

# College Planning Guide

**Maple Shade High School**

**CEEB Code – 310748**

**[www.mapleshade.org](http://www.mapleshade.org)**



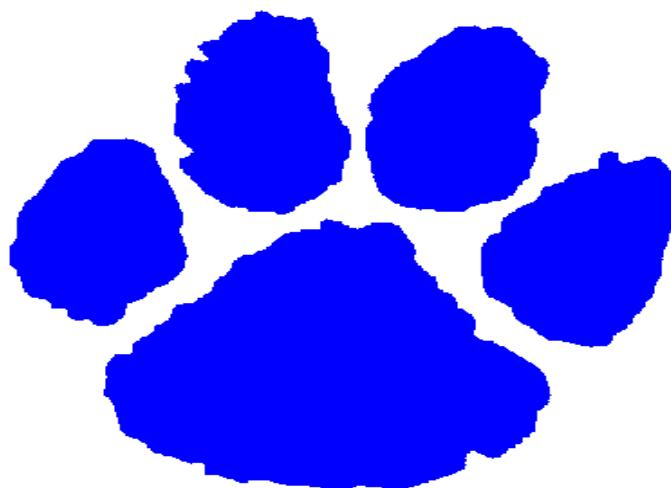
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# Table of Contents

<b>Your School Counselor .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Beginning Your College Search .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Internet Resources .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The College Visit .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>College Profile Page .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Notes for College Visits .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Standardized Testing .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>BCC College Acceleration Program .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Completing College Applications.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>The College Application Essay.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Applying to Military Academies.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Students with Learning Disabilities.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Factors in the Admission Decision.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Study Strategies .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Financial Aid Information.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Understanding the Terminology .....</b>	<b>31</b>

## *Appendix*

NCAA Freshman Eligibility Standards  
College Bound Plan of Action: Senior Year  
Request for College Recommendation Form



# YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR and the College Search



Today's students find themselves increasingly challenged by the rising needs and demands of a twenty-first century society. School counselors are trained professionals who are committed to student advocacy. Their goal is to promote and enhance student learning and growth in the areas of academic, personal/social, and career development. Together, the school counselor and student have developed a program to prepare the student for optimum post-secondary success and to foster life-long learning. MSHS counselors are specialists in college and career planning.

Starting now with this critical transition period, the school counselor needs to become the student's new "best friend" and, to some extent, his/her publicist as well! It is important that the communication lines stay open between the student and counselor as they work together in this important venture. Specifically, school counselors are available to provide the following services related to post-secondary planning:

- Review of college and career options in large group and individual meetings
- Assistance in the development of an academic program that will support post-secondary plans
- Review of college application process and preparation for mailing applications
- Review of student transcript
- Individual meetings with students and/or parents to address the above concerns
- Announcements of scholarships and preparation of scholarship applications
- Individual meetings and group presentations to facilitate student transition
- Review of community service, part-time employment, extracurricular commitments, and standardized test scores as they impact on the student's admissibility
- Telephone and written communication with college admissions representatives and college coaches as necessary
- Recommendation letters for each student if required for post-secondary plans
- Parent and student programs in college admissions and financial aid planning
- Supervision of local scholarship program

The counseling staff does all of this (and more!). They share the commitment of the student and the parents to find a post-secondary placement that will provide for the student's future success and a lifelong feeling of well being. MSHS school counselors will meet with juniors and seniors to review this college and career search process and to provide support in all post-secondary planning endeavors.



# BEGINNING YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH

There are more than 3,000 colleges in the United States alone from which to choose. Trying to narrow your college selection should be your first goal. Begin with yourself! It is important that you are honest with yourself and your family about what you want in post-secondary education.

Start by answering some basic questions:

- Am I going to college? This may sound like an unusual question, but it is the most important one. Be sure that you alone have made the commitment to attend college.
- Why am I going to college?
- When should I go to college? Be sure that you would like to start college immediately after high school. Not everyone is ready for college immediately after high school.
- What do I want to achieve with a college diploma?
- Do I have a specific goal in mind, or am I going to college to broaden my knowledge?
- Do I want to be “big fish” or a “small fish” in terms of campus size or rigor of study?
- What would make me most comfortable in a college setting?
- What will help me to reach my highest potential?
- Do I want a large diverse student population or do I want to know just about everyone?
- What do I do well?
- What is important to me?
- Do I need any special support?
- Am I self-directed or do I need a lot of guidance?
- Where do I see myself in ten years?

With the answers to these questions in your mind, trust your instincts as you begin looking at colleges. Your final choice is one of the most important decisions you will be making. You want to be sure it reflects all that you are and all that you can be.

## ***Narrowing the Search***

To start narrowing the search from the 3,000 colleges and universities available to you, sort your thoughts along these lines:

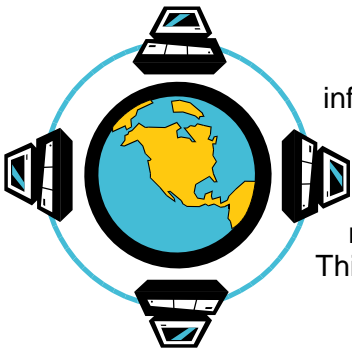
- **Location:** Do you want to live far away, or do you want to commute? Does climate matter? Would you rather be in a city, a suburb, or the countryside?
- **Size:** Again, would you rather be in a large school or a small college? The size of the college impacts on relationships as well as the style in which your education will be delivered (small classes versus lecture, etc.).
- **Academic Challenge:** Will you be more successful in a less threatening academic environment or one that is more competitive?
- **Admissibility:** You should select your colleges by three categories:
  1. “Reach” or “dream” schools are those you would like to attend but whose admissions standards may be a “reach” for you in terms of grades, test scores, etc.
  2. “Target” schools are those that are reasonably within range of your grades, test scores, etc.
  3. “Safety” schools are those schools you are certain to be admitted to, such as community colleges, etc.

- **Curriculum:** Be sure that the colleges you choose have the major areas of study in which you are interested. If you are unsure of the major, try to focus your selections on universities that provide a wide selection of programs within their individual colleges. This would ensure that you would not have to transfer later on to find a school with your major.
- **Cost:** It is important that you and your parents sit down and discuss finances for college honestly. Be aware that financial aid and scholarships usually will not cover the total cost for college. Also, you and your parents need to be sure that a large debt at the end of your undergraduate education will be worth it. If cost becomes a factor, you might want to look at a dual degree program at a local community college or a smaller, less competitive college, which will be more generous in scholarship offers.
- **Type of College:** Two-year or four-year colleges, universities, community colleges, or professional schools all offer different opportunities. It is important to investigate them all.
- **Social Life and Personality:** These “intangibles” are apparent during college visits. It is important to visit schools while they are in session. Have something to eat on campus and check out the atmosphere in the eating areas; look at the bulletin boards and see what’s being advertised for fun; watch the students interact on campus: do they look at each other and say “hello” often, for example?

Once you have narrowed down your preferences, you need to start looking into basic resources and, of course, the Internet!



# INTERNET RESOURCES



The Internet holds many possibilities regarding college searches and college information. Since web addresses change frequently, it is best to mark them as your Favorites or Bookmarks. **The most important site** is the Maple Shade High School's Counseling Department web page at [www.mapleshade.org](http://www.mapleshade.org) for up to date information regarding college entrance, SAT dates, and other valuable resources. Our website also contains current resource links to other useful sites. This site should be checked frequently!

GO TO [www.mapleshade.org](http://www.mapleshade.org), select HIGH SCHOOL, click on COUNSELING

## OTHER FREQUENTLY USED WEB ADDRESSES

**ACT Assessment Home Page:** [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

- Find assessment information, online registration, sample questions, how to apply to college, and our online financial aid need estimator.
- Alphabetical list of many college and university home pages.

**College Board Online,** [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

- This site supported by the College Board includes a scholarship search, SAT registration and college search. Monthly newsletters for students and more. . .

## NEW JERSEY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

### *Public Colleges and Universities*

Burlington County College, [www.bcc.edu](http://www.bcc.edu)

The College of New Jersey, [www.tcnj.edu](http://www.tcnj.edu)

Kean University, [www.kean.edu](http://www.kean.edu)

Montclair State University, [www.montclair.edu](http://www.montclair.edu)

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), [www.njit.edu](http://www.njit.edu)

Ramapo College of New Jersey, [www.ramapo.edu](http://www.ramapo.edu)

Richard Stockton College, [www.stockton.edu](http://www.stockton.edu)

Rowan University, [www.rowan.edu](http://www.rowan.edu)

Rutgers University, [www.rutgers.edu](http://www.rutgers.edu)

Thomas Edison State College, [www.tesc.edu](http://www.tesc.edu)

University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ, [www.umdnj.edu](http://www.umdnj.edu)

William Paterson University, [www.wpunj.edu](http://www.wpunj.edu)



### ***Private Colleges and Universities***

Berkeley College, [www.berkeleycollege.edu](http://www.berkeleycollege.edu)

Bloomfield College, [www.bloomfield.edu](http://www.bloomfield.edu)

Caldwell College, [www.caldwell.edu](http://www.caldwell.edu)

College of Saint Elizabeth, [www.st-elizabeth.edu](http://www.st-elizabeth.edu)

Drew University, [www.drew.edu](http://www.drew.edu)

Fairleigh Dickinson University, [www.fdu.edu](http://www.fdu.edu)

Felician College, [www.felician.edu](http://www.felician.edu)

Georgian Court College, [www.georgian.edu](http://www.georgian.edu)

Monmouth University, [www.monmouth.edu](http://www.monmouth.edu)

Princeton University, [www.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu)

Rider University, [www.rider.edu](http://www.rider.edu)

Saint Peter's College, [www.spc.edu](http://www.spc.edu)

Seton Hall University, [www.shu.edu](http://www.shu.edu)

Stevens Institute of Technology, [www.stevens-tech.edu](http://www.stevens-tech.edu)

### ***COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS***

NCAA , [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

A guide from the NCAA for college-bound student athletes including eligibility, clearinghouse, and recruiting information. Also check counseling office website for list of MSHS NCAA approved courses.

### ***COLLEGE & CAREER SEARCH***

<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

This site, run through the Department of Education, provides an easy to use college search.

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

Peterson's provides information on study abroad, careers, summer programs, and the usual college-related information. Students can save their work and later return to continue. Along with the College Board site, this is one of the most useful resources for college researchers.

[www.usnews.com](http://www.usnews.com)

This site takes the user to the site of US News and Report and its ratings/rankings of colleges. Students can compare college stats, predict college costs and search for scholarships.

[www.gocollege.com](http://www.gocollege.com)

This site includes a lot of good information about higher education including college and scholarship searches. You can submit questions to “Ask the Experts” and read through the archives of previous questions and articles.

[www.review.com](http://www.review.com)

This site is maintained by the Princeton Review. A scholarship search is available, as is a section for parent-related issues. Students can also apply online.

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)

Students can use this site to search for colleges and scholarships. Online applications for over 1500 colleges are available. A recruitment service allows students to create a profile that colleges can access.

[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)

This site provides profiles of 3,700+ individual colleges and links to specific college web pages. The career search allows students to use personal inventories in conducting searches. Information on specialized schools (Christian and Historically Black Colleges) is also available.

[www.careersandcollege.com](http://www.careersandcollege.com)

Among other things, this site allows you to prepare for standardized tests, search for colleges and scholarships, and find loans for school.

[www.collegeparents.org](http://www.collegeparents.org)

The College Parents Association sponsors this site, which includes a section on scholarship scams, on-campus alcohol abuse, and many other topics.

[www.bestschoolsusa.com](http://www.bestschoolsusa.com)

This is a comprehensive site featuring both two and four year colleges. It includes extensive information about college scholarships, tips on application/essay writing, and interviewing advice. There is even a section with maps showing where the colleges are located.

[www.campustours.com](http://www.campustours.com)

Take a tour of the college of your choice without leaving home. Virtual tours are available from college web sites around the country.

[www.mapping-your-future.org](http://www.mapping-your-future.org)

This is a one-stop shopping site for college, career and financial aid planning. Advice is offered for all grade levels, beginning from middle school.

[www://campussafety.org](http://www://campussafety.org)

This site is maintained by Security-On-Campus, a non-profit organization geared toward the prevention of campus violence. Parents and students can look at campus crime statistics, as well as get tips on safety.

<http://www.collegeanswer.com>

This site assists in selecting, applying, deciding, and financing a college education. There is an excellent section for parents also.

<http://www.myfootpath.com>

This site provides information on careers and college, including funding your education.

<http://edonline.com/cq/hbcu>

This site is dedicated to information on Historically Black Colleges.

<http://njtransfer.com>

This site helps students who will be attending county college to choose their courses while meeting the requirements of a four-year school to which the students plan to transfer. Users can see the course equivalents for the participating colleges.

<http://www.studentedge.com>

Use Maple Shade access code: CUBKXBLQ to find college matches, search for scholarships and utilize test preparation practice.

<http://www.nacac.com>

The National Association of College Admissions Counselors maintains the site. Included is a section for students and a listing of national college fairs.

### Virtual Tours

- <http://www.ecampustours.com/> - virtual campus tours
- <http://www.campustours.com/>
- <http://www.campusview.com> – collection of on line view books
- <http://www.collegiatechoice.com> – non promotional videos of colleges

### What are my Chances at This School?

- <http://www.go4college.com/>
- [www.collegedata.com/cs/promo/promo\\_calcodds\\_tmpl.html](http://www.collegedata.com/cs/promo/promo_calcodds_tmpl.html)
- [www.princetonreview.com/college/research/articles/find/MatchReachSafety.asp](http://www.princetonreview.com/college/research/articles/find/MatchReachSafety.asp)

### STANDARDIZED TESTING

<http://www.collegeboard.com>

This site is sponsored by the College Board. In addition to allowing the user to conduct a college search, students can also access other College Board services such as registering for the SAT, SAT practice questions, and applying online to more than 300 colleges. The “My Organizer” feature allows the student to use the site to keep track of important deadlines and tasks, with automatic reminders. This is one of the best sites for college planning.

<http://www.act.org>

This site is sponsored by ACT, the company that produces the American College Test. Many southern and mid-western colleges prefer scores from the ACT. At this site you can register online to take the ACT, search for colleges, and purchase test preparation materials.

### Test Prep Resources

- <http://www.testprep.com/> - by Stanford Testing Systems
- <http://www.eurekareview.com/> - Eureka One on One Review, LLC
- <http://www.vocabulary.com/> - fun ways to improve your vocabulary

## For Minority, Low-Income, First Generation Students

- [www.finaid.org/otheraid/minority.phtml](http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/minority.phtml) - minority aid site
- [www.smart.net/~pope/hbcu/hbculist.htm](http://www.smart.net/~pope/hbcu/hbculist.htm) - historically black colleges
- [www.educacionsuperior.org/](http://www.educacionsuperior.org/)
- [www.yesican.gov/](http://www.yesican.gov/) - White House initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans
- [www.yosipuedo.gov/](http://www.yosipuedo.gov/) - Spanish version of same site as above
- [www.chciyouth.org/](http://www.chciyouth.org/) - English and Spanish information on planning – free publications
- [www.hispanicfund.org/](http://www.hispanicfund.org/) - Hispanic resource for college aid
- [www.uncf.org/](http://www.uncf.org/) - United Negro College Fund
- [www.ubp.com/](http://www.ubp.com/) - universal black pages
- [www.collegefund.org](http://www.collegefund.org) – American Indian fund
- [www.aimd.org](http://www.aimd.org) - American Institute for Managing Diversity
- [www.aihec.org](http://www.aihec.org) – American Indian Higher Education Consortium
- [www.sciencewise.com/molis](http://www.sciencewise.com/molis) - Minority Scholarships and Fellowships
- [www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA) - Department of Education/Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs
- [www.black-collegian.com/](http://www.black-collegian.com/) - the Black Collegian
- [www.blackexcel.org/](http://www.blackexcel.org/) - Black Excel: The College Help Network
- [www.hillel.org/](http://www.hillel.org/) - Jewish resources for college
- [www.gmsp.org/](http://www.gmsp.org/) - Gates Millennium Scholars Fund
- [www.hsf.net/](http://www.hsf.net/) - Hispanic scholarships
- [www.hacu.net/](http://www.hacu.net/) - Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
- [www.jbhe.com/](http://www.jbhe.com/) - Journal of Blacks in Higher Education
- [www.gemnetwork.gem.org](http://www.gemnetwork.gem.org) – quality Education for Minorities
- [www.nativeculture.com/lisamitten/education.html](http://www.nativeculture.com/lisamitten/education.html) - Tribal Colleges, Native Studies Programs, and Indian Education





## THE COLLEGE VISIT

Taking a campus tour will allow you to experience the campus “first-hand.” What is the atmosphere like? Do you feel comfortable there? The impressions you gather help you decide if you and the institution are a good match.

The spring/summer of the junior year is an excellent time to make college visits. If you make your college visits during the summer months, however, be sure to revisit the colleges you are seriously considering in order to get a feel for what the college is like when it is in “full swing” and students are on campus.

Arranging a campus tour is easy. Simply call the Admissions Office and ask when tours are offered. Confirm your visitation date over the telephone. Many colleges have “visitation days,” “preview days,” or “open houses” scheduled. These programs can be very informative as they are designed specifically for prospective students. They can also include information on specific majors and on financial aid. Arrangements to sit in on classes, stay overnight, or meet with coaches and faculty members should be made at this time. If you want to visit a college on a day when no specific program is planned, you can schedule individual appointments and tours through the Admissions Office.

In addition to seeing and hearing about programs and facilities, student-conducted tours offer at least three other benefits: first, the opportunity to ask the student guide questions on any and all subjects and get the “student view”; second, the chance to exchange information with others on the tour (prospective applicants and their parents) regarding the different campuses they’ve visited; and third, the opportunity to meet students who may be your future classmates.

### ***How to Make the Most of Your College Visit***

- A. Prepare for your visit by learning as much as you can about the college. Have questions ready.
- B. Take a tour, noting how the students look, the cleanliness of the campus, the atmosphere, the size, etc.
- C. Talk to someone in the department you are considering as a major (e.g., business, education, etc.). Be sure to check out the labs, computers, and other facilities for that major. Also ask what kinds of jobs their graduates get, what the average starting salary is, etc.
- D. If you are a particularly outstanding student, check to see if the university has an Honors Program. Honors Programs offer a variety of unique opportunities for students who qualify. These may include priority scheduling, access to low enrollment honors courses, and/or honors housing.
- E. Visit a dorm, ask to see a room, and if possible, eat in one of the student cafeterias. You may want to also check out the freshman dorm options.

Consider the following as you tour the facilities of each campus you visit:

#### Library:

- How extensive are the hours?
- How extensive are the resources?
- Are tutoring services available?

#### Laboratories/Studios

- Are there sufficient computer labs?
- Are there foreign language labs?

- What do the science labs look like?
- Are labs equipped with state-of-the-art technology?
- Are there art studios, music studios, dance studios?

#### Theater

- What is the size and scope of the theater?
- Are productions open to non-theater majors?
- How many productions are scheduled each year?
- Is there a campus repertory company, choir, band, or orchestra?

#### Athletics

- What are the facilities for men and women?
- How important is the athletic program to campus life?
- What intercollegiate and intramural sports are offered?
- In what athletic division does the college participate?
- Are athletic scholarships available?

#### Housing

- Where are the residence halls located on campus?
- Are rooms singles, doubles, triples or suites?
- Are residence halls coed or single-sex?
- Where do freshmen live?
- How are roommates selected for freshmen?
- Can you change roommates or dorms?
- What are the residence hall rules? Are there quiet study hours?
- Is there a visitation policy for guests?
- Can freshmen live off-campus? Are there fraternity or sorority houses?
- Is housing guaranteed for four years?

#### Dining

- Where are the dining halls located?
- Are there apartment-style dorms where students do their own cooking?
- What types of meal plans are available?
- Can special diets be accommodated?
- Are there restaurants near the campus?

#### Health Services

- Are good clinical facilities available on-campus?
- During what hours are doctors and nurses available?
- Are good counseling services available to students?
- Is there a charge for medical care?
- What hospitals are near the campus?

#### Security

- Does an effective security staff patrol the campus?
- Are parking lots and walkways well lit?
- Is information on crime statistics regularly disseminated to the campus community?

#### Internships/CO-OP

- Are there internship, CO-OP, or other opportunities to study abroad?

## ***Wandering***

Once you have completed your tour and interview, your parents may be invited to meet with the Admission Counselor to discuss topics of concern to them. At the conclusion of this session, it is often a good idea to wander the campus on your own. Go back to see in more detail places covered too quickly during the tour. Wandering can be extremely valuable because it allows you to ask questions of the students currently enrolled at the institution. Don't be shy, just go up and ask! This is not unusual, so most students are happy to discuss what they like or dislike about the institution and are great sources of insight.

## ***Helpful Hints***

As part of being prepared for your college visit, remember to do the following while on campus:

1. Request a business card from any college official you meet (admission counselor, faculty member, coach) or make a note of his or her name for future reference.
2. Keep a journal or diary so you can record and remember your feelings and impressions. Use the COLLEGE PROFILE PAGE on page 12 to rate each of the colleges you visit.
3. Thank the Admission Counselor at the conclusion of your interview. A letter should be sent acknowledging his or her assistance in addressing your questions and concerns.

Inquire about special programs such as Open Houses, Financial Aid Workshops, etc. If you are seriously interested in an institution, you will want to participate in these events to get a broader view of campus life.

### **TOP 5 WAYS TO IMPRESS AN ADMISSIONS OFFICER**

- **Be five minutes early.**
- **Dress and behave to impress.**
- **Ask thoughtful questions.**
- **End the conversation on a positive note.**
- **Follow up via short thank-you e-mail within 48 hours**

## College Comparison Profile Page

College/ University Name				
<b>Academic Program</b>				
Availability of Intended Major				
Possibility of combining majors of interest				
Reputation for academic quality				
Opportunities for cooperative education; internships; etc.				
Library resources				
Desired class formats and size				
Availability of off-campus programs of interest				
Quality of facilities that support intended major				
<b>PEOPLE</b>				
Quality and accessibility of faculty				
Friendliness of students				
Social life				
Diversity of enrollment				
Intellectual level of students				
Accessibility of administration				
<b>CAMPUS</b>				
Appearance of campus				
Access to cultural and social opportunities				
Availability of housing				
Quality of facilities and activities for students				
Student involvement in campus government				
Sports program				
Availability of good places to study				
Availability of nearby shopping				
Convenience of transportation				
Extra-curricular activities				
<b>COST</b>				
Availability of financial aid				
Availability of employment				
Scholarship opportunities				
Other important items				



# Anecdotal Notes from College Visits

**College # 1** \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Impression \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Liked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Disliked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**College # 2** \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Impression \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Liked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Disliked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**College # 3** \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Impression \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Liked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Disliked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**College # 4** \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Impression \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Liked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I Disliked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## STANDARDIZED TESTING

For many students as well as adults, taking a test is not always a pleasant experience. As you prepare to take college entrance examinations, you may be wondering what value your test scores have and how they will be used by the colleges to which you are applying. Because high schools across the country vary widely in their academic curriculum and grading practices, college entrance examinations such as the SAT and the American College Test (ACT) were developed to provide a common yardstick to measure students' readiness to do college-level work. Remember that colleges ask you to take specific tests not to keep you out but to help you fit in where you will be the happiest. Research shows that the combination of your grades and test scores is the best predictors of your potential for academic success in college. It is a good idea to find out as early as possible what tests the colleges in which you are interested require and what the deadlines are for receiving these scores.

### UNDERSTANDING THE PRELIMINARY SAT/ NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (PSAT/NMSQT) & PLAN

The college application process really begins in the fall of your junior year with the taking of the PSAT/NMSQT. This test is similar in content and format to the SAT Reasoning Test and ACT. All college-bound juniors are strongly encouraged to take this test as it helps identify areas of strength and weakness in preparation for the SAT or ACT.

It should be noted that PSAT scores are used as the determining criteria for the National Merit Scholarship Program, the largest national search for academically talented students. The highest PSAT scorers from each state become Semifinalists. Semifinalists progress to Finalists based on an equivalent performance on the SAT, an endorsement from their high school, and a biographical sketch. Merit Scholars are eligible to receive financial awards. Additionally, colleges and other scholarship agencies across the country eagerly recruit Semifinalists, Finalists and Merit Scholars. Furthermore, PSAT scores are used to compete for scholarships offered by the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students and the National Hispanic Scholar Awards Program.

### UNDERSTANDING THE SAT

#### ***SAT Reasoning Test***

The SAT is a 3 hour and 45 minute test, primarily multiple choice, divided into three sections, which measure verbal, mathematical, and writing abilities. Each section is scored from a low of 200 points to a high of 800 points. The highest possible combined score is 2400; however, the national average is about 500 on each section. Since there is a slight penalty for guessing, if a student has no idea what the answer is, he/she should leave it blank. If one or more answer choices can be eliminated, the student should make an "educated" guess. *(Tip: for an additional fee, ACT and SAT will send you a copy of the test, the correct answers, and your son or daughter's answers. For the student who plans to retake the test, this information could be helpful.)*

The SAT is offered several times during the school year. These dates are listed at the end of this booklet, are available in your high school Counseling Office. SAT registration is completed online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

You should consult your counselor for a suggested timetable for taking the SAT. Scores from an SAT taken during junior year are used to identify students eligible for New Jersey State Scholarship Programs. Scores from the junior year are also helpful when applying for Early Decision at a particular college.

When completing the SAT registration online, be sure accurately include MSHS's CEEB code number (310748) so that test scores may be included on your transcript. Indicate your first and alternate choice of test center. Finally, if you know to which colleges you will be applying, you should indicate these colleges so that results can be forwarded. Note: Students on free or reduced lunch qualify for 2 fee waivers for the SAT. See your counselor for a fee waiver.

You are encouraged to complete the Student Descriptive Questionnaire as well.. Deadlines for registration are five to six weeks before the actual test. It takes approximately five weeks for your results to be processed and sent to the colleges of your choice, so be sure to choose test dates that will allow sufficient time for scores to be received by the application deadline.

### **SAT Subject Tests**

Originally called *College Board Achievement Tests*, and more recently *SAT-II* tests, SAT Subject Tests are offered in Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, American History, Social Studies, World History, French, German, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Chinese and Spanish. The tests are one-hour long, primarily multiple choice and scored on a scale of 200-800 points.

Unlike the SAT, which measures more general abilities, Subject Tests measure your knowledge of particular subjects and your ability to apply that knowledge. Many colleges require or recommend one or more of these tests for admission or placement purposes. It is helpful to keep a checklist for each college to which you intend to apply and note if it requires SAT Subject Tests. It is advisable to get this information as early as possible.

SAT Subject Tests are given several times during the school year. registration information with dates can be obtained in the Counseling Office. The best time to take SAT Subject Tests is upon completion of the subject matter course. Be aware that some tests are only given on certain test dates. You may take up to three tests on any one test date. You can specify which tests you plan to take either in advance or on the day of the exam.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT)**

The American College Test (ACT) is used in place of the SAT by many colleges in other geographic regions of the country. Registration forms for the test are usually available in the Counseling Office. The ACT measures student learning in four different areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. Each area is scored on a scale of 1-36 with a composite score given for the entire exam. The national average composite score is 21. Since there is no penalty for guessing, a student should answer every question. Test dates and information can be found at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org). Like the SAT, the ACT now includes a writing assessment. Although the writing assessment is optional to the student, most colleges which normally require the SAT will want the ACT writing assessment too, if the ACT is submitted in lieu of the SAT.

## PREPARING FOR THE TESTS

The best way to prepare for college entrance exams is to take a well-balanced academic program during all four years of high school. It may also help to do one or more of the following to reduce any test anxiety that you may feel:

- Pick up a copy of *Taking the SAT*, *Taking the SAT Subject Tests*, or *Preparing for the ACT Assessment* from your Counseling Office and familiarize yourself with the directions and sample test questions.
- Read and study books geared toward English and Math review, which are available in your local bookstore or public library. These can be helpful reinforcements.
- Take the SAT Prep. course at MSHS. The Math and English SAT Prep. courses help prepare students with important test-taking strategies. However, the best preparation by far is still a solid course foundation in all academic areas.

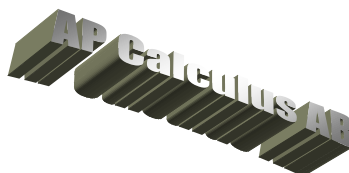
## PROVIDING SCORE REPORTS

It is your responsibility to have the scores from all admission testing sent to the colleges to which you are applying. Most colleges require an official score report sent directly from the College Board or the American College Testing Program. To have score reports sent to colleges or scholarship programs, write in their code numbers and darken the corresponding ovals when you complete the Registration Form. If you do not report results from prior test taking sessions, they will still appear on score reports since the reports are cumulative. You may send score reports to additional colleges or scholarship programs at any time by completing the *Additional Report Request Form* or by calling the test agency. A fee is charged for this service, however students can avoid the fee by taking advantage of the four free reports offered to students each time they register for an SAT test.

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS

The Advanced Placement Examinations are intensive subject-matter tests given in May and taken by students who have been enrolled in Advanced Placement courses in high school. Each test is scored on a scale of 1-5. Colleges throughout the country will award credit for subject matter that a student scores a 3,4, or 5. (varies by college). For more information, go to [www.collegeboard.com/chooseAP](http://www.collegeboard.com/chooseAP)

### *AP Classes Offered at Maple Shade High School*

AP BiologyAP English LiteratureAP ChemistryAP ChemistryAP US HistoryAP Calculus ABAP Studio Art

## BCC: College Acceleration Program (C.A.P.)

The College Acceleration Program is an innovative Burlington County College program designed for academically gifted high school students. C.A.P. offers high school students the opportunity to take college courses for college credit in their own high school.

MSHS Class	BCC Class	BCC Credits
Honors English 11	ENG 101	3
AP English Literature	LIT 201	3
Spanish 4	SPA 102	3
French 4	FRE 102	3
AP Biology	BIO 103, 104, 107 & 108	8
AP Chemistry	CHEM 115, 116, 117 & 118	8
AP Calculus	MATH 118	4
Honors Pre Calculus	MATH 130	4
Statistics	MATH 107	3
AP US History	HIS 101; HIS 102	6
Advanced Mass Media	ETC 101, COM 103	6
Psychology	PSY 101	3
Marketing II	BUA 220	3
Computer Science Technology	CIS 101	3

### Who Teaches C.A.P. Courses?

C.A.P. courses are taught by qualified high school teachers approved as BCC adjuncts. BCC administrators and faculty review course syllabi, textbooks, and learning outcomes for appropriateness.

### How Do Students Enroll in C.A.P.?

Qualified high school students complete a special BCC Application for High School students (available from high school counselors). The application must be signed by the principal, counselor, and parent. The completed application and tuition check are sent to BCC for processing. Registration and payment for BCC C.A.P. courses is in the fall, usually in October.

### What are the Advantages for C.A.P. Students?

- C.A.P. provides students with broader, more challenging course offerings.
- Upon course completion, students receive an official BCC transcript.
- C.A.P. students demonstrate proficiency at college level work -- an asset in the college admissions process whether or not the students intend to continue their studies at BCC after high school graduation.
- Students graduate with a high school diploma and a college transcript.
- BCC's affordable tuition and fees can represent a substantial cost savings, particularly if students are transferring their credits into much more expensive four-year colleges and universities.

### What else do I need to do?

Earn a "C" or better in the course. The Counseling Office will automatically send the grade to BCC.

**What else do I need to do?** Earn a "C" or better in the course. The Counseling Office will automatically send your grade to BCC at the end of the year.

## GUIDE TO COMPLETING COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

1. If applying on-line, read through the directions on the website carefully and, if possible, print out a hard copy of the application and read through the entire application and make a copy of it before making any marks on the form. This will give you a rough copy to use.
2. Create a log-in and password to begin the on-line application at the college's website. Take your time completing the application. You can save your work and come back to it as many times as necessary to accurately complete the entire document. If submitting a paper application, use the rough copy first, completing all sections of the application before neatly transferring the information to the final copy.
3. Be sure to identify the correct major. Some majors require specific GPAs or materials. If you are unsure of your intended major, select "undecided" or "undeclared."
4. Fill in your name and other requested personal data on the top of the section(s)/pages that will be used by others (i.e. school reports, recommendation forms, mid-year reports).
5. As soon as possible, but at least three weeks before the due date, ask your teacher(s) for letters of recommendation if required. Complete the *Request for College Recommendation* form (available in the counseling office) and give it to the teacher/advisor. If the application included a special recommendation form, be sure that the teacher gets it. The teacher/advisor will give a copy of the letter to your counselor. The teacher/advisor may or may not give you a copy.
6. **Check the directions again.** Do you need an essay, letter of recommendation, piece of graded work, picture? If so, be sure to make arrangements to provide all required materials. Edit all your work.
7. Before submitting an on-line application or mailing a paper application, print a copy to keep. Read through the copy carefully before sending the application.
8. Once you have completed the application, let your counselor know so (s)he can mail all supporting materials well in advance of the due date. **Meeting all due dates is your responsibility.** If there is a form(s) for the counselor to complete, fill out the biographical information i.e. name, address, etc. before submitting it to your counselor.
9. Be sure to leave at least two weeks for processing of transcripts and for the U.S. Mail to meet your application deadline. Official transcripts are mailed directly to the colleges and not given to the students or parents for mailing.
  - Use black ink ONLY if completing a paper application.
  - Do not use slang (a swell course, a terrific guy, my grades were pretty good, etc.)
  - Do not use abbreviated forms (PE, CYO, OK, .M.Y.F. etc.)
  - Do not use local names which will have no meaning to the college (Talking Leaves, Scout, Interact Club...instead use terms such as Yearbook, School Newspaper, School Service Organization)
  - Do not "ramble on." Ten well-chosen words are better than one vague paragraph.

## THE COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAY

The importance of the college application essay is often underestimated by students. It is a key factor in the admissions process. James W. Wickenden, former Dean of Admissions at Princeton University summed up the power of the essay with the following statement.

“The essays make the facts in a folder come alive for us. We don’t know the applicants personally. We haven’t taught them, coached them or counseled them. All we have is the image presented in the portfolio. The essays do much to shape our impression.”

Application essays offer the opportunity to discuss the kind of person you are, your aspirations, what is important to you and the struggles you have faced. You can use the essay to explain mistakes of the past (failed courses, low SAT scores) and the high points of your life (awards, special talents/activities). Best of all you can demonstrate that you know how to write well, an invaluable skill at any college.

How can you use this essay power to enhance your chances of being accepted at the college of your choice? Begin by realizing that the essay gives you an opportunity to present an honest insight into who you are and what events got you to this point. Now is not the time for trying to falsely impress the admissions staff. As with the rest of your application, this is not something to just slam together at the last minute. A good essay takes planning and time.

An often asked question is some variation on, “Tell us about you.” You could prepare for this inquiry by putting together some notes about yourself. First, list all your school activities, community involvement, outside activities and awards/honors. Next list all the events in your life that had a particularly strong impact, like a special trip or project. Think of one or two sayings or philosophies of your family. How did these things shape you? Describe an accomplishment you had to struggle to achieve. How did you tackle it and how did it affect you? Lastly, list any shortcomings in your school record and explain why they occurred. If you could, would you change the situation? How? Why? Using these notes you are ready for the first draft.

Once your first draft is finished, put it aside for a day. Come back to it with a fresh perspective. Your goal when you polish this first draft is to make it concise and to the point. Sharpen your focus. Did you cover the topics you had planned to include? Did the essay ramble without a focus point? Can you condense some ideas into shorter, simpler terms? You also need to know and apply the writing principle of “Show, don’t tell.” The rule is that you should give the readers such convincing evidence that they draw the conclusions you want them to draw. Give examples. Instead of saying, “I’m very responsible,” try something to illustrate the point such as “Last summer I was put in charge of a project...”

Read the essay aloud. Your ear will pick up any awkward phrasing. Place yourself in the role of the reader and ask, “Was I bored? Confused? Did the essay go off the subject? Does my first sentence really grab attention? Does the whole thing make sense?”

Be sure to show your essay to others. An objective reader can pick up any weak spots. Your English teacher is also an excellent resource. Ask them to read over the essay and make suggestions. While other people can give you ideas for improvement, only you can decide what actually should be changed. Good essays reflect the writer and are clear, honest and concise. Good essays take time and effort. They are rarely created in a ten-minute session.

## APPLICATION PROCESS FOR MILITARY ACADEMIES

- See your counselor during the spring of your junior year to discuss the criteria for eligibility and the necessary steps to follow.
- Determine whether you meet the scholastic and physical qualifications of the specific military academy to which you are applying. It is important to understand the responsibilities and duties involved upon admission and your commitment for the future.
- Write a letter requesting information and an application from those schools in which you are interested.
- Before you apply for a nomination from one or more of the government officials listed, you must obtain this information in order to compete for admission to all service academies **except** the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

### *Military Academy Websites*

#### **United States Military Academy – West Point**

[www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)

#### United States Naval Academy

[www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)

#### United States Air Force Academy

[www.usafa.af.mil](http://www.usafa.af.mil)

#### United States Coast Guard Academy

[www.cga.edu](http://www.cga.edu)

#### United States Merchant Marine Academy

[www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)

### SENATORS

[http://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm?State=NJ](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm?State=NJ)

### CONGRESSMAN

[http://www.house.gov/representatives/#state\\_ne](http://www.house.gov/representatives/#state_ne)

### VICE PRESIDENT

[www.whitehouse.gov/vicepresident](http://www.whitehouse.gov/vicepresident)

### *Military Careers Websites*

- <http://www.todaysmilitary.com> – Military (general)
- <http://www.army.mil/> - Army
- <http://www.navy.mil/> - Navy
- <http://www.uscg.mil/USCG.shtm> - Coast Guard
- <http://www.marines.com/> - Marines
- <http://www.af.mil/> - Air Force



## COLLEGE APPLICATIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



. Below are the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions concerning the college application process. We hope that this will prove helpful to you. However, if you have additional questions or concerns about your senior's applications, do not hesitate to call your counselor.

### **1. How does a student obtain college applications?**

Each senior is responsible for getting his/her own applications. This can be accomplished by contacting the admissions department of the college, visiting the campus, obtaining one from a college representative at a college fair, printing an application from the internet or applying online.

### **2. How do seniors obtain letters of recommendation?**

Some colleges require a stated number of letters of recommendation, while other colleges leave it up to the applicant and some schools do not require any letters at all. If a student wants to include such letters in his/her application packet, there are definite guidelines to use.

*Seniors should ask for letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches or club advisors, who know them well.* This request should be made **at least** three weeks before the letter is needed. If the college application contains a special "Teacher Recommendation Form", it should be given to the teacher at the time of the request. While teachers are very anxious to help their students, they are still doing them a professional courtesy by making a special effort and taking their personal time to write letters. Therefore, the senior should approach the teacher in an appropriate manner. Personal contact in asking a teacher for a recommendation is necessary. Leaving a note in the teacher's mailbox requesting a letter of recommendation does not set the appropriate tone for the request.

It is also helpful if the senior provides the teacher with some personal information. The Counseling Department has a *Request for College Recommendation* form available to all seniors that allows the student to list extracurricular activities, hobbies/interests, special accomplishments, awards, GPA, class rank and SAT scores. This information helps the teachers "round out," and improve their letters. A completed *Request for College Recommendation* form should be given to the teacher when the senior makes the request for a letter of recommendation. The teacher will complete the letter and turn it in to the student's Counselor. Occasionally, a college will require the letter to be mailed directly; therefore, the teacher will do so if required..

While some college applications already require the counselor to complete a section of the form, many seniors request that their counselor write an individual letter of recommendation. The counselors are happy to do this and want to help the student as much as possible.

### **3. *What is an official transcript and why is it such an important part of the college application?***

An official transcript is a copy of a student's permanent school record. The student's name, address, phone number, the parent/guardian's name, a listing of all courses taken, final grades for those courses and the attendance record for each year at Maple Shade High School. It includes the cumulative GPA and both the weighted class rank. An official transcript also carries the signature of the registrar and the official embossed school seal.

Official transcripts are mailed only to other schools, colleges, universities or agencies when a parental permission form is on file. Official transcripts are not given directly to students or parents. This policy avoids the concern of a transcript being altered, thus misrepresenting a Maple Shade High student.

### **4. *How do the colleges get the SAT or ACT scores?***

When students register for the SAT or ACT, they are asked to list their high school or CEEB code. Including this on the registration allows Maple Shade High School to receive a copy of the scores to be included on the transcript. Some colleges will accept the scores from our transcript while most schools require that you have the scores sent directly from the testing center. The testing companies will forward test scores directly to the colleges listed on the SAT or ACT registration to receive them. Most colleges will only accept scores directly from the SAT or ACT testing companies.

### **5. *What should seniors do with their completed applications?***

Once the senior has completed the application and gathered any required supporting materials, the entire application packet should be sent via the US Postal Service or online, to the college. The senior should then submit a Transcript Request Form. If there is a part of the application designated to be completed by the counselor, include it with the request for a transcript. The counselor will use the information on the Transcript Request Form and send out an official transcript. The date of the transcript mailing will be noted in the school records. No transcripts can be released unless a permission slip signed by the parent is on file.

While the Counseling Department is very diligent in processing transcripts and college forms, it is necessary for students to give the counselors at least two weeks to complete the task before any deadline. When considering due dates and application processing, be sure to also take into account that the U.S. mail also requires time to make deliveries. Maple Shade High School cannot guarantee same-day mailing of transcripts.

### **6. *How are online applications handled?***

Students who complete applications online **MUST** meet with his/her counselor so that the counselor can compile and mail all supplementary materials, including the official transcript.

### **7. *How are college mid-year reports/evaluations handled?***

Some colleges require that a mid-year report/evaluation be forwarded at the end of the first semester of senior year. Many colleges will even provide a special form to be used for this purpose. If this is the case, the student should turn in the mid-year report form to his/her counselor when turning in the application.

## NOTES FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

If you are a college-bound student with a learning disability, the process of finding the “right” college may be a bit more challenging. In addition to following the guidelines already established in this book, it is essential to understand what your learning difference is and how it impacts your academic studies. One way to do this is to actively participate in the Child Study Team evaluation process and your IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings. Now is the time to ask questions and get a sense of your strengths and weaknesses, your learning style, and the level of competition you can handle. Your successes in high school will help you determine the type of support program you may need at college.

College support programs vary widely. As part of your search, you will need to consider whether you are seeking a comprehensive program or a college with special services. The typical components of a comprehensive program are diagnostic testing, remediation, advisement, special courses, tutoring, counseling, and a range of auxiliary aids and services uniquely designed for LD students. Special service programs may offer some of the same components but are generally geared to the entire student population. Students and their families should examine each college’s offering and compare them to individual needs to find the best fit.

By law, colleges cannot ask an applicant if they are learning disabled. If disclosed by the student, this information cannot be used to deny admission. Conversely, being diagnosed as leaning disabled does not guarantee admission. Colleges and universities are under no obligation to alter their admission requirements. Although the choice to self-identify at the time of application is strictly your own, there are advantages. By disclosing your disability either through the required essay, personal letter or interview, you can provide the Admission Committee with valuable insight into your academic performance. A clear explanation of the nature of your disability and the strategies you have used to overcome it are typically viewed in a positive light.

Whatever you decide, it is essential to contact the Office of Disability Support Services immediately after acceptance to request any services you may need. At this point, you will be required to provide current (within the last three years) documentation of your learning disability. The documentation usually includes a copy of your testing report and your IEP, which then guides the college in providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations. Whatever type of program you decide to select, it is wise to have your high school update your LD documentation prior to graduation.

### ACTION PLAN FOR HIGH SCHOOL

- Enroll in a college-preparatory academic program. Work closely with your school counselor and case manager starting in freshman year to select courses where you will achieve maximum success.
- Get involved in clubs, sports and/or community service activities. Colleges are looking for the “well rounded” student.
- Become familiar with your evaluations, IEP’s, and your learning disability. Be able to discuss it intelligently. Understand what your disability is, how it affects your learning process, and what services you require to help compensate.
- Practice self-advocacy. Be comfortable and confident in describing your learning difference and your academic needs.
- Work to improve your study skills, organizational skills and time management.
- Establish your short-term and long-term goals.
- Be realistic in your college search and make sure you visit campuses before applying. Assess how well an institution is equipped to meet your needs, as well as how equipped you are to meet the challenges of the institution.

- Know your rights. Be familiar with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Be ready to work. College is going to be a challenge. It gets harder, faster.
- Relax. Thousands have gone before you and succeeded. You will too!

## **CAMPUS VISIT QUESTIONS**

1. What type of support program is provided for the students with learning disabilities?
2. Are there special admission procedures for the program and what are the requirements for admission? What records or documentation are necessary to arrange for academic accommodations?
3. What is the total number of students in the program? How many freshmen are accepted each year?
4. What specialized training in disabilities do the service providers have? How many staff members are there?
5. Are there extra fees for tutoring, testing or other services?
6. How often can students have support or tutoring sessions?
7. Is there a required pre-college summer program?
8. What is the retention rate for students with learning disabilities? What is the graduation rate?
9. What modifications have faculty and administrators been willing to make for students with learning disabilities on campus?
10. Are the following available: reduced course schedule, tape recording in class, books on tape, extended time for tests and projects, alternate test formats, readers, note takers, priority registration, interpreters, assistive technology, tutors, remediation in basic skills, course substitutions and waivers?

### **Websites for Students with Disabilities**

- <http://www.ahead.org/> - Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
- <http://www.add.org/> - Attention Deficit Disorder Association
- <http://www.chadd.org/> - Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders
- <http://www.ldanatl.org/> - Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)
- <http://www.ldresources.com/> - Learning Disability Resources
- <http://www.nclld.org/> - National Center for Learning Disabilities
- <http://www.fcsn.org/> - Federation for Children with Special Needs
- <http://www.ldonline.org/> - Learning Disabilities Online
- <http://www.nifl.gov/> - National Adult Literacy & Learning Disabilities Center

## FACTORS AFFECTING ADMISSION DECISIONS

### 1. GRADES/GPA/CLASS RANK

This is referred to as the “weighted GPA” in the Maple Shade High School. It is calculated on a 4.0 scale. AP and Honors classes carry more weight; therefore, an A or B in one of these courses could raise your GPA.

Your class rank allows the college to compare you with all of the other seniors at Maple Shade High School.

### 2. STRENGTH OF CURRICULUM

The GPA does NOT tell the whole story! Two students may have a 3.5 GPA, but it is the classes in which the GPA's were earned that make all the difference. The student who earns the higher GPA **while taking more challenging classes** is going to be more highly favored in the admissions process. We at Maple Shade High School challenge our students to take the most challenging courses they can handle while still maintaining an “A” or a “B.” Take Honors or AP courses if you can!

### 3. STANDARDIZED/ADMISSIONS TESTS

“Ninety-four percent of colleges place some importance on standardized tests. Four-year colleges and institutions with larger enrollments are more likely to attribute higher importance to standardized admissions tests. On average, 61 percent of enrolled freshman submitted SAT scores for admittance into college, and 50 percent submitted ACT scores.”

For a list of colleges that place little or no importance on standardized testing in the admissions process, please visit: <http://www.fairtest.org/>.

### *Other factors.....*

4. **ESSAY OR WRITING SAMPLE**
5. **COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION**
6. **STUDENT'S DEMONSTRATED INTEREST**
7. **TEACHER RECOMMENDATION**
8. **INTERVIEW (occasionally required)**
9. **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**
10. **WORK**



# STUDY STRATEGIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE

Do not forget you are still a high school student and that your senior grades count!  
Be sure to keep the following strategies in mind.



## **Time Management**

1. Start to manage your time at the beginning of the semester.
2. Organize your semester by plotting the following on a large calendar: due dates for assignments, midterm exams, and other important dates.
3. Set goals for yourself, such as the grades you would like to receive in your courses and what you expect to learn from each course. Think about how much time it will take to accomplish these goals.
4. Break tasks into smaller, more management jobs (e.g., week 1 = essay outline, week 2 = research, week 3 = rough draft, week 4 = final draft)
5. Make a weekly schedule to indicate lectures, labs, seminars, study time, etc.
6. Plan time for leisure/recreation. Set priorities, but be flexible.
7. Use "To Do" lists when you have a lot to do in a day. *Listening and Notetaking*

## **Listening and Notetaking**

1. Go to class – there's no substitute for the real thing.
2. Have assigned readings done before each lecture.
3. Listen actively by anticipating what the lecturer will say.
4. Screen and evaluate information by comparing with your text and your own knowledge.
5. Concentrate.
6. Take notes. Note topics and subtopics. Use brief point form, putting things in your own words.
7. Use the margin or draw a column to note key terms or questions you have.
8. Use diagrams where possible, especially to illustrate relationships.
9. Review your notes before each class, and plan a weekly review, which integrates lecture and text notes.
10. Ask your professor to clarify points you don't understand.

## **Textbook Reading**

1. Do required reading on a regular basis. Keep a weekly schedule.
2. Preview material to get an overview. See how the chapter is organized.
3. Consider the author's writing style and potential biases.
4. Use different reading speeds. Pay attention to your attention.
5. Think of questions to answer as you read the material.
6. Reflect on the material as you read. How is it valuable?
7. Summarize what you have read. Note important points. Integrate with lecture notes or in text margins.
8. Take breaks. Set targets to work towards and breaks in-between.
9. Find a quiet, comfortable place to read. Your bed may not be the best place!

10. Review your readings on a regular basis.
11. Review course material weekly to keep material fresh in your memory.



### ***Exam Preparation***

1. Study in a quiet, comfortable (but not too comfortable!) location where distractions and interruptions are minimal.
2. Be organized. Make a study schedule by breaking down what you have to do. Have all your materials with you.
3. Study in small chunks of time. Two-hour blocks, then a 15-minute break works well.
4. Keep a normal schedule. Be sure to eat right, get enough sleep, and take time to exercise and relax.
5. Gather information about the test from the professor and teaching assistant (i.e., Will the test be multiple choice, short answer, or essay? How many questions will be on the test? What material will be covered?).
6. Anticipate exam questions. Do practice questions, including questions from old tests, which may be found on reserve in the library, at the department office, or from students who have taken the course. Make up sample questions and answer them.
7. During the test, read the instructions and questions carefully. Budget your time. Organize your answer. Make up an outline for essay questions if possible.
8. Relax. Be aware of tension build-up. Don't forget to breathe!
9. Follow-up. See the professor or the teaching assistant to discuss where you went wrong so that you can improve next time.



# FINANCIAL AID

## **Who Can Apply for Financial Aid?**

All United States citizens can apply for financial aid. In addition, United States permanent residents who have an Alien Registration Receipt Card or an Arrival/Departure Record from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service showing any one of the following designations are classified as eligible noncitizens for the purpose of receiving federal and state assistance: refugee, asylum granted, indefinite parole and or humanitarian parole, or Cuban-Haitian entrant.

Holders of nonimmigrant visas are ineligible for financial aid.

## **Independent Student**

In applying for financial aid a student is considered independent only if he or she meets one of the following criteria:

24 years of age or older by December 31

Orphan or ward of the court, up to age 18

Veteran of the Armed Forces

Graduate or professional student beyond the baccalaureate degree

Student with legal dependents other than a spouse

Person with other unusual circumstances as determined by a financial aid counselor (Professional Judgment)

## **How to Apply for Financial Aid**

Obtain a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for use throughout the federal aid process during and after college from the Department of Education's PIN Web site at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov). You will need a PIN number to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If you're a dependent student, your parents should also apply for a PIN number. The PIN number will enable both the student and parent to sign the financial aid application electronically and to access other federal student aid websites. Safeguard your PIN and remember it. You will need to reapply for financial aid next year.

File your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after January 1<sup>st</sup>. You may file the FAFSA on-line using FAFSA on the Web, which contains built-in edits to help prevent costly mistakes, at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).

You will receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) by mail or e-mail if you provided a valid e-mail address when you applied. Review the comments on your SAR and verify the information for accuracy and if necessary correct items. Note: Your application will not be processed if both the student and parent (if dependent) have not signed the application with the PIN number. In addition to the FAFSA, some colleges request the CSS Financial Aid Profile. Since requirements vary from school to school, it is particularly important that you contact the financial aid office of your specific colleges(s) to check on requirements. The Profile information is available in the Counseling Center but the registration must be submitted online.

Some schools may also require their own institutional form in addition to the above forms which should be sent directly from the respective colleges.



## ***Federal Sources of Aid***

### **Federal Family Educational Loan Program (Stafford)**

Federal Stafford Loans are the department's major form of self-help aid and are available through the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program. You must be enrolled at least **half-time** to receive Stafford and Loans for Parents of Dependent Students (PLUS) funds.

FFEL programs also offer PLUS loans for parents of dependent students and Consolidation Loans.

Stafford Loans are either subsidized or unsubsidized. A subsidized loan is awarded on the basis of financial need. The federal government pays interest for the loan ("subsidizes" the loan) until you begin repayment and during authorized periods of deferment. An unsubsidized loan is not awarded on the basis of need. You'll be charged interest from the time the loan is disbursed until it is paid in full.

### **Federal Work Study Program (FWS)**

College Work Study provides jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to the student's course of study.

### **Federal Perkins Loan Program (PERK)**

A Federal Perkins Loan is a low-interest (5 percent) loan for both undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. Your school is your lender and the loan is made with government funds. You must repay this loan to your school.

### **Federal Pell Grant Program**

A Federal Pell Grant, unlike a loan, does not have to be repaid. Pell Grants are awarded only to undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's or professional degree. For many students, Pell Grants provide a foundation of financial aid to which other aid may be added.

### **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)**

This grant is for undergraduates with exceptional financial need, and gives priority to students who receive Federal Pell Grants. You do not have to repay FSEOG.

### **Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)**

An Academic Competitiveness Grant will provide up to \$750 for the first year of undergraduate study and up to \$1,300 for the second year of undergraduate study to full-time students. Students must have completed a rigorous secondary school program to be eligible. Second year students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0. The Academic Competitiveness Grant award is in addition to the student's Pell Grant Award.

### **SMART Grant**

The National SMART Grant will provide up to \$4,000 for each of the third and fourth years of undergraduate study to full-time students. The student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 in coursework required for the major and must be pursuing an eligible major in physical, life or computer sciences engineering, technology, mathematics or a critical-need foreign language. The National SMART Grant is in addition to the student's Pell Grant award.

## **State Sources of Aid**

### **NJ Class Loan Program**

Undergraduate and graduate students or parent(s), legal guardian, spouse or relative may borrow for each student per academic year. New Jersey and out of state students must be enrolled at least half-time, at an approved school in New Jersey or outside of New Jersey. Applicants must be citizens or eligible non-citizens of the United States for at least six months prior to filing an application. Students must be making satisfactory progress towards a degree.

### **Tuition Aid Grant**

Students, who intend to be full time undergraduates at an approved New Jersey college, university or post secondary institution, are eligible. Applicants must demonstrate need for college aid and must have been legal residents of New Jersey for at least 12 consecutive months before receiving the grant. Students who have received a baccalaureate degree are not eligible.

### **NJ Educational Opportunity Grant**

Applicants must be New Jersey residents for 12 consecutive months prior to applying. To be eligible, the applicant must be a student from a background of historical poverty, who demonstrates financial need. Applicants must also be enrolled *full time* and matriculated at a participating New Jersey college or university.

### **Garden State Scholarship Program (GSS)**

Students demonstrating the highest level of academic achievement based upon their secondary school records and junior year Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores will be selected for consideration by their secondary schools.

### **Outstanding Scholar Recruitment Program (OSRP)**

Students who meet eligibility criteria and enroll as first-time freshmen receive annual scholarship awards of up to \$7,500. The award amounts vary depending on class rank and combined SAT scores. To be eligible for renewal, a student must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA and earn a minimum of 24 credits per academic year. See Stockton's "Scholarship Opportunities" brochure for the eligibility criteria.

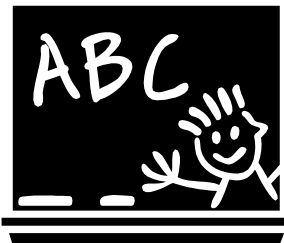
## **Financial Aid Calculators**

- [www.finaid.org/calculators/](http://www.finaid.org/calculators/) - financial aid calculator
- [www.act.org/fane/index.html](http://www.act.org/fane/index.html) - calculator on the ACT website

## **Financial Aid Links**

- <http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/> - Federal Student Aid Site or call 1-800-433-3243 (TTY 800-730-8913 for hearing impaired)
- <http://www.finaid.org> – Student aid resource site
- <http://www.students.gov/> - student gateway to the US Government
- <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> - online FAFSA application

# UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



## *Collegiate Degrees*

The college search process has its own unique vocabulary. Understanding the language can be 80% of the battle!

**Associate Degree** The degree awarded after the successful completion of a two-year program, usually at a junior or community college.

**Bachelors Degree** The degree awarded after the successful completion of a four-year program of study at a college or university.

**Masters Degree** The degree awarded at the completion of the first post-graduate program.

**Doctoral Degree** The degree awarded after intensive study in a particular field such as Philosophy (Ph.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Education (Ed.D.) or Law (J.D.)

## *Collegiate Calendars*

**Semester System** The most common calendar, where the academic year is divided into two relatively equal periods of approximately 16 weeks.

**Trimester System** A calendar which divides the academic year into three equal periods.

**Quarter System** Similar to the Trimester System, but usually includes a fourth, summer session.

**4-1-4 System** A system where students carry four courses during the fall session, one course during the "January Term" (sometimes in an off-campus situation), and four courses in the spring session.

**Three-Two Program** A combined degree program at two cooperating institutions, the first three years at an undergraduate school and the final two years at an institution providing specialized study; degrees are awarded from both.

## *Admission Plans*

**Matriculation** Admission to a college as a degree candidate usually formalized by payment of tuition.

**Early Admission** Admission to a college following the completion of the junior year of school.

**Early Decision** A plan where students make application in early fall of senior year and notification is sent by mid-December. If accepted, a commitment-to-attend is usually required along with withdrawal of other college applications. A student may apply to only one college under Early Decision.

<b>Early Action/ Notification</b>	Similar to Early Decision except that if accepted, the applicant is <b>not</b> committed to attend the institution and other applications may be made. Early Action – <i>Single Choice</i> may require the student not to apply elsewhere until a decision is made.
<b>Wait List/ Alternate List</b>	A response to an application indicating that his/her application is acceptable, but the limit of accepted students has already been reached; wait-listed students may be admitted after May 1, if space becomes available.
<b>Rolling Admission</b>	A procedure by which admission decisions are made on a continuous basis and notification is sent within about 3-4 weeks after receipt of completed application material.

### ***Admission Dates***

<b>College Notification Date</b>	The date by which colleges not using rolling admission notify applicants of the decision on their applications, usually by April 15.
<b>Candidate Reply Date</b>	The date by which applicants must reply to college offers of admission and submit a tuition deposit to secure a place in the freshman class, usually by May 1.

### ***Testing Terminology***

<b>PSAT</b>	The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is usually taken in October of the junior year in preparation for SAT or ACT. The PSAT/NMSQT score serves as a basis for selection of National Merit Scholars who receive public recognition and financial awards.
<b>SAT Reasoning Test</b>	A 3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hour test given on specific dates throughout the year at testing centers and required by most colleges for admission. The scoring has three components: 1) Critical Reading –which indicates an understanding of words, skill in dealing with word and thought relationships, the ability to read with understanding and discrimination; 2) Math – which measures ability to handle numbers and do quantitative reasoning. 3) Writing – which measures a student’s knowledge of grammar and ability to write. Scores on each section range from 200-800.
<b>SAT Subject Tests</b>	One-hour tests given in specific high school subjects. Scores range from 200-800 and demonstrate level of accomplishment. A number of colleges may require these tests in addition to SAT.
<b>American College Test (ACT)</b>	A four-part test consisting of English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science, the ACT is used largely by Midwestern, Western, and Southwestern colleges. Individual and composite scores range from 1 to 36. A new, optional writing assessment is available.

<b>Advanced Placement Tests</b>	Subject-oriented college-level tests given in May and usually taken by high school students completing advanced placement courses. College credit is usually granted based on scores (1 is low and 5 is high) enabling students to pursue further study in a field or shorten their college career.
<b>Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)</b>	An exam used in conjunction with or as a substitute for the SAT or ACT for students whose native language is not English.
<b>College Board</b>	The College Board owns and regulates the Admission Testing Program, which includes the SAT Reasoning Test, the SAT Subject Tests, and the Advanced Placement (AP) Tests.
<b>Educational Testing Service (ETS)</b>	This organization creates, administers, scores, and reports results of the Admission Testing Program of the College Board. ATP reports are cumulative, and a student's report includes current scores and all SAT and SAT Subject Test scores from up to five previous dates.
<b>CEEB Code</b>	The identification number of your high school used for College Board tests. Maple Shade High School's code number is 310748.
<b>Student Search</b>	A program by which students' SDQ responses, PSAT, SAT and SAT Subject Test scores are made available to colleges to allow them to directly contact by mail those students in whom they might be interested.