



# THE COLLEGE PROCESS: 101

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[WWW.WATERTOWN.K12.MA.US](http://WWW.WATERTOWN.K12.MA.US)




# Junior Year



## JANUARY-JUNE



- Register for the Spring SAT (May/June) at [collegeboard](#)
  - If necessary, take SAT Subject Tests
  - AP Exam registration at school
  - Begin researching possible colleges/majors
  - Make an appointment with your guidance counselor
  - Ask for a letter of recommendation from two teachers
  - Brainstorm ideas for college application essay topics
  - Visit [Naviance](#) to do a college search
  - Visit local colleges/universities to get a sense of what is important to you in a school
  - Select challenging courses for your senior year during scheduling
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# Junior Year



## JUNE-SEPTEMBER

- Continue to visit schools throughout the summer
- Draft an application essay
- Begin narrowing down your list
- Observe Deadlines
- Familiarize yourself with The Common Application
- Males only – Register at the age of 17/18 for the Selective Service

# Senior Year

## SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Get good grades- No Slacking!!
- Register for the Fall SAT I/SAT II at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
- Register for ACT at [act.org](http://act.org)
- Send your scores to your schools
- Make an appointment with your guidance counselor to discuss your plans
- Narrowing down your list of schools
- Use Naviance
- Attend college fairs (in the WHS Gym)
- Schedule interviews with schools if needed/recommended
- Give Senior Self Assessment teachers/counselor for letters of recommendation!!
- Decide on Early Action/Decision/Regular Admission
- WATCH Deadlines
- Involve your parents/guardians!!

# Senior Year

## NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

- Continue to work hard
- Complete...
  - Transcript request in guidance
  - Release form on Naviance
  - Application online/mail
  - College essay
  - Registration for SAT/ACT
- Provide SASE's to teachers for recommendation letters
- Continue to communicate with guidance throughout this process
- Visit schools and introduce yourself to Admissions
- Submit applications with deadlines in the Fall for Early Action, Early Decision or Regular Admission
- **OBSERVE DEADLINES!!!** You are responsible for getting your applications out on time- *not* your parents/guardians, teachers or counselor
- Fill out CSS Profile (private colleges)
- Attend Financial Aid Night with Parents/Guardians (December)

# Senior Year

## ■ JANUARY -APRIL

- File for Financial Aid (FAFSA) on [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- Register with NCAA if playing Division I or II sports in college [www.ncaaclearinghouse.com](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.com)
- Apply for scholarships (Watertown scholarship application in February)
- Register for AP Exams
- OBSERVE DEADLINES!!!
- After receiving Financial Aid packages, make final decision

## MAY - JUNE

- May 1st is the National Candidate Reply Date
- Tell guidance counselor your choice so we can send Final Transcript
- Send deposit to school of choice
- CELEBRATE with FRIENDS/FAMILY!!
- Send thank you cards to the people who wrote recommendation letters for you
- Sign up for New Student Orientation at your school
- Now- help your junior friends/relatives through this process- you are a master at it now!!
- GRADUATION on June 5th!



# Where do we start?

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**START BY  
LOOKING AT  
COLLEGES**

# College Visits

*Admissions counselors say that a student decides in the first five minutes of being on a campus whether he or she likes it or not. A school may appear great on paper, but not in person. When you visit a school, do the following things:*

- Take a student-guided tour- they know more about the college experience than admissions officers
- Attend a class if possible
- Try cafeteria food
- Pick up copies of student publications such as newsletters, etc.
- See the dorm rooms/athletic facilities/student activity areas, etc
- Stay overnight with a friend if possible
- Find the commuter lot
- **ASK QUESTIONS**- ask what you can't read in the college books!!

# Questions to ask...

- Are you happy here? Was this school your first choice?
- Are there job opportunities available on campus for students?
- How do you register for your classes?
- Are the faculty nice? Are the courses challenging?
- How did you know you wanted to go here? What are the pros/cons of attending this school?
- Is this a safe campus?
- What extra-curricular/intramural/clubs activities are available?
- Is the campus/school fun?
- What do most students do on the weekends? Do most go home?
- Are there laundry facilities available? Where? Cost?
- How is the cafeteria food? How many options are there?
- What do I do if I don't like my roommate?
- What is the process for housing selections? Is there a lottery?
- What technology is available on campus?
- How many hours per week do you have to put aside for homework/studying?
- Is there an orientation program available for new students? When?
- What classes did you (student) take during your senior year in high school?

# Let's look at a complete application

- ✦ Application
- ✦ Application fee
- ✦ Student essay
- ✦ SAT/ACT scores
- ✦ Recommendation letters
- ✦ Transcript/profile



# Student responsibilities

Fill out the application by deadline

- Pay FEE (different for every college)
- Write a dynamic essay
- Ask favorite teachers for letter of recommendation (fill out form)
- Send test scores from collegeboard.com or act.org
- Meet with guidance counselor
- Request transcripts

# WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS

- 1) You have the right to request information from colleges and universities without feeling high pressure tactics to persuade you to apply or enroll.
- 2) You have the right to accurate information about each institution's academic programs, facilities, and faculty, along with each institution's retention and graduation statistics.
- 3) You have the right to the names of all accrediting, certifying, or licensing organizations for each institution.
- 4) You have the right to complete information about all direct and miscellaneous expenses, the types of non need-based and need-based financial assistance provided, and the methods by which eligibility is determined.
- 5) You have the right to accurate information about all aspects of campus safety, including institutional crime statistics.
- 6) You have the responsibility to assure that all required items necessary for the completion of your application are received by each institution within the required timeframe.
- 7) Once admitted to a college or university, you have the right to wait until May 1 to respond to an offer of admission and financial aid (unless you have been admitted under a binding Early Decision program).
- 8) You have the right to request in writing an extension to May 1 without penalty if an institution requires an earlier commitment (unless you have been admitted under a binding Early Decision program).
- 9) You have the right to historical information about prior waiting list activity including the number wait-listed, the number ultimately admitted and the availability of housing and financial aid. Colleges and universities cannot require a deposit from you to maintain your place on a waiting list.
- 10) You have the responsibility to submit a deposit to only one institution—and upon submitting that deposit to withdraw from all other institutions to which you have been admitted

# The Essay

## 2 fold purpose

1. writing sample
2. tell them something about yourself they can't read in the application

## Tips for writing your essay:

- ◆ Be yourself. Be funny, but not too funny.
- ◆ Be original, authentic and true to yourself.
- ◆ Hook'em with an intriguing opening line- make them want to read on.
- ◆ **Proof, proof, proof!!!**
- ◆ Answer the question; use descriptive words.
- ◆ Don't whine, repeat information, change your writing style, or write what you think they want to hear.

# ESSAYS THAT WORK!



Sample Essays

# College Admissions Exams

## **SAT: collegeboard.com**

- Duration: 3 hrs. 35 mins.
- Cost: \$45.00
- Three sections: Critical Reading, Math and Writing (total possible score- 2400)

## ■ **SAT Subject Area Tests: collegeboard.com**

- Duration: 1 hr.
- Cost: \$20.00 (basic registration fee), \$9.00 (per test fee), \$20.00 (per language test w/ listening)
- Subjects include: English Lit., Bio., Chem., Math, History, Foreign Langs. (full list on website)

## ■ **ACT: act.org**

- Duration: 3 hrs. 30 mins.
- Cost: \$31.00 or \$46.00 with writing
- Four sections: English, Math, Reading and Science Reasoning (total possible score- 36)

## ■ **TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) ets.org/toefl**

Some schools no longer require admissions tests  
see [www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org)

# Admission options

- **Regular Decision**: This is the most common admission option. It means that you turn in your application by the college's deadline, and it lets you know by a specified date if you have been admitted or not.
- **Early Action**: With Early Action, you send in your application earlier, and the college sends you its decision earlier. Make sure you read the instructions from each college carefully because some colleges have additional restrictions on their early action programs. Academically strong students will often apply to one Early Action school.
- **Early Decision**: You can apply Early Decision to only one college. You are committing yourself to going to a particular school if you decide to apply Early Decision. You should only apply Early Decision if you have a clear idea of your first-choice college. If you are looking at several colleges and don't want to limit your choices yet, Early Decision is not for you. If you apply to other schools, you risk having your Early Decision school reject your application.
- **Rolling Admissions**: There is no deadline for this option. Schools review and make decisions on applications as they receive them.
- **Wait List**: Colleges and universities use this term when they deny you admission initially, but may accept you later on if too many regularly accepted candidates refuse their offers of admission.

# Massachusetts State College Admission Standards

## UMASS

<i>GPA</i>	<i>SAT / ACT</i>
2.51-2.99	950/ 20
2.41-2.50	990/ 21
2.31-2.40	1030/ 22
2.21-2.30	1070/ 23
2.11-2.20	1110/ 24
2.00-2.10	1150/ 25

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*4 years English*  
*3 years Math*  
*3 years of Science (2 labs)*

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## State Colleges

<i>GPA</i>	<i>SAT / ACT</i>
2.51-2.99	920 / 19
2.41-2.50	960 / 20
2.31-2.40	1000 / 21
2.21-2.30	1040 / 22
2.11-2.20	1080 / 23
2.00-2.10	1120 / 24

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*2 years history (US I and II)*  
*2 years Foreign Language*  
*2 years electives*

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# Recommendation letters

## Teacher Recommendations:

- Aim to get 2 teacher letters
- Choose someone who knows your academic skills and personality
- It is the choice of the teacher to write for you, not a requirement.
- Fill out Teacher Recommendation form (available in guidance or on website)
- Give them the form, application forms, and SASE's for each school
- Provide deadlines

## ■ Counselor Recommendation:

- Meet with your guidance counselor to review process
- Fill out Senior Self Assessment (available in guidance or on website)

\*\* YOU NEED TO GIVE PLENTY OF TIME TO WRITE THESE LETTERS – do NOT ask for a letter one week before the deadline.

\*\* when filling out self assessments, be specific and detail oriented. If you spend 10 minutes filling it out, you will get a 10 minute recommendation. If you spend 30 minutes, you will get a much more descriptive and convincing letter

## What to expect from your counselor:

- A one on one appointment with
- Interest, support and encouragement
- Suggestions for schools to look at (list)
- Feedback
- Guidance through the college application process
- Sharing of knowledge and resources with you
- Will contact schools with questions if necessary



## What *not* to expect from your counselor:

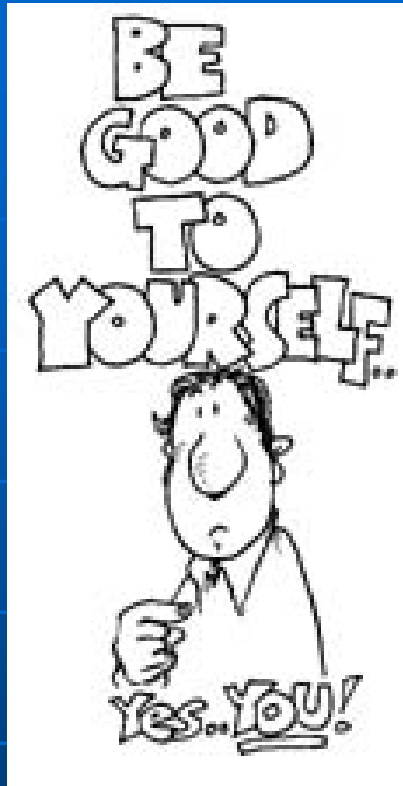
- Know your thoughts
- Keep track of deadlines and appointments for you
- Apply to schools or for scholarships for you
- Write recommendations w/o notice or your Senior Questionnaire

# What your counselor expects from you:

- Send out applications, essays, etc. on time!
- Be responsible for applications, scholarships, deadlines, decisions, recommendations, essays, financial aid (FAFSA); register for SAT's (we will help you but not do it for you)
- Keep an open mind- be open to new ideas/suggestions
- Ask questions when you are unsure about something
- Make transcript requests at least two weeks before due date
- Keep scheduled appointments

**\*Don't forget to make an appointment with your guidance counselor when you get back to school in the Fall so that you can begin the college application process.**





**NOT  
DONE  
YET!**

**SCHOLARSHIP TIME!!!!**

# **SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH**

## ***LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS***

The WHS scholarship application and booklet are given to students in the spring of their senior year.

**STUDENTS MUST APPLY TO WIN  
SCHOLARSHIPS ON AWARDS NIGHT!**

## ***NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS***

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

Guidance informs students of additional scholarships via Naviance

# RESOURCES

Collegeboard

ACT

SAT optional schools

NCAA (athletics)

Naviance

Common Application

FAFSA

CSS Profile