

Hamlin
Robinson
School

High School Transition Guide

TRANSITION TEAM

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At Hamlin Robinson School, learning has no limits.

Choosing the right high school for your student can make all the difference in their academic career. The good news is there are plenty of options. This transition guide is a resource to assist our families in preparing for the high school admissions process.

It is our goal to provide information about high school options and to ensure each student receives the best possible education for their individual needs.

MISSION

Hamlin Robinson School ignites the academic and creative potential of students with dyslexia and other language-based learning differences.

VISION

The world-class educational program at Hamlin Robinson School is a catalyst for students to discover the joy of learning within a rich, comprehensive school experience.

CORE VALUES

Respect
Responsibility
Perseverance
Purpose

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RANKING SCHOOLS

Hamlin Robinson School aligns with and promotes the NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools) statement on ranking schools. When considering school options, we encourage families to select a high school based on fit and to ensure a successful academic outcome.

NAIS STATEMENT

The National Association of Independent Schools is and always has been opposed to the ranking of schools. The “best” school — public, parochial, or independent — is the one that uniquely meets the needs of each particular child. In the independent school sector, each institution, in its mission statement, defines its own objectives: the kind of program and campus culture the school provides, and often, the qualities that will help a student to succeed there. These schools were not created from one mold. They have different missions, offer different grade ranges, curricular emphases, pedagogical approaches, and extracurricular programs. Independent schools are to be judged, through their rigorous accreditation processes, according to what they individually set out to accomplish.

Ranking of schools encourages a destructive competitiveness, leading institutions away from offering rich alternatives and toward a stultifying sameness. It is a disservice to the schools, concerned parents, and children, and therefore, to our society.

SCHOOL EVALUATION FORM

	School #1:	School #2:	School #3:	School #4:
Location				
Website				
Open House Date				
Application Deadline				
Financial Aid Deadline				
Principal/Admin				
Admissions Director				
Class Size				
Learning Support Programs				
Learning Support Philosophy				
Religious Profile				
Graduation Rate				
Graduation Requirements				
College Counseling				
Athletics				
Fine Arts Programs				
Parent Engagement				
Facility Size				
Diversity				
Tuition				
Additional Costs/Fees				

BEFORE YOU APPLY

Seeking the right fit.

ONE

Things to Consider

Physical Environment: location, safety, cleanliness, appearance and age of the building, common areas and classrooms, etc.

Social Environment: relationship between adults in the school, between students and adults, and between students.

Curriculum: Be sure to review the course catalog and class descriptions to see what is offered.

Holistic Development: What opportunities are available for physical, esthetic, and practical skill development? Are athletics available to all students? Does the school teach life and leadership skills? Are volunteer hours required? Does the school offer clubs and activities?

TWO

Research + Prepare

Preview and keep track of application due dates by organization. Some schools may require an entrance exam, teacher recommendations, transcripts, and - for public schools - proof of residence as well as immunization information. Public schools require current testing information and evaluations for accommodations or special needs so begin this process in the fall. If you are interested in an IEP or 504, contact the HRS transition team.

THREE

Explore Options

There are three high school options:

- Public
- Independent, NWAIS accredited
- Religious (some religious schools have NWAIS accreditation)

Cast a wide net when exploring schools. Consider schools not on your radar. Talk to friends with whom you share basic values. Find out where their student attends school. Be sure to understand and explore overall personalities, opportunities, and pitfalls. Read all current information about each school, including print materials, website, online reviews, social media, etc.

Use the School Evaluation Checklist in the back of this handbook to compare locations, educational opportunities, financial commitment, etc. Examine your ideals about school. What is an appropriate class size? What type of learning environment best suits your student? If you picture the ideal school, what do you see? What elements of the school are most important?

BEFORE YOU APPLY

FOUR

Get Organized

Gather professional documents including information from doctors, psychologists, therapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, etc. Locate school transcripts, psychological evaluations, IEP documents, correspondence, etc.

FIVE

Create a Resource List + Master File

Gather a resource list of all individuals and/or organizations with information regarding your student. Include the following:

- Names and titles of professionals who have provided services
- Addresses, phone numbers, email addresses
- Educational records, documents, records, cumulative file from schools your student has attended

Master File

A master file should include the following:

- Report cards and test scores
- Testing and evaluations
- IEP documents
- Immunization records
- Medical records
- Leadership activities and responsibilities
- Honors and awards
- Volunteer activities
- Athletic, musical, or fine arts participation

TRANSITION CHECKLIST



7th GRADE

WINTER

- Review HRS High School Transition Guide
- Attend high school transition event
- Connect with transition team about IEP if considering public school

SPRING

- Attend HRS school conference
- Attend HRS spring transition meeting

8th GRADE

SEPTEMBER

- Back to School conference with Level 8 teacher to discuss preparation for High School
- For public school applicants, discuss IEP evaluation or 504 Accommodations Plan with teacher and the transition team
- Explore high schools options by visiting school websites
- Schedule a high school “Shadow/Visit Day”

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER + DECEMBER

- Attend open houses and school tours
- Begin applications and write essays
- Submit HRS Preliminary High School Tracking Form to HRS Front Office by November 1
- Submit teacher evaluations and transcript requests to the HRS Front Office by November 15
- Schedule practice interview with the transition team (student)
- Attend family/student interviews with prospective schools
- If needed, register for the entrance exam required by the school (ISEE, SSAT or HSPT)
- Submit financial aid application

JANUARY

- Confirm all admissions materials submitted
- Confirm financial aid application complete

FEBRUARY

- Acceptance letters received
- Complete enrollment contract with deposit
- Seattle Public School Choice open enrollment

MARCH + APRIL

- Write thank you notes to application schools
- Send HRS transition team admissions results: accept, wait-list, decline, and attending.

TRANSITION TIMELINE

7th GRADE

WINTER

HRS will host a high school transition event to outline and review the high school admission process. If considering public school, connect with the transition team to discuss the process of qualifying or updating an IEP (Individual Education Plan). This process can take several months. Evaluations and assessments are considered current for three years.

If an updated assessment is needed, start this process now by making an appointment with your preferred learning specialist. This process can take several months.

SPRING

Attend the HRS school conference to understand areas your student requires support, areas approaching independence, and areas of strength.

Attend the HRS spring transition meeting to learn more about the IEP and 504 process for public schools and how to navigate requesting and receiving accommodations at private schools.

8th GRADE

SEPTEMBER

Attend the back to school conference with the Level 8 advisory teacher to discuss test history, possible schools of interest, current student profile, goals, and high school application dates and deadlines.

Begin to investigate prospective high school learning support options and application requirements. Take time to explore and examine school websites, admission materials, and the philosophy and/or mission of the school. The admissions section of the prospective school website will include dates, deadlines and financial assistance application information. It is important not to miss deadlines.

Discuss potential high school options with your student, the Level 8 advisory teacher and the HRS transition team. The transition team can assist in connecting families with former HRS students and/or families who attend or have attended a prospective school to help answer questions or provide insight.

Begin the application process. There can be a considerable amount of writing required on the application so do not wait

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER + DECEMBER

Parent Meeting

Level 8 parents will meet as a group with the transition team and a panel of HRS alumni parents to get firsthand feedback on the high school admissions experience and process.

The HRS Preliminary High School Tracking Form is due to the front office by November 1.

TRANSITION TIMELINE

Open Houses and Tours

Attend high school open houses and school tours. If possible, arrange to meet with the learning specialist or learning program coordinator. Schedule appointments for interviews and tours well before the winter break. Do not wait until January or February as some application deadlines will be missed.

Public “choice” or “lottery” schools will sometimes hold open houses. Check district and school websites for dates. If you are interested in a public high school and can’t find an open house date, call the school’s front office and ask if they will host an open house or if there is an opportunity to visit the school.

Consider requesting a meeting with the learning support coordinator or IEP case manager to gather more information about support programs and options.

Student Recommendations

Submit all forms requesting recommendations, evaluations, testing, etc., to the front office by November 18. If applying through the online Ravenna portal, please list frontoffice@hamlinrobinson.org as the contact email for all teacher evaluations. We will distribute all forms to the appropriate teachers and then onto the schools requesting the information. Forms received after the mid-November deadline are at risk of not being completed on time or as thoroughly.

The Interview

Be yourself in the interview. Schools truly want to get to know you and your student as well as they can in a short period of time. If possible, relax and enjoy the moment.

If needed, have your student schedule a practice interview with the transition team. This is a good opportunity to receive helpful tips and feedback on body language, clarity of answers, etc. as well as help the student feel more at ease.

Before the interview, be sure to have a thorough understanding of the schools’ philosophy and why your student would like to attend that school.

Entrance Examinations

The ISEE (Independent School Entrance Examination) is required by many independent schools in our area. Some schools may require the SSAT, or the school may have their own exam. The majority of Catholic schools require the HSPT (High School Placement Test) for the entrance exam.

Register your student for their necessary exams through the exam websites (ISEE or SSAT) or in the case of Catholic schools, on their school’s website. HRS is not able to do this for families.

If accommodations are needed, be sure to apply well ahead of time through the testing website. HRS is not able to do this for families.

If your student needs to take either the ISEE or SSAT test, information is available on ERBLEARN.org (ISEE) and/or SSAT.org (SSAT). These websites provide more details regarding sample tests, dates of testing, testing with accommodations, registration fees, test results, etc. As a service to the community, HRS is a test site for the ISEE with accommodations.

JANUARY

Waiting for acceptance letters can be stressful for families and students. Most schools will notify

TRANSITION TIMELINE

applicants of incomplete applications either through e-mail or the Ravenna application portal. It is important to contact HRS if any information is missing. Families can contact a school to ask if the application packet is complete, but it is not recommended to pursue information or push regarding acceptance.

HRS prepares school reports, transcripts, recommendations, administrative forms, etc.

It is helpful for HRS to know where parents are likely to enroll their student should they gain admission. Please notify the transition team.

FEBRUARY + MARCH

Notifications Letters

Most admissions notification letters from high schools are mailed by mid to late February. When a notification letter is received, read it carefully for important dates and deadlines. There will be information regarding deposits and placement testing.

Please remain sensitive to other families as they wait for acceptance information from schools. Remember, schools have different acceptance and deposit dates.

Please email the transition team with acceptance information so they can offer congratulations or strategies for the next step.

From receipt of the notification letter, most schools will offer two – three weeks to confirm enrollment. It is important to notify each school.

Students who wish to attend a Seattle public school outside of their designated area may apply for assignment to a different school through School Choice. Open enrollment for School Choice normally takes place from early February to mid-February. For more information, visit seattleschools.org.

Second Round - Waitlist

After first admission notification letters are mailed, a second round of acceptances may take place. If your student is placed on a waitlist, follow instructions carefully. Some schools require a response to remain on the waitlist. Schools will not provide information or reasons why your student was waitlisted or not accepted.

APRIL + MAY

Families choosing to apply to public “choice” or “lottery” schools should begin hearing if space has been secured at the school.

JUNE

Graduation - Congratulations!

APPLICATION

TIPS + TRICKS

The application is the primary vehicle through which students are considered for admission.

Apply Early

Applications submitted immediately preceding the deadline could reflect a lack of care. This includes submitting teacher recommendation and evaluation request forms to HRS on time.

Be Neat

Applications that are hard to read will not receive equal consideration. Copy the application to use as a rough draft. Type the application whenever possible.

Be Complete

It is better to write “not applicable” instead of leaving a question blank.

Be Honest

Students should not pretend to be something they are not. Highlight their strengths, but don't hide their challenges. A school wants to know a student is aware of their challenges and is willing and capable to put forth the work to overcome their challenges. It is also important for a school to know a student has the support of family.

Prepare the Application Yourself

Only the student should prepare their application. Parents, guardians, teachers and the transition team are welcome to offer advice; however, a “too perfect” application might raise questions.

Recommendations

Recommendations should come from those who know the student best. Sometimes, a schools will require a recommendation from a specific instructor. Please provide two to three weeks for the teacher to complete the recommendation.

Essay

Be open and honest when writing the essay, make sure it is interesting to others, follow directions carefully, and be sure to proofread.

Supplementary Materials

Do not submit extra materials unless it is relevant and requested. Programs may ask for a portfolio, but do not “pad” the application.

Extracurricular Activities

These should be presented honestly. Do not minimize or exaggerate.

VISIT + INTERVIEW

DO'S + DON'TS

The interview and visit are opportunities for the student to showcase and highlight their achievements, passion for learning, and activities that make them unique. In addition, this will help determine if the school is the right fit for the student.

Each Level 8 student is invited to schedule a practice interview with the transition team in September. For self-advocacy and initiative, students are expected to contact the transition team to schedule.

DO:

Parent:

- Highlight areas that set your student apart from others
- Research the school
- Show interest in learning more about the school
- Establish a personal (yet professional) relationship with the admissions team
- Draft the student essay early
- Show the essay to another person to proof and make suggestions
- Inquire with the admissions team about courses, 4-year course plan, and special programs
- Thank HRS teachers for writing recommendations

Student:

- Write thank you notes to the teachers for recommendations
- Write thank you notes to open house tour guide and interview/visit guide
- Practice interview with the transition team

DON'T:

- Repeat information
- Exaggerate or take credit for things not accomplished by the student
- Be pushy
- Pad or overload the application
- Ask to see teacher recommendations
- Call the admission office unless there is a valid question or concern
- Assume all schools are alike - take the time to research each school
- Attend the interview unprepared (student and parent)

PUBLIC SCHOOL TRANSITION

If applying to public high school, the student will likely need an IEP or 504 plan. Public schools require current testing information and evaluations for accommodations or special needs support.

Individualized Education Program

Each public school student eligible to receive special education and related services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The development of an IEP allows parents, teachers, school administrators, and service personnel time to examine the student's strengths and weaknesses and determine how to best provide supports for the student's education. These individuals work as a team to design an educational program that helps integrate the student into the general curriculum.

Is your student eligible for special education and related services?

Students may be recommended by parents, teachers, counselors, etc. Parent consent is required prior to an evaluation. A professional group determines eligibility through an evaluation process. If it is determined the student is eligible for special education, the school district must provide a copy of the evaluation report to the parents. If the student is ineligible, the district must notify the parents within ten days from the completion of the evaluation.

Who participates on the IEP team?

The IEP team is made up of parents, at least one general education teacher of the student, at least one special education teacher, and a qualified representative of the school district who is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and resources of the school district. An individual who can interpret the completed evaluation report should participate, the student can participate if appropriate, and the parents may invite an advocate for assistance.

Unhappy with the IEP results?

Before the school district can provide services to the student, parents must consent. If parents do not agree with the IEP results, discuss your concerns with other members of the IEP team and try to work out an agreement. If there is still disagreement, a parent can request mediation or the school may offer it. A parent can file a complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and request a due process hearing, or hire an attorney specializing in education.

What to expect from an IEP:

- Evaluation of student current performance
- Annual goals and progress notification
- Special education and related services provided/offered for the student
- Participation with non-disabled students
- Participation in state and district-wide tests
- Dates and places for provided services
- Transition services needs for students 14 years or younger

After the IEP is developed:

Once the IEP is developed, a copy should be given to the parents. Each of the student's teachers and service providers should also have access to a copy of the IEP. The IEP team should review the IEP at least once per year. At least every three years, the student must be re-evaluated.

PUBLIC SCHOOL TRANSITION

Section 504

Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that is designed to eliminate disability discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal funds. All public schools must comply with Section 504 because school districts receive federal funds. Section 504 is a federal civil rights law.

Referral:

Any person can refer a student for evaluation under Section 504.

Upon referral:

After receiving a Section 504 referral, a district should decide whether to evaluate the student and must notify the student's parents or guardian of its decision.

Evaluations:

Evaluations are individually designed. An evaluation may include aptitude, achievement data, medical, psychological, social, or cultural information. The district determines the scope of the 504, and the 504 should be broad enough to enable the district to determine whether or not a student is disabled under Section 504. If so, the district must provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education).

Placement:

Placement under Section 504 means services - the educational and related aids and services that a student needs to receive free and appropriate public education.

Due Process:

Parents have the right to challenge district decisions regarding the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of their student and provide the parent or guardian an opportunity to challenge the action if they disagree.

Consent:

Parents must give consent before the student's initial evaluation and before the student's initial placement.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Visit <http://www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements/default.aspx> to see OSPI published graduation requirements for the State of Washington. It is possible to call the Superintendent of Public Instruction at (360) 725-6000 or talk with the high school counselor.

Information for Families

Families can obtain further information from the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding student learning plans, (plans for students to stay on track and graduate from high school), culminating projects, and beyond high school planning.

Hamlin Robinson School is approved by the Washington State Board of Education. The Washington State History class taught in grade 7 fulfills the public high school graduation requirement and will be recorded on the student transcript.

STUDENT SUPPORT ASSESSMENT

Area of Assessment	Needs Support?	To What Degree?
Reading Fluency/Accuracy		
Reading Comprehension		
Written Expression		
Spelling/Writing Mechanics		
Organization Skills		
Math		
Homework Completion		
Study Skills		
Social/Emotional		