

September 2025

Dear Students and Parents,

This is your copy of the School and College Counseling Office Information 2025-2026. It is divided into sections for each class year. You should be particularly aware of the ideas and suggestions for your daughter's grade, but review other materials as well. Some of the information is of a general nature while certain procedures pertain only to Mount Saint Dominic Academy. All of it, however, will be of value to your daughter in completing a successful year at the Mount.

We suggest that both students and parents read the material. Should there be a question about anything contained in this brochure, please call your daughter's counselor for an explanation. If you wish to make an appointment, please call Extension 1112.

May this school year at the Mount be a productive one for you.

Sincerely,

School and College Counseling Office

*Pauline Condon, Director of School & College Counseling
Kayla Campanile, School and College Counselor
Kristina Bisceglia, School and College Counselor
Chase Padusniak, College Counselor (Part-time)
Ceil Marra, Administrative Assistant*

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

We sincerely hope that your first year at Mount Saint Dominic Academy will be a happy and successful one. We encourage you to take your school work seriously, join some extracurricular activities, and meet new friends. The members of the school counseling department are here to help you with your transition from elementary or middle school. Please call us if we can be of any assistance. We would like to remind you that the courses you take and the grades you receive this year are important to your future. They form the first part of your transcript or the cumulative record of your years at Mount St. Dominic Academy. The average of your grades begins your cumulative grade point average which indicates your scholastic achievement standing among your classmates. A poor first (or sophomore or junior) year will be reflected on your transcript, an important item in the college admission process.

To be a happy Mount student, you should investigate and participate in some extracurricular activities. Such participation provides the opportunity to broaden your circle of friends and develop practical leadership skills. Consider running for an office now or next year.

Feel free to speak with your counselor about your academic progress. Your counselor will be happy to have you make an appointment to discuss academic or personal matters at any time. You can email your counselor for an appointment or simply stop by during lunch or CAP.

If you are taking an AP Exam, the full payment is due **Friday, January 30, 2026.**

There will be a College Panel Night for first year students, sophomore and junior Parents on **March 24, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the PAC.** Try to attend.

It is important to keep track of your activities that you are involved in this year. During the Health and Wellness seminar class in the fall, you will log into Naviance and begin to create a resume. You will keep this record for various school activities, and any service that you do in or outside of school. If you intend to play sports in college, you could consider an athletic resume.

Explore summer enrichment programs. Look for volunteer or job opportunities that are of interest to you. You can gain valuable experience from these opportunities. If you will need working papers for a summer job, you can obtain the form from Mrs. Marra in the School Counseling Office. All forms must be filed at your local board of education.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

Find out what materials are available over the internet, and Resource Center in our Counseling Office to help you plan for college. Your public library has college selection materials also. Of special interest will be the general guides such as The College Handbook, Index of Majors, College Cost Book, and Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges, as well as the Naviance college program and individual college web-sites.

Keep your grades up. Remember your sophomore grades will become part of your cumulative GPA.

Your counselor will be happy to meet with you concerning both academic and personal concerns. Do not hesitate to make an appointment.

You will be taking the PSAT/NMSQT on Wednesday, **October 15th** this year. In the fall, you will receive a copy of the PSAT Student Bulletin which will help in preparing for this test.

Because you are a sophomore, you will not qualify for the National Merit Scholarship program, but you will gain valuable experience for next year when you will be eligible. These results will also be strong indicators of your SAT I scores. Compare your PSAT scores with your practice SAT I scores for added confirmation.

Remember to register for all standardized tests using the legal form of your name.

If you are taking AP Exams, the full payment is due **Friday, January 30, 2026**.

Continue to investigate careers. The Career program on Naviance, where you may explore college and career information is part of our Sophomore Seminar. Speak with persons in the field; investigate the possibility of a summer job connected with your field of interest. There will be a College Panel Night for First year students, Sophomore and Junior Parents on **March 24, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the PAC**. Try to attend.

Course offerings for the following year may be discussed before course selection time in March. Students may choose several electives for the junior year.

College Fair dates will be posted in The Week Ahead. Attend one or more if you can.

In the sophomore seminar, you will create a resume on Naviance of your extracurricular activities, as well as, service in or outside of school.

Explore summer enrichment programs. Good study or work experience can be gained during the summer. If you will need working papers for a summer job, you can obtain the form from Mrs. Marra in the School and College Counseling office or go online at myworkinpapers.nj.gov. All forms must be filed at your local board of education.

Visit colleges whenever possible – spring break, summer vacation. “Get the feel” of each school.

JUNIOR YEAR

September

Undoubtedly you have received information from colleges or you will be requesting information yourself very soon. Consider documenting each college you investigate. Study the materials so that you have an overview of these colleges. Continue to look through the general guides, the college web-sites, and the Naviance college program for answers to specific questions about admissions, majors, and finances.

Grades and curriculum are the most important aspects of your college applications. Remember that all your grades become part of your cumulative GPA that is recorded on your transcript.

Visit colleges and attend information sessions and tours. Talk to classmates, parents, teachers, recent graduates of the Mount who are in college, college graduates, adult friends, college admissions officers, employers, and potential employers. Visit web-sites of colleges to receive up-to-date information, as well as, Naviance.

College Fair dates will be posted in The Week Ahead. Attend one or more if you can.

College admissions representatives will be visiting Mount St. Dominic Academy in the fall. To attend a session you must sign up on Naviance. You must receive permission from your teacher to attend these sessions.

October

Develop lists of your interests, educational priorities, special talents and abilities, social and cultural preferences, and personal qualities. Refer to these lists as you explore colleges in more detail and keep the lists up to date. This will become a major part of your resume.

You will be taking the PSAT/NMSQT on Wednesday, **October 15th**. Take this seriously; it will be a predictor of the SAT. High scoring juniors may be eligible for National Merit Scholarships and/or special academic commendation. You will receive a PSAT Student Bulletin. PSAT results will be available to you in December.

November

Actively use the sources of information about colleges that you have found. Read the publications carefully. Talk to others about your expectations.

List the college features that suit your interests, needs, and abilities. Try to rank them in order of their importance to you. These include size, type of college, location, fields of study offered, academic quality, necessary facilities, desirable programs, special opportunities, cost and financial aid opportunities, and social and cultural environment.

December

You will receive your PSAT results this month. Use this information to assist with your college search, and to determine which of your current college choices are “reach” schools, matches, and which are “likelies”.

Juniors should take the SAT and/or ACT at least once in the spring. Decide which date(s) in the spring you will take the SAT and/or ACT. Check the registration dates so that you will register on time because there is an additional fee for late registration. SAT Booklets, as well as application forms, are available on-line at www.collegeboard.com.

Our school code is **310180**.

Currently, many institutions are test optional. Check out those colleges on www.fairtest.org.

January

If you have already identified colleges you would like to visit this year, you may contact admissions office; mention your academic interests, and arrange for a campus visit. Winter and Spring breaks, as well as summer vacation, provide ample visit opportunities. Many colleges have open house programs in the fall and spring. Check the web-site.

When considering possible senior courses, remember to continue to challenge yourself.

Your Junior Seminars will assist you with beginning the college process. Use the materials that will be distributed to help you organize your college information.

If you are taking AP Exams, full payment is due **Friday, January 30, 2026**.

February

Continue to keep track of your activities for junior year so that your involvement is available for college admissions.

Review your transcript. Check your courses and grades, as well as your address and birthday. Make sure the school counseling office is aware of any discrepancies you find.

Student meetings with your counselor to discuss college planning and senior electives will be scheduled in February, March and April.

Investigate private student aid and scholarship programs for which you might be eligible. Register at www.fastweb.com to be notified of scholarship opportunities. The earlier you start, the better chance you will have to locate monies. Many students receive financial aid of one kind or another from the colleges to which they are accepted when the financial aid office puts together a “financial aid package” for them. This “package” contains every type of aid that is available from the individual college, including federal, state, and college aid from the specific college.

We will have the Junior College Information Night on **February 5, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the PAC**.

Consider taking the ACT test.

March

There will be a College Admissions Panel Night for first year students, sophomore and junior Parents on **March 24, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the PAC**. Try to attend.

April

Plan to attend College Fairs that come to our area in the spring. Look for the dates in The Week Ahead.

If you plan to play Division I or II sports in college you must go online to NCAA Clearinghouse to register as a perspective athlete. Authorization forms for release of records can be obtained in the school counseling office and returned to Mrs. Marra after you have registered.

The counselors will conduct three workshops dedicated to the college essay. Following this, you will continue to develop your essay in your English class.

May

Develop a list of colleges that interest you and put them in Naviance.

June, July, August

Identify teachers whom you could ask for letters of recommendation. Ask yourself whether or not they know your work, personality, and other characteristics well enough to make valid recommendations. Then ask that teacher for a letter of recommendation before the school year ends.

Consider a college visit in conjunction with any summer travels you and your family may do.

Finalize your college essay and begin to work on the Common App.

If you wish to apply for “early decision” which will usually give you an acceptance decision by December or January, you will want to do serious preparation over the summer. Your application materials have to be in early (usually between October 15 and November 15) to be considered by colleges for early decision. Early decision is a **BINDING** contract; a student accepted by a college under this plan is obligated to register at that college and will withdraw applications to all other colleges. Make sure you visit the college before applying early decision.

Early Action lies within the same dates; however, it is not a binding contract. You may apply Early Action to as many colleges as desired.

Schedule of 2025-2026 SAT Reasoning Test

Test Dates	Registration Deadlines - Regular	Deadline for Changes, Regular Cancellation and Late Registration
August 23, 2025	August 8, 2025	August 12, 2025
September 13, 2025	August 29, 2025	September 2, 2025
October 4, 2025	September 19, 2025	September 23, 2025
November 8, 2025	October 24, 2025	October 28, 2025
December 6, 2025	November 21, 2025	November 25, 2025
March 14, 2026	February 27, 2026	March 3, 2026
May 2, 2026	April 17, 2026	April 21, 2026
June 6, 2026	May 22, 2026	May 26, 2026

Schedule of 2025-2026 ACT

Test Dates	Regular Deadlines – Regular	Registration Deadlines - Late fee required
September 6, 2025	August 1, 2025	August 19, 2025
October 18, 2025	September 12, 2025	September 30, 2025
December 13, 2025	November 7, 2025	November 24, 2025
February 14, 2026	January 7, 2026	January 21, 2026
April 11, 2026	March 6, 2026	March 24, 2026
June 13, 2026	May 8, 2026	May 27, 2026
July 11, 2026	June 5, 2026	June 24, 2026

SENIOR YEAR

September

Individual and Senior Seminar with your school counselor begins. These will direct the final stages of the college selection process for you. Set up appointments as often as you feel they are necessary.

Plan to use your senior year to obtain the greatest challenge from your education, while allowing for personal growth in other areas. Remember you need to apply yourself because colleges will be reviewing your senior year grades carefully. You must pass all senior courses in order to be eligible for graduation. Senior year matters!

If you have not clarified your educational goals, needs, and preferences and developed a list of colleges, it is not too late. See your counselor.

When you receive college materials, analyze the application instructions to see what information is required and to learn about all due dates.

Last chance, if needed, you can sign up for a Fall SAT and/or ACT Test. Tests are administered in September, October, November and December.

If you still need to visit colleges, call, make appointments, and go for the interviews.

The College Scholarship Service (CSS) offers a service called the Financial Aid Profile. CSS will begin processing them October 1st. The “Profile” may be used by some private colleges to determine their own scholarships and grants. Be sure to check that the colleges you apply to require this form, in addition to the FAFSA. You must complete the CSS Profile at www.collegeboard.com. A list of colleges who require this form is available at the collegeboard web-site.

Plan to attend the Financial Aid Night for seniors and their parents on **September 23, 2025 at 7 PM.**

College admissions representatives will be visiting Mount St. Dominic Academy in the fall. To attend a session, you must sign up on Naviance. You must receive permission from your teacher to attend these sessions. This can be a final show of interest on your part to a specific college.

October

If you are still uncertain about college choices, attend a regional college fair. Dates will be announced.

November

Some colleges also have their own financial aid applications that you must complete. Inquire at the colleges to which you are applying as to the necessary forms.

Before printing the final copies of your essays ask your parents, English teacher, or school counselor to check it for spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. **DO NOT SEND AN ESSAY THAT HAS NOT BEEN CHECKED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF.**

If you are planning for “early decision” admission, have a transcript request form in the school counseling office in sufficient time to allow it to be processed, mailed and received by the college on its due date. “Early decision” dates are usually between October 15 and November 15, but check your application instructions to be certain. Remember early decision is a binding agreement.

Your first marking period grades will **automatically** be sent to all colleges to which you have applied.

Check the scholarship information posted on Naviance. If you are interested in applying for one or more of these scholarships get the applications from the School Counseling Office.

Remember the deadline for submitting all transcript requests to the School Counseling office is **December 1, 2025** if you wish them to be mailed before Christmas.

December

Be mindful of your application deadline dates.

If you applied for early decision, you will probably receive an answer this month.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at most colleges must be filed between January 1st and February 15, 2026 in order to be considered for federal financial assistance at www.FAFSA.gov. Check with each college for the deadline.

Requests for transcripts and recommendations must be in by **December 1, 2025** for applications due December 15th and January 1, 2026 deadline. Many colleges suggest that students submit applications in December even if there is a January or February application deadline.

January

Begin working on your FAFSA financial aid application. Check college deadlines.

If you did not submit your transcript requests before Christmas, do so now giving the School Counseling Office sufficient time to prepare your materials.

Keep working on your grades. Grades continue to count throughout the senior year.

If you are taking AP Exams, full payment is due **Friday, January 30, 2026**.

February

Your first semester grades will **automatically** be sent to all colleges to which you have applied. This is required. Even to schools that you have received acceptance.

March

Keep the School Counseling office informed of your college acceptances as you receive them. This will keep your records accurate, and allow us to keep statistics. Also inform the School Counseling Office when you receive scholarships and give Mrs. Marra a copy of any official scholarship awards.

April

Most colleges announce their decisions by April 1st. If you are accepted at more than one college, decide which one is best for you. Talk it over with your parents, counselor, family, and friends. Think it through carefully yourself.

Consider the financial aid packages you have been offered. This may well be an important factor in your final enrollment decision. Financial aid award letters must be signed and returned to the institution. Make sure you do not overlook this requirement.

Notify the schools that you have decided not to attend of this decision.

Scholarship applications from civic and service organizations in the area will be distributed as they arrive and are posted on Naviance. Personally inquire about local offers where you live, from where your parents are employed or from organizations to which they belong.

May

The National Association for College Admission Counselors sets the candidate reply date as May 1st. You must send your deposit to the college of your choice by this date or you will jeopardize your admission. Your deposit should arrive at the college no later than this date.

If you are “wait listed” by a college and intend to enroll if accepted, call, visit or write to the admissions director to state your intention and ask how to strengthen your application. Recent evidence of notable academic or other achievements could be helpful.

KEEP THE SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE INFORMED OF ALL SCHOLARSHIPS OR GRANTS YOU RECEIVE OR HONORS PROGRAMS TO WHICH YOU ARE INVITED. BRING A COPY OF THE LETTER ANNOUNCING THE AWARD TO THE SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE. THIS INFORMATION IS USED FOR THE AWARDS CONVOCATION AND FOR THE GRADUATION PROGRAM. THIS MUST BE DONE IN ORDER FOR THE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT TO SEND YOUR FINAL TRANSCRIPTS TO YOUR COLLEGE.

June

Your final transcript will **automatically** be sent to the college in which you have enrolled.

Pay attention to the dates you are given by the college of your choice such as orientation, class registration, advisor meetings, and residence hall opening date.

LOOK FORWARD TO A CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING COLLEGE CAREER!!!