

Senior Handbook

A guide for students and parents

Class of
2025



Credit Requirements

NL-S High School

4 years English

3 years math

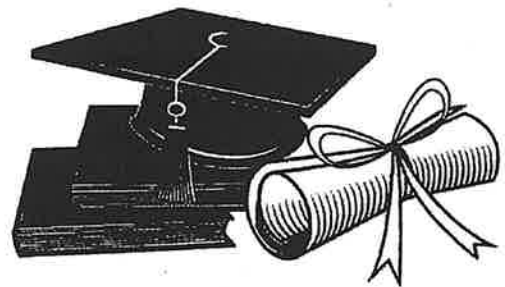
3 years science

3.5 years social

1 year phy ed

.5 years health

1 year art



2 Year v. 4 Year

Costs less	Costs more
Open Admissions	Selectivity varies
Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree
No generals	Generals needed
Accuplacer	ACT optional/required
Many locations	Many locations
Tend to be smaller	Tend to be larger
Earn degree or transfer	Earn degree
Skilled workers	



Timeline

Fall

- Start file of important papers
 - Keep photocopies of applications, essays, etc.
- Meet with recruiters - in person, virtually/zoom
- Attend a college fair
 - MN college fair 2024
 - Oct. 22 & 23 at the Minneapolis Convention Center
- Visit Colleges
 - MEA DAYS (October 17-18)
 - Sign up on college websites
- Start applying
 - Don't forget to request a transcript to be sent
 - If needing letter of recommendations, ask early!
- Research scholarships
- ACT - offered in October, registration information can be found online at my.act.org
- FAFSA form anticipated launch date, December 31, 2024, potentially earlier.
 - Fafsa.gov
- Individual meetings with counselors

Winter

- Check with your college about priority deadlines
- Scholarships
- Maintain contact with schools
- ACT is offered in December and February at multiple locations (additional information on my.act.org)

Spring

- Stay active in school
- Inform every college of acceptance or rejection by May 1st
- Enjoy the rest of your senior year!

Scholarships and Financial Aid

FAFSA - forms are available December and due June. You must fill this out to receive financial aid from any institution.

- Go to: www.fafsa.gov
 - Website for filling out your free application for financial aid which includes grants, scholarships, loans, and work study.

Sources to find scholarships:

- Parent or student memberships
 - Turkey Federation, Thrivent, Masons
- Employers
- Insurance companies (homeowners, life, medical)
- Websites
 - www.nls.k12.mn.us - go to Schools → High school → Counseling → Scholarships → Submit (scroll down)
 - Fast Web
 - www.Fastweb.com – scholarship database. You will be asked to fill out a profile. They will send you an email when they find a scholarship with criteria that matches your profile.
- Information for local scholarships (presented in April at the Honors and Awards Program) will be presented to students in late February/early March.
- Colleges - some colleges automatically send you scholarship information after applying, for others you will have to ask.

Resources

- School Website - www.nls.k12.mn.us
 - Look under the high school for information on scholarships, senior and parent resources, testing, and more.
- <https://portal.mn.cis360.org/>
 - MN Career Information System. This site has a wealth of information about careers and colleges.
 - Use your campus login information
- bigfuture.collegeboard.org
 - Includes lots of information about college planning. College Board is also home to the SAT and AP.

- My.ACT.org
 - ACT's official site to sign up for tests, check your scores or request that your scores to be sent to a college
 - If you took the ACT on the junior state testing day, you created an account already!

Office of Higher Education (MN Goes to College program)

- Offering college and financial aid virtual sessions
 - Apply to College - October 1st, 2024 @ 7pm
 - Understand Financial Aid - October 8th, 2024 @ 7pm
 - Prepare to Apply for Financial Aid - October 15th, 2024 @ 7pm
 - Search for Scholarships - October 22nd, 2024 @ 7pm
- Register at:
<https://sites.google.com/view/minnesotagoestocollege/for-students/attend-a-virtual-event>

At College:

- Tutors, Counselors, Advisors, Health Services, Academic Support Services

On the Job:

- Human Resources (HR)

ACT National Testing Dates and Deadlines

To find the nearest location on a specific test date, look up test center locations during the registration process.

Go to [MyACT.org](https://myact.org) to register.

(**NOTE:** if you took the test with the junior class last spring, you have an account already!!) School code: 241 815

We have ACT and SAT practice tests in the high school office. Students may check them out at any time.

2024-2025 National Test Dates Schedule

Test Date	Regular Registration Deadline Late Fee Applies After This Date	Late Registration Deadline	Photo Upload and Standby Deadline
September 14, 2024	August 9	August 25	September 6
October 26, 2024	September 20	October 7	October 18
December 14, 2024	November 8	November 22	December 6
February 8, 2025	January 3	January 20	January 31
April 5, 2025	February 28	March 16	March 28
June 14, 2025	May 9	May 26	June 6
July 12, 2025*	June 6	June 20	July 4



Free Application Opportunities at Minnesota Colleges and Universities (2024-2025)

As Minnesota high school students think about applying to college, application fees should not be a barrier. There are many opportunities for students to apply to Minnesota institutions for free.

FREE APPLICATIONS ALL YEAR

Institutions below do not charge application fees throughout the year.

St. Cloud State University

4-YEAR PRIVATE COLLEGES

Augsburg University
Bethany Lutheran College
Bethel University
Carleton College
College of Saint Benedict
College of St. Scholastica
Concordia College, Moorhead
Concordia University, St. Paul
Gustavus Adolphus College
Hamline University
Macalester College
Saint John's University
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
St. Catherine University
St. Olaf College
University of Northwestern—St. Paul
University of St. Thomas

2-YEAR PUBLIC COLLEGES

Anoka Technical College
Anoka-Ramsey Community College
Central Lakes College
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
Lake Superior College
Minnesota State Community & Technical College
Minnesota State College Southeast
Minnesota West Community & Technical College
Normandale Community College
Northland Community & Technical College
Pine Technical & Community College
Ridgewater College
Riverland Community College
Rochester Community & Technical College
Saint Paul College
South Central College

4-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Metropolitan State University

FREE APPLICATIONS DURING COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE MONTH (OCTOBER 1-31)* Some institutions use promo codes, noted by [] below.

PRIVATE COLLEGES

Dunwoody College of Technology
Minneapolis College of Art and Design [MCW2025]

4-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Bemidji State University
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Southwest Minnesota State University
University of Minnesota, Crookston
University of Minnesota, Morris [Morris24]
University of Minnesota, Rochester
Winona State University

2-YEAR PUBLIC COLLEGES

Alexandria Community & Technical College
Century College
Dakota County Technical College
Hennepin Technical College [MSM24]
Inver Hills Community College
Minneapolis College
Minnesota North College
North Hennepin Community College [MSM24]
Northwest Technical College
St. Cloud Technical and Community College

***ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MAY APPLY TO THESE MINNESOTA COLLEGES FOR FREE ALL YEAR (BEYOND OCTOBER).** This includes all of the colleges listed above, with the addition of the **U of M campuses in the Twin Cities and Duluth.** High school counselors and college admission staff can help a student complete the fee waiver or self-report during the application process to waive fees.

Campus Visit Checklist

Visiting a college campus helps you get a sense of what a college — and life at that college — is like. This can help you decide whether the college is right for you.

GATHER INFORMATION

Find out what you need to do to apply, and see if the college's class and major offerings are what you want:

- ☐ Take part in a group information session at the admission office.
- ☐ Interview with an admission officer.
- ☐ Pick up financial aid forms.
- ☐ Sit in on a class that interests you. If classes aren't in session, just see what the classrooms are like.
- ☐ Meet a professor who teaches a subject that interests you.
- ☐ Talk to students about what they think of their classes and professors.
- ☐ Get the names and business cards of the people you meet so you can contact them later if you have questions.

EXPLORE THE CAMPUS

Get a feel for student life, and see if this college is a place where you will do well:

- ☐ Take a campus tour.
- ☐ Visit the dining hall, fitness center, library, career center, bookstore, and other campus facilities.
- ☐ Talk to current students about the college and life on campus.
- ☐ Check out the freshman dorms, and stay overnight with a student, if possible.
- ☐ Talk to the coaches of sports that you may want to play.
- ☐ Walk or drive around the community surrounding the campus.

CHECK OUT CAMPUS MEDIA

Tune in to learn what's happening on campus and what's on students' minds:

- ☐ Listen to the college radio station.
- ☐ Read the student newspaper.
- ☐ Scan bulletin boards to see what daily student life is like.
- ☐ Go to the career center and learn what services it offers.
- ☐ Browse the school's website and any campus blogs.
- ☐ Read other student publications, such as department newsletters, alternative newspapers, and literary reviews.

GET THE MOST OUT OF A CAMPUS VISIT IN **6 STEPS**

1 DECIDE WHERE AND HOW

See if your school arranges group trips to colleges or if you could get a group of friends together and visit the campus. A family trip is another option and allows you to involve your family in the process.

2 PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

Before you set out, get a map of the college campus and pick out places of interest. Call the college's admission office to schedule a guided tour of the campus.

3 TAKE YOUR OWN TOUR

Just wandering around the campus on your own or with friends can be the best way to get a feel for what a college is like.

4 EXPLORE THE FACILITIES

Find the spots on campus where students gather or ask a student where the best place to eat is to get a feel for the character of the college. Visit the library and check out the gym or theater. Ask an admission officer if you can tour a dorm and a classroom.

5 MAKE CONNECTIONS

Talk to current students. Ask the students at the next table or sitting nearby what they like best about the college.

6 TAKE NOTES

During your visit, write down some notes about your experience. What did you see that excited you? Are there aspects of the college that you don't like? If so, what are they?

Questions to Ask During Your Visit:

ASK TOUR GUIDES/STUDENTS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What's it like to go from high school to college?
- What do you do in your free time? On the weekends?
- What do you love about this college?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What is it like to live here?
- What does the college do to promote student involvement in campus groups, extracurricular activities, or volunteerism?

ASK PROFESSORS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- Can a student be mentored by professors, graduate students, or upperclassmen?
- How are professors rated by the college? Does the college think mentoring and meetings for project guidance are important?
- How does the college help students have access to professors outside class? Do professors join students for lunch, help with community service groups, or guide student organizations?
- How many students do research or other kinds of projects for a semester or more?

ASK THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

- How much has your total college cost for each student risen in the past year?
- How much do your students usually end up owing when they graduate?
- What is the average income of graduates who had the same major that interests me?
- Will my costs go up when your tuition goes up, or can we use the same tuition rate I started with so I'll know the costs for four years?
- How many students usually graduate in the major that interests me? How long do these students usually take to get their degree? In what ways does the college help students graduate in four years?

College Visits

How to set up:

- ☐ You may either call your college or sign up online through the college's website.
- ☐ Be prepared to tell them a date and time that you would like to go.
- ☐ In some cases, they will ask what program you are interested in. If you answer, they will likely show you the specific program area and maybe even introduce you to students or faculty within that area.
- ☐ Colleges may have specific visit days for specific programs
- ☐ A parent needs to call the attendance line (354-1417) to excuse the absence.

Things to keep in mind

1. If you visit on a weekend or have visited during a time that the college is not in session, you may want to visit again. Colleges often have a different feel when students are present.
2. Use the included campus visit sheet to make the most of your visit.

College Courses Offered at NLS

***NLS High School cannot send your college transcript. They belong to the college. As a student you must request and pay for your college transcript to be sent to your college(s) of choice.**

Southwest MN State University

ENG 151: Academic Writing - 4 credits
LIT 100: Human Diversity - 3 credits
MATH 110: College Algebra - 3 credits
MATH 125: Special Functions and trigonometry - 3 credits
COMM 110: Essentials of Speaking and Listening - 3 credits
PSYCH 101: Psychology - 3 credits

University of MN - Twin Cities

Physics 1101W: Introductory College Physics I - 4 credits

Minnesota State University - Mankato

KSP 235: Human Development - 3 credits
BIO 105: General Biology - 4 credits

Minnesota North College - Itasca Campus

All CIS Infinity classes

Requesting Transcripts

Important for requesting credit recognition:

1. Save the syllabus, all written coursework, and, if possible, exams
 2. Photocopy and save the textbook's table of contents
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- ☐ For Southwest classes: go to www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords. Select "Transcripts". Check the "after Grades are Posted" option.
 - ☐ For U of MN classes: go to onestop.r.umn.edu/academics/transcripts-and-grades and follow the directions for requesting a transcript.
 - ☐ For Mankato: go to www.mnsu.edu/academics/course-planning-and-registration and follow the directions for requesting a transcript.
 - ☐ For MN North: go to <https://minnesotanorth.edu/academics/records/> and follow the directions for requesting a transcript.

Letter of Recommendation – Information

Name: _____

Date Required: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Rank/GPA: _____

Scholarship or school applying to: _____

State any honors, AP or enriched classes taken: _____

A. Post high school plans (include school, career options, work): _____

B. Your strengths, aptitudes, and/or skills: _____

C. Special interests, hobbies, talents, etc.: _____

D. Activities:

Years of Participation

Awards/Honors – School

9 10 11 12

E. Community

F. Work Experience

