all colleges allow **Score Choice and want to see all tests taken**. Check the college’s website to get testing requirement information. College Board also has a record of which colleges do and don’t allow **Score Choice**.

**2.5 TOEFL for Non-Native speakers & International Students**

TOEFL stands for “Test of English as a Foreign Language.” See [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org). The test measures your ability to use and understand the English language as it is read, written, heard and spoken in the college classroom. The TOEFL is a supplement to your other standardized testing and can help the college ascertain your mastery of the English language.

Although there is no single rule about which students should or should not take the TOEFL, some colleges do require it under certain circumstances. Please be sure to check your college’s website. Students whose first language is not English should talk to their school counselor and a college counselor about whether and when to take the TOEFL. Traditionally these students take this test in the fall of senior year since their English proficiency will improve throughout their high school career.

**Registration**

Students need to register online at [www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl). Test sites and dates are available worldwide throughout the year.

**Scores** - You will receive an email letting you know when your scores are available — approximately 10 days after your test date.

**Sending the Scores** - Official TOEFL score reports will be sent to your designated recipients approximately 13 days after you take the test.

**2.6 Accommodations for IEPs, 504 plans and Other Special Needs**

College testing companies sometimes allow for accommodations based on information provided about the student, accommodation plans or other special needs. Students and parents/guardians should speak to their school counselor about testing accommodations during **sophomore year** or at least three months before a testing date. Specific paperwork must be filled out and filed in order to get approval for an accommodation from the testing board. Note that requested accommodations are not guaranteed.

**2.7 Advanced Placement Tests (AP)**

Newton South offers a wide range of AP classes, typically for juniors and seniors, which culminate in a standardized AP exam. These classes can provide opportunities for students to gain college credit or advanced placement for some college courses. The exams are usually given in May and the testing schedule is available on [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). **AP exams are not required or necessary for most college admissions purposes.**
Registration

Registration for AP tests is done through Newton South. The tests are given in May at Newton South during school hours. Students enrolled in AP classes will receive notification from Newton South about registration procedures, test dates and applicable fees.

2.8 Fees and Fee Waivers
There are fees associated with registering for all the standardized tests and for submitting scores. If the fees are a financial hardship, you may be eligible for a fee waiver. See your school counselor for more information.

Section 3: Determining Which Tests to Take
First and foremost, it is critical to check the requirements for each college to which you will be applying to determine what their specific test requirements are. Colleges that require standardized tests will accept either the SAT or the ACT with Writing. In addition, some colleges require SAT Subject Tests.

3.1 SAT vs. ACT - Which Test is Right for Me?
Both the SAT and ACT are equally well regarded by colleges. Students should pick the test they are most comfortable with and feel they can get the best score on. While the two tests share a high statistical correlation, some students may perform better on one than the other.

The best way to determine which test is right for you is to try a practice test of each type. You can take the PSAT (the practice test for the SAT) and/or the PreACT (the practice test for the ACT) at Newton North. You can also take free practice SATs through the College Board/Khan Academy collaboration. Another option is to take a full, timed SAT and/or ACT practice test at a private testing center, which are typically given free with no obligation for further services.

Rather than choose between the two tests, you may decide to take both the SAT and ACT. If you take both, you can send results from either test or both. Colleges will only see the scores you send.

If you would like to learn more about the differences between the two tests, see Appendix 11 - SAT vs ACT

3.2 SAT Subject Tests
Decisions about which SAT Subject Tests to take can be difficult because there are so many to choose from. Choose subjects in which you have a high probability of doing well. Your classroom teachers can advise you based on the level of your course, your class performance and whether they think a subject makes sense for you. Since some colleges will not allow Score Choice, you will want to be thoughtful about your selections.
Note: The SAT Subject Tests are not based on any one specific curriculum; therefore no class at Newton South can be guaranteed to fully prepare you for any specific test. Sometimes additional preparation may be required. Be sure to discuss this with your teacher well before the registration deadline.

It is especially important for students interested in taking World Language tests to speak with their teachers; some of these tests are taken primarily by native speakers and this may affect the grading curve for the test and ultimately, your score.

Section 4: Determining When to Take Your Tests

4.1 Plan Ahead

It is helpful to develop a tentative testing schedule in the second semester of sophomore year. This schedule can be modified, but a plan will help you see what tests are offered on given dates and how you might want to schedule your testing. Students may also want to consider the timing of tests in light of academics, extracurricular activities, athletic events, etc.

The tests are offered in the following months:

PreACT - October, 10th grade

PSAT - October, 11th grade

ACT - September, October, December, February, April, June & July (beginning in 2018)

SAT - August, October, November, December, March, May, June

Make sure to check your schedule when planning your testing.

See Worksheet 2: Planning for Standardized Testing, which is designed to help you organize your testing schedule. This worksheet can be used by any student, whether they are taking the old or new SAT.

If you are taking multiple tests, the timing of your testing can be tricky and you should spend some time thinking ahead. Here are some things to consider:

- Am I taking SAT or ACT or both?
- Will I be taking AP tests in May of junior year?

~While SATs can be taken in the same month as APs, it may be more than a student will want to take in one month.
~Some students find it advantageous to take the SAT Subject Tests while they are also preparing for the AP exam in the same subject.

- **Will I be taking SAT Subject Tests in May or June of junior year?**

~The SATs and SAT Subject Tests cannot be taken on the same day, so if you are taking SAT Subject Tests in May or June, you might consider taking the SAT earlier in the year.

- **How much time will I need or do I want to spend practicing and preparing for the test?**

~If you plan to do some test prep you will want to know your tests dates in order to plan and schedule your test prep accordingly.

- **What if I want to or need to take the test more than once?**

~Make sure you leave yourself time to retake a test before your application deadlines.

- **Will I be applying Early Decision, Early Action or Rolling Admission to any colleges? Know your college testing deadlines.**

~These applications will require submission of test scores earlier than regular decision applications. It can take up to two or three weeks to receive your scores and another 10 days to have them delivered to your college.

~Check individual college websites to find out the last testing date that the college will accept

- **Are there any conflicts with final exams, vacations or extracurricular activities?**

~Second semester junior year can be a very busy time with your classes, testing and end of the year responsibilities. Keep in mind that the most important activity is finishing your junior year strong and earning good grades. It is important to weigh your decision about testing against what you need to do to complete the year in school.

- **What if I hope to be recruited to play NCAA sports in college?**

~You may need to know your scores early to determine your NCAA eligibility. See Chapter 9 - NCAA Athletic Recruiting for more details.

**4.2 PSAT**
The Newton South Counseling Department recommends that college-bound students take the PSAT (a pre-SAT) junior year.
4.3 SAT and ACT
The SAT and ACT are given several times a year but NOT every month and NOT over the summer.

The SAT is administered in August, October, November, December, January, March, May and June. More information about the exact dates for the SAT is available at www.collegeboard.org.

The ACT is administered in September, October, December, February, April, June and July (beginning in 2018). More information on the exact dates for the ACT is available at www.act.org.

Most students will think about taking the SAT and/or ACT sometime between January and June of junior year. The fall of senior year is often when students will take the tests for a second or third time if they choose.

Students who are taking AP test(s) or SAT Subject Tests in May and June will need to pay extra attention to planning their testing schedule. Please refer to Worksheet 2 – Planning for Standardized Testing and discuss this with your school counselor and/or the college counselor.

4.4 SAT Subject Tests
SAT Subject Tests are typically taken at the end of the academic year, either in May, June of junior year and or August, the summer before senior year. Since the SAT Subject Tests require specific knowledge of material, it is important for students to take the test shortly after they have completed a class on that subject matter while the material is fresh in their minds. Generally, students taking upper level courses and performing well in them can consider taking SAT Subject Test(s).

If you are taking SAT Subject Tests, think about taking them at the time when you might be taking AP exams or final exams in a particular subject (AP exams are given in early May).

Note: The SAT Subject Tests are not based on any one specific curriculum; therefore no class at Newton South can be guaranteed to fully prepare you for any specific test. Additional preparation may be necessary. Be sure to discuss this with your teacher well before the registration deadline.

Note that some sophomore students could take the Chemistry and/or World History SAT Subject Test at the end of sophomore year if they have performed well in their corresponding honors class. Students can take an SAT Subject Test as late as December or, in some cases, even in January of their senior year. Speak with your teacher and/or school counselor and check with your colleges’ deadlines.
Not all SAT Subject Tests are administered every time the Subject Tests are given. This is especially true for World Language SAT Subject Tests which offer language and mandatory listening components at various times. Make sure you consult www.collegeboard.org, and discuss with your teacher(s) which one(s) might be best for you to take.

You can take one, two, or three SAT Subject Tests on the same day. You cannot take the SAT and SAT Subject Tests on the same day.

4.5 When to Prepare for the Test
Keep in mind that preparing for a test can take weeks or even months. Therefore, once you have thought about the timing of your testing, plan your test preparation accordingly. See section on “Test Prep” in this chapter for more details. Summer is an optimal time to prep since most students have more time to focus than during the school year.

If you think you might be applying under Early Decision, Early Action or early Rolling Admission plans, it is recommended that all college testing be completed by November of senior year, at the latest. The SAT, ACT and SAT Subject Tests are administered throughout the fall. Students who will apply to regular college deadlines may continue to test through January of senior year.

4.6 When to Retake a Test
If you are not satisfied with your scores, you are not alone. Many students opt to take the SAT and/or ACT a second time. Sometimes your score will help you determine which areas need improvement. Make sure to leave enough time between tests so that you can do additional preparation and cover more course material in your classes. Generally it is not recommended that you take a test more than three times. SAT Subject Tests may also be repeated.

A possible testing plan might be to take the SAT in March and repeat in October, and/or to take the ACT for the first time in April or June and repeat in September or October. Worksheet 2 - Planning for Standardized Testing can be a helpful tool.

It takes about two to three weeks to get scores from a given test. As part of your planning, you should think about possible dates when you might retake one of your tests, if needed. Think also about how much time you might need to prepare for your retake test and how it fits in with your other testing and application deadlines.

Make sure you have completed everything by your colleges’ deadlines! These deadlines are firm.
**Section 5: Test Prep**

Students who plan carefully and familiarize themselves with the test format through use of practice materials may improve their scores.

For some students test preparation can take a few weeks, for others, it can span over a few months.

Test preparation can be done by taking full practice tests and/or sample questions from books, online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) and [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or at private test centers. Lastly, you can hire private tutors and/or sign up for test prep classes.

**5.1 Khan Academy: Free Test Prep for the SAT**

The stated goal of the College Board is to tie the SAT more closely to the high school curriculum making specific test-taking skills less important. In an effort to make test prep accessible to all, the College Board is partnering with Khan Academy (a free, online learning resource) to make comprehensive test prep for the SAT free of cost to students. It is highly recommended that this option of test prep be used by all students. See [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) or [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org).

**5.2 Newton Community Education- SAT & ACT Prep**

The City of Newton offers test preparation classes through Newton Community Education. Please see their website for more information. ([http://www2.newtoncommunityed.org](http://www2.newtoncommunityed.org)).

**5.3 ACT Online Test Prep**

ACT has partnered with Kaplan to provide [live online prep](http://www2.newtoncommunityed.org) for a reduced cost. Free for students using ACT Fee Waivers.
Chapter 5 - The Application

CEEB (College Entrance Examination Board) NSHS Code: 221548

Section 1: A College Application Consists of...

The college application is your opportunity to present yourself to colleges that you are interested in. Colleges look at a variety of factors when evaluating your application. Some factors are objective such as grades and test scores; others are more subjective such as your extracurricular activities, teacher evaluations and essays.

A college application typically includes:

- Official High School Transcript
- Standardized test scores (if the college requires them)
- Teacher Recommendation(s)
- Counselor Statement
- A form, which people typically refer to as “the application,” in which you include biographical information, extracurricular activities and personal statements (essays).
- Supplemental materials which might include additional essays, an art or music portfolio or other items.

Materials sent by Newton South

After an official request is submitted by the student, Newton South will send the following official materials to the requested college(s):

- Official Transcript with weighted and unweighted GPA (grades 10-12) including previous high school transcripts for transfer students
- Counselor Statement
- Teacher Recommendations (sent by the teacher)
- Newton South High School Profile (including histogram)

The process for making these requests is fully explained to students in Senior Seminars. Check with your school counselor if you have questions.

In order to help organize the information associated with this process please see Worksheet 4 - College Application.
Manage your time. Since there are many components to the application, make sure to leave yourself plenty of time to complete it. Do not expect to finish an application in one sitting. Also, be sure to leave time for adequate proofreading and checking the accuracy of everything you submit.

Section 2: The Common Application

2.1 What is the Common App?
The Common Application (also known as the Common App) is an online form through which you can apply to many colleges in the United States. It is a standard form that you complete once and is then available for you to send to multiple colleges. Note, you do have the opportunity to edit some of the details of the application form before you submit it to a particular college. Please see http://www.commonapp.org.

2.2 Colleges That Do Not Accept the Common App
Not all colleges accept the Common App. These colleges have their own application forms and directions for applying are specified on their websites. Make sure to check a college’s website to determine its requirements.

In recent years, a number of colleges have created the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success. A very small number of colleges are requiring this application exclusively for admission consideration. Please see www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org for more information.

While this chapter primarily focuses on the process of completing and submitting an application through the Common Application, much of the following material will be relevant to most application platforms because the components of the applications tend to be similar.

2.3 Accessing the Common App
To access the Common App you must register at www.commonapp.org. Once you have created your Common App account you can list the colleges to which you intend to apply and start to complete the form. All of your data will be stored online. You can always update your list of colleges and edit the information in the form before it is sent to any given college.

WARNING: Do not open an additional Common App account UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. Remember to keep track of your Common App login information.

2.4 What’s in the Common App
The Common App consists of several sections. You will be asked to input biographical information, a list of extracurricular activities, a list of honors and awards, your senior year classes, your self-reported (if required) test scores and one essay.
As you fill out the application, it will prompt you when you have entered all the necessary information in a given section.

*Should I complete the section that asks for “Additional Information”?*

In order for the colleges to get the fullest picture of you, the “Additional Information” section in the Writing part of the main Common Application should be used to expand on something that has not been previously mentioned in detail. Examples include:

- Interest / Passion / Extracurricular Activity
- Challenges you may have faced
- Explanation of something on the transcript

*Should I include a resume?*

Each student may develop a resume through Naviance or with their own format and continue to update the document through their senior year. A resume is a very useful tool for organizing activities and other extracurriculars in preparation for the college process and beyond. At Newton South, many students create their resumes in Naviance.

The question of whether to include your resume and how to do it is one that you should discuss with your school or college counselor.

**2.5 Application Supplements**

The Common App site will also show you which colleges require a “Supplement.” The supplement is an additional application form specific to a given college which may require additional essays and other information.

Like the main part of the Common App, the supplement is filled out and submitted electronically and is unique to that college/university. For some colleges, the application supplements are submitted separately from the Common App. Please make sure you submit both!

**Section 3: Additional Application Requirements**

Some colleges may require additional information beyond what is included in the Common App and/or a college’s application supplement. You will need to find these requirements on specific colleges’ websites as they will not be listed on the Common Application.

**3.1 Fine & Performing Arts College Planning**

Students interested in the Fine & Performing Arts (visual art, music, theatre) can tailor their collegiate experience to their level of interest and desire of intensity of programming. Many
universities have art/music/or theatre departments that allow students who are majoring outside of the F&PA to take enrichment classes, or even to minor in the F&PA.

Some universities offer specialized programs in the F&PA called conservatories within their larger institutions. Students who choose to go to a conservatory will have an intense and immersive experience in their discipline of choice. Still other students might choose to attend a conservatory outside of a larger university, or a college that specializes in one area of the F&PA. Many colleges and conservatories that are discipline-specific often have arrangements for their students to enroll in courses offered at a traditional university. A few colleges offer dual degree programs, such as Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), where students enroll in five year programs and graduate with two degrees (B.A. and B.F.A., for example).

**Fine and Performing Arts Admissions Process**

Many of the universities, conservatories, and colleges specific to the F&PA use the Common Application. Some schools do not require any additional materials, and others have supplemental requirements specific to their schools. Many art schools require a portfolio of artwork in addition to the Common Application, usually ranging from 15-20 pieces of original artwork that show personal voice, and breadth of skills in multiple materials and subjects. In addition to a portfolio, some schools will also require applicants to complete a home test that consists of completing artwork based on specific prompts. It is common practice for music and theatre conservatories to require applicants to supplement their application with an audition. Often, students will be asked to send in a video performance as a pre-screening to a live audition. Students interested in applying to institutions in the F&PA should familiarize themselves with each school’s specific admissions requirements early in the application process to ensure they are prepared to submit the appropriate materials and format in time for each deadline.

NOTE: Even if not required, students may choose to submit additional artistic presentations as part of their application. Please check with each college for details on their submission process.

Please be in touch early with the NSHS Fine and Performing Arts faculty for more information on this process.

**Section 4: Essays**

The Common App requires one essay (currently a maximum of 650 words) based on one of a choice of seven writing prompts, which includes a topic of your choice. See Chapter 6 - The College Essay for a detailed discussion on writing effective college essays.
Note that while you can type the essay directly into the Common App form, it is best to write it in a Google or Word document and cut and paste it into the Common App when you are ready to submit your application. This strategy avoids potential accidental submissions and lets you use the advanced spell checking and formatting capabilities of your editing software. It also makes the essay available to you for use elsewhere, if necessary.

In addition to the Common Application essay, college/universities members may also require “supplemental essays”. In some cases, students have found these individualized, college/university-specific essay questions to be significantly more time consuming than the “Common App” essay. Plan accordingly to meet your deadlines.

Section 5: Teacher Recommendations
Teacher Recommendations are NOT submitted through the Common App. Rather, most are submitted by the teacher through Naviance. Some teachers may choose to send via postal mail. You will be instructed by your teacher. Teacher recommendations are an essential part of the application. Each college will indicate how many and what type of recommendations are required. Two Teacher Recommendations and one Counselor Statement are the norm.

Typically, juniors will have a verbal conversation with the teachers they have thoughtfully identified to complete a recommendation prior to leaving school in June of their junior year. Students will need to contact these teachers again during senior year to provide an updated list of schools and accompanying deadlines. Giving teachers a 4 week window to complete a recommendation is requested. Finally, seniors who add colleges must continue to update teachers to be sure all recommendations are sent to all your colleges.

Section 6: Counselor Statements
Counselor statements are submitted separately by the school as part of the transcript materials. The counselor statement provides a comprehensive picture of your academic, social and extracurricular contributions to the Newton South community. School counselors are in the best position to collaborate with staff, communicate with you and review your record to provide colleges with a broad and unique perspective. The statement may also include an explanation and clarification of any special circumstances in your background that affected your academic achievement or attendance (e.g. transfer student, extended illness). You must submit a Transcript Request Form 4 weeks prior to your first college deadline to initiate your counselor’s recommendation.

Section 7: Standardized Test Scores
The Common App will give you the option to self-report your standardized test scores and AP scores directly on your application. This data is NOT a substitute for submitting your official
scores either through www.collegeboard.org for the SAT and SAT Subject Tests or www.act.org for the ACT. See Chapter 4 - Standardized Testing for details on submitting test scores.

If a college specifically requires you to submit your AP scores(s) as part of your application, you must do this through www.collegeboard.org.

You may omit your test score information if you are applying to a test-optional college(s). Students on IEPs or with a 504 can waive sending their test scores for Massachusetts public universities. Please see Chapter 8, “Special Circumstances” for additional information.

**Section 8: Submitting Your Application**

Your Common App is submitted electronically from www.commonapp.org. Do not wait until the last minute. There have been years where major snow storms and power outages have occurred and students were unable to meet college deadlines. These deadlines are firm!

*Note that submission of the application is done separately for each college to which you apply. While most of the application will stay the same, you do have the opportunity to edit some of the details of the application before you submit it to a particular college. For example, you may wish to remove test scores for colleges that are test optional.*

There is a fee to submit the Common App. If the fees are a financial hardship, you may be eligible for a fee waiver. See your school counselor and the College Counselor for more information.

Colleges that don’t use the Common App will have instructions on their websites on how to submit the required materials.

**Section 9: Checking the Status of Your Application**

You should receive a confirmation from www.commonapp.org that your application was successfully submitted. In addition, the college will usually send you instructions on how to check the status of your application on its website or you may be assigned a login for an applicant portal.

It is important to check with the college to which you applied to make sure that it has received all components of your application including teacher recommendations, scores and transcripts. Even if Naviance or www.collegeboard.org indicate that materials have been sent, do not assume that all materials have been received. You need specific confirmation from the college that your application is complete. Many colleges allow you to check the status of your application on their website or a dedicated, secure, college-specific portal. If not, contact them. Do not assume that the college will contact you if information is missing.
Many colleges will send a confirmation email or letter after receiving an application, giving the applicant a username or account ID which is then used to access a college **specific information portal** on which the applicant can track their application. Often results are posted on these portals before letters or emails are received.

**Note:** it is wise to have a place where you have access to all of your college-related usernames and passwords for easy reference. Once you apply to a college, you are often given access to their portal. This is where you may find information on your application status and decisions, so it is important to have login information in a reliable place.
Chapter 6 - The College Essay

This chapter was prepared in part by using the thoughts of John C. Conkright, Dean of Admissions, Randolph Macon College, Ashland, VA.

Section 1: Essay Preparation
Many colleges require that an applicant submit an essay or personal statement as part of the college application. In general, the essay helps the college assess your critical thinking and writing abilities. It is also designed to shed light on your special interests or experiences, values, attitudes and expectations of the future.

In order to avoid essay writing anxiety, it is best to begin drafting an essay sooner rather than later. The summer between junior and senior year is an ideal time to begin brainstorming ideas for essay topics. A good activity to help you begin the process of writing an essay is to complete Worksheet 3 - College Essay Brainstorming.

The Common Application and many other college applications are usually ready for the next year's applicants around August 1st. At that point, you can preview the essay questions in order to best prepare for drafting the essay.

The Common App requires a student-written essay. There are seven essay prompts to choose from with a maximum of 650 and minimum of 250 words. To preview the essay prompts, go to www.commonapp.org.

In addition, some colleges require a supplemental essay(s) to be submitted along with the Common App. These essay topics tend to be more college specific. For example, they might ask you to expand on your choice of major or reasons for applying.

Make sure you are aware of the essay requirements for each college you are applying to. As always, the best source for this information is a college’s website.

Section 2: The Essay: Step by Step
If you are like most students, you see the college essay as another hurdle you must jump over on the way to being accepted at the college of your choice. In fact, the essay is not a hurdle but a rare opportunity. It is a chance for you to “talk” directly to the college’s admissions committee
and to help them “see” you as a thinking and feeling person, rather than simply a set of impersonal statistics. Except for the interview, it is your only chance to share your thoughts, insights and opinions, to highlight your accomplishments and to convey your maturity and outlook on life. If you see the college essay in this way, as an opportunity, then it is clearly worth the effort to put some extra time, thought and energy into writing it.

2.1 Purpose of the Essay
The college essay is extremely important for two major reasons:

1. It enables the college admission office to evaluate your communication skills. Through your essay they can assess the clarity of your thinking and your ability to convey your thoughts in written form.
2. It enables the admissions officer to learn more about you as a person, beyond what grades and SAT scores can convey. A well-written essay can speak volumes about your attitudes, feelings, personal qualities, imagination and creativity. For the admissions staff, it adds another important piece to the puzzle because it distinguishes you as an individual and differentiates you from other applicants.

2.2 Choosing a Topic
Regardless of whether you are writing an essay to meet the requirements of the Common App or a college’s supplemental application, here are a few general hints about the most effective way to approach your topic:

- Narrow your topic and try to be as specific and illustrative as possible.
- The easiest topic to write about is you. No one knows more about you than you. Since one important purpose of the essay is self-revelation, this is not a time to be shy or modest, although you should not exaggerate. If you choose to write about yourself, remember that little incidents and facts are often the most revealing of one’s character and outlook.
- Do not be afraid to write about something you think is a little different. A unique topic or approach is often refreshing to a college admissions officer who has been reading applications all day. Further, an unusual or offbeat essay may be an excellent way to show your creativity.

2.3 Preparing To Write
Before sitting down to write a first draft of your essay, spend time organizing your thoughts. Develop a framework for your essay so it will have a smooth and logical progression from one idea or incident to the next. Consider your purpose in writing, what you want to convey and the tone you think is most appropriate for the topic. Decide on a style that is comfortable for you, not one that you think the admissions committee prefers. Finally, remember that organizing
your thoughts and deciding on a framework does not mean you must be overly rigid at the start: leave room for flexibility and creativity as you actually begin writing.

2.4 Writing the Essay
You do not have to get it right the first time! Instead, write the first draft of your essay with the main focus on having the content communicate your thoughts. Then set it aside for a day or two, reread it with a fresh perspective and make any necessary changes. This is also the point at which you should consider matters of organization, style, grammar, spelling and tone. Once you have rewritten your first draft you may wish to try it out on your family, friend, English teacher, or school counselor. While automated spell check is helpful, do not solely rely on it. Find a person to proofread your essay. In the first term of senior year, all senior English classes will complete a unit on personal essay writing, which may help in this process. While the final product and final “voice” should be yours, outside readers may be able to offer helpful suggestions for technical or other improvements and see what kind of impression you would make on someone who doesn’t know you as well.

Note that while you can type the essay directly into the Common App form, it is best to write it in a Google or Word document and cut and paste it into the Common App when you are ready to submit your application. This strategy avoids potential accidental submissions and lets you use the advanced spell checking and formatting capabilities of your editing software. It also makes the essay available to you for use elsewhere if necessary.

Please use the “Preview” feature in the Common App to make sure your essay is complete and formatted correctly.

Section 3: Dos and Don’ts
Within this general outline for writing the essay, there are some “Dos” and “Don’ts” to consider:

DOs
- Do think “small” and write about something you know about.
- Do reveal yourself in your writing.
- Do show rather than tell. By giving examples and illustrating your topics, you help bring it to life.
- Do write in your own “voice” and style.

DON’Ts
- Don’t write what you think others want to read.
- Don’t exaggerate or write to impress.
- Don’t use a flowery, inflated, or a pretentious style.
- Don’t neglect the technical part of your essay (grammar, spelling, sentence structure).
- Don’t ramble – say what you have to say and conclude.
Your college essay, along with your high school transcript, standardized test scores and extracurricular involvement, will provide the basis upon which the college makes its admissions decision. A thoughtful, well-written essay can affect that final decision in a positive way. Keep this in mind and take full advantage of the opportunity that the college essay affords you.
Chapter 7 – Admission Application Options

When you apply to a college in the fall of your senior year, you may have a choice about which type of application to submit. These options affect the deadline for submission, the date you will receive notification about admission, the date by which you must notify a college that you will attend, and in some cases, it may determine what other applications you are allowed to submit to other colleges.

Section 1: Regular Decision
- Regular Decision means you apply to the college’s regular deadline (typically in early winter).
- You can apply to more than one college Regular Decision.
- You typically receive your admission decision between March and April.
- The decision to attend the college does not usually have to be made until May 1.

Section 2: Rolling Admission
- Rolling Admissions means applications are reviewed by the college as they are received. That is, as the applications come in, the admissions office reviews them and makes the decision on a “rolling” or on-going basis.
- You typically receive your admission decision as early as a few weeks after receipt of the application.
- It is best to submit your application as soon as you have decided to apply to the college, as chance of acceptance may improve if you apply early.
- The decision to attend the college does not usually have to be made until May 1.

Section 3: Open Admission
- Open Admission means that the college admits almost all applicants who have earned a high school diploma or a GED.
- Open Admission colleges usually have no deadline by which you must submit your application.

Section 4: Early Action
- Early Action means you apply to the college by a specific early deadline, usually between early November and early December.
- You typically receive your admission decision 4-6 weeks after the application deadline (this is earlier than regular decision notification).
- If admitted early, you are not committed to enroll at that college and can choose to apply to other colleges.
The decision to attend the college does not usually have to be made until May 1.

**Restricted Early Action/Single Choice Early Action**
- Restricted Early Action means that you are not allowed to apply to other colleges with “Early” admissions options at the same time. Follow the specific instructions at these colleges.

**Section 5: Early Decision**
- Early Decision means you apply to the college by a specific early deadline, usually between early November and early December.
- Some colleges now have a second Early Decision program (often called Early Decision 2), usually with a January deadline.
- You typically receive your admission decision 4-6 weeks after the application deadline (this is earlier than regular decision notification).
- Under Early Decision you must commit to attend that college, if accepted. **You, your parents/guardians and school counselor will be required to sign a statement on the application agreeing to this binding policy.** This is different from Early Action where you still apply early but you are not required to attend if accepted.
- **If admitted ED, you must enroll and must withdraw any pending applications to other colleges.**
- Once you are admitted Early Decision, **Newton South High School will NOT send transcript materials to any other colleges.**

**5.1 Points to Consider When Thinking about Early Decision**
1. Applying Early Decision means, if accepted, you will enroll at that college. The decision is **binding**, which means that you must withdraw applications that have been submitted to other colleges and apply to no other colleges.

2. Early Decision **should be discussed in detail with your counselor and parents/guardians.** This decision must be well thought out and carefully considered. You should only apply Early Decision if s/he has visited the preferred college or attended an informational session.

3. The only way to nullify an Early Decision commitment is if the financial package is insufficient; however, this may not leave you much time to apply to other colleges.

4. You should request your teacher recommendations from a teacher in the spring of the junior year if you intend to apply to college on an early admissions plan.
**ADVANTAGES:**

- Applying Early Decision is a way of sending a strong message to that college that “This is my definite first choice.”
- It can save time, energy and the cost of filing more applications.
- If the college is a realistic match with your academic background, applying early might give you an advantage.

**DISADVANTAGES:**

- If you are accepted by a college through Early Decision, it is binding if you have a change of heart.
- By agreeing to attend the college, if accepted, you are giving up the opportunity to compare financial award letters from other colleges that accept you. You are also giving up the bargaining position. The Early Decision route may be a risk for a family with moderate or high financial need.
- If you are applying Early Decision, you must have applications to other colleges “ready to be submitted” in the event of a deferral decision, rejection decision or insufficient financial aid. While getting admitted early can reduce stress, the impact of an Early Decision deferral or rejection letter can be stressful.
Chapter 8 – College Application Planning: Special Education/504, First-Generation & ELL Applicants

Some students applying to college have additional concerns when applying to college. These include students with IEPs or 504 Plans, Deaf and hard of hearing students, first-generation and English Language Learners (ELL), Deaf and hard of hearing students or students on IEPs or 504 Accommodation Plans. When searching for a college, it is important to gather information about whether student services (academic support) and disability services are offered. There are often a wide range of services offered amongst colleges. Some colleges have structured programs where students are closely monitored, other colleges have coordinated services that are less comprehensive and finally, there are colleges that have services available only to students who advocate for themselves.

Section 1: Special Education and 504 Accommodations

Whether you need comprehensive services or more common accommodations to access the educational environment, there is a college for you.

Preparing for the college search and application process should begin earlier for students with learning or other disabilities in order to maximize the possible positive outcomes. Consider thinking about the process early in order to have enough time to fully research programs offered by colleges, determine your needs, update your diagnostic testing and prepare your application. You may also want to start thinking about the supports you now use and what supports you might need when you are in college. Like the process to develop an Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") or 504 Accommodation Plan at Newton South, finding the right college(s) and successfully applying will require a team effort involving you, your family and your counselor. It is also important to remember that the planning process for a student with learning or other disabilities involves all the same steps as for other students, plus a few more. So be sure to use this entire College Planning Guide, and think about how each step may be impacted by your particular circumstances.

First, familiarize yourself with Appendix 5 - The Big Difference which describes and compares the differences between disability laws applicable to high school and postsecondary education and Appendix 6 - Applying to College with an IEP or 504 Plan which provides a decision-tree to help guide your thinking about how big a role your disability has played in high school and may play in college. Be prepared to review these periodically as you plan for college. Your thinking about how to proceed may evolve as you mature, get farther into the process, and learn more about different college programs.
1.1 What is required by law?
There are a variety of ways colleges and universities support students with learning and other disabilities. All colleges are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities. See Appendix 5 - The Big Difference for a review of the framework applicable to colleges. To access the services which comply with the ADA, the student must have a diagnosed disability and the supporting documentation, must initiate contact with The Disability Services Office of the college, and must specifically request particular accommodations. This process requires you to take the initiative, and be able and willing to discuss your disability, including identifying what accommodations you will need and why. Although this may sound daunting, many colleges are willing to help you through the process before and after admission and provide other support. How to determine which college does the bare minimum required by law and which college provides more is the challenge when searching for a college for a student who may need more than the minimum required by law.

1.2 Programs and Evaluating Services
Many colleges and universities recognize that students with learning disabilities have a lot to add and can be successful. In addition to the usual considerations for selecting a college and determining what level of services may be needed for a student to be successful in college, there are a few more things to think about when researching colleges. It is important to understand the college’s graduation requirements, including any core curriculum requirements which might include math, science or foreign language requirements. Even colleges with core curriculum have options in each category, and may permit waivers or substitutions. Determine whether you can meet these requirements or whether you have a weakness in one or more of these subject areas that would make it difficult. Advance research will help you figure out if a reduced course-load will be possible, if there is a minimum full-time requirement, and whether summer school is an option to allow you to stay on track for graduating in four years.

1.3 Comprehensive Support Programs
Some colleges have developed comprehensive support programs for students with learning disabilities. These programs typically require a second application that is either submitted by the student along with the regular college application or shortly after being notified of acceptance. Many of these programs are limited in the number of students they will accept as they typically involve one-on-one educational coaching or small group work. Colleges offering these programs often require an additional fee beyond tuition; this fee can be substantial depending on the college. If you are interested in applying to a college with a comprehensive support program, it is very important to identify the colleges early on and to plan for the application (which may have diagnostic documentation requirements that are different or more extensive than those used to develop the IEP). Almost all of these special programs will require a separate essay from you about how your learning disability has impacted your education. Some require in-person interviews. Careful planning will go a long way towards improving the
process. Note that there are also a small number of colleges which specifically cater to students with learning disabilities where many, if not most, of the student body has some sort of learning disability or needs additional support.

### 1.4 General Support Programs

Many colleges have academic support services for ALL students. These services may include tutoring, writing centers, study groups and similar helpful programs. Please note that these programs may or may not be identified on the disability services webpage for a college. Ask about them during tours (even if you don't want to mention the word "disability"). Schools with general academic support services may still be a good fit and sufficient to meet your needs.

#### Questions students with learning disabilities (LD) should ask when researching colleges:

- Who is responsible for all LD support services?
- What level of support is offered for students with LD?
- Is there an additional cost for the services/programs?
- How many people are on the support center staff?
- How many LD students do you serve?
- Do students meet with LD staff on a regular basis?
- Who advises students with learning disabilities about academic issues?
- What accommodations are available?
- Is there a writing support center? Who staffs it? Where? Days/Hours?
- Is there a math support center? Who staffs it? Where? Days/Hours?
- I plan to be a ______________major. Are there specific, targeted supports in this major?
- What if the student has not taken a foreign language?
- What type of diagnostic testing and other documentation is required for a student to receive services? How old can acceptable testing be?
- Where are the services available on campus?
• How many credits per semester is a student required to take?
• Does the college provide services or a program or both?

1.5 Preparing for Standardized Testing
Sophomore year is a good time to become familiar with the policies of ACT and College Board (SAT, SAT Subject Tests and Advanced Placement exams) for testing accommodations as this information will be critical to planning for those standardized tests. See services for students with disabilities on http://www.actstudent.org and http://sat.collegeboard.org for details concerning documentation and your diagnoses (as determined by your diagnostic testing) required for testing accommodations. Since this process takes considerable time and requires specific applications and documentation transmitted from the school, it is best to plan well in advance. Be sure to coordinate with your school counselor and/or special education administrator.

Sophomore year is also a good time to start familiarizing yourself with the “practice” tests for the SAT, known as the PSAT. This test is more fully described in Chapter 4– Standardized Testing. You may want to apply for testing accommodations.

Note that some accommodations which may be available at Newton South, like the use of word processing technology (computer) for written essays, may be more difficult to obtain from standardized testing companies without a specific, detailed diagnosis, like dysgraphia.

The policies and process for applying for test accommodations differ between the SAT and ACT. For the ACT, you will need to apply for accommodations every time you take the test. For the SAT, you apply for accommodations once and, if approved, they apply to every College Board test you take (PSAT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests and AP tests).

Most experts encourage students with learning disabilities to take both the ACT and the SAT because the tests are different and assess different traits. Students with variable strengths and weaknesses may do better on one versus the other. Seriously consider taking a practice test for both the ACT and SAT under simulated testing conditions early enough to help you determine which test might best match your learning style. For a more detailed description of standardized tests, planning your testing schedule and a discussion of determining which test might be the best fit for you, see Chapter 4 – Standardized Testing.

Please consult your school or college counselor to decide if you should take the ACT and/or the SAT with writing.

Lastly, don’t forget that more and more colleges are providing an application process which is "test optional" meaning standardized test scores are not required to be submitted for admission
(although they may have additional requirements in lieu of test scores). For a list of colleges which are "test optional" see http://fairtest.org. In addition, some colleges, like the ones in the University of Massachusetts system, waive the standardized test requirement for students on IEPs and 504 plans. Be sure to check your college’s website.

1.6 Diagnostic Testing
It is important for students with learning disabilities to make sure that their diagnostic testing is up-to-date. Most colleges require diagnostic documentation current within three years in order to access disability services and "reasonable accommodations." The SAT and ACT also require diagnostic testing to qualify for any testing accommodations. Some comprehensive college programs require more current, specific assessments and special applications. The key to finding the right college for a student with learning or other disabilities is having the best available information about the student's strengths, weaknesses, needs and desires. Early preparation, self-reflection as well as objective data will be necessary to maximize the chances for a successful transition to an appropriate college.

1.7 Disclosure
The type of college you intend to apply to (based on your strengths, weaknesses, needs and desires), will impact whether, when and how to disclose information about your learning or other disability. For some colleges, especially those with comprehensive programs, the application offers you an opportunity to indicate your interest in the college's learning support program and provides you with a separate application process through which you can submit current diagnostic information and a personal essay or statement. Colleges with these programs usually have close coordination between the disability services and the admissions department. If a college does not specifically ask for pre-acceptance learning disability information, then the admissions department typically does not consider documentation related to learning or other disabilities. Most admissions departments do not consider or accept IEPs or 504 Accommodation Plans with the application. It is important to check each college website (search for "disability" on the homepage to quickly access the proper information) or call the admissions department if you are unsure about when or what to submit.

If you feel strongly that your disability has significantly shaped your high school experience, either positively or negatively, there are some appropriate methods to communicate these circumstances with an admissions office. This is a particularly important consideration if there is some aspect of your application (e.g. test scores, grades, gaps in attendance, no foreign language) which might be better explained or put in context with information about your disability. You may choose to write about your disability in the college essay, disclose it in an interview, or include it in response to the "additional information" question on the Common App (but note there is a word limit on the Common App). For more information about writing your essay see Chapter 6 - The Essay.
It is important to speak with your school counselor and research the specific college before making this decision. As noted above, some colleges are more supportive than others of students, so research using the resources listed below will be important. However, for some students, how they have managed their disability may be a triumph which could enhance a college application. Do not always assume it is bad to disclose your learning or other disability in your application; each student's circumstances will be different.

1.8 Once You’ve Been Accepted
Once you have been accepted to a college, you can contact the Disability Services Office (or its equivalent) on campus and see what documentation they will need for you to send in order to receive accommodations. In almost every instance, you will be asked to send your most recent testing evaluation, not the IEP. Even if you decide that you will not require support services at the college level, it still may be a good idea to provide the college with your testing in case you decide to utilize services at some point in the future.

1.9 Resources
Below is a list of resources, college handbooks and websites, to help you identify colleges with programs to match their needs. Check out some of the books at The College and Career Center and the links below:

- Peterson’s Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or AD/HD (book)
- National Center for Learning Disabilities: Post-High School Planning
- Selecting a College for Students with Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- National Resource Center on AD/HD, Succeeding in College
- Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
- Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology (DO-IT)
- U.S. Department of Education, Transition
- Wentworth Institute of Technology Disability Services
- Strategic Alternative Techniques Center at The University of Arizona
- College Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities
Section 2: EDCO Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

EDCO services are provided for students who are either deaf or hard of hearing. While Deaf and hard of hearing students have been attending college for many years, only the last few generations have had access to auxiliary aids and services that can contribute significantly to a successful educational experience. Deaf and hard of hearing students should contact their school counselor to ensure that appropriate accommodations are made for standardized testing, such as the ACT, SAT or other college entrance exams.

A wide range of services and technology are now available to students, including professional sign language interpreters, Computer-Assisted Realtime Transcription (CART), or assistive listening devices. However, prior to identifying which aids and services may be beneficial, Deaf and hard of hearing students must identify for themselves the kind of academic and social environment in which they would like to spend their college years. Sign language interpreters may be completely appropriate in the classroom, but the ability to develop a strong social network and participate in non-classroom activities and events may not be as accessible. Therefore, students must decide if they want to attend a mainstream college or would prefer a college environment that has a sizeable Deaf and hard of hearing population.

Once students have been accepted to college, they should contact the Disability Services Office on campus to discuss accommodations required and inquire about any supporting documentation needed. Most often, colleges want evidence of current evaluations rather than an IEP. Bear in mind that equal access to Deaf and hard of hearing students on college campuses is required by law and the Disability Services Office is the appropriate contact to make sure that this happens.

Section 3: First-Generation College Applicants

For students who are the first generation in their families to attend/apply to college, the process may seem overwhelming and intimidating. It is important to let your school counselor know that you and your family are going through this process for the very first time. School counselors will help you throughout the process. In addition, the college counselor in the College and Career Center is an important resource for first-generation college students and their parents/guardians. On Our Way to Success (OWTS) is a free after school program at Newton South which meets twice a week with junior and seniors to support and advise in the college application and scholarship processes.
Section 4: ELL (English Language Learner) and/or International Students

ELL students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to work with their school counselors and the ELL staff. Determining a plan for standardized testing is an important part of the process. In addition, the college counselor has a great deal of experience working with ELL students and is a valuable resource for them. In order for a student to receive ELL services, he/she is deemed eligible by the district’s ELL Office. This is done through screening tests that help determine English proficiency for students whose first language is not English.

The college application process for international students can be very complex. It is also very different for each student and family. There are many factors that must be considered, including the student’s status in the U.S. (e.g., visa type, “green card,” in process for “green card”).

Parents/guardians of international students should inform the student’s school counselor, a college counselor and the colleges to which the student is applying about the student’s status in the United States. This status has critical implications for the application process and the awarding of financial aid. Please see Appendix 8 - Financial Aid Information for Non-US Citizens.

ELL students and their parents and guardians are encouraged to speak to teachers, counselors, and ELL staff about a plan for standardized testing.

What is the TOEFL??

TOEFL stands for “Test of English as a Foreign Language.” See toefl.org. The test measures your ability to use and understand the English language as it is read, written, heard and spoken in the college classroom. The TOEFL is a supplement to your other standardized testing and can help the college ascertain your mastery of the English language.

Although there is no single rule about which students should or should not take the TOEFL, some colleges do require it under certain circumstances. Please be sure to check your college’s website. Students whose first language is not English should talk to their school counselor and a college counselor about whether and when to take the TOEFL. Traditionally these students take this test in the fall of senior year since their English proficiency will improve throughout their high school career.

Resources:

1. What Ell Students Need to Know
2. ESL Directory for programs at universities
Chapter 9 - NCAA Athletic Recruiting

There are many different ways in which a student can play sports at college. Being recruited or walking on to play at a Division I, II or III school are options. Playing at a club or intramural level at college is another. It is important to first establish what level is best suited to you as a student-athlete. You can do this by speaking with your Newton South or club coach to get a sense of your competitiveness in regard to college play. They will give you a realistic evaluation of your talent. An important fact to keep in mind: Approximately two percent of college athletes are highly recruited and receive full scholarships. The remaining 98 percent must find their own way to the right college. Please see Appendix 7 - The Reality of College Sports for a helpful chart.

Remember to pick a college based on where you feel most comfortable. NEVER pick a college based solely on its athletic program because if you get injured and can’t play, or lose interest in the sport you still want to be happy with the rest of your college experience.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) provides the most comprehensive information about the recruitment of student-athletes and provides many resources, so check out their website at www.ncaa.org. As recommended throughout this College Planning Guide, always refer to the individual college websites for more information.

Section 1: Athletic Divisions
It is important to understand the difference between Division I, Division II and Division III levels of play and how athletics factor into admission. Division I and Division II colleges may offer athletic scholarships. Division III colleges do not offer scholarships based on athletic ability, but coaches may influence admission decisions for students and affect financial aid packages.

Section 2: National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
To play Division I or II sports at any US college, a student-athlete must have registered with the Eligibility Center which will ultimately certify their academic and amateur credentials. This process can be started as early as sophomore year. In Division III, this certification of a student-athlete is conducted by each college and not by the NCAA. Please note that there is a charge to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center, unless you are eligible for a fee waiver. Please see your counselor for more information as to whether you may be eligible for a waiver.
The NCAA website is the number one source of information for you during this process. The Eligibility Center provides an extensive “Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete” which can be downloaded **FREE** at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org). It is essential to check here to find out all you need to know about the academic and amateur eligibility requirements, the list of approved and required college prep courses, statistics, links to member conferences (e.g. Big Ten, ACC, Atlantic 10), etc. It also identifies important differences in the college application process for the DIV I or II bound student-athlete. For instance, while you still apply to each individual college you also need to ask the NSHS Main Office to send your official transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center. If you have transferred from another high school, please refer to the NCAA’s Eligibility Center for the correct procedure.

Please check with the NCAA Eligibility Center for details.

**Section 3: NCAA Recruiting Rules**

The NCAA mandates the recruiting regulations for Division I, II and III colleges, which bind both the coach and the student-athlete. There may also be certain recruiting requirements specific to a particular sport. These rules indicate when a coach is allowed to send recruitment materials to or contact a prospect or invite the prospect to visit a campus. For a complete list of recruitment rules for each sport go to [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**Section 4: Timeline**

**Junior Year...**

- Athletes are encouraged to take the SAT or ACT no later than the spring of their junior year – remember to select NCAA as a score recipient, code **9999**.
- Create an athletic resume & letter of introduction. Please see [Appendix 12: Sample NCAA Letter of Introduction and Resume](#).
- Fill out “Prospective Student Athlete” forms online for any of the colleges that you’re potentially interested in.
- Send your athletic resume and letter of recommendation(s) from one of your current coaches. *Also feel free to send the college coach a link to video highlights of yourself if you have one.*
- If a coach responds to you be sure to keep in contact with him/her. Send a schedule of your upcoming games so that he/she can come see you play live and in person! Be sure to read up on the rules/regulations regarding visits on the NCAA website.
- Register with the [NCAA Eligibility Center](http://ncaa.org) by the end of your junior year if you haven’t already done so.
- **VISIT THE COLLEGES!** Go see the colleges that interest you. Talk to student-athletes there. Watch practices & games of the team you are interested in playing on. Check out
all of the facilities, do your research about classes and majors offered and investigate activities other than your sport of choice.

**Senior Year...**

- Take the SAT or ACT again if necessary - remember to select NCAA as a score recipient, code **9999**.
- Apply to the colleges of your choice. Let the coaches know that you have applied and that you are still very interested in playing for them.
- Even if you are being recruited remember to apply for financial aid. Refer to [Chapter 10 Financial Aid](#).
- Review your amateur status on the NCAA website and request your final amateurism certification on or after April 1st (for fall enrollees) or October 1st (for spring enrollees).
- After graduation ask the Main Office to send your final transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center with proof of graduation. (Again this is on the NCAA timeline on their website)

**Section 5: Evaluating Your Options**

Before you accept an offer to play sports at a college ensure you do your research before you sign with them. If it is a Division I or II college, make sure you ask for all the details about any scholarship money and the rules for maintaining the scholarship. Even if the coach of a Division I or II college wants you to play for him/her, it doesn’t mean that you will get a “full ride.” They may not have any money to give you!

Make your decision only after you have compared the total cost of attending each college you have been accepted to and compare any scholarships, grants and financial aid packages.

For further information refer to [Worksheet 5 – Financial Aid Comparison](#).

**Section 6: Tips for When & How To Talk to Recruiters**

When is the right time to start talking to coaches? That will depend on many factors such as the season you play your sport in, your level of competitiveness (whether you play at a club level etc). For instance, if you would like to play Div III soccer and you play high school and club level soccer, you could contact coaches of colleges you are interested in during the fall and/or spring of your junior year. Let the coaches know your game schedule and invite them to come to see you play. If you decide to contact coaches earlier than this, remember that at this level, they might not be ready to think about their teams’ needs that far into the future. For Div I & II sports teams, the timetable might be earlier. Each sport is different and this is something you should investigate and discuss with your school, town, or club coach.

You can connect with college coaches through a variety of ways including:

- Letter of introduction or athletic resume. See [Appendix #12 Sample Letter of Introduction & Resume](#)
• Seek a high school or club coach’s assistance
• Player profile forms
  o Fill out the player profile form online for any college you are interested in.
• Highlight video
  o Consider making a short video that you can upload to the web, highlighting your playing ability. Whether a coach has been able to see you play or not, this video will be a helpful reminder. The video does not need to be a fancy professional production, but you will need to spend some time researching what a coach of your chosen sport will want to see and the best ways to showcase your ability.

• College showcases
  o Generally speaking these opportunities relate to team sports so talk to your town or club coach if they plan to attend any of these events. If so, find out which coaches will be attending and spend some time contacting those you are interested in playing for and invite them to watch you play.
• College camps
  o Most colleges run sports camps during vacations, which are another good way to connect with coaches.
• Campus visits

NOTE: Coaches want to hear from the athlete, not the athlete’s parents/guardians. Establish a professional email address and review all your social media accounts for appropriateness.

Here are a few questions to keep in mind when talking to college coaches and recruiters:

1. Ask for details about academic programs that interest you.
2. How can you manage your academics with your sport?
   • What types of tutoring are available?
   • Do the requirements of the sport allow you to pursue your academic interests?
   • Does the schedule of the sport match the demands of your major?
   • What percentage of student athletes take summer courses in order to meet their academic requirements?
   • Are there limitations on what I can study based on my athletic commitment?
   • Is there a minimum GPA requirement I must attain in order to participate in the sport?
3. What is the recruiter’s role at the college? Will the recruiter monitor your academic process? Will the recruiter provide tutors to assist with your academics?
4. What are the coach’s expectations of his/her players? (time commitment, appearance, etc..)
5. What are the rules for maintaining the athletic scholarship?
6. What happens if you get injured, benched or are on academic probation?
7. What are the housing and eating arrangements for athletes? (Some colleges require athletes to live and eat together during the season.)

Section 7: Final Advice
It is important to keep a level head. Stick with the principle criteria on your college list and do not allow athletics to totally dictate your college search. You are attending college to do more than play sports.
Chapter 10 - Financial Aid

The cost of college is a major consideration when going through the application process. College costs go beyond just tuition and include room, board, books, fees, travel and can be over $60,000 per year depending on the college. While colleges are required to report their total costs on their websites, you will not know what the actual cost of that college will be for you until the financial aid process is complete and you have received notification from all financial aid sources. Keep that in mind if you are interested in a college that may appear to be financially out of reach.

Applying for financial aid isn’t easy, but it is very manageable if you fill out the forms on time, stay organized and know where to go when you have questions.

If you are not a U.S. citizen you may still be eligible for financial aid. See Appendix 8 – Financial Information for Non-US Citizens for more information.

Section 1: Sources of Financial Aid
Financial aid can come in many forms:

Scholarships and Grants: money that does not need to be repaid, also known as “gift aid”

Loans: money that must be repaid

Need-Based Aid: determined by a student and family’s ability to pay

Merit-Based Aid: determined by a student’s achievement(academic, artistic, athletic, service, etc.)

Work Study: money that you must work for. You will maintain an on-campus job and earn this money gradually on an hourly wage.

The main sources of financial aid are:

- The federal government
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Colleges and universities
- Private sources such as foundations, corporations and banks

Financial Aid from Colleges and Universities
From a cost perspective, there are several things to consider when choosing which colleges to
apply to. Cost of tuition is certainly important. The Massachusetts State University System of universities and community colleges are going to offer tuition rates lower than private colleges or out of state public colleges.

For private colleges, it is important to look not just at tuition but how much financial aid a college offers. Sometimes colleges with very high tuition may end up being more affordable because of the generous financial aid they offer. You may want to look at the following information on a college’s website:

- What are the college’s resources for scholarships?
- Does the college give merit scholarships that you might apply for?
- Does the college have “need blind” or “need aware” admissions?
- Does the college meet full need?
- What percentage of students at the college typically get financial aid awards?
- What is the average financial aid package offered to students?

**Newton South Financial Aid Nights**

A great way to learn about financial aid options for college is to attend the Financial Aid Night held at Newton South in the fall. The workshop provides an overview of the financial aid process including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS PROFILE).

In the spring of senior year, The Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) will present a seminar called "After the Acceptance" which will help students and families understand and analyze the financial aid they have been offered and advice on choosing their best financing options.

**Section 2: Getting Started**

A great way to get started is to do a bit of research and use some online tools and calculators to help you assess how much aid you might qualify for and what college payments might look like under various aid scenarios. One useful tool is “Your Plan for the Future.”

This tool is a joint initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA). It is an online one stop shopping resource for planning post-secondary opportunities. Once you register, it provides a number of resources including:

- **Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Estimator**: an online step-by-step calculator to help you determine your EFC
- **College Cost Estimator**: an online tool to compare college costs
- **Loan Cost Estimator**: an online tool to estimate monthly payments on loan
Section 3: Financial Aid Timeline

Fall - Winter of Senior Year

- September – Attend Newton South’s Financial Aid Night
- Create an ID through https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/fsaid
- October 1 - First day the FAFSA may be filed. Use your 2019 tax information and be sure to list all the colleges which you will be applying.
- October 1 – First day the CSS PROFILE may be filed. Not all colleges require this. Check College Board for more information. Be aware that colleges that require this may have established deadlines to submit.
- Scholarships are available through a list on Naviance. The list of outside scholarships will provide details and deadlines pertaining to individual applications. Check a weekly email.
- December-February -Complete and submit the Newton South High School Local Scholarship Application.
- By early February - Submit the FAFSA by the earliest financial aid deadline of the colleges to which a student is applying. Check deadlines for your colleges and submit the FAFSA by the financial aid deadline and any other financial aid applications that college(s) may require. Pay attention to “Priority Dates”.
- After the FAFSA is submitted, a student should receive the Student Aid Report (SAR) within three days to three weeks. Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.

Spring of Senior Year

- February-April -Research/visit colleges where a student receives acceptance of admission.
- January-April -Review the college acceptances and compare the colleges’ financial aid offers. Use Worksheet 5: Financial Aid Comparison.
- Contact a college’s financial aid office for any questions about the aid that a college has offered. Getting to know the financial aid staff early is a good idea no matter what—they can tell students about deadlines, other aid for which to apply and important paperwork that might need to be submitted.
- April -Attend Newton’s “Paying the College Bill” for help comparing financial aid packages typically held at Newton North High School.
- May 1 -When a student decides which college to attend, notify that college of the commitment and submit any required financial deposit. The universal college reply date for notification and deposit is May 1.

Section 4: Things You Should Know About Financial Aid

Based on an article by Beckie Supiano “In a Rocky Economy, 10 Steady Tips About Student Aid“ from The Chronicle of Higher Education.
1. **Deadlines matter.** Students have to apply for aid each year, and they must do so on time. First-year students need to understand that different colleges may have different deadlines. Give yourself sufficient time to collect the information you need, complete the form and submit it to the institution in time to meet their deadline.

2. **Every student should apply for aid** - Regardless of family income or citizenship. Even families who think they will not qualify for need-based aid at the time they apply should still complete required financial aid forms by the required deadlines. If a family’s financial situation changes during the course of the year, the financial aid office cannot offer aid if forms have not been submitted at the required times.

3. **Check Each College’s Financial Aid Application Requirements** - All colleges require the FAFSA. About 250 colleges require a CSS/Financial Aid Profile. State grants and outside scholarships may also require additional paperwork. It is important to check each college’s website to see what forms you will need to submit when applying to that college.

4. **Understand what your ‘Expected Family Contribution’ will be** - When you apply for need-based financial aid through the FAFSA or CSS PROFILE, a calculation is done to assess how much your family has the ability to contribute towards your student’s education for one year. This is called the “Expected Family Contribution.” Your EFC may vary slightly from college to college. Knowing your EFC will help you understand your eligibility for needs-based aid.

5. **Be aware of what is included in the cost of attendance** - This figure includes tuition, fees, housing and indirect costs like books, supplies and transportation. The actual cost paid for some of these items will vary from student to student.

6. **Eligibility and need aren’t always the same** - If a student meets the criteria for a federal Pell Grant, the college has to award it. But the college may determine that a student who is eligible for a Pell Grant on paper doesn’t demonstrate the level of need to get other institutional need-based aid.

7. **There is a big difference between need-based and merit aid** – You cannot apply for merit aid. It is awarded by the college and is almost always tied to academic performance or some specific circumstances that the college selects. Need-based aid is based solely on a families’ demonstrated financial situation as documented in the financial aid application materials.

8. **There are different forms of aid** - Students can receive federal, state and institutional aid. Aid can come in the form of grants, loans, or work. And yes, financial aid offices view loans as a form of aid.

9. **Award letters vary** - Be sure to note whether aid is in the form of grants or loans and whether it is renewable from year to year. See Worksheet 5 – Financial Aid Comparison.

10. **Award letters can be appealed** - If a family knows or expects its financial situation will change, it should talk it over with the financial aid office. Most offices can help a family with special circumstances.
Section 5: What’s Involved
There are several forms required as part of the financial aid application process. All colleges require the FAFSA (see below) and many colleges require the CSS PROFILE (see below). In addition, there may be other requirements so make sure to check the college’s website for all required forms and deadlines.

You can also consider applying for scholarships offered by local community groups or other institutions. Some of these scholarships may be targeted to a particular area of interest or tied to specific criteria. Check with the College and Career Center for more information.

A free resource to determine what outside scholarships you might be eligible for is FastWeb.

5.1 The Forms
• The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): All prospective U.S. college students who are U.S. citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents who want financial aid must complete the FAFSA. Instead of filing one application for each separate college, each student only files one FAFSA for each academic year. There are spaces on the form where you can list your prospective colleges.
• FSA ID - Students, parents, and borrowers are required to use an FSA ID, made up of a username and password, to access certain U.S. Department of Education online systems. Your FSA ID is used to confirm your identity when accessing your financial aid information and electronically signing your federal student aid documents.
• The CSS (College Scholarship Service) PROFILE: Used mostly by private colleges, this is a supplemental financial aid form. Check each college's website or the CSS PROFILE website to see if any of the colleges where you are applying require it.
• Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC): The College Board collects families’ federal tax returns and other documents on behalf of participating colleges and programs. The College Board notifies students selected by participating institutions when to submit the required documents.
• Institutional Financial Aid Forms: Some colleges have their own financial aid forms. IF REQUIRED, these are included in admissions applications, and usually have specific questions that the FAFSA does not cover. If a college requires the CSS PROFILE, it will NOT require an institutional form as well.
• The Newton South Local Scholarship: Newton South students can fill out this one form and become eligible for scholarships that generous members of the Newton South community have established. Instruction on how and when to file this application will be indicated on the form. Access is through the NSHS main web page.
• Outside Scholarships: The term "scholarship" is sometimes mistakenly used to refer to all types of financial aid. Scholarships are, however, only one type of aid and should be looked at, in addition to, and not instead of, other types of aid (i.e., grants, loans and, college
work study) that are triggered by the FAFSA, the CSS PROFILE and institutional financial aid forms.

**Applying for scholarships is hard work**, and we suggest approaching it in the following manner:

- Make the FAFSA, the CSS PROFILE (if required), institutional financial aid forms (if required) and the Newton South Local Scholarship Application priorities. Fill these out thoroughly, accurately, and submit them **on time**.
- Consider applying for "targeted" or "focused" scholarships first. Are there any scholarships that you might be eligible for that most others students are not? Look to these sources first. Examples include employers, foundations, social/ethnic/religious/ organizations and labor unions.
- NEVER pay money to a scholarship service or to anyone who offers you financial aid or scholarship information for a fee. There are a lot of SCAMS out there.
- Use a free scholarship search like FastWeb and check Naviance for the scholarship list to find outside scholarships for which you are eligible.

**Section 6: Web Resources**

  FAFSA is the KEY form in the federal financial aid process. Massachusetts also uses the FAFSA information for state scholarships. The FAFSA is required by all colleges. Newton South recommends that all students fill out a FAFSA.

  It is **FREE** to fill out the FAFSA. Do not use sites ending in .com to fill out the FAFSA. You should not pay a fee to fill out this form.

  The FAFSA hotline number is 1-800-4 FED AID.

  Each student and a parent need to obtain an FSA ID which will serve as an Electronic signature and for logging into the FAFSA.

  The U.S. Department of Education’s Federal Student Aid web site

  The CSS PROFILE financial aid application required by SOME colleges.

• **finaid.org/calculators** - [http://www.finaid.org/calculators/](http://www.finaid.org/calculators/)
  Custom calculators can help you figure out how much college will cost, how much you need to save, how much aid you'll need and give you a quick approximation of your Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

• **FastWeb** - [http://www.fastweb.com/](http://www.fastweb.com/)
  FastWeb is the leading student resource and scholarship center on the Internet.

• **MEFA** - [http://www.mefa.org/](http://www.mefa.org/)
  MEFA — the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority — is a non-profit state organization that serves students and families in Massachusetts and out-of-state students and their families pursuing higher education in Massachusetts. MEFA offers a number of resources to help make paying for college possible:
  o Straightforward information and advice on applying for and choosing college financing
  o Innovative college savings plans for parents/guardians of young children preparing for future education expenses
  o Free financial aid seminars and helpful calculators and tools to help you understand your options and plan your college funding strategy
  o Low-cost loan programs for parents/guardians and students
  o “Ask a MEFA expert”
  o Link to financial aid apps and scholarship search engine

  Net price calculators are available on a college's or university's website and allow prospective students to enter information about themselves to find out what students like them paid to attend the institution in the previous year, after taking grants and scholarship aid into account.

• **The Common Data Set (CDS)** - CDS is a detailed report covering university-wide information (eg. Class size, cost, enrollment, demographics, etc). Data is presented in the same **common** format used by most institutions of higher education to facilitate comparisons among institutions. Use the search: Common Data Set and college name or “Common Data Set UMass Amherst”

• **“Is it a Scam?” Federal Trade Commission** - Beware of scholarship and other financial aid scams! This information can help you spot scams and avoid wasting your money.

• **The New England Board of Higher Education’s Tuition Break Program**
  eligible students pay lower tuition when they attend out-of-state New England public colleges and universities.
Chapter 11 – Additional Pathways After High School

Options After High School

For many students, going directly to college from high school is not their first choice. This decision is often difficult for students in high school as the pressure to attend college may be viewed as “what everyone does”. Newton South High School counselors respect an individual student’s unique journey toward self-understanding through the pursuit of their educational and career goals. This is a lifelong process of self-expression and personally meaningful actions. Simply stated, for some, college is the next step toward this pursuit. For others, a career is the stepping-stone towards self-fulfillment. Some will consider joining the military as an option and others may defer a commitment to college, vocational training or work to engage in community service or cultural immersion opportunities. Sometimes this is referred to as a “gap year” or deferral year. All choices involve furthering one’s understanding of self and the world.

The choice may not simply be college or career, as the evolution of career development is fluid. A job may lead to further education, training or college. Likewise, direct entry into college may be re-routed to focus on skill development through a co-op or internships, or curtailed due to the necessity to work. Whatever the route a student embarks upon after high school graduation is the right choice for that individual. Creating a plan for your future is key to ensuring future success.

It is wise to consider many factors when making the decision about where you will begin your journey after high school. These factors include financial readiness and the emotional maturity to engage in pursuing an education, a vocation, a military commitment or experiences abroad.

The following is a summary of options that many students at Newton South High School have pursued since high school graduation.

Section 1: Community Colleges
Community colleges have become an increasingly popular choice, especially from a financial perspective. It's much less expensive to fulfill basic requirements at a community college. You can finish with a two-year associate degree or transfer and get a bachelor's degree from a four-year college. Another advantage to a community college is that if you didn't do as well as you hoped in high school (in either your classes or on standardized testing), you essentially start
with a clean slate. Four-year colleges will primarily look at your college grades when considering a transfer application.

The community college application process is very simple. These colleges do not require standardized tests or essays, only a high school diploma. You can decide to attend a community college as late as the end of your senior year, but use the resources available to you (including your school counselor and the College and Career Counselor) during the year. As a Massachusetts resident, in-state colleges will be much less expensive for you and are spread across the state.

MA Community Colleges:  http://www.masscc.org/student-resources/our-campuses

Another advantage to the community college system is that if you are in good academic standing, your credits will automatically transfer to a Massachusetts State University.

Also, you may choose to attend a two-year program in another state. You don’t get the in-state tuition, but it’s still a more affordable financial option.

**Section 2: Certificate Programs/Trade Schools**

If you want short-term specialty training in fields such as automotive, culinary, cosmetology, construction, or electrical technician, there are many certificate programs and trade schools available in Boston and beyond. The Massachusetts Career Information System(MassCIS) is a free online service designed to provide occupational and educational information to help students learn more about careers, certificate programs and trade school choices.

Also check out this resource on trade careers:  https://www.trade-schools.net/

Your School Counselor and College/Career Counselor can assist you in exploring these options.

**Section 3: Distance Learning**

More and more colleges and universities are offering online courses and degrees, whether for individualized learning or as a “virtual” class. These can be especially useful if you need a more flexible academic schedule, and they can be much less expensive or free. Some programs are completely online, and other colleges, including a growing group of selective institutions, are offering online options.

**Web Resources**

- **Straighter Line** -  www.straighterline.com offers low-cost online courses that are guaranteed to transfer to schools in a network of 100+ accredited colleges.
- **Coursera** -  www.coursera.org provides online courses from top universities and organizations
• **EdX** - [www.edx.org](http://www.edx.org) offers free online courses and classes through a partnership between MIT and Harvard.
• **ASU** - [www.asuonline.edu](http://www.asuonline.edu) offers fully online certificate, bachelor’s degree and graduate degree programs.

**Section 4: Gap Year**
Many colleges will allow you to defer your enrollment for a year, but you must check each college’s website or call the admissions office to confirm this. If you choose to defer, most colleges will hold your enrollment spot if you provide a deposit. Be in touch with your counselor and the college to discuss these options.

According to the American Gap Association, “A gap year is a structured period of time when students take a break from formal education to increase self-awareness, challenge comfort zones, earn money and experiment with possible careers. Typically these are achieved by a combination of traveling, volunteering, interning or working.

**Benefits of Taking a Year Off**

• Allows for greater opportunity to learn about the world around you and self-understanding
• Greater engagement and purpose for attending college
• Improved self-confidence
• Earn money for college/advanced educational training
• Discover new interests and develop skills

[Gap Fairs](http://www.teenlife.com/category/gap-year/gap-year-in-the-united-states/), which are similar to college fairs are typically held in January in Brookline and Dedham. These events will give you a chance to speak with representatives from an array of gap year organizations.

**Gap Year Resources**

• **Teenlife**
• **American Gap Association**: [www.americangap.org/index.php](http://www.americangap.org/index.php)
• **Dynamy**: [www.dynamy.org](http://www.dynamy.org)
• **Gap year search**: [www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)
• **Interim Programs**: [www.interimprograms.com](http://www.interimprograms.com)
• **National Leadership Outdoor School**: [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu)
Chapter 12 – Military Options

Another option after Newton South is to join the military, attend a military academy or participate in a ROTC program or National Guard program. There are also colleges that focus on military education. Like any post-secondary decision, choosing a military path requires a great deal of research and reflection. Counselors at Newton South are available to provide information about these programs.

Section 1: Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)
A college-based military officer training program offered by more than 1000 colleges. Academic scholarships are offered in exchange for military service after graduation. You should contact individual colleges to see what’s available.

Section 2: Military Academies
If you are interested in the very selective military academies, the process begins in junior year. There is no cost to attend any of the five academies; in fact you can earn a small salary while at the academy. You are required to give at least five years of active service and three years in the reserves after you graduate from an academy.

The United States Military Academy (Army)
West Point, New York

The United States Naval Academy (Navy and Marines)
Annapolis, Maryland

The United States Air Force Academy
Colorado Springs, Colorado

The United States Coast Guard Academy
New London, Connecticut

The United States Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, New York

All military academies (except the Coast Guard) require a nomination from a member of Congress. If you want more information about how to choose among the branches, this is a helpful article: http://usmilitary.about.com/od/joiningthemilitary/a/choosing.htm
If applying to a military academy, you must be:

- A U.S. citizen (or an eligible non-citizen)
- At least 17 years old, but younger than 23, by July 1 of admission year (for the United States Merchant Marine Academy the upper age limit is 25)
- Unmarried, not pregnant and without dependents

**Section 3: National Guard**
The National Guard (Army & Air Force) is a component of the reserve services for the United States military, serving as a supplement to the regular Army and Air Force. It is a state-run militia, with those enlisting training close to home, one weekend a month and one, two-week training period a year. The state’s Governor may call those serving in the National Guard in times of crisis or state of emergency, as well as by the President of the United States. Many who serve in the National Guard simultaneously pursue a college education, with the Guard offering tuition assistance programs. To learn more about the National Guard, consult their website: www.nationalguard.com/eligibility.
Chapter 13 – Making Your Decision

Don’t forget to tell your counselor all of your college news, and congratulations for making it all the way through!

Although many people will help in this process, the final decision should be yours.

If you applied to college through an Early Decision or Early Action program, you will probably hear back from your college six to eight weeks after submitting your application.

If you have applied through a Rolling Admissions program, you may hear as early as a few weeks after submitting your application.

If you have applied through the Regular Decision process, you will usually hear back from colleges sometime between February and April.

Section 1: Admission Decisions

The Early Decision, Early Action, Rolling and Regular Decision decisions can come back in several different forms:

**Admit:** Congratulations! You have been admitted to the next year's class, and the only information you may still need before you can make a choice is what kind of a financial aid package you may be offered.

**Defer:** If you applied Early Decision or Early Action your admission decision may be "deferred" to Regular Decision. This means you're qualified, but the college needs more grade data (semester 1 grades) and wants to compare you to applicants in the Regular Decision pool. If you have just begun to improve your record, they might want to make sure you're continuing on an upward trend through your senior year. If deferred, it is important to send an email/letter of continued interest, see Appendix 13: Email/Letter of Continued Interest. First semester grades will automatically be sent from Newton South High School.

**Deny:** If you are denied it means they do not have room for you in the incoming class. Few colleges permit appeals but it may be helpful to check it there is a process.

**Wait List:** If you’ve been waitlisted it means you may be admitted once the college has heard back from its accepted students and has determined whether there is additional space in the
upcoming class. Waitlist decisions are typically made by a college after the May 1st deadline for accepted students. Some colleges may contact wait-listed students throughout the summer.

Therefore, even if you choose to stay on a waitlist, **you will need to accept and submit a deposit to one of the colleges to which you have been admitted by May 1st**. This deposit is typically not refundable.

Remember that waitlists can be very long, and that their usage depends on the acceptance rate for admitted students. This is unpredictable and can be frustrating and varies from year to year. **The best strategy is to focus on and get excited about one of the schools that has admitted you, and have your waitlist school(s) as a happy backup plan.**

### Section 2: How to Decide

Making a final choice at the end of this long process can be challenging. However, you will probably end up feeling great about the school you choose.

- If you have received financial aid packages, compare them very closely and make sure you really understand the differences among the offers. You can always call MEFA (the Mass Educational Financing Authority) who will answer your questions for free. See [Worksheet 5 – Financial Aid Comparison](#).

- Visit. If you’re invited to an open house or other on campus programs for accepted students, you should try to take advantage of this opportunity. The benefits of these programs include seeing the campus in action, attending a class, spending the night in a dorm, and potentially meeting other prospective students— Also try to check in with students, faculty, coaches, etc. who are not specifically part of the admission event to get the most out of your visit. If you can’t make the accepted student events, you can still visit. Try to arrange for a tour, sit in on a class, see a rehearsal or practice, visit the career center, eat in the cafeteria, and explore the town where the college is located. Contact the college’s Admissions Office to arrange this visit.

- Conduct thorough research by exploring the websites deeply. Take a virtual tour. Look at blogs. Ask questions online. Go to the Facebook page for the college. There may be a specific page for admitted students.

- Fill out [Worksheet 1 - College Comparison](#). It will give you a visual record of the pros and cons for each school as you think about your priorities.
• Ask South counselors, teachers, friends, alums about their experiences with the schools you’re considering.

Once you’ve made your final decision make sure to email **all the colleges to which you have been accepted and let them know whether you plan to attend. You don’t need to wait for the May 1st deadline to respond.**

**Section 3: What To Do If You Have Been Waitlisted**

Being waitlisted at the college of your choice is never easy.

If you are offered a spot on a college’s waitlist, most colleges will give you the option to remain on the list or opt out. Each college has different policies and procedures, so carefully read the waitlist information provided by the college and adhere to the instructions. Some colleges require that you simply agree to remain on the waitlist, some allow you to submit a paragraph describing your interest and/or update your application materials, and others allow you to submit unlimited additional material. If you are waitlisted and you want to remain on the waitlist, you should consult with your school counselor who can help create a plan for moving forward. Your School Counselor is available to call One school, of your choice, to Consult your school counselor; he or she can help in a number of ways.

**If the college allows**, it is recommended that you do one or more of the following things:

• Write an email or letter to the college detailing your continued interest in attending. Although colleges typically do not rank order their waitlists, it is good for them to know that you are serious about wanting to attend their college and why. Be specific, see **Appendix 13: Letter of Continued Interest.**

• If you are writing a letter, include any **new and relevant** information (grades, scores, activities, honors, projects and/or special summer activities) for their information.

• Be in touch with your alumni/off-campus interviewer (if applicable) if you had a very good interview. He or she may be willing to advocate for you.

• Send an additional letter of recommendation from someone who knows you well.

**Remember to send a deposit to one (and only one) of the schools to which you have been accepted while you wait.**

Most importantly, look at the pluses of the colleges to which you have been admitted. You are most likely to have a wonderful experience at one of these if you decide to attend with a positive attitude!
Section 4: Helpful Articles

- [https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/making-a-decision/you-made-your-college-choice-whats-next](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/making-a-decision/you-made-your-college-choice-whats-next)
- [https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/06/opinion/sunday/bruni-how-to-choose-a-college.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/06/opinion/sunday/bruni-how-to-choose-a-college.html)
Appendix 1 – NSHS Four-Year College Timeline

Newton South College Search and Application Activities: A Four-year Timeline

Each student at Newton South is assigned a school counselor who will provide academic and post-graduate planning support throughout their high school career. This document provides a brief overview of the guidance activities and testing related to college planning at Newton South High School.

Freshman Year

September, November, February - Freshman Guidance Seminars: students meet with their school counselor, in small groups, to focus on transition and orientation to high school. Topics discussed and information provided include, academic and social adjustment and school support and resources. Students will also meet to focus on fulfilling graduation requirements and course registration for sophomore year. School counselors are available to meet individually with freshmen about appropriate course choices and the importance of the right level of academic rigor for each student.

September, February - Freshman Parent Night: This evening provides information about the transition to South, what students and parents might expect academically, socially and developmentally freshman year. Information about course load, balance and helping students manage stress throughout high school will also be discussed.

Sophomore Year

Establish a distinct email for college and work correspondence. Create a positive social media presence. Pay attention to your privacy settings.

December, February - Sophomore Guidance Seminars: In two separate seminars, students meet with their school counselor, in small groups, to focus on fulfilling graduation requirements, appropriate course selection for junior year and access to their own Naviance account.

February - Sophomore Parent Night: This evening provides information about what to expect in the second half of sophomore year and transitioning into junior year as well as an introduction to Naviance. The evening ends with a group meeting with the student’s school counselor.
May or June - SAT Subject Tests: Sophomores who do well in Honors World History and/or Honors Chemistry may consider taking a SAT Subject Test in those subjects in either May or June. Students who are interested in learning more about these exams will discuss this option with their teachers and school counselor and should review Chapter 4 - Standardized Testing.

Junior Year

September-November - College Admission Rep Visits: College admissions representatives offer informational sessions during the school day. Interested students must have a signed permission form (available in their house office or the College/Career Center) from teacher 24 hours prior to the visit.

September-October - PSAT Test: Juniors take the PSAT test in October, which is a practice test for the SAT college admission test. Information regarding test details and dates can be found on Newton South’s website. Students register for the PSAT Test at Newton South. Details regarding cost and registration dates will be given in mid-September.

October - College Nights: Juniors and their parents/guardians may attend two College Nights at Newton North High School with admission representatives from over 100 different colleges and universities each night. This is typically held in early October.

December - PSAT Test Results: Juniors who took the PSAT Test receive their results in an individual meeting with their school counselor. The students will then bring their results home to share with parents/guardians.

January - Junior Parent Night: Junior parents/guardians attend Junior Parent Night. This program offers a variety of presentations on various aspects of the college application process. Topics include a definition of roles, a demonstration of Naviance, standardized testing and question and answer period. Parents will also have smaller group presentations with their student’s counselor.

December, January - Junior Guidance Seminars: In two separate seminars, students meet with their school counselor, in small groups, to focus on fulfilling graduation requirements and receiving information on the college search and application process.

January-June - Individual Guidance Counselor Appointment: Juniors should meet individually with their school counselors to review and discuss their post-graduation plans.

January-June - College and Career Center Appointments: Juniors may schedule an appointment with the College & Career Counselor to conduct future planning and goal setting.
Appointments with the College and Career Counselor, begin on the first day of second semester and continue to the end of the school year. A student’s school counselor and parents/guardians are encouraged to attend these appointments. Meetings are encouraged to include the student’s School Counselor for the purpose of consistent communication and support.

**January-June - Standardized College Admission Tests:** Juniors take the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and/or the ACT. Students can work with their school counselors to help determine the type of tests to take and a testing schedule.

**February - Weighted and Unweighted GPAs:** GPAs can be viewed in Naviance in the beginning of the second semester. GPAs are available in the “About Me” tab under “Profile”.

**March - May: College Admission Rep Visits:** College admissions representatives offer informational sessions during the school day. Interested juniors must have a signed permission form (available in their house office or the College/Career Center) from teacher 24 hours prior to the visit.

**April-June - Teacher Recommendation Requests:** Juniors ask two junior (preferably) teachers to write a College Recommendation for their future college applications.

**Senior Year**

**September-June - Counselor Meetings:** Seniors meet with their school counselors individually about choosing and applying to colleges and other institutions. Students review their college application status and materials. Meetings may include the College/Career Counselor.

**September-June - College and Career Center Appointment:** Seniors make follow-up college planning appointments in the College and Career Center.

**September-November-College Admission Rep Visits:** College admissions representatives offer informational sessions during the school day. Interested students must have a signed permission form (available in their house office or the College/Career Center) from teacher 24 hours prior to the visit.

**September - Senior Parent Night:** Parents/guardians attend Senior Parent Night. This evening gives an overview of what to expect in the senior year and specifics about the college admissions process. The evening ends with a group meeting with the student’s school counselor.
**Senior Guidance Seminars:** In two separate seminars, students meet with their school counselor, in small groups, to focus on fulfilling graduation requirements and the details regarding the college application process (see Senior Seminar Packet).

**September-June -Standardized College Admission Tests:** Seniors take the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and/or the ACT. ELL students should take the TOEFL, a college admissions test for all students applying to college for whom English is not their first language. Students can work with their school counselors to help determine the type of tests to take and a testing schedule.

**October -College Nights:** Seniors and their parents/guardians may attend two College Nights at Newton North High School with admission representatives from over 100 different colleges and universities each night.

**September-November -College Essay Support:** In the first term of senior year, all senior English classes will complete a unit on personal essay writing, which will help in the college application process.

**October-February -Submit financial aid documents:** Complete FAFSA, CSS Profile and scholarship applications

**October -Financial Aid Night:** Seniors and their parents/guardians attend Financial Aid Night to get information on financial aid forms, timeline, and process.

**November -First Term Grades:** Seniors’ first term grades will automatically be sent in November to the colleges for which a transcript request was submitted.

**Fall/Winter - College Essay Support:** All senior English Classes will complete a unit on personal essay writing, which can help in the college application process.

**February -Second Term Grades:** Seniors’ second term grades and updated GPA will automatically be sent in February to the colleges for which a transcript request was submitted.

**May 1 – Common Reply Date:** This is the date for depositing at ONE college for the fall.

**June -Senior Graduation Survey:** Seniors complete a required survey in Naviance letting Newton South know where to send a final transcript to the college they will attend.
Appendix 2- College Application Timeline
Appendix 3 - Creating a Resume in Naviance

A great feature of Naviance is the tool for creating a Resume. The resume option will help you complete the activities portion of your college applications. You can also customize your resume. For example, you can print out a specific document for athletics, performing arts or work experience. It can also be useful when applying for part-time and summer jobs, as well as the Newton South Local Scholarship. As soon as you get access to Naviance, you can start adding information to it. Here are step-by-step instructions to create your resume:

- Log in
- Go to the “about me” section
- Click on “resume”
- Read the “build resume” sections
- Add a new entry with the drop-down menu.
- Include as much detail as you can in every category—there’s plenty of room
- Add to resume

When you’re ready to print, you can customize it:

- Customize your printable resumes
- Create a new print format
- Name the document (For example, Mary’s athletic resume)
- Select and arrange content
- Choose the information you want to print. You can include References information or not
- Save and close
- Select the document you want to print under your saved print format
- Edit (pencil icon) if you want to make changes
- Save and close
- View/Print

You can just print it out, or save it first and then print.
If you save it, you can play with the format.
If you are on a PC, the URL information will appear on the printed page.

If you’re on a Mac, it won’t include every activity you can think of—you can always select the ones you want to print later. If you do a one-day fundraising walk, participate in a math competition as a sophomore, or coach a youth soccer team, type it in. Naviance will store the information until you need it.
Appendix 4 - College Visit Clusters

This listing can serve as a good starting point when beginning a college search and will help in planning visits to different regions and areas of the U.S. and Canada.

- **Large** colleges and universities have approximately 10,000 or more undergraduates.
- **Medium** colleges and universities usually have between 3,000-10,000 undergraduates.
- **Small** colleges and universities usually have less than 3,000 undergraduates.

The groups of colleges and universities listed below are by no means exhaustive for each region.

**Boston/Rhode Island Area**

**Large:**
- Boston University
- UMASS Boston
- UMASS Lowell
- Northeastern University
- University of Rhode Island

**Medium:**
- Bentley University
- Boston College
- Brandeis University
- Brown University
- Framingham State University
- Harvard University
- Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
- UMASS Dartmouth
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Providence College
- Rhode Island College
- Roger Williams University
- Salem State University
- Suffolk University
- Tufts University
- Wentworth Institute of Technology

**Small:**
- Babson College
- Emerson College
- Emmanuel College
- Lasell College
- Lesley University
- Massachusetts College of Art & Design
- Merrimack College
Regis College
Rhode Island School of Design
Salve Regina University
Simmons College (women)
Stonehill College
Wellesley College (women)
Wheaton College
Wheelock College

**Maine/NH/VT**

**Large:**
- University of Maine
- University of New Hampshire
- University of Southern Maine
- University of Vermont

**Medium:**
- Dartmouth College
- Keene State College
- University of New England
- Southern New Hampshire University

**Small:**
- Bates College
- Bowdoin College
- Colby College
- Colby-Sawyer College
- Franklin Pierce University
- Middlebury College
- New England College
- Saint Anselm College
- Saint Michael’s College

**Central/Western Massachusetts**

**Large:**
- UMass Amherst

**Medium:**
- Westfield State University
- Worcester State University

**Small:**
- Amherst College
- Assumption College
- Clark University
- Fitchburg State University
- Hampshire College
- College of the Holy Cross
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
- Mount Holyoke College (women)
- Smith College (women)
Western New England University
Williams College
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

**Connecticut**

**Large:**
University of Connecticut

**Medium:**
Fairfield University
Quinnipiac University
Sacred Heart University
Yale University

**Small:**
Connecticut College
Trinity College
Wesleyan University

**New York City Area**

**Large:**
New York University

**Medium:**
Adelphi University
Columbia University
Fordham University
Hofstra University
Pace University

**Small:**
Barnard College (women)
Eugene Lang College
Sarah Lawrence College
Wagner College

**New York/NJ**

**Large:**
Cornell University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
SUNY system
Syracuse University

**Medium:**
Ithaca College
Fashion Institute of Technology
Marist College
Princeton University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
University of Rochester
Small: 
Bard College
Colgate University
Clarkson University
Drew University
Hamilton College
Hobart & William Smith Colleges
Marymount Manhattan College
Skidmore College
St. Lawrence University
Union College
Vassar College

Philadelphia Area

Large: 
University of Delaware
Drexel University
University of Pennsylvania
Rutgers University
Temple University

Medium: 
Villanova University

Small: 
Bryn Mawr College (women)
Haverford College
Swarthmore College
Ursinus College

Pennsylvania

Large: 
Pennsylvania State University
University of Pittsburgh

Medium: 
Bucknell University
Carnegie Mellon University
Duquesne University
Lehigh University

Small: 
Allegheny College
Dickinson College
Franklin & Marshall College
Gettysburg College
Juniata College
Lafayette College
Muhlenberg College
Susquehanna College
**Washington DC/Baltimore Area**

**Large:**  
University of Delaware  
George Washington University  
University of Maryland, College Park  
Towson University

**Medium:**  
American University  
Catholic University  
Georgetown University  
Howard University (Historically Black College & University)  
Johns Hopkins University  
Loyola University of Maryland

**Small:**  
Goucher College  
St. John’s College  
St. Mary’s College  
Washington College

**Virginia/North Carolina/Tennessee**

**Large:**  
East Carolina University  
James Madison University  
North Carolina State University  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
University of Virginia  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

**Medium:**  
Duke University  
Elon University  
University of North Carolina, Wilmington  
University of Richmond  
Vanderbilt University  
Wake Forest University  
College of William and Mary

**Small:**  
Davidson College  
Guilford College  
Hampden-Sydney College (Men)  
Hampton University (Historically Black College & University)  
High Point University  
Lynchburg College  
Roanoke College  
Rhodes College  
University of Mary Washington  
Washington & Lee University
**South/Florida**

Large:  
Clemson University  
College of Charleston  
University of Florida  
Florida State University  
University of South Carolina  

Medium:  
Emory University  
Furman University  
Loyola University New Orleans  
University of Miami  
Nova Southeastern University  
Savannah College of Art & Design  
Tulane University  
University of Tampa  

Small:  
Eckerd College  
Lynn University  
Morehouse College (men/Historically Black College/University)  
Rollins College  
Sewanee: University of the South  
Spelman College (women/Historically Black College/University)  
Stetson University  
Wofford College

**Chicago/Michigan/Wisconsin/MN**

Large:  
DePaul University  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
University of Michigan  
University of Wisconsin  

Medium:  
University of Chicago  
Loyola University of Chicago  
Marquette University  
Northwestern University  

Small:  
Beloit College  
Carleton College  
Kalamazoo College  
Lake Forest College
Lawrence University
Macalester College

Indiana/Ohio

Large: Ball State University
Indiana University
Miami University of Ohio
Ohio State University
Purdue University

Medium: Butler University
Case Western Reserve University
University of Notre Dame

Small: College of Wooster
Denison University
Kenyon College
Oberlin College
Ohio Wesleyan University
Valparaiso University
Wabash College (men)
Wittenberg University

Southwest/Texas

Large: University of Arizona
Arizona State University
Texas A & M
University of Houston
University of Texas, Austin

Medium: Rice University
Southern Methodist University
Texas Christian University
Trinity University, San Antonio

Small: St. John’s College, Santa Fe
**Colorado**

Large: Colorado State University  
University of Colorado at Boulder

Medium: University of Denver  
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

Small College: Colorado College
Southern California

Large: California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo
University of California at Los Angeles
University of California at San Diego
University of Southern California

Medium: Loyola Marymount University
University of San Diego

Small: California Institute of Technology
California Institute of the Arts
Chapman University
Claremont Colleges (Claremont McKenna, Harvey Mudd,
Pitzer, Pomona & Scripps (women)
Occidental College
Pepperdine University
University of Redlands
Whittier College

Northern California

Large: University of California at Berkeley
University of California at Santa Cruz

Medium: University of the Pacific
Stanford University
Santa Clara University
University of San Francisco

Small: California College of the Arts

Pacific Northwest

Large: University of Oregon
University of Washington
Washington State University
Western Washington University

Medium: Evergreen State University
Gonzaga University
University of Puget Sound
WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY
### Small:
- Lewis & Clark College
- Reed College
- Whitman College
- Willamette University

### Canada

**Western:**
- University of British Columbia
- Simon Fraser University

**Eastern:**
- Acadia University
- Concordia University
- Dalhousie University
- University of Guelph
- McGill University
- Mount Allison University
- Queens University
- Ryerson University
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Western Ontario
- York University

**International:** Please talk to the college counselor if you are thinking about applying to colleges outside the United States
## Appendix 5 – High School vs College Disability Laws

### The Differences Between High School & College Disability Laws

One key step to a successful transition from high school to college is to anticipate and be prepared for the differences between the two settings. This is especially true for students with disabilities. In addition to dealing with the same transition issues that all students face, they also have the added challenge of changes in how support services are requested and arranged. In college, students must play a more active role and assume more responsibility. The chart below compares the legal rights and responsibilities in high school versus those in college.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Secondary (High School)</th>
<th>Postsecondary (College)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the law?</td>
<td>IDEA and Section 504</td>
<td>ADA and Section 504 (Subpart E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the intent of the law?</td>
<td>IDEA: To provide a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to students with disabilities. 504: To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability is denied access to, benefits of, or is subjected to discrimination in any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.</td>
<td>To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability will be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is covered under the law?</td>
<td>All infants, children and youth requiring special education services until age 21 or graduation from high school.</td>
<td>All qualified individuals with disabilities who meet the entry age level criteria or particular program entry criteria of the college and who can document the existence of a disability as defined by the ADA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for identifying and documenting the need?</td>
<td>School districts are responsible for identifying, evaluating and planning educational services at no expense to the parent or individual.</td>
<td>Students are responsible for self-identification and for obtaining disability documentation from a professional who is qualified to assess their particular disability. The student, not the institution, assumes the cost of the evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for initiating service delivery?</td>
<td>School districts are responsible for identifying students with disabilities and providing special instruction, individualized education plans, and/or accommodations.</td>
<td>Students are responsible for notifying the Office of Disability Services staff of their disability and of their need for accommodations. Accommodations (not special education) are provided on a semester by semester basis in order for students with disabilities to have...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for enforcing the law?</td>
<td>IDEA is basically a funding statute, enforced by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the U.S. Department of Education. ADA/504 are civil rights statutes, enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).</td>
<td>Section 504 (Subpart E) is a civil rights statute enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education. The ADA is also a civil rights statute enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What about self-advocacy?</td>
<td>The parent or guardian is the primary advocate. Students with disabilities should learn about their disability, the importance of self-advocacy, the accommodation(s) they need, and ways to become a self-advocate accommodations.</td>
<td>Students must be able to communicate what their disability is, their strengths, weaknesses, and how the disability impacts and functionally limits major life activities. They must be able to identify and justify any requested.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kay McVay, Faculty Development Specialist, PROJECT CONNECT, Henderson State University
Appendix 6 - Applying to College with an IEP or 504 Plan

- Student has an IEP or 504
  - Student needs to explain something about the transcript
  - Student needs services at college
  - Neither of the above
  - Don’t contact or disclose

- Contact college disability office and mention on college application, if asked (i.e. disclose)
  - Parent or student gets packet (IEP, testing) from NSHS Sp. Ed office
  - Check that appropriate services are available at the college. Visit and ask questions

- Parent chooses what to send/not send. Parent sends materials to college. Colleges may require certain materials
# Appendix 7 - The Reality of College Sports

## Estimated Probability of Competing in College Athletics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High School Participants</th>
<th>NCAA Participants</th>
<th>Overall % HS to NCAA</th>
<th>% HS to NCAA Division I</th>
<th>% HS to NCAA Division II</th>
<th>% HS to NCAA Division III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>487,097</td>
<td>35,460</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>551,373</td>
<td>18,816</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Country</td>
<td>270,096</td>
<td>14,270</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>1,036,842</td>
<td>73,557</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>144,024</td>
<td>8,609</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Hockey</td>
<td>35,060</td>
<td>4,229</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacrosse</td>
<td>113,313</td>
<td>14,310</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>456,362</td>
<td>25,072</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>138,935</td>
<td>9,697</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>158,151</td>
<td>7,838</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>600,097</td>
<td>28,698</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>60,976</td>
<td>2,163</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Polo</td>
<td>22,501</td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>245,564</td>
<td>7,239</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>412,407</td>
<td>16,614</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Country</td>
<td>223,518</td>
<td>15,632</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Hockey</td>
<td>59,856</td>
<td>6,103</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>78,871</td>
<td>5,375</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Hockey</td>
<td>9,609</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacrosse</td>
<td>98,904</td>
<td>12,061</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>390,482</td>
<td>27,811</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>367,881</td>
<td>20,316</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>175,594</td>
<td>12,848</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>190,768</td>
<td>8,608</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>488,992</td>
<td>30,018</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>446,583</td>
<td>17,471</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Polo</td>
<td>21,054</td>
<td>1,216</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** High school figures from the 2017-18 High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations; data from club teams not included. College numbers from the NCAA 2017-18 Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Report.

Last Updated: April 3, 2019
Appendix 8 – Financial Aid Information for Non-US Citizens

I am a non-U.S. citizen. Can I get federal student aid?

If you fall in one of the categories below, you are considered an “eligible non-citizen.”

1. You are a
   - U.S. national (includes natives of American Samoa or Swains Island) or
   - U.S. permanent resident with a Form I-551, I-151, or I-551C (Permanent Resident Card, Resident Alien Card, or Alien Registration Receipt Card), also known as a green card.

2. You have an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) showing
   - “Refugee,”
   - “Asylum Granted,”
   - “Cuban-Haitian Entrant (Status Pending),”
   - “Conditional Entrant” (valid only if issued before April 1, 1980), or
   - “Parolee” (you must be paroled for at least one year, and you must be able to provide evidence from the USCIS that you are not in the United States for a temporary purpose and that you intend to become a U.S. citizen or permanent resident).

3. You hold a T-visa (for victims of human trafficking) or your parent holds a T-1 visa. Your college or career school’s financial aid office will ask to see your visa and/or certification letter from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

4. You are a “battered immigrant-qualified alien” who is a victim of abuse by your citizen or permanent resident spouse, or you are the child of a person designated as such under the Violence Against Women Act.

5. You are a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau. If this is the case, you are eligible only for Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, or Federal Work-Study. Check with your college or career school financial aid office for more information.
Does my parent’s citizenship status affect my eligibility for aid?

No, your parents’ citizenship status does not affect your eligibility for federal student aid. In fact, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) doesn’t even ask about your parents’ status.

What if the expiration date on my documents has passed?

- If your green card has expired, it doesn’t necessarily mean that your status as a legal permanent resident has expired. You might just need to renew the card. Be sure to do so promptly!
- If your permanent residence status has in fact expired, you are no longer eligible for federal student aid.
- If your documentation shows that you are a Cuban-Haitian entrant, you are still an eligible noncitizen even if the expiration date has passed.
- For all other documents listed in 1–3 above, if the expiration date has passed, you are not an eligible noncitizen and cannot receive federal student aid.

For more information about eligible noncitizen status, contact a college financial aid office.

What if I have documentation that isn’t listed above?

You are NOT an eligible noncitizen and cannot receive federal student aid if

- you have only a “Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence” (I-171 or I-464),
- you are in the U.S. on an F-1 or F-2 student visa, or on a J-1 or J-2 Exchange Visitor Visa, or
- you hold a G series visa (pertaining to international organizations).

So if I’m not an eligible noncitizen, can I get any type of financial aid to study in the U.S.?

Yes, there may be some scholarships and other aid you can get.

- Check with your country’s embassy or a consulate here in the U.S. or with the appropriate government office back in your country to see what they offer.
- Try the U.S. Department of Labor’s free online scholarship search.
- Ask the college or career school you plan to attend whether they offer any aid for students like you.
- Check out educationusa.state.gov and www.studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/non-us-citizens
Appendix 9 - UMASS & MA State University Admission Requirements

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

These standards are minimum requirements. Eligibility for admission is not an entitlement of admission for any applicant; as such, meeting the minimum standards does not guarantee admission, since admissions officers consider a wide range of factors when reviewing students’ applications. The state universities and UMass campuses may establish additional requirements.

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

Freshman Applicants

The admissions standards for freshmen applicants at Massachusetts public four year institutions have 3 main parts:

1. Successful completion of required academic courses in specific subjects; and
2. A minimum average and weighted grade point (GPA) earned in high school level academic courses
3. The submission of SAT or ACT scores.

Academic Course Requirements

All freshmen applicants are required to successfully complete the following courses in each academic subject. Currently, these applicants are required to have completed 17 courses.
Table 1: Academic Course Requirements for Entering College Freshmen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTERING COLLEGE FRESHMEN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4 courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>4 courses (Algebra I &amp; II and Geometry or Trigonometry, or comparable coursework) including mathematics during the final year of high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>3 courses (from Natural Science and/or Physical Science and/or Technology/Engineering), including 3 courses with laboratory work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>2 courses (including 1 course in U.S. History)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>2 courses (in a single language) NOTE: American Sign Language (ASL) is a foreign language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>2 courses (from the above subjects or from the Arts &amp; Humanities or Computer Sciences)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: “comparable courses” are defined as coursework that is equal to or beyond the content defined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

If a high school designates a course as a comparable mathematics course or designates a science course as a science laboratory course, college admissions officers must accept that the course meets the above requirements. High school transcripts should clearly indicate that the course(s) are mathematics or science courses.
Minimum Required Grade Point Average (GPA)
The minimum average GPA for freshman applicants, weighted for accelerated(Honors & Advanced Placement) courses, is 3.0 for both the state universities and the UMass campuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State University GPA</th>
<th>University of Massachusetts GPA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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</table>

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

**SAT /ACT Score Requirements for Applicants Who Do Not Meet The GPA Requirement**

- Applicants who meet the GPA requirement do not have to use the sliding scale for admission, but still must submit SAT or ACT test scores for consideration if they are applying to a state university or UMass campus within three years of high school graduation.
- Sliding Scale (used when GPA is lower than the minimum required GPA)
- If an applicant’s GPA falls below the required minimum, a sliding scale will apply. This scale should be used only when an applicant’s GPA falls below the required 3.0 minimum for admission to the state universities or UMass campuses.
- The sliding scale, used in making admissions decisions for students with high school grade point averages falling below the required minimum, will continue to be based upon the combined critical reading (verbal) and math sections of the SAT or ACT scores.
Table 2: Required SAT or ACT Scores for Freshman Applicants to UMass Undergraduate Campuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted High School GPA</th>
<th>Combined SAT-I V&amp;M Must Equal or Exceed (ACT Equivalent in Italics)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.51-2.99</td>
<td>950 (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.41-2.50</td>
<td>990 (21)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.31-2.40</td>
<td>1030 (22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.21-2.30</td>
<td>1070 (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.11-2.20</td>
<td>1110 (24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.00-2.10</td>
<td>1150 (25)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NO APPLICANT WITH A HIGH SCHOOL GPA BELOW 2.00 MAY BE ADMITTED TO A STATE UNIVERSITY OR UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS CAMPUS.

Table 3: Required SAT or ACT Scores for Freshman Applicants to Massachusetts State Universities. [www.mass.edu/shared/documents/admissions/admissionstandards.pdf](http://www.mass.edu/shared/documents/admissions/admissionstandards.pdf)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maine Maritime Academy</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Champlain College Design</td>
<td>Reed College</td>
<td>The George Washington University</td>
<td>Vanderbilt University</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Regis College</td>
<td>University of Rhode Island</td>
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<td>The University of Scranton</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin, Madison</td>
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<td>Tufts University</td>
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<td>Tulane University</td>
<td>United States Air Force Academy</td>
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<td>Purchase College, SUNY</td>
<td>Quinnipiac University</td>
<td>Union College, NY</td>
<td>The University of Edinburgh</td>
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</table>
### Appendix 11 - SAT vs ACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>SECTIONS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Evidence-based Reading and Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Writing and Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Writing Test</td>
<td>Optional Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite score: 1-360</td>
<td>Total score: 400-1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section scores for English, Math, Reading and Science: 1-16 each</td>
<td>Section scores for Math and Evidence-based Reading and Writing: 200-800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Test: 2-12</td>
<td>Essay: 2-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCORING</strong></td>
<td><strong>SCORING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 hours, 55 minutes (without Writing Test)</td>
<td>3 hours (without essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 hours, 35 minutes (with Writing Test)</td>
<td>3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Penalty for Wrong Answers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>READING AND WRITING</strong></td>
<td><strong>MATH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two sections (English, Readings)</td>
<td>Two sections (Reading Test, Writing and Language Test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Passage-based grammar—excluding punctuation</td>
<td>- No more sentence completions; focus on multiple-meaning words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Four reading passages in 35 minutes that are drawn from Fiction, Social Sciences, Humanities and Natural Sciences</td>
<td>- Five reading passages in 65 minutes that are drawn from significant historical or scientific documents—may include informational graphics, such as charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Passage-based grammar—excluding punctuation</td>
<td>- Passage-based grammar—excluding punctuation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Essay**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Writing Test is optional (40 minutes, timed)</td>
<td>The essay is optional (50 minutes, timed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will need to write about perspectives on an issue relevant to high school students and evaluate and analyze multiple perspectives on that issue; they will be scored on ideas and analysis, development and support, organization, and language use</td>
<td>Students will be provided with a substantial passage 600-700 words and asked to analyze how the author built his or her argument; students will need to understand the techniques the author used to write persuasively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com), January 2018
Appendix 12 - Sample NCAA Letter of Introduction & Athletic Resume

Sample Letter/Email from High School Athlete to College Coach
Date

Coach’s Name
College/University
Address
City/State/Zip

Dear Coach<last name>

I would like to introduce myself. I am currently a sophomore/junior/senior at Newton South High School. I have played high school volleyball for four years, starting as a setter for the last three. I am 5’8” and weigh 145 pounds. I have been All-Conference for the past two years and All-State this year.

My Coach’s name is <first, last name>. The best way to reach her is through email, which is <emailaddress>.

My weighted GPA is 3.7 on a 5.0 scale and although my high school does not rank, I have taken a challenging course load. My highest combined SAT score was 1210/1600. I intend to retake it in October. I am interested in pursuing a four year degree in biology. I also hope to continue playing volleyball on the college level. Your program especially interests me<state why>. I have followed your team’s season in The Washington Post and have attended two games.

I have included a link highlighting my skills and games. My jersey number is #1 in the light-colored uniforms. I have also included a schedule for the 2016-2017 volleyball season. Please let me know if there is additional information that my coach or I can provide you. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Athlete’s name

Source: The NCAA & College: What You Need to Know About Playing Competitive Sports in College, Academy of the Holy Cross, Kensington, MD
Sample Student-Athlete Resume

Ann Athlete
Volleyball Information
Address, Town/City, State, Zip
Phone   Email

Coach:        Mary Jones
Address
Town/City, State, Zip
Phone
Email

High School:  Newton South High School
140 Brandeis Road
Newton, MA 02459
617-559-6500

Volleyball League/
Division:      Dual County League

Jersey:       #1 Dark/ #10 Light

Offense Used: 5-1 Offense

Years Starting
Varsity:      3 years

                Most Valuable Player(2015)
                All State (2014, 2015)

                University Summer Camp (2013, 2014)

Height:       5'8"
Weight:       145lbs
Vertical:     23"
GPA:          3/74/5.0
Graduation Date: June 8, 2018
Appendix 13: Email/Letter of Continued Interest

**Goal** – formally express your desire to attend the college

**The email/letter must be:**

1. Written as a formal document/letter
2. Emailed or mailed to the admissions office, ideally to a specific contact
3. Be sure to ask that it is included in your application file
4. Sent by mid-late January, ideally for **deferral**. For **Wait List**, send by mid-April at the latest.
5. If you want to submit new SAT/ACT/TOEFL scores be sure to share this with the rep and send officially.

Additionally, send either your mid-year grade (if **deferred**) or third quarter grades (if **waitlisted**).

**Format**

**Paragraph 1 – Re-introduce yourself** as an applicant for admission for the **fall of 2021**. While you are disappointed to be deferred or waitlisted, you are grateful that you can continue to be competitive in the application process and that they’ll reread your application.

**Paragraph 2 – Update** – Update them on new academic interests or accomplishments, new activities/involvements, even new hobbies. Goal is to update them on new information. Bring new information to light. Be specific.

**Paragraph 3 – Why Them?** – Give a good solid, specific paragraph about why you like the college, why it is such a good fit for you and why you are a good fit for them. Make it sincere, specific, and heartfelt. If this is your first choice, say so, but don’t say it if it isn’t true.

**Paragraph 4 – Conclusion** – Tell them you’ll send new grades when available, thank them for their continued interest in you as a prospective student at their college.
Sample Letter of Continued Interest

Date

Ms. Admissions
Director of Admissions
Ideal University
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Ms. Admissions,

(Re-Introduction) Thank you for taking the time to review my application. I know that Ideal University is a competitive school, and I am grateful to (be included on the Waitlist) or (continue to be competitive in the application process through a deferral to the regular decision pool of applicants.

(Update) Since applying to Ideal University, I have received the Seal of Biliteracy in russian, which is awarded by the state of Massachusetts in recognition of a student’s proficiency in two languages. This award means a lot to me as it celebrates my family’s culture and demonstrates my passion for linguistics, language and communication. I also was a part of the Newton South Varsity Gymnastics team that won the New England State Championships title this winter. It was an unforgettable experience to be Captain of this selfless team that overcame adversity and injuries to achieve this outstanding accomplishment.

(Why Them?) I am still very excited to join Ideal University’s English Department and begin working on literary research and writing poetry with inspiring faculty like Professor Smith. I love the sense of community on campus and school spirit o especially at the basketball games (Go Lions!). The idea of joining Ideal University’s Outing Club and participating in their annual trip to Lake George greatly appeals to me and my sense of adventure.

(Conclusion) Thank you so much for your continued consideration. I will send my updated transcript as soon as it is available. I am anticipating all A’s and B’s this quarter and I feel that these grades are a better reflection of my ability. Please let me know if you have any additional questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Student’s Name

Adapted from The Admissions Strategist’s “Writing an Amazing Letter of Continued Interest- https://www.tranzision.com/letter-of-continued-interest/
# Worksheet 1: College Comparison

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Considerations</th>
<th>College #1</th>
<th>College #2</th>
<th>College #3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of College or University</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Major / Career Goals</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your area of academic interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>strong at this college?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Campus Statistics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student enrollment / size of</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>freshmen class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Size of campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student/faculty ratio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average class size</td>
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<td><strong>Geographical Location</strong></td>
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<td>Specific region</td>
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<td>Urban, suburban or rural</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weather/Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nearest city, airport</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>College Type and Setting</strong></td>
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<td>2 year / 4 year</td>
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<td>Private, public, technical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-ed, male, female</td>
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<td>Religious affiliation</td>
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<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>% living on campus</td>
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<td>Residence hall requirement</td>
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<td>Food plan options</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apartment/off-campus housing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Admissions Selectivity</strong></td>
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<td>Middle 50% SAT range</td>
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<tr>
<td># of applicants vs. # of accepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Action, Early Decision?</td>
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<td><strong>Academic Environment</strong></td>
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<td>Double Majors/Minors</td>
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<td>Required courses / Distribution</td>
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<td>program</td>
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<td>Year Abroad / Exchange Programs Support Services/Program</td>
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<td>Activities</td>
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<td>Organizations – religious, ethnic</td>
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<td>Athletics – NCAA division, intramural, club</td>
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<td>Greek Life (what %)</td>
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<td>Female/Male Ratio</td>
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<td>Campus Events</td>
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<td>Tours, interviews, Open Houses</td>
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<td>College Fair / College Rep Visit at Newton South</td>
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<td>Admission Requirements</td>
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<td>Application fees, deposits</td>
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<td>Books, additional fees, travel costs to home</td>
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<td>Fee for Support Services (if applicable)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommended resources to assist in evaluating colleges:

- [Naviance](#) [CollegeData](#)
- [College Results](#) [College Navigator](#)

For those who love information and statistics, there is a source of broad information on higher education institutions called **Common Data Set**. The combined goal of this collaboration is to improve the quality and accuracy of information provided to all involved in a student’s transition into higher education, as well as to reduce the reporting burden on data providers.”

- To access the CDS for a college/university, simply search by typing, “common data set”
and list the college/university name. For example, common data set UMass Amherst

**Worksheet 2: Planning for Standardized Testing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sophomore Year:</th>
<th>October:</th>
<th>PSAT Test(^1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June:</td>
<td>SAT Subject Test(^2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Junior Year:</th>
<th>October:</th>
<th>PSAT Test(^3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December:</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February:</td>
<td>ACT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March:</td>
<td>SAT (^4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April:</td>
<td>ACT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May:</td>
<td>SAT/ SAT Subject Tests(^5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June:</td>
<td>SAT/SAT Subject Tests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Year:</th>
<th>July:</th>
<th>ACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>SAT/SAT Subject Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September:</td>
<td>ACT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>TOEFL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October:</td>
<td>SAT/SAT Subject Tests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November: SAT/SAT Subject Tests (^6)</th>
<th>December: SAT/SAT Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. Some sophomores may elect to take the PSAT in the fall of their sophomore year.
2. Sophomores who do well in Honors Chemistry and/or Honors World History may think about taking the SAT Subject Test in Chemistry and/or World History at the end of their sophomore year. Consult with your teacher to determine whether this is advisable.
3. The PSAT is most commonly taken at this time by the junior class.
4. March is an SAT-only testing date, and SAT Subject Tests are not administered at this time. Check [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) to confirm since testing schedules change from year to year.
5. Students who are taking AP classes and final exams might consider taking SAT Subject Tests in these areas at the same time. AP exams are given at school in early May.
6. Early November is often the deadline for Early Decision and Early Action applications. Some schools will accept testing from this test sitting, others may not. Check your college’s website for more information.
Worksheet 3: College Essay Brainstorming

**Step 1: Brainstorming – Finish the following sentences:**

1. An achievement that made me feel really proud was...
2. Something I have struggled to overcome or change about myself was...
3. An event or experience that taught me something about myself or the world was...
4. A bad experience or something I had to get past was...
5. Someone’s act of strength or courage that affected me was...
6. A family experience that influenced me in some powerful way...
7. A lesson, class project, activity or job that had an impact on my academic or career goals was...
8. One memory that helps define my character is...?
9. An item, place or activity that has special meaning to me is...
10. An event that helped to define me in terms of my background was...
11. I feel passionate about...?
12. If I could change one thing about the world, I would...
# Worksheet 4: College Application Worksheet

**COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

Name: __________________________

**OVERALL TO DO:**

- [ ] Had an Appointment in College & Career Center: ___________________
- [ ] Met with School Counselor to Review Plans: ___________________
- [ ] Spoke with School Counselor about Application Fee Waivers (if eligible): ____________
- [ ] Submitted Teacher Rec Checklist to Teachers Writing Rec: ____________
- [ ] Returned Transcript Release Form to Records Office: ____________
- [ ] Notified Counselors of Colleges’ Response (Accept/Deny/Waitlist): ____________
- [ ] Notified Counselors of Final Decision & Deposited to ONE college by May 1

**FINANCIAL AID:**

- [ ] Received SAT / ACT Fee Waiver from counselor (if eligible): ____________
- [ ] Data Filled FAFSA: ____________
- [ ] Date Filled CSS Profile (if required by college): ____________
- [ ] Submitted Student Aid Report: ____________
- [ ] Submitted NNHS Scholarship Application: ____________
- [ ] Additional Scholarships submitted: ____________

---

**FOR EACH COLLEGE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College 1</th>
<th>College 2</th>
<th>College 3</th>
<th>College 4</th>
<th>College 5</th>
<th>College 6</th>
<th>College 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TESTING: ACT/SAT Required?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Tests Required?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date ACT scores sent from ACT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date SAT scores sent from <a href="#">CollegeBoard</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECORDS OFFICE:** Request for Transcript turned into Records Office with $3 per college & envelope with postage if being mailed (fee waived for eligible students - see your counselor)

**APPLICATIONS:** College Deadline

- Application Type? - Common App, Coalition [AppCollege](#), Specific Online App, or Mail Delivery
- # of Recommendations Required
- Date Teacher/Rec Request was submitted in NAVIANE / Teacher Envelopes for rec were given to teacher if rec needs to be mailed
- Essay & Supplements Completed, Portfolio (if applicable)
- Date Submitted / Mailed Application

**FINANCIAL AID:** College added to FAFSA list

- Is CSS-PROFILE required? - Date submitted

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## Worksheet 5: Financial Aid Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>College #1</th>
<th>College #2</th>
<th>College #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>[A] Annual Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1 Tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 Room and Board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 Books and Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Personal Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES (A1 thru A6)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>[B] Gift Aid (not loans)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1 Merit Scholarships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG’s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3 Pell Grants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4 Any Additional Gift Aid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL GIFT AID (B1 thru B4)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>[C] Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 Work Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 Job</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL WORK (C1 thru C2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[D] Loans (Repayment required)</th>
<th>College #1</th>
<th>College #2</th>
<th>College #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D1 Federal Direct Loans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2 Federal Perkins Loans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3 Direct Stafford Loan (Subsidized)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D4 Direct Stafford Loan (Unsubsidized)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D5 Additional Student Loans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D6 Additional Parent Loans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL LOANS (D1 thru D6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Annual Family/Student Contribution Needed While In College Including Loans |
| A − (B + C + D) |

| Annual Family/Student Contribution Needed While In College Excluding Loans |
| A − (B + C) |

---
# Glossary of Terms

**ACT**
A college entrance examination, which measures aptitude and skill in 4 areas - English, Mathematics, Reading and Science – plus an optional writing test required by some colleges.

**AP Test**
Advanced Placement test taken by high school students usually at the end of their junior or senior year, after they have completed certain AP courses. Many colleges give advanced standing and/or credit for these College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) sponsored tests if students earn certain scores on them.

**Admissions Rep. Visits**
Each fall, Newton South hosts over 100 college & university admissions personnel who often read the applications of our students. This is an opportunity for juniors or seniors to learn more about a college of interest or to demonstrate greater interest in the institution if you have already visited campus.

**Associate Degree**
Degree granted by a college for a program earned in 2 yrs.

**Bachelor’s Degree**
The Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or any other bachelor’s degree granted by a college or university for a program that typically requires 4 years of full-time study.

**Certificate Program**
A qualification earned from short-term specialty trainings that are offered in fields as varied as auto, culinary, or teaching English as a Second Language.

**College Board**
The organization responsible for the administration and administering of the PSAT/SAT/SAT Subject Tests/AP exams. It also offers the PROFILE for financial aid applications.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Common App or Application</strong></th>
<th>A universal application form widely accepted by participating colleges and universities. Each year the form is typically released in August.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common App Supplements</strong></td>
<td>Supplemental forms used by Common App schools that request further information not found on the Common App.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community College</strong></td>
<td>A 2-year public college offering 1-year Certificate programs, 2 year Associate Degrees, and transfer programs to public and private 4-year colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consortium</strong></td>
<td>Several colleges and universities in one area often join together in a consortium, or cooperative association, which gives students the opportunity to use the libraries and/or take courses at all member institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counselor Statement</strong></td>
<td>A comprehensive picture of the student’s academic and social contributions to the Newton South community written by the student’s school counselor. It may incorporate comments provided by teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CSS PROFILE</strong></td>
<td>A financial aid form, different from the FAFSA, required by many colleges and universities that helps them award non-federal student aid funds. The form is available online and fees are charged to first register and then for each college you want the form sent to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distance Learning</strong></td>
<td>Term given to describe online courses and degrees offered by many institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Action</strong></td>
<td>Under <strong>EA</strong> a student applies usually between early November and early December and will know within 4 to 6 weeks whether they are accepted, denied or deferred. If admitted early the student is not committed to enroll and may elect to apply to other colleges. The decision to attend usually does not have to be made until May 1st.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Action Unrestricted</strong></td>
<td>An admission policy that allows a student to apply to more than one college with “Early” plans at the same time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Early Action Restricted**  
An admission policy that does not allow a student to apply to other colleges with “Early” plans at the same time.

**Early Decision**  
An early application option that demands a binding decision whereby if the student is accepted ED s/he must attend that college. Therefore a student can only apply to one college under ED.

**EDCO services**  
Services provided to students who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

**Engineering or Technical College**  
An independent professional college that provides 4-year programs in the fields of engineering and physical sciences. They are often known as “Institutes of Technology” or “Polytechnic Institutes.”

**ELL services**  
**English Language Learner** services provided to students for whom English is not their first language.

**Expected Family Contribution**  
When you apply for needs-based financial aid through the **FAFSA** or **CSS PROFILE** a calculation is done to assess how much your family has the ability to contribute towards your student’s education for one year. This is called the **EFC**.

**Fee Waiver**  
Permits eligible students to submit college applications or test registration forms without the fee. A limited number of waivers are available to students who qualify. Eligible students must see their counselors.

**FAFSA**  
The **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** form that all prospective U.S. college students who want financial aid must complete and submit to determine their eligibility. This application is FREE and is required by all colleges and universities, unlike the CSS PROFILE, which some colleges only require. Massachusetts also uses the FAFSA information for State scholarships.

**Gift Aid**  
Grants and scholarships are often called “gift aid” because they are financial aid that does not have to be repaid. Grants and scholarships can come from the federal government (e.g., Pell Grants), the state government, your college, NSHS, or a private or nonprofit organization.
GPA  Two grade point averages (GPAs) are calculated at Newton South High School: a 5.0 weighted GPA and a 4.0 unweighted GPA. A student’s weighted GPA is based on curriculum level. For more information see the NSHS Course Catalog.

IEP  An Individual Education Plan developed between Newton Public School and the student’s parents/guardians for a student who is eligible for Special Education services based on their learning profile.

Khan Academy  Beginning in 2015, students in the Class of 2017 & beyond have access to free test prep through this online tutorial. Practice tests are available.

Liberal Arts College  A 4-year institution which emphasizes a program of broad undergraduate education.

Local Scholarship Form  Please see Newton South Scholarships

NCAA  The National Collegiate Athletic Association is an athletic governing body to which approximately 1,200 colleges and universities belong. Each college chooses a general division I, II or III and is required to follow the policies regarding recruitment and scholarship awards that have been established for that division. Students must register with the NCAA if they intend to play Division II or I sports in college.

National Merit Scholarship  National academic competition for scholarship awards open to all eligible high school juniors taking the PSAT.

Naviance  A comprehensive web-based tool used by Newton South for post-high school planning. This program contains data on colleges throughout the country and keeps track of recent Newton South college applications, student statistics, and admissions decisions.

Need Aware/Need Sensitive  A family's ability to pay for college may be a factor in the college’s admission decision process.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Need Blind</strong></th>
<th>A family’s ability to pay for college is not a factor in the college’s admission decision process.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newton College Fairs</strong></td>
<td>Held at Newton North High School, this is an opportunity for juniors, seniors and their parents/guardians to meet representatives from some 200 colleges at an event held over 2 evenings in October.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newton South Scholarships</strong></td>
<td>All seniors should take advantage of scholarships from the generosity of local Newton South community donors who contribute significant awards to graduating students from Newton South High School who will pursue an education. Scholarship form available from the College and Career Center or their counselor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matriculated</strong></td>
<td>A matriculated student is one who has applied and been formally admitted to a degree-granting program at that institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEFA</strong></td>
<td><strong>Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority</strong>, a non-profit state organization that serves students and families in Massachusetts, and out-of-state students and families pursuing higher education in Massachusetts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Admissions</strong></td>
<td>An admissions policy whereby the college admits almost all applicants who have earned a high school diploma or a GED.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pell Grant</strong></td>
<td>The Federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduate and certain post-baccalaureate students to promote access to postsecondary education. Students may use their grants at any one of approximately 5,400 participating post-secondary institutions. Grant amounts are dependent on: the student’s expected family contribution; the cost of attendance as determined by the institution; the student’s enrollment status (full-time or part-time); and whether the student attends for a full academic year or less. Pell grants do not have to be repaid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Post-graduate Year**  
The “PG” year, as it is often called, is a full academic year of study generally pursued between graduation from high school and matriculation at a college or university.

**PSAT**  
A practice test for the SAT, it contains fewer sections than the SAT, takes @ 2 hours and is typically taken in October of sophomore and/or junior year. A high score on the PSAT in your junior year may make you eligible to participate in the National Merit Scholarship program.

**Regular Decision**  
Allows a student to apply regular decision to more than one college by the college’s regular deadline (typically early winter). Decisions tend to be received between March and April and the decision to attend does not usually need to be made by the student until May 1st.

**ROTC**  
**Reserve Officer Training Corps** is a college-based military officer training program offered by more than 1,000 colleges. Academic scholarships are offered in exchange for military service after graduation.

**Rolling Admission**  
Application is reviewed when it is received and the college makes a decision on a rolling or on-going basis usually a few weeks after receipt. The decision to attend does not need to be made until May 1st.

**SAT**  
The SAT is a college admissions test offered by the College Board, which comprises 3 sections, critical reading, math and writing. Each section yields a score out of 800 for a maximum possible total of 2400.

**SAT Subject Tests**  
Distinct from the SAT these are one hour tests offered in subjects as literature, foreign languages, science, history and math. These tests measure a student’s knowledge of particular subject areas and are scored on the same scoring scale as the SAT.

**Scattergram**  
Graphical representation of all of Newton South applications to specific colleges and the admissions decisions for each of those colleges from past graduating classes. This data, which includes the SAT/ACT scores and GPAs of applicants (without names) allows students to have an understanding of
how their statistics match up to previous Newton South applicants.

**Score Choice**
Offered as an option for the SAT and Subject Test, this gives the student the ability to choose which test sittings to send to a given college. Not all colleges allow Score Choice.

**Super Scoring**
Policy of some colleges to select the highest score for each section from across all the tests scores submitted (SAT or ACT) therefore encouraging submission of all tests taken.

**Teacher Recommendations**
Normally a college will require 2 teacher recommendations and 1 guidance counselor statement. Teacher recommendations are not submitted through the Common App but separately through Naviance.

**TOEFL**
*Test of English as a Foreign Language* is a test used to evaluate the English proficiency of those students whose first language is not English.

**Trade School**
Offering a qualification earned from short-term specialty trainings that are offered in fields as varied as auto, culinary, or cosmetology.

**Transcript**
A list of final course grades and credits for all classes awarded for freshman, sophomore and junior classes as well as first and second semester during senior year.

**Wait List**
A term used by many institutions to describe a process in which they may initially delay offering or denying admission and extend the possibility of admission into the future. Colleges offer admission to wait list candidates if insufficient numbers of regularly admitted candidates accept their offers of admissions.