

NHS College & Career Post-Secondary Process



During our College Planning Night and multiple junior English classroom visits, student will complete and review the following with support from the NHS College & Career and School Counseling staff:

1. Login and review [SchoolLinks account](#), including how to complete a College Search, Updating your College List, and viewing your GPA in relation to schools that interest you
2. Create a [Common App account](#) and review the FERPA agreement
3. Importance of visiting colleges campuses: [Maximizing College Campus Visits](#)
4. Letter of Recommendation Process: [Advice on who to ask](#)
5. Senior Post-Secondary Essay: [Choosing an Essay Topic](#) & [From Ideas to Impact: Writing a Memorable College Essay](#)
6. Next steps for students interested in pursuing options such as the Armed Services, Gap years, Internships, or the Workforce: [Connecting student interests to future career options.](#)
7. [Developing a resume](#): Use your SchoolLinks account and add as much information as possible and it will automatically be added to your resume, check out [How to Build Your Student Profile](#) and how to [Export Your Profile into a Resume.](#)
8. [How important is LinkedIn](#): How to [Build a LinkedIn Profile](#)

In addition, you can also schedule individual meetings with your school counselor and/or our college & career counselor, [Mr. Aaron Ribaud-Smith](#) if you would like to discuss your postsecondary plan further.

Post-Secondary Checklist and Roadmap: this is a fully digital checklist plus questions to get you started and helpful tips on how college is very different from high school.

Please take a look at the [Junior Timeline](#), and [Junior Quick Facts sheet](#), with important information that will also be reviewed in your classes.

College Search and Application Support Sessions

During the month of May the College & Career Center will be offering the Class of 2026 - College Search and Application Support Sessions. Please sign up in Enriching Students as these sessions will take place during Clipper Block. Those dates in May will come out in late March or early April.

Summer College Planning Bootcamp

During the summer seniors in the Class of 2026 will have an opportunity to participate in one or all of the four bootcamp days. Those dates will come out later this spring.

Helpful Links:

Below includes some of the links to resources we will be utilizing throughout our class visits [Newburyport High - College and Career Center](#) - Review many more resources provided by Mr. Ribaud-Smith.

College Application- Please note that all students interested in applying to college will need to utilize both SchoolLinks and the Common App.

SchoolLinks - SchoolLinks is an online career portfolio that holds the information you will need to prepare for your future after high school. Any college planning, applications, career decisions, etc. that you are thinking about or actively pursuing are all contained within this platform for your time at Newburyport High School. Naviance has a variety of tools and features that can help you to be successful at planning a career path that you will love. These include, but are not limited to:

- Career Quizzes
- Information on colleges of interest
- Requesting Teacher Recommendation letters
- Uploading test scores and reviewing your GPA to view your potential admission to schools of your choice
- Adding colleges to your list

Common App - The Common App is an online college application platform that allows you to apply to hundreds of participating colleges in the nation. By completing this application once, you can send your information to any college within its database to apply without having to resubmit your application numerous times.

Filling out the Common Application

Standardized Testing - We encourage all students to sit for at least one SAT/ACT.

As the pandemic accelerated the ongoing trend of colleges placing less emphasis on standardized testing in admissions decisions, many institutions have recently reinstated the requirement for test scores, believing they are a reliable indicator of academic success in college. Having a strong test score can certainly bolster your application, but if your score is not as high as you would like, test-optional colleges will consider other aspects of your application to assess your suitability for their institution. While academic performance remains crucial, colleges are likely to place more importance on your essays, recommendations, and extracurricular activities if you opt not to submit test scores. It is important to note that if a college does not have a test-optional policy, you will need to provide a test score to be considered for admission.

SAT vs. ACT: How to Decide Which Test to Take

SAT Test Dates and Registration

SAT Preparation

ACT Registration and Dates

Other Helpful Information

Recommendation Letters - While most schools require only 1 teacher letter and the other coming from your school counselor, some require 2 teachers letters.. Make sure to ask early so that it gives your recommender(s) plenty of time to write a letter for you. Remember, many other students are also in need of recommendation letters! Students can begin officially asking teachers for a letter of recommendation on **May 27th**.

*Students will need to wait until August before they can officially request a teacher letter of recommendation in SchoolLinks, as the system will be updated to reflect your transition from juniors to seniors by that time.

Who should you ask? The ideal candidate(s) should check off most of these boxes:

- Know you well (academically and personally)
- Be someone who you have a good relationship with
- Be someone who has worked closely with you, possibly over several years (ex. Coach or club advisor)
- Be a core academic teacher or a teacher who teaches a subject you wish to pursue in college/university

Essay - As part of most applications, the personal essay is one of the central components. Admissions counselors reviewing your application will use your personal essay(s) to assess your critical thinking and writing skills. Yet, you should also use this part of your application to highlight any special interests, passions, experiences, values, expectations of the future, and/or reflections on the past that are important to who you are as a person and an applicant.

The Common App essay prompts that you will be using for your senior-year application are noted below. Typically, we suggest that you pick a few to brainstorm on and draft outlines of during the end of your junior year. The goal is to have your essay finalized by the beginning of your senior year. You can refer to the essay prompts [here](#).

Demonstrated Interest - *Demonstrated interest* is a term that refers to a measure that colleges can use in the admissions process to determine a student's level of interest in that particular institution. In recent years, students overall have been applying to an increasing number of colleges. The challenge for a college admissions office is to enroll the correct number of students who will be a great fit for the institution. To do that, the admissions office wants to offer admission to students who are likely to attend. Assessing a student's "demonstrated interest" has become one gauge colleges use in deciding whom to admit. If a student demonstrates interest, this gives a college a stronger level of certainty that the student will attend if admitted.

Students can show [demonstrated interest](#) in a variety of ways. It is rare that a student applies without having contact with the college ahead of time. Visiting campus, attending an admissions presentation, and taking a tour are all strongly encouraged. Once on campus students meet administrators and faculty and are sometimes able to make a connection. At the very least they can fill out a card requesting additional information. The college keeps track of students who attend these events. Students who cannot make it to campus can visit the college website, request more information, or call with a question. Some calls are noted in the admissions file. Here is a [link](#) to more information about demonstrated interest.

When to Apply - Application Types - When applying to college, you may have the option to choose between different types of applications. These choices will impact important deadlines such as the submission deadline, notification about admission, deadline to confirm attendance, and in some cases, restrictions on submitting applications to other colleges. While the majority of NHS students choose to apply early for various reasons, it is important to consider waiting for regular decision in certain situations. For example, if an applicant is aiming to improve their academic record with a strong performance in the first semester of senior year, it may be more beneficial to apply during the regular decision period. [What's the Difference Between Early Decision and Early Action?](#)

DEFINITIONS OF ADMISSION OPTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

STUDENTS: WHICH COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS BEST SUITS YOU?

Regular Decision	Rolling Admission	Early Action (EA)	Early Decision (ED)	Restrictive Early Action (REA)
DEFINITION: Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.	DEFINITION: Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.	DEFINITION: Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.	DEFINITION: Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll and withdraw all other applications. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.	DEFINITION: Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.
COMMITMENT: NON-BINDING	COMMITMENT: NON-BINDING	COMMITMENT: NON-BINDING	COMMITMENT: BINDING	COMMITMENT: NON-BINDING
Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.			Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions.	

For a copy of this flyer, please visit www.nacacnet.org

Educational Options Beyond Four-Year College

For many students, enrolling in a 4-year public or private college right after high school may not be the right choice. Many alternative options exist to the 4-year college pathway such as 2-year community colleges, a gap-year, or certificate programs and trade schools.

Community College - Massachusetts state residents are **FREE**.

Community colleges remain a popular post-secondary educational pathway. For some students, earning the 2-year Associate's Degree is all they need to pursue a fulfilling career in their field of choice. For others, community colleges serve as an affordable option to fulfill basic general education requirements on their way to earning a 4-year Bachelor's Degree. All of that is to say, community colleges provide a flexible pathway no matter what your long-term plan may be. As a Massachusetts state resident, in-state community colleges are **FREE**. Below is a list of all the Massachusetts community colleges and a guide to the MassTransfer program that makes it simple for community college graduates to transfer to in-state four year programs. More information on MassTransfer can be found on [their website](#).

Certificate Programs & Trade Schools

If you are considering a job/career in fields such as automotive, culinary, cosmetology, construction, or electrical technician, there are many certificate programs and trade schools available in Boston and beyond. The MassHire Career Information System is a free online service designed to provide occupational and educational information to help students learn more about careers, certificate programs, and trade school choices. Additionally, Job Corps is a service for students exiting high school that provides students with free career training and on-the-job training in order to gain the skills necessary to enter the workforce.

If you are considering a hand-on job or going into a trade, you will most likely be required to undergo training and classroom instruction. Many of the trades involve an apprenticeship

program which typically lasts 2 to 5 years and provides a stipend or salary. For more information on trades and apprenticeship programs, refer to the following resources.

- [The Ultimate Guide to Becoming a Trade Apprentice in Massachusetts](#)
- [Building Pathways Boston Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programs](#)
- [Trade Schools Search Engine](#)

Gap Year

Student Annabel Hughes shares her experience and discusses the [benefits of a Gap Year](#), class of 2022 - Boston University

If you have been accepted as part of the incoming class, some colleges will allow *you* to **defer** your enrollment for a year. Many students benefit from a year to bridge from high school to college, and many colleges are happy to accommodate, as students return more mature and focused for their freshman year. If you choose to defer college for a year and take a gap year (no college classes allowed), most colleges will hold your spot for as long as you pay your deposit first.

- [Dynamy](#)
- [EF Gap Year Abroad Programs](#)
- [City Year Service Year](#)
- [Teenlife Boston](#)
- [Europe GapYear Programs](#)
- [Sea-Mester: Study Abroad & Gap Year Voyages at Sea](#)
- [WorldWide Opportunities on Organic Farms - USA \(WWOOF USA\)](#)
- [Where There Be Dragons](#)
- [VERTO Education](#)
- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Interim Programs](#)
- [Up with People](#)
- [Year UP](#)

Parent Information

- Need SchoolLinks Parent Access? We have already [Synced your Guardian Email](#).
- At the end of Junior Year, complete the [Parent Information Sheet](#) (given to your student and/or their counselor so that their counselor may use the information in their recommendation).
- If you have any questions about your students' post-secondary plan and would like to speak with their School Counselor or our College and Career Counselor, please contact them directly.