



HUTTO HIGH SCHOOL

College and Career Guidebook 2024-2025



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Communication with Parents and Students

The College and Career Center utilizes Hutto ISD's official means of communication including ParentSquare, Hutto ISD student email, district/campus websites, official district/campus social media pages, school announcements, and in-school fliers. Please refer to these communication channels for the most up to date College and Career Center information.

Suggested College and Career Timelines

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Summer Before	- Identify goals for high school - Talk with friends, teachers, and parents about college and career options - Learn about advanced academic options	- Career exploration - Shadow, volunteer, or intern	- Start studying for ACT or SAT - Shadow, volunteer, or intern - Learn about career options and investigate the type of education needed	- Shadow, volunteer, or intern - Review college application deadlines - Start college applications - Reach out to recommendation writers
Fall	- Sample a range of extracurricular activities - Start resume and list of scholarships - Earn good grades	- Choose 1-2 extracurricular activities - Take the PSAT in October - Continue to track accomplishments	- Commit to keeping grades up - Take on leadership roles in extracurriculars - Take the PSAT/NSMQT in October - Visit college campuses - Attend HHS College Fair	- If needed, retake ACT or SAT - Write Essays - Submit college applications - Submit FAFSA - If needed, take an pass TSI - Apply for scholarships - Attend HHS College Fair
Spring	- Take interest inventories on SchooLinks - Explore careers - Earn good grades	- Learn about Dual Credit opportunities - Learn about the SAT and ACT - Take TSI in interested in Dual Credit	- Take and pass TSI - Narrow in on 5-10 colleges - Visit college campuses - Take SAT or ACT	- Review financial aid packages - Apply for scholarships - Make college decision - Send deposit to college of choice - Keep grades up - Celebrate your accomplishments!

College and Career Investigation Tools

SchoolLinks is Hutto ISD's post-secondary planning platform. It is a modern, college and career readiness platform to prepare students for what comes after graduation. SchoolLinks helps students discover their interests and strengths, explore colleges and careers and send important documents to colleges and universities during the application process.

Students can:

- Take swipeable surveys and quizzes to learn more about your interests and what careers might be right for you
- Research careers and watch videos to help navigate the college and career planning process
- Explore college profiles to learn about campus life, the student body, and more
- Learn about financial literacy and how decisions you make can financially impact you after you graduate
- Find scholarships
- Sign up for school-sponsored college visit trips and admission representative info sessions

Students login to SchoolLinks via Classlink.

Parents and Guardians can:

- View the results of your student's career interest, strength, and mindset assessments to learn more about their interests and what careers might be right for them.
- Check your personalized dashboard for upcoming events as well as important reminders and to-dos for your student.
- Complete your own research on colleges, careers, and more to help you have informed conversations with your student.
- Compare college costs and explore expected financial aid, scholarships, and out of pocket expenses
- Watch this [video](#) and read this [document](#) to learn more about how to create your account.

Other Career Investigation Tools

These are all free. Remember: results are not saved on these sites.

- [Texas Workforce Commission](#)
- [Career One Stop](#)
- [Texas Career Check](#)

College Applications

The college application timeline begins the summer before a student's senior year with deadlines throughout the fall and spring semesters of a student's senior year. Deadlines will vary by school and are subject to change from year to year. They also vary with regard to early action, early decision, and regular decision.

Schools that offer early action options consider an offer of admission non-binding, but may state that students can't apply to other early action or early decision programs. Early decision is binding, meaning that if offered admission, your child is obligated to accept the offer and withdraw applications from other schools.

ApplyTexas

ApplyTexas is a centralized web portal for prospective students from Texas and other states to apply for admission to Texas higher education institutions. The purpose of ApplyTexas is to allow students to complete one profile and submit it to multiple institutions of higher education, including community colleges, within Texas. You can apply for admissions to any Texas public university, participating community colleges, or participating private universities, and you can easily copy parts of your application to another Texas school so you can avoid having to do an entirely new profile for each school.

ApplyTexas opens July 1 for the following year's fall semester. Although ApplyTexas opens on July 1, individual schools may set individual opening dates for their applications and many schools choose to open later. Given the variance in college application deadlines, students should pay close attention to when they need to submit their materials.

Common App

The Common Application, which is accepted by more than 1,000 schools, including some colleges outside the U.S., helps streamline an essential part of the admissions process for students. Through the platform, first-time and transfer applicants can apply to multiple colleges at once. So students only have to fill out details that most schools require – such as name, address and extracurricular activities – one time.

Most college applications open August 1 each year for students who plan to begin college classes for the following year's fall semester. Students don't have to wait until Aug. 1 to get started on the Common App. They can create an account at any time and transfer their information into the new app when it opens. Given the variance in college application deadlines, students should pay close attention to when they need to submit their materials.

Common College Application Requirements

While each school has its own admission guidelines that you should follow, here's generally what you need for a complete application:

- Complete application form
- High school transcript and college transcripts, if applicable
- ACT or SAT scores, if applicable
- Extracurricular, volunteer, and employment information
- School-specific requirements, including essays
- Application fee or a fee waiver
- Letters of recommendation, if applicable
- If you are not a native English speaker, a TOEFL or IELTS score

SchoolLinks and College Applications

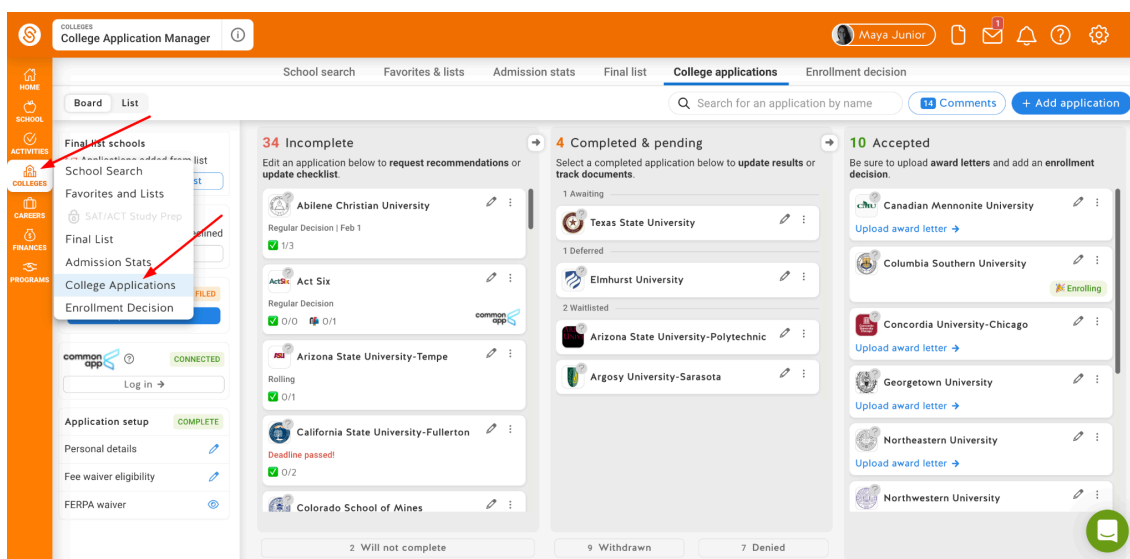
The SchoolLinks College Application Manager serves as an easy way to keep track of all the application steps and materials you need to submit to colleges and when you need to submit them, but it is not an application portal. You will need to submit applications using the methods offered by the colleges where you're applying. College Application Manager integrates with Common App so that you can complete college applications and keep track of your application materials all in one place.

The SchoolLinks College Application Manager allows you to:

- Track the progress and requirements for your college applications.
- Organize all the application materials for the colleges where you're applying.
- Request your application materials including transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc. to be sent to the desired institution.

The SchoolLinks College Application Manager is **REQUIRED** for students to request transcripts be sent to colleges as part of their application.

Learn more about the SchoolLinks College Application Manager [here](#).



Important Tests: What, When, Why, How

ACT: This college entrance test may be taken through the senior year, but scores must be received by the college application deadline. The average score on the ACT is between 20 and 21, with 36 as a perfect score. However, keep in mind that different colleges may have different standards for what scores are typical for their campuses. The ACT is taken on select Saturdays throughout the year. ACT is not offered at HHS. Students will need to register for this test at www.ACT.org. There is a fee associated with this test. A limited number of fee waivers are available for students who receive Free and Reduced Lunch.

ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery): The ASVAB is an optional career planning test offered free of charge. This test can help you in your career planning by helping you to identify your interests, clarify what is important to you, and better understand your abilities. The ASVAB typically takes place in November of each year at HHS.

PSAT: Recommended for college-bound students, the PSAT provides practice for the SAT. The PSAT assesses verbal and mathematical skills. Though eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Program is determined by a student's junior year score on the PSAT, sophomores may take the PSAT for practice. Sophomores and Juniors typically take PSAT in October each year at HHS.

SAT Test: This college entrance test may be taken through the junior and senior year, but scores must be received by the college application deadline. SAT uses a 1600-point scale with an optional essay that is scored separately. SAT is taken digitally on select Saturdays throughout the year. HHS offers one free SAT for juniors in March. Otherwise, SAT is not offered at HHS. Students will need to register for this test at www.collegeboard.org. There is a fee associated with this test. A limited number of fee waivers are available for students who receive Free and Reduced Lunch.

TSI (Texas Success Initiative): The TSI is a test to measure college readiness and is a state requirement for all students entering any Texas public college/university (i.e. Austin Community College, A&M, Texas State, Texas Tech, UT, etc.). You must satisfy this requirement prior to college enrollment. To be considered college ready in Math, students must have TSI scores of 950 to 990 on the multiple choice section or a score of 6 on the diagnostic. To be considered college ready in ELAR, students must have TSI scores of 945 to 990 on the multiple choice or a score of 5 on the diagnostic. To be considered college ready in Writing, students must have an essay scores of 5.

TSI is offered for free at HHS throughout the fall and spring.

You are exempt from the TSI if you meet one of the following two standards:

1. ACT scores: combined score of 40 in English and reading and a 22 in Math
2. SAT scores: SAT Math of 530 and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) of 480.

What is TSI and why is it important?

TSI stands for Texas Success Initiative. It indicates college readiness in the areas of Math, English and Writing. If someone has met TSI, they are prepared academically to take college coursework. If TSI is not met, one can take the TSI Assessment test. Information on test preparation and study material can be found at <http://sites.austincc.edu/tsiprep/>.

The TSI Assessment measures your strengths and weaknesses in mathematics and statistics, reading and writing, and is an indicator of how ready you are to handle college-level courses. The results of the assessment, in conjunction with your academic background, goals, and interests, are used by academic advisors and counselors to place you in the appropriate course that matches your skill level. The goal is to help you become ready for college-level course work.

The individual score report indicates your score in the mathematics, reading, and writing portions of the TSI Assessment and the appropriate course level in which you will be placed. Your scores on the TSI Assessment determine if you are ready to take college-level courses. If you are college ready, you may enroll in any related entry-level college course that requires a standard.

Not all students need to take the TSI Assessment. There are many ways you can be exempt. Qualifying for a TSI Assessment exemption means that you can enroll in any entry-level college course without restrictions or prerequisites. In certain cases exemptions are subject-specific, which means you may qualify for an exemption in one area such as reading but not in another area like mathematics or writing. You may be exempt if you meet one or more of the following:

Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Exemptions:

1. ACT scores: combined score of 40 in English and reading and a 22 in Math.
2. SAT scores: SAT Math of 530 and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) of 480.

Test-Optional Policies

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, some colleges have adopted test-optional or test-flexible policies or plan to de-emphasize standardized test scores when reviewing undergraduate applications this fall.

If you are not a great test-taker or think your test scores don't accurately reflect your abilities as a student, you might consider applying to test-optional schools. Here are four things to know before you take that step.

1. THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEST-OPTIONAL SCHOOLS

A *test-optional* college lets students decide whether they want to submit test scores with their application. If you submit them, they'll be reviewed as part of your application, but if you don't, you won't be at any disadvantage compared to applicants who did submit test scores. While most test-optional schools will consider SAT and ACT scores if they are submitted, they may focus on other factors they believe are stronger predictors of a student's potential to succeed in college. These schools look at a student's essays, recommendations, grades, and coursework just as (or more) closely than your test scores.

A *test-flexible* college lets students submit other test scores in place of the SAT or ACT, such as an AP Exam and/or school-administered placement tests.

A *test-blind* college will not consider test scores, even if you submit them.

2. TEST-OPTIONAL POLICIES DIFFER FROM COLLEGE TO COLLEGE

Some test-optional policies come with restrictions. For example:

- Some colleges require test scores for out-of-state or international students, or for students pursuing certain majors.
- Some test-optional schools may determine your test-optional eligibility using an index calculated from your GPA, test scores, and class rank.
- Some schools may ask you to submit test scores for placement in the freshman class or to take a placement exam.
- Some may ask for additional materials instead of test scores, such as samples of your academic work, scientific research, or additional recommendation letters.

Due to COVID-19, many colleges have changed or lifted some of these restrictions, so be sure to check with the college to confirm how it will use test scores in the admissions process.

3. OTHER PARTS OF YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE CLOSELY SCRUTINIZED

Colleges want as much information about you as possible. So without test scores, it's likely that other parts of your application -- your grades and grade trends, essays, extracurricular activities, and achievements -- must be strong enough to make the college want to admit you.

4. TEST SCORES MIGHT BE REQUIRED FOR MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Many test-optional colleges look at test scores when awarding merit scholarships, so not submitting them might put you at a disadvantage. Be sure to confirm all scholarship requirements before applying.

Should You Submit Test Scores to Test Optional Schools?

Submit test scores if:

- Your test scores are strong (at or near the 75th percentiles of admitted students to the school)
- You don't have other strong test scores (AP tests, IB Tests, etc.) to send
- The school still recommends submitting scores if you can

Don't submit test scores if:

- Your test scores are low (Below 50th percentiles of admitted students)
- You're confident other areas of your application (GPA, class rank, extracurriculars, etc.) make up for a lack of test scores
- You have strong test scores from other exams (AP tests, IB Tests, etc.) that you will submit

State of Texas Top 10% Rule

If you're in the top 10% of your high school graduating class, you're eligible for automatic admission to any public university in Texas (Except the University of Texas at Austin). To meet the requirements for automatic admission, you must:

- Graduate in the top 10% of your class at a public or private high school in Texas with the Distinguished Level of Achievement Graduation (DLA) Plan, or
- Graduate in the top 10% of your class from a high school operated by the U.S. Department of Defense and be a Texas resident or be eligible to pay resident tuition;
- Enroll in college no more than two years after graduating from high school; **AND**
- Submit an application to a Texas public university for admission before the application deadline (check with the university for specific deadlines).

The Top 10% Rule and the University of Texas

In 2009, the law was modified for The University of Texas at Austin. Under the new law, the university must automatically admit enough students to fill 75 percent of available Texas resident spaces. Each fall, the university notifies Texas school officials of the class rank that current high school juniors need to attain by the end of their junior year in order to be automatically admitted. The following can be a guide:

Summer/Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 applicants: Top 6%

Financial Aid Graduation Requirement

In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.0256, beginning with students enrolled in 12th grade during the 2021-2022 school year, each student must do one of the following in order to graduate:

- Complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- Complete and submit a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA); **or**
- Submit a signed opt-out form.

For more information on the Financial Aid Graduation Requirement, please visit tea.texas.gov/academics/college-career-and-military-prep/financial-aid-requirement

FAFSA typically opens on October 1st each year with a state priority deadline of January 15th. Note: there is a federal deadline and there may be college-specific deadlines for FAFSA completion.

- *College Deadlines:* Many college FAFSA due dates have priority deadlines, which means you need to submit your FAFSA form by that date to potentially receive the most money from the college. Many colleges have this date clearly marked on their financial aid webpages. If you can't find it, call the school's financial aid office.
- *State Deadline:* Many states have limited funds, so their FAFSA deadlines may be quite early. So you should always get your FAFSA form submitted ASAP.
- *Federal Deadline:* The FAFSA form for that particular academic year becomes unavailable after June 30. That means that the 2024–25 FAFSA form will disappear from StudentAid.gov on June 30, 2024, because that's the end of the 2024–25 school year.

NCAA Information

Students wishing to play a sport at a Division I, II or III college or university must go through the NCAA eligibility process. Students interested in playing NCAA sports should first speak with their coach.

Student athletes need to be aware that the NCAA does not accept all courses that are taught through distance learning, online, and/or credit recovery. The course must be four-year college preparatory; therefore, credit-by-exam courses do not meet core course requirements. For questions regarding specific courses, please contact your academic counselor.

Learn more about NCAA eligibility at: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

For more resources for the College-Bound Student Athlete go to the NCAA Publications website: <http://www.ncaapublications.com/>