

Grove School



POST-SECONDARY PLANNING GUIDE

CLASS OF 2025

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WHERE AM I SUPPOSED TO START?

There is **NOT** just one path to your future. There are many options to consider, and your decision about which you explore is based on your interests, career goals, and/or readiness for further study.

So, put a check next to things that might interest you—there is plenty of time to dig deeper!

- Four year college or university
- Two year College
- Prep School
- Gap Year (can include travel, service projects, etc.)
- Trade/Technical School
- Employment
- Military Service

Junior year is the perfect time to consider what options may make sense for you after graduation. If you are uncertain as to which path you may choose, here are some questions to ask yourself in an effort to narrow down the possibilities:

What goals do I hope to have accomplished in five, ten, fifteen years from now?

What do I most enjoy doing?

How have I performed in school and how does that impact the choices available to me?

What is most important to me?

What am I good at and do these skills relate to certain careers?

Talking with your family, friends, teacher(s) and treatment team are important parts of this process.

HOW DO I CHOOSE THE COLLEGE THAT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

Utilizing the resources listed below will help you to create a reasonable list of schools in which you are interested. Start by performing a broad college search based on location and major and then begin to narrow down your list through website research, school visits, conversations with students/alumni visiting schools, and interviews when possible.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY?

Colleges typically offer two and four year undergraduate programs and range in size from several hundred students to many thousands.

Universities offer both undergraduate and graduate degree programs and have a faculty dedicated to research as well as to teaching.

Two-Year Colleges provide academic curriculum and/or career/vocational training. Programs may end with a certification or associate degree. In recent years, some students opt to enroll in core studies at a two year or community college and then transfer to a college or university for completion of a Bachelor's Degree.

WHAT ARE OTHER OPTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY?

Post Grad Year is a one year program that is similar to an extra year of high school. Students may explore this option to gain additional study skills and academic maturity, or may be looking at a prep year as a factor in athletic recruitment.

Vocational/Trade Schools offer certification programs and training in a variety of fields, such as Automotive, Culinary Arts, Cosmetology, Electricity, and Construction Management. These programs prepare you to continue studying after the earned certificate or enable you to gain employment in the field.

WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING MYSELF?

LOCATION

- ⇒ How far from home might you like to be?
- ⇒ Do you want to be home for every holiday?
- ⇒ Do you need to have dinner with the family once a month?
- ⇒ Are you ready for the freedom and additional independence that comes with a campus that is a plane ride away?
- ⇒ Do you hope to be right in the center of a bustling city?
- ⇒ Would you rather be somewhere rural?
- ⇒ Are you prepared to be far away for the next four years?

SIZE

- ⇒ Do you want to be at a small school with several hundred kids? Or one with thousands of students?
- ⇒ Do you want to feel like you know everyone?
- ⇒ Would you mind taking a shuttle to classes or do you want to be able to walk?

When visiting schools:

Look to see where the academic buildings and dining halls are in relation to dorms. Maps in the brochure and on the website can be very deceiving.

Ask your tour guide how well students know one another and/or if the school ever feels too big or too small.

Make note of how close you are to the nearest town and if there is public transportation available.

WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING MYSELF?

ACADEMICS

- ⇒ Do you know what you want to study? If you do, you can research the detailed program information.
- ⇒ Not sure what your major will be? You should apply to schools that offer a wide range of programs.
- ⇒ What happens if you change your mind? Many students will change their major once or twice before making a final commitment. There may be some course requirements involved in switching majors.
- ⇒ What courses are required to earn a particular degree?
- ⇒ Where are graduates employed or attending graduate school?
- ⇒ Are internships or special programs available?
- ⇒ Is there a chance to study abroad?
- ⇒ Does Career Services have solid resources and networks for employment after graduation?
- ⇒ Are there any programs available that allow you to graduate with two degrees (sometimes called 3-2)?
- ⇒ How large are the class sizes?

Things to remember:

Many competitive programs require you to apply to that particular program and may/may not allow you the chance to switch once you are there. These usually include Engineering, Nursing, and Business Management.

Ask specific questions; do not assume you can switch any time you want during the four years as such programs can be very prescribed.

Do not assume high school courses meet prerequisites or that you will test out of introductory courses. Many schools want you to take their version even if you are awarded some credit for AP exams.

FACULTY

- ⇒ What percentage of freshmen classes are taught by full professors?
- ⇒ What percentage of classes are taught largely by graduate students/TAs?
- ⇒ What is the faculty to student ratio?
- ⇒ Are professors required to keep office hours?
- ⇒ Will your adviser be a faculty member or more of a counselor?
- ⇒ Are there research opportunities for students to work alongside faculty?
- ⇒ How many courses on average do full time professors teach?
- ⇒ How much of the faculty is full-time v. part-time?
- ⇒ Is there a publishing requirement for faculty members?

You DO NOT have to know ALL of these things...but asking someone about them on a tour or at a regional meeting will give you an idea of how much access you would have to your teachers for academic support or guidance.

WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING MYSELF?

HOUSING

- ⇒ How many students live on campus?
- ⇒ What percentage live on campus vs. commute? Is housing guaranteed?
- ⇒ What type of dorms are available? (single, double, quad, suite, etc.) How are roommates assigned?
- ⇒ What are off-campus housing options? Are some dorms freshmen only?
- ⇒ Does each dorm have a study or library space? In what year was the newest dorm built?
- ⇒ Is new or additional housing being planned?
- ⇒ Do some programs have separate housing? (by major or by activity for example) Are there Greek houses on campus or nearby?

Things to consider:

While housing is unlikely to be the driving force behind what school you attend, it is important to find out if the housing options are suitable for you.

Keep an open mind. Dorm rooms are not going to look like home. Be sure to ask to visit one if you are on a tour.

You may not need to know all of the things listed above, but a school's commitment to updating or building tells you something about its ability to maintain facilities.

SCHOOL CULTURE

- ⇒ Are you an avid sports fan who wants to be cheering on a team?
- ⇒ Do you revel in a school culture where live musical performances are the norm?
- ⇒ Do you want to be someplace where Shakespeare in the Park is an annual tradition?
- ⇒ What percentage of the student body comes from other countries?
- ⇒ Is diversity important to you?
- ⇒ Are you hoping for intramural sports?
- ⇒ Do you see yourself helping with on air or online productions?
- ⇒ Are you looking for a school with strong ties to its alumni?

WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING BEFORE I COMMIT?

TRANSITIONING

- ⇒ What does freshman orientation look like?
- ⇒ Are there optional add-ons (like adventure excursions) that you can participate in before the start of school?
- ⇒ What annual events does the campus offer for freshmen to connect with other students?
- ⇒ How do you freshmen connect with clubs and groups they are interested in joining?

STUDENT SUPPORTS

- ⇒ Is free tutoring available?
- ⇒ Are there counselors available on a drop-in basis?
- ⇒ Who do you see if you are really struggling with a course?
- ⇒ Who do you see if you have a situation with a roommate?
- ⇒ What supports are available for mental wellness?
- ⇒ Do academic support services include help for those with learning disabilities?
- ⇒ Is there a comprehensive student safety plan? (safe rides, walking escorts, etc.)
- ⇒ Does the school have a dedicated police force or building security?



Support Programs at a College or University For Students with Learning Differences

Lynn University (FL) - Institute of Achievement and Learning

<http://www.lynn.edu/academics/institute>

Landmark College (VT)

<http://www.landmark.edu/>

University of Connecticut (CT) – Beyond Access Program

<https://beyondaccess.csd.uconn.edu/>

American University (DC) – Learning Services Program

<https://www.american.edu/provost/academic-access/learning-services-program.cfm>

Fairleigh Dickinson University (NJ)– COMPASS Program

<https://www.fdu.edu/academics/colleges-schools/psychology/compass-program/>

College Support Program (CSP) Rutgers University (NJ)

<https://rcaas.rutgers.edu/CSP>

Pace University (NY) – OASIS Program

<https://www.pace.edu/oasis>

Curry College (MA) – PAL - Program for Advanced Learning

<https://www.curry.edu/academics/program-for-advancement-of-learning>

Marist College (NY) – Learning Disabilities Support Program

<http://www.marist.edu/specialservices/prospect-ldis-admission.html>

University of Arizona (AZ) – SALT Center

<http://www.salt.arizona.edu/>

Support Programs at a College or University For Students with Learning Differences

Beacon College (FL)

<http://www.beaconcollege.edu/>

Mercyhurst College (PA) – AIM – Autism Initiative at Mercyhurst

<https://www.mercyhurst.edu/academics/autism-initiative-mercyhurst>

Hofstra University (NY) – PALS – Program for Academic Learning Skills

<https://www.hofstra.edu/student-access-services/pals.html>

Syracuse University (NY) – OnTrack at SU

<https://disabilityresources.syr.edu/students/ontrackatsu/>

University of Denver (CO)– Learning Effectiveness Program

<https://www.du.edu/studentlife/learningeffectiveness/index.html>

Lynn University (FL) - Institute for Achievement and Learning -

<https://www.lynn.edu/campus-directory/departments/institute-for-achievement-learning>

Transition Programs

Grove School

www.groveschool.org

Mansfield Hall (MA)

<http://mansfieldhall.org/>

Dynamy (MA)

<http://www.dynamy.org/>

College Internship Program (MA and other locations)

<http://cipworldwide.org/>

Mitchell College - Thames Academy (CT)

<http://www.thamesacademy.org/>

NOLS – National Outdoor Leadership School

<http://www.nols.edu/>

VISTA (CT)

<https://www.vistalifeinnovations.org/>

Chapel Haven (CT)

<http://www.chapelhaven.org/>

Onward Transitions, ME

<http://onwardtransitions.com/>

Fulshear: Treatment to Transition, TX

<https://www.fulsheartransition.com/>

DEVELOPING A WELL-BALANCED SCHOOL LIST

You should develop a “well balanced list.” It is important to understand exactly what this means as you explore various colleges. When we refer to this list, we are considering two important factors: first, how many schools you will apply to and second, what range of schools should be included with regard to admissions criteria and competition.

While each student’s plan varies, we typically advise students to apply to six to eight schools. Each of these schools should encompass the key features desired by that student but ***should vary in levels of selectivity.***

Admission to any school is based on both your background and the level of competition for a spot in that year’s freshman class. Consider the following three categories:

SAFETY: You will almost certainly be accepted because your test scores and grades are well above average in comparison to the school’s profile.

REALISTIC: You have a good chance of admission because grades and test scores fall into the middle range of accepted students.

REACH: Chances of admission are unlikely but sometimes possible. Your grades and test scores are lower than the middle 50% of accepted students.

There are a small number of highly selective colleges that are reach schools for every student.

Admissions standards and the volume of applicants at these schools are so high that perfect grades and scores do not guarantee acceptance.

It is essential to be realistic as you consider each school you want to add to your list. The bulk of your list should be in the realistic range and there need to be at least two safety schools included. Students are always encouraged to apply to reach schools, as long as they understand their chances of admission. It is also not reasonable to have the most competitive schools make up the majority of the list. Everyone needs to feel that they have a choice.

College admissions can be unpredictable at times but a well thought out and balanced list should ensure each student will have options to choose from as the process unfolds.

ADMISSION PLANS

REGULAR DECISION: This is the standard and most commonly used application process. Application deadlines vary but typically fall around January/February and notifications are sent by April 1st.

EARLY DECISION: If a student is 100% certain (s)he has found the perfect school, ED may be an appropriate option. **The key factor to ED is that it is a binding commitment.** If you are accepted you must attend, unless the school does not meet your financial need. Application deadlines are typically in early November and decisions are communicated in December/January. Once accepted, you must withdraw all outstanding applications at other schools. Early college acceptances are typically granted to students who VERY clearly meet or exceed the school's acceptance criteria. However, there may be a slight advantage to applying ED as you are expressing a clear commitment to attend. Students may be accepted, deferred into the regular decision pool, or denied during the ED process.

EARLY ACTION: EA allows students to receive an early notification without making a commitment to attend. Application deadlines are typically in early November and decisions are communicated in December/January. Students do not need to make a decision about whether they will attend until the standard candidate reply date of May 1. The EA process is very competitive. If a student is prepared to apply early, EA can be a great option to gain admittance to safety schools and or get an "early read" from realistic schools. Students may be accepted, deferred into the regular decision pool, or denied during the EA process.

****Please note that a small number of schools may place certain restrictions about applying to other colleges when utilizing their EA or ED process. Always read the fine print!***

ROLLING ADMISSIONS: This is an ongoing admissions process. Once a student's application file is complete, it is reviewed, and a decision is communicated. It may only take a few weeks to receive notification once the application file is complete. It is important for students to apply on the earlier side for rolling admissions (we recommend by December 1st) as common-sense dictates there are more spaces available earlier in the process.

WAIT LIST: Regular admission decisions include acceptances, denials and wait lists. If not, enough accepted students decide to attend a given school, that school will begin to offer those spots to students who remain on the wait list. It can be a challenge to receive a spot off of a wait list, but we typically see this happen every year. Students who want to attend a school that has waitlisted them should still place a deposit at another school so that there is a plan for the fall no matter what. If someone is waiting for such a place, it is helpful to remain in contact with the school or area rep; persistence in such cases can pay dividends.

DEFERRED ADMISSION: This is a circumstance in which a student is notified of acceptance during senior year but then asks the college for permission to take a year for travel, work or other projects before starting. Colleges can also offer a deferred admission with the requirement that the admitted student complete additional studies at the community college level prior to matriculation the following year.

Deferred admission may be initiated by the student or the college, but the student still needs to make the required deposit by May 1 to secure the spot, even though the start date is not until the following year.

CANDIDATES REPLY DATE AGREEMENT: The CRDA is May 1. This is the earliest date a college may require an accepted student to commit to attending (with the exception of ED students). This allows students to make the most informed decision as they will have all decisions and financial aid information by this date.

WHAT IS A GAP YEAR?

For a variety of reasons, some students graduating from high school decide to delay a college education. When students do so in coordination with a plan of study, travel, or service learning, it is called a gap year. Some students apply and gain admission to their college of choice, and then request deferred enrollment so that their spot is “held” until the next year or even second semester. Some students use the gap year to bolster their credentials and make themselves more appealing as applicants. Still others recognize that heading off to school might not be the best fit for them at this age, and so choose to broaden their horizons through life experience.

Whatever the reason, the gap year has grown in popularity in the US over the past decade and is an option that students should explore if it speaks to them in some way. In some families, and in some European countries, it is a long-standing tradition that students take a year to travel before beginning university studies.

There are many groups and agencies that partner with students to provide gap year experiences, and they need to be researched carefully. Service-based experiences are available in the U.S. and abroad. If you choose to travel, using an established agency can help you navigate international issues as well as provide some assurance for your family that you have a legitimate point of contact overseas. Suggested sites to begin research are listed in the online resources section of this manual but start by having real conversations with your parents and your treatment team.

Some of the questions you need to explore if you are considering a gap year are:

- ⇒ Should I apply to school before or after I take a gap year?
- ⇒ Can I still get financial aid and scholarships if I take a gap year?
- ⇒ Are there affordable options for a gap year?
- ⇒ What are the benefits of a gap year?
- ⇒ What do college admissions officials think of a gap year?
- ⇒ Will it be hard to transition to college after a gap year?

Whether you are interested in traveling, working, or service learning, the most important thing is to have a real plan. Using a gap year to get caught up on video games or binge watch a series you missed is not an option!

HOW AM I GOING TO PAY FOR SCHOOL?

FINANCIAL AID

Meeting the high cost of college is a concern for most students and families. Applying for financial aid can potentially relieve some of the burden. Each college has its own individual financial aid requirements and process, so students need to keep track of deadlines beginning in the fall of senior year.

TERMS TO KNOW:

Merit Based Financial Aid – This is typically distributed without consideration of financial need but instead as a recognition of achievement, skill, or special talent. In some instances, all applicants are automatically considered for merit-based aid and in others, students need to apply by a specific date or fill out additional forms. Research the merit-based aid section of each school’s website or call the school’s financial aid office to ask questions.

Need Based Financial Aid – Need based aid often makes up the bulk of financial assistance that a student receives. Eligibility for need based aid is determined as schools consider a family’s expected contribution and the cost of attendance. Need based aid may be administered in the form of grants which do not have to be repaid; loans which require re-payment; and employment that a student is given in exchange for the aid.

Need Blind—Some schools identify as need blind, which means that students should apply regardless of their financial situation, as the school does not base its decision on student ability to pay tuition without aid. This is often touted by very expensive schools which also have hefty endowments and can therefore subsidize your college experience. (SCHOOLS THAT SAY THEY ARE “NEED BLIND” OFTEN HAVE LOTS OF MONEY TO GIVE YOU SO DON’T BASE YOUR DECISION TO APPLY ON WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN AFFORD IT.)

Colleges review the submitted documentation and determine the family contribution and financial need. A family’s income, assets, debts, family size, and circumstances are considered. If extenuating or special circumstances exist, you should contact the financial aid office at each school for additional guidance.

REQUIRED FORMS:

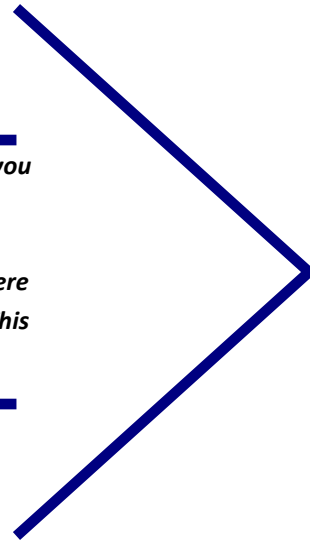
1. **FREE Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** All students applying for need based financial aid are required to complete the FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov). The FAFSA becomes available on October 1st each year.
2. **You can also access the FAFSA 4caster which will provide you with estimated eligibility for federal student aid (<https://fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cForm?execution=e1s1>)**
3. **CSS Profile:** This form was created by the College Scholarship Service of College Board and **is required by some private colleges and universities** in addition to the FAFSA. This form helps determine eligibility for the school’s private fund awards. The form and additional information can be accessed at <http://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>.
4. **School Specific Forms:** Some schools may require additional forms that are specific to their institution. Always check ALL requirements, dates and deadlines to ensure you have completed all documentation required.

HOW AM I GOING TO PAY FOR SCHOOL?

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT AT HOME:

- ⇒ What is a realistic expectation for your family to contribute?
- ⇒ Are you willing or able to take student loans to pursue your degree?
- ⇒ Should you consider a state school vs. a private one?
- ⇒ Should you live at home and avoid the cost of housing?
- ⇒ What scholarships might be available through family members' professions or memberships?
- ⇒ Are you going to be seeking an advanced degree so that it would make more sense for your Bachelor's to be earned at a more reasonably priced school?
- ⇒ Will your academic record likely earn you financial aid based on SAT performance or GPA?

While college financial aid offices will make decisions about the package you are offered, YOU are an important part of making your dream a reality. Research scholarship opportunities and don't be shy about touting your creativity or demonstrating a skill. There are many organizations out there that provide support for college students, but YOU have to go looking! This is not a passive process.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AS YOU PREPARE TO APPLY:

- ⇒ Do your homework and include financial safety schools on your list.
- ⇒ Do not limit your choice of schools only to those you can afford without financial assistance.
- ⇒ Many of the private, more expensive schools, offer financial assistance in the form of loans, grants and scholarships that could cover anywhere from 20% of the cost to the full cost depending on your level of need.
- ⇒ Some schools report their admissions as “need blind” which means that your financial status is not part of their decision to admit you or not.
- ⇒ Parents can complete the FAFSA on October 1st. Previous year's tax information can be imported from the IRS. This information will be used to calculate your financial aid package.

Financial Aid deadlines are NOT flexible.

HOW AM I GOING TO PAY FOR SCHOOL?

COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS

A student can contact their local public school's Guidance Department and ask for a list of scholarships available in their community.

SCHOLARSHIP SEARCHES

There are thousands of scholarships available, but it takes time and research to find them. Websites such as findaid.com and fastweb.com are helpful starting points. Always read the fine print and determine how many awards are distributed to help determine if it is worth the time and effort to apply. You want to apply for as many as possible but also maximize your time and available opportunities.

AFFILIATIONS

Many families find that an organization with which they are affiliated offers scholarships to graduating seniors. Some of these are related to the company one works for, or the field of business. Others are sponsored by fraternal organizations or unions. Some students might even have after school jobs which offer such opportunities. Leave no stone unturned in making inquiries of family and friends.

FINANCIAL AID PACKAGES

Once you are accepted to a school, the financial aid office at that school puts together a "package" using your detailed financial profile. That package usually includes grants or scholarships, the expected family contribution (EFC as determined by the FAFSA) and the amount in loans which you are eligible to borrow. It will not reflect any private scholarships which you might be awarded by graduation. Review each package carefully and call the school with specific questions you have.

If you are committed to attending a school but the financial package does not meet your needs, there is sometimes room for negotiation. A student could:

⇒ Send a letter to the office expressing sincere commitment to attending if the package can be adjusted

KEY RESOURCES FOR PLANNING:



WHAT CAN I DO WITH NAVIANCE?

Each of you already has an account in our college and career planning program, Naviance. Your parents were given an account login upon enrollment. If anyone needs to reset a password, please contact Sean Kursawe!

Throughout your junior and senior years, use Naviance to:

- search for schools that fit your academic profile
- search for schools that have a program of study that interests you
- find schools in your desired geographic area
- learn about acceptance rates for your intended major
- find out how much it costs to attend schools and the average amount of financial aid given
- build a resume that includes work, community service, and co-curricular activities
- start to build a list of schools to which you might apply
- sign up for visits with college admissions reps as they come to our school
- use as a direct link to official school websites to request more information
- provide a link to teachers writing letters of recommendation for you (**after you ask in person of course!**)
- request that transcripts be sent to schools
- keep track of your application materials as they are submitted
- research scholarships
- update your profile with decisions about admissions (accepted, rejected, wait listed, etc.)

log in at <http://student.naviance.com/groveschool>

KEY RESOURCES FOR PLANNING:



Standardized tests are required by many colleges and universities as one of the tools for analyzing your academic profile during the admissions process. While opinions about the ACT and SAT tests abound, they are currently still very much in use, and we recommend that you use the Junior Year Checklist in this guide to plan out a test-taking calendar and simply do the best that you can. While a mediocre performance on the exams does not mean you will be discarded as a candidate, a stellar performance can outweigh a weaker GPA or bring you to the attention of a particular school for academic scholarship opportunities. So, approaching the tests with a positive attitude and taking the time to complete some practice exams will be time well spent.

SAT The SAT is used to assess a student's college readiness in critical reading, writing and math. SAT results are accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the US. Standard time for the exam is 3 hours with multiple choice questions and some fill in questions. **Visit www.collegeboard.org to create your account**

ACT The ACT includes the four subject area tests: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. ACT results are accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the US. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete. The ACT has long been a popular choice in the Midwest and other parts of the country, and so it is not new, rather just more popular in New England than it used to be. **Visit www.actstudent.org to create your account**

Registration Grove School hosts some SAT and ACT exam dates. We recommend students register for exams at Grove where there is a familiar setting and proctor. In months that Grove does not host an exam, we will provide transportation for students to local test centers for National Test Dates.

KEY RESOURCES FOR PLANNING:

Exam Dates & Deadlines for the 2023-2024 School Year

SAT EXAM DATES			
Date of Exam	Registration deadline	test centers - codes	Where to register
08/24/2024	08/09/2024	Test at home – Grove on break	Register at www.collegeboard.org
10/10/2024	09/20/2024	Grove School	sean@groveschool.org
11/02/2024	10/18/2024	Daniel Hand HS – 07304 Guilford HS – 07266	Register at www.collegeboard.org
12/07/2024	11/22/2024	Daniel Hand HS – 07304 Guilford HS – 07266	Register at www.collegeboard.org
03/08/2025	02/21/2025	Daniel Hand HS – 07304 Guilford HS – 07266	Register at www.collegeboard.org
03/13/2025	N/A	Grove School CT SAT School Day	11 th grade students with CT IEPs
05/03/2025	04/18/2025	Daniel Hand HS – 07304 Guilford HS – 07266	Register at www.collegeboard.org
06/07/2024	05/22/2025	Daniel Hand HS – 07304 Guilford HS – 07266	Register at www.collegeboard.org
ACT EXAM DATES			
Date of Exam	Registration deadline	test centers - codes	Where to register
09/14/2024	08/09/2024	Branford 206810 East Lyme 222540	www.act.org
10/29/2024	09/15/2024	Grove School	e-mail sean@groveschool.org
12/14/2024	11/08/2024	Branford 206810 East Lyme 222540	www.act.org
02/08/2025	01/03/2025	East Lyme 222540	www.act.org
04/22/2024	03/15/2025	Grove School	e-mail sean@groveschool.org
06/14/2025	05/09/2025	Branford 206810 East Lyme 222540	www.act.org

Test Centers: Grove will only provide transportation to the local test centers on the dates listed. If a student registers on an exam date that is not listed, they will need to test at a test center close to home. Grove's ability to transport students to local test centers could change based on school policy regarding COVID-19. If those test centers are not available at the time of your registration your child may need to test at a center close to home or at a later date.

Registrations can be completed by following these instructions:

GROVE SCHOOL SAT & ACT SCHOOL DAYS

- Any student wishing to take the SAT or ACT at Grove is eligible
- Testing will be held at Grove School
- SAT fee is \$68
- ACT fee is \$69
- students register by having parents e-mail Sean Kursawe; sean@groveschool.org

SAT – National Test dates

- Go to www.collegeboard.com
- Log-in or create an account
- Click on registration tab and follow directions
- Choose one of Grove's designated testing centers or one close to your home
- For accommodations, enter the student SSD number (contact Sean Kursawe if you need the number)
- Forward admission ticket to Sean Kursawe at Grove the day registration is completed

ACT – National Test Dates

- Go to www.actstudent.org
- Sign up or log in
- Choose registration link and follow directions
- Choose one of Grove's designated testing centers or one close to your home
- For accommodations, indicate that they are needed during registration and Sean Kursawe will receive an email from ACT prompting Grove to submit a request for accommodations.
- Forward admission ticket to Sean Kursawe at Grove the day registration is completed.

For students with accommodations:

SAT

Accommodations for SATs must be applied for well in advance of the registration date. If a student is eligible for accommodations, a parent must sign the consent form and return it to Sean Kursawe, **please specify which accommodations are being requested.** Grove will then submit the necessary materials to the College Board. Keep in mind that it may take 8 weeks for the College Board to process the request. <http://files.ctctcdn.com/fe3d8d8c001/49090bee-995c-4b79-a83e-f26f89ec8831.pdf>

ACT

Accommodations for the ACT exam must be requested each time a student registers for the exam and are requested during registration. Once accommodations are requested during registration, a notification is sent to Sean Kursawe to complete the application process.

Test Preparation

College Board and ACT websites: We suggest that students take advantage of the many tools and resources available on both the College Board www.collegeboard.com and ACT www.actstudent.org websites. They offer valuable information regarding test preparation, college selection and financial aid.

Student Guides: Official student guides distributed by the College Board and ACT will be available outside the principal's office in the STEM school building. These free guides provide helpful information about the exams along with practice questions.

Khan Academy: There are free test prep courses on Khan Academy <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

Tutoring:

Individual tutoring is available through a local tutoring agency, The Learning Consultants. Contact your adviser to arrange individual tutoring sessions if interested.

APPLICATION PROCESS

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The Common Application (www.commonapp.org) allows students to complete one application that can be sent to multiple schools. There are over 750 member schools and the majority of schools that Grove School students apply to are member schools. If a college is not a member of the common application, students can access that application directly on the school specific website.
- Applications and Fees for each school
- Essay and School-Specific Required Supplements
- Official SAT and/or ACT Scores (if required)
- Completion of documentation requests in Naviance **at least two weeks prior to each school's deadline**
- Confirming with colleges that application file is complete

GROVE SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Transcripts at the request of students
- Secondary School Report Form
- School Profile
- Counselor/Teacher Recommendations
- Mid-Year and Final Grades

SAT AND ACT SCORES

Colleges may allow you to "self report" your SAT or ACT scores. If colleges require official score reports they must be sent through your CollegeBoard or ACT accounts.

Log onto www.collegeboard.com or www.actstudent.org to have your scores sent electronically to colleges at least two weeks before the application deadline

ARE SOME SCHOOLS REALLY TEST OPTIONAL?

Yes! It is becoming increasingly popular for schools to identify themselves as test optional or test flexible, which can actually mean several different things. Some schools exempt students who meet grade-point average or class rank criteria, while others require SAT or ACT scores but use them only for placement purposes or to conduct research studies. Some schools really do mean it when they state that the decision to submit SAT or ACT scores is entirely yours. Check in Naviance to determine whether any schools on your list fall into this category. You can also do a search to determine which schools currently have this policy in place.

APPLICATION PROCESS

TRANSCRIPT RELEASE

Transcripts must be requested at least two weeks prior to each school's deadline.

Following through with this process is the only way to ensure your documentation is sent to each school. There are several versions of your transcript that will be sent:

Initial Transcript – Includes all High School grades through the end off 11th grade.

First Quarter Grades – A student's progress report grades will be added to an Initial transcript at the end of October.

Mid-Year Transcripts - As Trimester 1 grades close and grades become final, Grove will send mid-year transcripts grades to each college to which you have applied.

Final Transcript - The college you decide to go to will require a Final Transcript. Grove will contact your college in June to explain our year-round calendar, communicate your academic standing at Grove, and inform the college the final transcript will be forwarded to them in August.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

CHECKLIST TO COMPLETE

SAT/ACT Scores:

1. Have your scores sent two weeks before the application deadline?
2. Monitor college admission portals to confirm the receipt of scores

Transcript Request Process :

1. Keep your list of schools on Common App and Naviance accurate and up to date
2. Log into Common App and add schools to which you are applying in the “My Colleges” section
3. Log into Naviance and go to the “Colleges” tab then click “Colleges I’m applying to” Add ALL schools to which you are applying.
4. Make sure your application status for each school is correct: RD, ED EA

Teachers Recommendations:

1. In Naviance go to “Colleges/Colleges I’m applying to” and then select “teacher recommendations/add/cancel requests”
2. Select the teacher(s), add a personal note, and select “update requests”

Application:

1. Essay
2. Application fee
3. Supplement if requested
4. Confirm receipt of *all* application materials with colleges
5. When using the Common Application website, click on the checklist tab to check on the status of applications and supplements

Additional Documents as Required:

1. Disability Documentation
2. Division I & II Sports: Complete Eligibility Form – www.ncaaclearinghouse.com
3. Financial Aid Forms

THE COLLEGE ESSAY

The college essay is an incredibly important piece of your college application as it allows you the opportunity to present both your writing skills and a unique piece of yourself that may not be conveyed by other information in the application. Keep in mind that admissions counselors read hundreds of essays. Avoid sounding like everyone else. If you are planning to use a common experience (e.g., your experience on a sports team or inspirational family member), develop it in a unique way. Your choice of essay and the unique perspective of your voice may be the deciding factor in earning you an acceptance.

At Grove School, the college essay is a summer English class assignment leading into your senior year. Your English teacher will provide feedback as you work through each revision, but you should also seek out the opinion of family or friends—even if it seems a bit awkward to do so. You should also plan to attend our college workshops that meets weekly. **BE OPEN TO THESE OPINIONS!** Many students get hung up on the idea that their essay is a real work of art— and it may very well be—but ask yourself the following questions:

- Would someone that does not know me understand this essay?
- Do I feel like I need to be there to explain why it's meaningful or provide background?
- Have I written about something both genuine and interesting?
- Am I comfortable with the essay representing me?

Your college essay should take time. Do not wait until the day before it is due in class to start writing it. You won't like the grade and you will have to do it over anyway. So, working on it during the summer helps you set yourself up for success in the fall of senior year: the essay will be done, and you will have completed your first English assignment!

The updated Common Application with its essay prompts is typically released in August of each year. Past essay prompts have asked students to write about: experiencing failure; an ideal environment; a background story that is central to one's identity; or a challenging a belief or idea. The essay on the Common Application allows a range of 250-650 words.

Some schools will have supplemental essays as a required piece of the application. There is a wide variety of topics, but schools may ask why you want to attend their institution or provide you with an opportunity to explain a poor grade. Whatever the topic may be, take the supplemental writing pieces as seriously as the college essay. Finally, be sure to have someone else proofread your supplemental writing and work through multiple revisions.

The goal of the college essay is to put yourself on paper in a way that demonstrates who you are, what is important to you, and how effective you are in communicating those things through your writing. Since it is intended to be a glimpse into your personality, writing it yourself is critical. Do not be tempted to have someone else ghost-write it for you; not only is that product dishonest, but it's also usually quite obvious to those in the field of admissions. All other things being equal, if your own words and ideas are not enough to endear you to an admissions committee, that school likely isn't the right fit for you anyway.

COLLEGE VISITS

College visits are a crucial part of the college search process!

Website research and speaking with college representatives are wonderful ways to gain information about a school, but nothing compares to experiencing the school itself. March vacation is a great time to visit.

Don't feel pressured to go on a whirlwind college tour; wise planning might be to visit ONLY those schools to which you are accepted.

TIPS FOR COLLEGE VISITS

- ⇒ **PLAN AHEAD:** If you know you can visit, register for a tour or inquire about attending a class. When applications are submitted, letting the school know you have been there is an expression of interest.
- ⇒ **DON'T SEE TOO MANY IN ONE DAY:** College visits are exciting and provide lots of useful information, but too many in one day can be exhausting and cause information overload. In order to make the most of each visit try to limit yourself to no more than two per day.
- ⇒ **VISIT WHEN SCHOOL IS IN SESSION:** Sometimes summer is the easiest time to visit but try to see some of your top choices when students are actually there. This will provide you with the best feel for campus.
- ⇒ **PREPARE A LIST OF QUESTIONS PRIOR TO THE VISIT:** Ensure you get the most out of your visit by thinking about questions ahead of time and try to get all the answers you need. The NOTES pages of this book have suggestions.
- ⇒ **PICK UP A CAMPUS NEWSPAPER OR READ IT ONLINE AHEAD OF TIME:** What are the current issues that students are thinking about?
- ⇒ **TALK TO AS MANY STUDENTS AS POSSIBLE:** Try to get the perspective of more than just your tour guide; every student's experience is different. Don't be shy about chatting to students in the coffee bar or cafeteria.
- ⇒ **SPEND AS MUCH TIME AT YOUR FIFTH CHOICE SCHOOL AS YOU DO AT YOUR FIRST CHOICE SCHOOL:** You should be proud and content to attend any school that is part of your final list. Don't assume you are not interested; visit and see what happens.
- ⇒ **TAKE NOTES AND PICTURES:** Do this while you are there and/or on your way home while things are fresh in your mind. Use the note-taking pages in this guide so that you can keep everything straight. You think you will remember everything, but it is a lot of information to retain.
- ⇒ **ENJOY THE DAY:** Try to picture yourself as a student there. Could it be your home for the next four years?

Advice for Parents:

Wait for your child to share their first impressions of a campus before sharing your thoughts. Your perspective is important in the decision-making process, but letting your child form their opinions first allows them to give you an unbiased review.

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW

Each college has its own policies and options surrounding the interview. Some schools do not offer them at all, some invite certain applicants to interview, and some allow anyone who is interested to sit for an interview. The weight of the interview also varies. Sometimes the interview is more informational for the student and at other times may be a significant factor in the admissions decision.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

- ⇒ As soon as you have decided to apply, call the admissions office to find out if interviews are offered.
- ⇒ When making plans to visit a school —**especially those that are a plane ride away**— call ahead to see if you can interview while you are there to visit the campus. This is appropriate junior OR senior year!
- ⇒ Try to schedule an interview for after the tour, so you can ask questions not addressed on the tour.
- ⇒ Research the college beforehand. You do not want to ask a question that can easily be answered by exploring a college's website.
- ⇒ Develop questions to ask during the interview, such as:
 - Do professors teach courses or are they taught by graduate students? How big are class sizes in my intended major?
 - Are campus jobs limited to students receiving financial aid? Does Career Services have helpful job placement resources? Are research opportunities available within my major?
- ⇒ Be prepared to describe yourself honestly and accurately (3 adjectives about yourself is a good exercise!)
- ⇒ Be able to talk about your hobbies, interests, educational plans, travel experience, and work experience.
- ⇒ Obtain a copy of your transcript from the guidance office to take with you.
- ⇒ Anticipate questions an interviewer might have about your grades or course of study.
- ⇒ Know your ACT and SAT scores.
- ⇒ Know what courses you will be/are taking senior year.

ARRIVAL ON CAMPUS (OR OFF-CAMPUS IF A LOCAL INTERVIEW)

- ⇒ **Allow ample travel time to arrive early!**
- ⇒ Look the part. While our world is increasingly informal, appropriate attire sends the right message. You don't need a watch fob or pinafore, but professional dress is appropriate.
- ⇒ If you see a campus newspaper, pick one up and read about current issues and events on campus. This can make for great conversation with your interviewer and allow you to get a more personal feel for the school.
- ⇒ Be friendly and courteous to everyone you meet. People do talk to their colleagues about the impression candidates made while waiting or touring.
- ⇒ **PUT THE PHONE AWAY!**

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- ⇒ Greet your interviewer with a handshake, a smile, and direct eye contact.
- ⇒ Know your audience. Is it a student, alumnus(a), or admissions officer? Tailor your questions appropriately.
- ⇒ Be honest and genuine. Let your personality show.
- ⇒ Truthful answers are more interesting than trying to get it “right” or give the perfect response.
- ⇒ Answer each question to the best of your ability. If you need to, ask for a moment to think, request clarification, or let someone know that you don’t know something. **It is OK to say, “I’m not really sure how to answer that.”**
- ⇒ Make eye contact and stay engaged and enthusiastic.
- ⇒ Develop your points fully and try to get the most important information across but beware of “rambling on” or being too brief (this is why a mock interview beforehand can be very helpful).
- ⇒ Express what makes you unique; avoid clichés such as hard-working, responsible, and friendly.
- ⇒ Highlight distinctive personality traits and passions when asked to describe yourself.
- ⇒ Provide the most detailed and colorful picture of who you are. Your interview should not just be a duplication of your application.
- ⇒ Always remember, interviewers are not looking to stump you but rather to get to know you. Interviewers are typically approachable and supportive.
- ⇒ Be sure to obtain the interviewer’s name and contact information before you leave and follow up with a prompt and personalized thank you note while you are still fresh in the interviewer’s mind.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS ASKED BY INTERVIEWERS

- ⇒ What do you do during your free time?
- ⇒ What local, national, or global issues concern you?
- ⇒ What are some of your favorite books?
- ⇒ What was the last show you binge-watched?
- ⇒ How would you describe your involvement in your community?
- ⇒ Does your high school record accurately reflect your ability?
- ⇒ Where do you see yourself in ten years?
- ⇒ What do you think is the most important issue facing high school students today?
- ⇒ What are your favorite subjects? Why?
- ⇒ Tell me about your proudest moment.
- ⇒ Who in your life has most influenced you?
- ⇒ What is a job you would hate to have?
- ⇒ What are your quirks? What makes you laugh?
- ⇒ How would your friends describe you?
- ⇒ What kinds of activities can you imagine being involved with on our campus?

TRANSITION PLANNING CHECKLIST – JUNIOR YEAR

JANUARY - APRIL

- Complete the Career Key in Naviance by March 1, 2024
- Complete a SuperMatch College Search Naviance by March 14, 2024
- Discuss test options with your adviser and parents. Take the SAT and/or ACT exam if appropriate.
- Make a list of schools that would be realistic to visit and talk to your parents about planning a few visits for spring and summer.
- Talk to friends and family about their alma maters to get ideas and make potential contacts.
- Work on completing your resume in Naviance. It will help tremendously to add to it over time rather than having to complete it all in September.
- If you can, visit colleges over March/April vacation. The campuses are best visited on weekdays when you can get a sense of student life. Take notes when you are there!

MAY/JUNE

- Start to think about who might be able to write your college recommendations.
- Take the SAT or ACT again if needed and be honest about your scores and what they mean.
- Make certain that your resume in Naviance includes ALL of your underclassmen extra-curricular activities. It is one more thing you won't have to think about in the fall.
- Talk with current seniors about their plans for next year and solicit advice for applications. You don't have to take it – but it's nice to hear about a variety of experiences.

TRANSITION PLANNING CHECKLIST – JUNIOR YEAR

JULY/AUGUST

- Start writing the college essay
- Consult collegeboard.com for Fall testing dates and make note of deadlines.
- Get email of grads going to schools to which you might want to apply.
- Start to get serious about a list of schools that are within your reach and/or that meet your criteria for:

- **Proximity to city**
- **Proximity to home**
- **Size of campus**
- **Quality of program relative to your major**
- **Cost and affordability**

If all of those things measure up...look at the available data points and ask yourself THE question: Can I get in? If you want it very badly, APPLY! If you are honest and know that you would never really go, don't bother!

TRANSITION PLANNING CHECKLIST – SENIOR YEAR

SEPTEMBER

- Participate in Senior Planning Workshops
- Finalize college list: talk with parents, friends, and family.
- Get off to a positive start academically.
- Plan final college visits.
- Find out if interviews are offered.
- Take notes/pictures on your visits!
- Revise college essay.
- Meet with your adviser to make certain you understand what your next steps are.
- Ask questions so that you don't miss deadlines.
- Complete the Common Application @ commonapp.org.

OCTOBER

- Meet with adviser to review transcript and college list.
- Decide if you will apply Early Decision or Early Action and note deadlines/requirements.
- Check financial aid requirements and deadlines for each school.
- Have honest conversations with your parents/caregivers about your options.
- Complete final draft of college essay.
- Check in with the teacher writing your recommendation to make certain they have enough information.
- Work with parents/caregiver to file the FAFSA and/or other appropriate financial aid forms.

NOVEMBER

- Submit Early Action/Decision applications.
- Research outside scholarship opportunities.
- File CSS (College Scholarship Service) Profile if required. This is a financial profile used by some private schools. Applications will indicate if necessary.
- Make certain that your Trimester 1 grades reflect your best possible performance.

TRANSITION PLANNING CHECKLIST – SENIOR YEAR

DECEMBER/JANUARY

- Complete and submit all applications by the deadlines.
- Approach your Trimester I exams/grades with gravity; all your schools are going to use Trimester I grades to make decisions.
- Compose a thank you note for the teacher(s) who completed your recommendation.

FEBRUARY

- Ensure you have met all financial aid requirements.
- Research and find at least one more private scholarship opportunity

MARCH

- Continue to explore colleges on your list as thoroughly as possible.
- Plan any final visits to schools by which you were accepted

APRIL

- Review potential schools and offers of financial aid with your family and treatment team
- Decide which school you want to attend! (get some gear)
- Submit a deposit to your chosen school prior to May 1.

MAY - AUG

- Sit for AP Exams if you have them.
- Keep up with your classes - they affect your transcript which will follow you to college. Enjoy what remains of your senior year with friends and classmates.
- Revel in your accomplishments at graduation!

REQUEST FOR RECOMMENDATION LETTER:

Student Name: _____

Seeking Recommendation from: _____

Date Asked: _____

Date Needed: _____

Recommendation for: _____

Student Information:

Honors or Accolades received:

Sports and Extra Curricular Activities (include years participated, positions held, and other pertinent info):

Areas of interests and other info:

College Visit Notes: _____

School Visited: _____

Date: _____

Safety/Realistic/Reach (Circle)

Campus Life	
<i>Consider...</i>	
<i>Can you relate to the students you meet?</i>	
<i>Are there things for you to do outside of academics?</i>	
<i>What is the housing like?</i>	
<i>What do students do on the weekends?</i>	
<i>What is the vibe of the campus?</i>	
Academic Atmosphere	
<i>Consider...</i>	
<i>How big are the classes?</i>	
<i>Are the classes taught by professors or graduate students?</i>	
<i>What opportunities exist if you struggle?</i>	
<i>Do students and professors interact in campus life?</i>	