

# **Hull High School**

## **College Application Handbook for Senior Year**

### **Class of 2020**



Congratulations- you are a HHS senior! The months between now and graduation will be very exciting, yet also stressful at times. For many students, a four-year college is the next step. This handbook is designed with that goal in mind. However, there are other options. You might also be considering two-year colleges, trade schools, the workforce, or the military. No matter what your plans are, your guidance counselor will be there to help plan for life after Hull High School.

If you plan to apply to four-year colleges, read this guide carefully and share it with your family. If you are still looking for colleges to add to your list and looking for tips on choosing a major, college visits, interviews, and online research, please remember to review the HHS College Admissions Handbook for Junior Year, which you received last spring. The information in these two handbooks is essential for a smooth and successful college application process.

Although this handbook will answer many of your questions, please remember that your guidance counselor is available for more questions, advice, and encouragement. Stop by with quick questions, or schedule an appointment for more in-depth help.

## TYPICAL TIMELINE FOR SENIOR YEAR

Your timeline will vary based on colleges/programs. Below is an idea of what to expect. Remember, YOU are responsible for knowing and meeting all of your own deadlines.

### September/October

- Start strong! In most cases, colleges will see your first quarter grades before making an admissions decision.
- Continue to research colleges, attend college visits during lunch, go on college tours, and adjust your list of “colleges I’m applying to”.
- Continue to research majors and careers if you are unsure of your path.
- Register for/take the early fall SAT/ACT tests if needed.
- Set up an appointment with your guidance counselor to discuss your college search.
- Ask your teacher(s) for a letter of recommendation and communicate about your deadlines. Add the teacher(s) on Naviance.
- Complete the Guidance Recommendation Questionnaire through Google Classroom.
- Continue to work on your college essay and feel free to ask for help.
- Begin or complete some college applications, particularly if you are applying Early Action or Early Decision. Typical EA/ED deadlines are November 1, November 15, or December 1 depending on the college. **Don’t forget to request transcripts through Naviance and send your SAT/ACT scores through College Board or ACT.**
- You may file the FAFSA as early as October 1.
- **Attend the MEFA Financial Aid Night on Wednesday 9/25 at 7:00pm** for an overview of the financial aid process.
- **Attend the Guidance Senior Parent Evening on Wednesday 10/2 at 7:00pm** for an overview of the college application process.

### November/December

- Continue to work hard in your classes! Many colleges will require second-quarter grades before they make an admissions decision.
- Continue to research colleges, attend college visits during lunch, go on college tours, and adjust your list of “colleges I’m applying to”.
- Register for/take more SAT/ACT tests if needed.
- Continue to work on and send college and financial aid applications. Typical Regular Decision deadlines are January 1, January 15, February 1, or March 1. Colleges may

also set individual financial aid deadlines. **Don't forget to request transcripts through Naviance and send your SAT/ACT scores through College Board or ACT.**

### **January/February/March**

- Continue to work hard! High school is not over yet and your final grades will be sent to the college you plan to attend.
- Finish any remaining applications for admission and financial aid.
- Get your admissions decisions- for EA/ED deadlines, you may get a decision in December/January. For Regular/Rolling deadlines, it can be up until April 1st.
- Review financial aid awards. Some will come with your acceptance, others may come later. Merit scholarships are also often given along with your acceptance.
- Notify your guidance counselor of your admissions decisions, and discuss your options. Ask for help interpreting offers of admission or financial aid.
- Make more visits to your top choice colleges to help make your decision. Many will host an "Accepted Students Day".
- Continue to apply for outside scholarships, especially the local scholarships posted in Guidance and listed on the HHS website.

### **April/May/June**

- Finish strong! The college you plan to attend requires your final transcript, and they can rescind their offer of admission if your grades drop. You could also lose scholarships.
- In April, continue to make any last college visits, compare financial aid offers, and discuss your options.
- By May 1st, submit your enrollment forms and deposit to the college of your choice. Notify other colleges that you will not be attending. Tell your guidance counselor your decision to ensure that your final transcript will be sent after graduation.
- Continue to apply for scholarships.
- Enjoy the end-of-senior-year activities and celebrations! CONGRATULATIONS!



## 2019-20 TEST DATES AND DEADLINES

The following are all SAT/ACT dates for 2019-20. Please note that several dates will be after the college application deadlines, and therefore more appropriate for high school juniors. Please check college admissions websites or contact admissions offices for individual testing deadlines.

**SAT and SAT Subject Tests:** [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Deadline (extra fee)
October 5, 2019	Sept. 6	Sept. 24
November 2, 2019	Oct. 3	Oct. 22
December 7, 2019	Nov. 8	Nov. 26
March 14, 2020 (SAT only, no Subjects)	Feb. 14	March 3
May 2, 2020	April 3	April 21
June 6, 2020	May 8	May 27
August 29, 2020	TBD	TBD

**ACT Test:** [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Deadline (extra fee)
October 26, 2019	Sept. 20	Oct. 4
December 14, 2019	Nov. 8	Nov. 22
February 8, 2020	Jan. 10	Jan. 17
April 4, 2020	Feb. 28	March 13
June 13, 2020	May 8	May 22
July 18, 2020	June 19	June 26

**FEE WAIVERS-** If you are eligible for free/reduced lunch at HHS, see your guidance counselor at least two weeks before the regular deadline to request a fee waiver.

**TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS-** If you have a 504 Plan or IEP and are interested in testing with accommodations including extra time, see your guidance counselor AT LEAST two months before your desired test to discuss your eligibility for accommodations.

## SAT/ACT FAQ'S

### **1. What are the SAT and the ACT?**

These are two different standardized tests that can be used during the college application process. Each college creates their own list of application requirements, but most will require you to submit your choice of either the SAT or the ACT. They differ in some of the content, structure, and scoring scales.

### **2. Why would I want to take both the SAT and ACT?**

Many students try both tests because they want to have the benefit of comparing their scores and using the better ones in the college application process. Some students do better on the SAT, some do better on the ACT, and some do very similarly on both.

### **3. How do I sign up for these tests? When are they?**

You are responsible for registering for the tests of your choice. Check the list of test dates and deadlines on the previous page of this handbook and register online. You need a College Board account to register for the SAT (which you should already have from checking your PSAT scores) and an ACT account to register for the ACT. If you have difficulty, reach out to your guidance counselor or the test's customer service center. Do not wait until the last minute!

### **4. Where will I take the tests?**

During the registration process, you will choose your test site. Hull High School is a test site for the May and November SAT. For other SAT dates or for the ACT, the website will list the test sites nearest to Hull and you can choose the one most convenient for you.

### **5. How much does it cost to take these tests?**

In 2019, the ACT costs \$50.50 without or \$67.00 with the Writing section. The SAT cost \$47.50 without or \$64.50 with the Essay. There is an extra fee if you miss the regular deadline and register during the late period. If you are eligible for free or reduced lunch at school, speak to your guidance counselor about fee waivers at least a week before the registration deadline for the test.

### **6. Should I take the SAT/ACT with the optional Essay/Writing section?**

When you register, you will choose whether you are taking these optional sections. Some colleges require them. Look at the testing requirements for colleges you are interested in. When in doubt, take the optional section so you will be sure to have all of the scores you need later. Talk to your guidance counselor if you need advice.

## **7. Should I take these tests more than once?**

It is a good idea to take more than one test. Many students take the SAT and/or ACT twice. Most colleges will “superscore”, meaning they will honor the highest scores from each section of the SAT test even they were from different test dates. Taking the test again could raise your score, especially if you did some preparation before the next round. However, do not expect your scores to keep increasing if you take the SAT/ACT more than three times. It can be expensive, time-consuming, and stressful to over-test.

## **8. What are the SAT Subject Tests? Should I take them?**

The SAT Subject Tests are one-hour, subject specific tests (for example, US History or Biology). You may take up to three SAT Subject Tests on one test date. Some colleges require or recommend that you submit SAT Subject Test scores in addition to the regular SAT/ACT. Check the admissions websites to determine what your colleges require, and ask your guidance counselor if you need assistance. Most colleges do not require SAT Subject Tests.

## **9. What if I am not happy with my test scores?**

If you are not happy with your standardized test scores, you are not alone. Talk with your guidance counselor about the free resources available, like Khan Academy and free practice tests. If you are willing to make an investment, ask about test prep programs in our area. Your guidance counselor can give advice on whether you should re-test (and if so, when), and whether you are better at the SAT or the ACT. You also might add some test-optional schools to your college list.

## **10. How do I send my test scores to colleges?**

You are responsible for sending SAT/ACT scores to colleges before the deadline. This is done through your College Board or ACT account. Some free registrations are included in your registration if you designate the colleges soon after taking your test or if you used a fee waiver. Otherwise, there is a fee of about \$12 per report.

## TEST-OPTIONAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Many colleges are acknowledging that standardized test scores are not always an accurate predictor of a student's potential to succeed in college. As a result, they may offer applicants the option to apply without SAT/ACT scores. These colleges are called "test-optional" schools.

Check a college's admissions page to determine whether test scores are required. If they are not required, read more about the college's test-optional policy.

- Some colleges require you to submit other information in place of your test scores (an extra personal statement, a graded paper, etc.).
- Some colleges require test scores for some of their merit scholarships.
- Some colleges require test scores for applicants to certain majors (nursing and education, for example).
- Some colleges can only accept a certain percentage of their class without test scores.

Test-optional is a great option for some students, but might not be the best option for you at all of your potential colleges. Discuss this more with your guidance counselor if you are considering applying to test-optional schools.

Here is just a sampling of the schools that were test-optional for the high school class of 2018:

Assumption College  
Bates College  
Bowdoin College  
Bridgewater State University  
Colby College  
College of the Holy Cross  
Dickinson College  
Endicott College  
Loyola University Maryland  
Marist College  
Merrimack College

Middlebury College  
Providence College  
Quinnipiac University  
Rivier University  
Roger Williams University  
Sacred Heart University  
Saint Michael's College  
Stonehill College  
UMass Lowell  
Wake Forest University  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

For a growing list of schools that are test-optional, visit <http://fairtest.org/university/optional>

## THE COMMON APPLICATION

- Almost 900 colleges and universities in the country use the “Common App”.
- The Common Application is available online at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org), along with a list of colleges that accept it.
- The application must be completed only once, then you control when you submit it to each college electronically.
- Keep in mind that some colleges require “supplements” in addition to the Common App. These school-specific questions will automatically appear on your Common App account once your schools are added. Some are as simple as “do you plan to live on campus?” while others are longer essays (in addition to your regular college essay). Feel free to ask your guidance counselor for advice or proofreading on these supplements, with plenty of time before your deadline.
- The Common App requires an essay with a 650 word limit. The following are the prompts for the 2019-20 school year. Feel free to ask your guidance counselor for help with your essay, with plenty of time before your application deadline.

*1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.*

*2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?*

*3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?*

*4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.*

*5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.*

*6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?*

*7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.*



## IMPORTANT STEPS ON COMMON APP

1. If you will be using Common App to apply to any colleges, create a Common App account at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). Keep your username and password somewhere safe.
2. Go to the "College Search" tab to add the schools you will be applying to using the Common App. Later, these should show up in your "My Colleges" tab.
3. Go to the "Common App" tab and begin filling out all required questions in the sections titled Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities, and Writing. Some, but not most, colleges may also require the "Courses and Grades" section.
4. The "Education" section asks many questions about HHS.
  - Search for HHS using CEEB code 221072. Then, the name and address will appear.
  - Date of Entry (for most seniors) is August 2016
  - Graduation is June 6, 2020
  - Counselor info for Mrs. Preble (seniors with last name A-M):
    - Name: Mrs. Meghan Preble
    - Title: Guidance Counselor
    - email: [mpreble@town.hull.ma.us](mailto:mpreble@town.hull.ma.us)
    - phone: (781) 925-3000 x 1122
  - Counselor info for Mrs. Burke (seniors with last name N-Z):
    - Name: Mrs. Michelle Burke
    - Title: Guidance Counselor
    - email: [mburke@town.hull.ma.us](mailto:mburke@town.hull.ma.us)
    - phone: (781) 925-3000 x 1121
  - Graduating class size: 77
  - Class rank reporting: exact
  - GPA scale: 4.0
  - GPA and Rank are both Weighted
  - Your GPA/ Rank can be found on your Naviance account. Right after you log in, choose "About Me" in the top right corner of the screen. A drop-down menu will appear. Click on the words "My Account" underneath your name on this drop-down menu. The bottom right corner of the screen should now show your weighted GPA and your class rank under the "Academic" heading.
  - Course scheduling system: Semester
  - Course levels you will be choosing from: Honors, AP (for a CP class, leave level blank)
5. After completing these sections, click on the "My Colleges" tab to view and complete any supplemental questions or writing samples required by individual colleges.
6. Under the "My Colleges" tab, choose one of your colleges and click on "Recommenders and FERPA". Click "Release Authorization" to read about the FERPA law and how it relates to your college applications. Using the information provided, and advice from adults if needed, make a decision to waive or not waive your FERPA rights. This only needs to be completed once, not for each college in your list. Now, you'll be able to "match" your Common App and Naviance Accounts (see next page for those instructions).
7. Add recommenders on the "My Colleges" tab under "Recommenders and FERPA", ONLY if you are using extra recommendations coming from people outside of HHS faculty. Examples might be scout leaders, supervisors at work, clergy members, etc. Your teacher recommenders will be added through Naviance instead and you will find directions for that on the next page.
8. When you are ready to submit an application, click on "Review and Submit" under that college in the "My Colleges" tab. Carefully follow the instructions on proofreading your application, paying any required fee, and finalizing the submission. If supplements are required for that college, do not forget to review and submit the supplement too. One college is submitted at a time, and you should receive confirmation for each submission. **If you are eligible for fee waivers (typically students who get free/reduced lunch at school) please see your guidance counselor.**

## IMPORTANT STEPS ON NAVIANCE

1. Log in often: <https://student.naviance.com/hull>.
  - a. For most students, their username is first initial, last name (John Smith= jsmith)
  - b. Your password was set to "hullhighschool". You may change it.
  - c. If you have difficulty logging in, see your guidance counselor right away.
2. As you continue your college search, make sure to update the "colleges I'm thinking about" list. Add new ones and delete those you are no longer interested in.
3. When you decide you will be applying to a particular college, move it to the "colleges I'm applying to" list. Guidance counselors will not be able to send your transcripts unless schools are in this list.
  - a. As you add colleges, indicate whether you are applying Early or Regular Decision, and whether you are using the Common App or a separate application.
4. After you have talked to a teacher and they have agreed to write a recommendation for you, add them through Naviance. Always have conversations in person first about your recommendation request and deadlines.
  - a. Watch this video to learn how to add teacher recommenders to your Naviance account. Teachers cannot upload recommendations until you do this.
  - b. <http://www.screencast.com/t/yFlgLhUy>
  - c. Notice that you have the option of adding teachers to all colleges, or to select particular colleges for each teacher.
5. If you are applying to any colleges using the Common App, you'll need to match your Common App account to your Naviance account. Make sure you complete steps 1-6 on the previous page before you attempt to do this.
  - a. Watch this video to learn how to match your Common App and Naviance accounts. <http://www.screencast.com/t/gxEQkElyo1>
6. AFTER you have submitted your pieces of a college application, request a transcript through Naviance.
  - a. On the "colleges I'm applying to" list, click "request transcripts" at the top of the screen.
  - b. Choose "initial" as the type of transcript and check off the colleges that you have already sent your application to.
  - c. Check in with your guidance counselor the next morning to make sure she has received your request and will be able to process your transcript.
  - d. If you have done everything correctly, your guidance counselor will process your transcript within five school days of your request.
7. Remember that your guidance counselor does not send your test scores or teacher recommendations. Make sure your teachers are aware of your deadlines, and send any required test scores through your College Board or ACT online account.

## MASSACHUSETTS STATE UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS STANDARDS

The Massachusetts State University system follows certain minimum standards for admission. Students should take certain courses (all of our “A Diploma” requirements, plus at least two years of a foreign language) and earn a 3.0 weighted GPA to be eligible. If a student has a GPA below 3.0, sliding scales are used to determine eligibility. These are the scales used in 2017 and are subject to change.

Please note- these are MINIMUMS, not a guarantee of admission. Some campuses, especially UMass Amherst, typically accept students with much higher GPA's/scores.

### UMASS Sliding Scale

(UMass Amherst, UMass Lowell, UMass Dartmouth, UMass Boston)

Weighted GPA	SAT (Evidence Based Reading and Writing + Math)	ACT Score
2.51-2.99	1030	20
2.41-2.50	1070	21
2.31-2.40	1110	22
2.21-2.30	1140	23
2.11-2.20	1180	24
2.00-2.10	1220	25

### State University Sliding Scale

(Bridgewater, Fitchburg, Framingham, Mass. College of Art and Design, Mass. College of Liberal Arts, Mass. Maritime, Salem, Westfield, Worcester)

Weighted GPA	SAT (Evidence Based Reading and Writing + Math)	ACT Score
2.51-2.99	990	19
2.41-2.50	1030	20
2.31-2.40	1070	21
2.21-2.30	1110	22
2.11-2.20	1140	23
2.00-2.10	1180	24

Some exceptions are possible, particularly for students with disabilities. Speak with your guidance counselor if you have questions and go online for more information: <http://www.mass.edu/forstufam/admissions/admissionsstandards.asp>

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

**“Financial Aid”** typically refers to grants, loans, or work-study available to you based on your family’s need. In order to qualify for federal financial aid, you must complete the **Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA), which can be done as early as October 1<sup>st</sup>**. In addition to the FAFSA, many colleges require the **CSS Profile**, and/or other school-specific financial aid forms. If you are unsure what a college requires, check the admissions/financial aid section of the website, or call the college to find out.

**“Merit Scholarships”** are scholarships awarded based on your transcript, test scores, extracurricular/athletic accomplishments, etc. They do not need to be repaid and are often renewable each year if you maintain certain standards (often a minimum GPA). Many of these will be awarded at the time of admission.

Often, your the most substantial merit scholarships will be awarded by a specific college when you are admitted. These are more likely to be offered when your GPA/SAT/ACT is higher than that of the college’s typical student. When you apply, make sure to find out if any additional forms are needed in order to be eligible for each college’s merit scholarships.

**MEFA College Financing Seminar-** For a complete overview of the financial aid process, please attend the MEFA College Financing Seminar at HHS on Wednesday, September 25th at 7:00pm in the Exhibition Room. If you miss this session and would like some of the information, stop by the guidance office.

**Local Scholarships-** There are many local scholarships available to HHS students. A list will be available on the school website, and many will be posted in the late winter/early spring. Scholarships will also be posted on the wall to the left of the entrance to the guidance office. Stop by often to check for new scholarships, and ask Mrs. Troy any questions you may have. Additional scholarships will be awarded at the end of the year.

Feel free to seek out other scholarship opportunities, but beware of scams. If you are unsure whether a scholarship is legitimate, ask your guidance counselor to look over the materials with you. You should not pay to apply for scholarships.

## HELPFUL LINKS

The following are websites that you may be using during the college search and application process. In most cases, usernames and passwords are created by the student and cannot be retrieved by a guidance counselor. Be sure to keep track of all usernames and passwords in a safe place. Guidance counselors can assist with Naviance login issues.

Naviance: <https://student.naviance.com/hull>

For most students, the “email” is a username made up of your first initial, last name (example: John Smith would put jsmith as “email” on the Naviance login page)

Your password was set to hullhighschool unless you have changed it.

See your guidance counselor for any questions about logging into Naviance.

College Board (register for SAT, check scores, send scores to colleges):

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

ACT (register for ACT, check scores, send scores to colleges): [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

Common Application (submit applications to participating colleges/universities)

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

FAFSA (financial aid application): <https://fafsa.gov/>

CSS PROFILE (additional financial aid application required by some colleges in addition to FAFSA): <https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>

HHS WEBSITE- GUIDANCE PAGE: <http://www.hullpublicschools.org/high-school/guidance>

MEFA (financial aid resources): [www.mefa.org](http://www.mefa.org)

Fair Test (list of test-optional schools): [www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org)



## CHECKLIST FOR EACH COMPLETED COLLEGE APPLICATION

There are many pieces to a typical 4-year college application, so please refer to this checklist to ensure that you have completed each necessary step. These steps are described in more detail in your “College Application Handbook for Senior Year” on the page numbers listed below. Plan ahead, so you will have plenty of time to ask your guidance counselor for help if you have difficulty with any of these steps.

Students applying for certain programs or scholarships might have additional requirements or special deadlines (for example, an Art Portfolio or a Theater audition).

- ✓ Added the college to “colleges I’m applying to” in Naviance (pg 10)
- ✓ Completed my “guidance counselor recommendation questionnaire” through the Class of 2020 Google Classroom at least two weeks before my first college deadline (pg 2)
- ✓ Discussed recommendations with my teacher(s) in advance of my deadline and given the teacher(s) whatever they need from me (pg 2)
- ✓ Added my teacher(s) to my Naviance under “letters of recommendation” (pg 10)
- ✓ Sent my SAT scores through Collegeboard.org and/or my ACT scores through actstudent.org if test scores are required (pg 6, 7)
  - Due to processing time, we recommend you order these score reports 3-4 weeks before your college deadline
- ✓ Matched my Naviance and Common App accounts (pg 10)
- ✓ Submitted my application to the college (Common App or other) (pg 9)
  - This includes paying a fee for many schools. You should get an email confirmation and see green checkmarks in the dashboard of your Common App account for the college and any required supplements if you did this correctly.
- ✓ Requested a transcript through Naviance immediately after submitting my application, and at least five school days before the deadline (pg10)
  - Guidance counselors cannot ensure that school forms will be sent on time if you have not given at least 5 school days’ notice for a transcript request.
- ✓ Checked in with my guidance counselor to ensure that I did things correctly and that she received my transcript request(s)

### **If you are also applying for financial aid at that college...**

- ✓ Sent my FAFSA to the college before their financial aid deadline (pg 12-13)
- ✓ Checked the college financial aid website to determine whether I need to send additional financial aid forms, like the CSS Profile or school-specific forms (pg 12-13)

