

# PSAT, SAT AND ACT-COLLEGE STANDARDIZED TESTING LETTER



Dear Sophomores, Juniors, Parents and Guardians:

September 2024

When students begin their junior year, standardized tests become essential to the college admissions process. The first test many juniors take is the **PSAT (Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test)**. This test measures skills that are important for success in college such as reading, writing, language and math. It is modeled after the SAT that many students take before applying to colleges and serves two basic functions. First, it helps students see their strengths and weaknesses before they actually take the SAT. Second, it qualifies top-scoring juniors for the National Merit Scholarship program.

Sophomores also have the opportunity to take the PSAT. Taking this exam as a sophomore would give a student more practice, but it is important to remember that this is a junior-based test. Sophomores do not have the extra year of math and English anticipated by the test's questions so the scores are usually lower than in junior year.

Students have only **one** opportunity each year to take the PSAT at OPHS. Here is a list of important dates:

- Students will have an opportunity to sign up and pay for the PSAT from **Wednesday September 4th - Wednesday, September 11th**. The cost of the PSAT exam is \$34.00 and is payable by **CHECK** (made out to Orchard Park High School).
- The PSAT will be given on **Saturday, October 12th from approximately 8:00 am until noon** at Orchard Park High School. Please note, **there is no alternate testing date available at OPHS**.

## Why take the test?

- **Practice for the SAT**
- **Get feedback about critical academic skills**
- **Get admissions information from colleges**
- **Enter National Merit Scholarship competition (Juniors)**

Once the PSAT is over, many juniors decide to take the SAT toward the end of their junior year in March, May or June. Orchard Park High School is a test center in May and again in November. The SAT is a four hour test that measures college readiness skills. While students will register for the PSAT directly with Mrs. Montesano, **SAT registration can only be completed online at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>**. It is essential to pay attention to deadlines in order to register and/or avoid a late fee.

**Students who wish to use their approved testing modifications (ex. extended-time) must also see their counselor to apply for these accommodations.**

Students can take preparatory classes for the SAT at OPHS through the Community Education program. There are also many other locations in Western New York that offer SAT/ACT test preparation and various review opportunities online. Information is available online at the School Counseling website and in your student's House Office. The cost of these courses varies greatly.

Many students also take the ACT (American College Testing Program). Depending on a student's strengths, he/she may perform better on the SAT or the ACT. The School Counseling Department recommends that students practice with both exams before taking one or the other. Specific questions or concerns regarding the SAT or ACT can be answered through the online registration bulletins or your child's counselor. Students and parents should check with each potential institution to see which assessments are required for admission.

*Sincerely,*

*Denice Montesano, SAT/PSAT testing coordinator and the OPHS School Counseling Department*  
**[dmontesano@opschools.org](mailto:dmontesano@opschools.org)**

# The PSAT / NMSQT is now DIGITAL!

The test is easier to take, shorter, allows more time per question and comes with a built-in calculator. It can also qualify you for the National Merit Scholarship Program and other scholarships.



Saturday,

October 12th, 2024

**PLEASE NOTE:** This is the **ONLY** day the PSAT will be given at OPHS.



All current juniors and sophomores may take the PSAT, but it is designed as a junior-based test.



Wed. Sept. 4th-

Wed. Sept. 11th

- Put check in an envelope
- Please tuck in the envelope flap. **PLEASE DO NOT SEAL THE ENVELOPE.**
- Please write the following information **NEATLY** on the outside of the envelope:

- **Last name / First name**
- **Grade / Homeroom**
- **Counselor**
- **Phone #** (very important if there is an error on the check)



check made out to Orchard Park High School / Student's 1st and last name on memo line



**\$34**



**NO CASH**



The locker right outside of Mrs. Montesano's room (329) will be used as a drop box (it will be clearly labeled). Stop by at any time during the day and deposit registration envelope and check. **Students** will receive a confirmation email at their opschools address within 72 hours. Please follow up with Mrs. Montesano in room 329 if you do not receive a confirmation email.

## Essential test day information



Students should arrive at the High School no later than 8:00 a.m. on test day and should be released between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 pm. Students are not permitted to leave early.

### Students must bring:



Calculator (if you do not wish to use on-screen calculator)



Pen or pencil (scrap paper will be provided)



Orchard Park I.D. card



**FULLY** charged school-issued chromebook



Chromebook charger

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PSAT

### PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

Please start by watching the following video:

#### What to Expect with the Digital PSAT/NMSQT

- Students will be using their school-issued chromebooks to take the test.
- The Bluebook exam app is already loaded on to sophomore and junior devices

Here are some other links that will provide you with detailed answers to any questions you may have, as well as offer preparation and practice activities for students:

#### What's on the PSAT/NMSQT?

#### Preparing for the PSAT/NMSQT

#### Taking the PSAT/NMSQT

- If you're not familiar with the Desmos calculator that's embedded in the digital test, take some time to learn how to use it while taking a practice test on the Bluebook™ app or on a Desmos Graphing Calculator preview experience.
- If you prefer to bring your own calculator, don't bring a brand-new calculator. Bring one you know. Practice for the test using the same calculator you'll use on test day.

#### Scholarships and Recognition

#### PSAT/NMSQT Testing Rules

### CREATE AN ACCOUNT

You may already have a College Board account if you have taken an AP exam. If not, [CREATE ONE NOW](#). Student accounts must be affiliated with OPHS so that the College Board can properly authenticate scores for online reporting purposes. It takes about twenty to thirty minutes to establish this account for the first time. You will use it for many things in the coming years:

- access a [DETAILED](#) report of your PSAT results
- register for the SAT
- access your scores and send them to colleges
- manage your personal college list
- save your scholarship searches
- compare costs at colleges

### GET SCORES

Students will receive 2024 October scores towards the middle of November 2024. If needed, students can request a password reset or recover their username for their College Board account by using their email address. Once logged in, students should click on **My Account**. Students must access their scores on-line. The roles assigned to us by the College Board do not include access to student scores.

### QUESTIONS

Contact me at [dmontesano@opschools.org](mailto:dmontesano@opschools.org). I check my email multiple times throughout the day.

**Please do not call the school.**