Irondequoit High School



College Planning Guide

2025 – 2026

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Introduction

Welcome to the endeavor that is the college application process! Take some deep breaths. We are here to help. This resource was created because we know there is **much** information to consume about this process. We hope the Table of Contents can help you go directly to the topic you may be searching for. In addition, although it will be available electronically, the fact that you can hold a tangible resource in your hands is the biggest difference we hope can help to ease the process.

Another way to keep informed about updates related to "all things college" is the S'More Newsletter that is put out quarterly. There is also a Senior-specific S'More which is embedded in the Fall Newsletter. Our Newsletter can also be found on the High School Counseling website.

In addition, a fantastic resource that IHS has available to us is the College and Career Center. This office is located just adjacent to the Counseling Center and is run by Mrs. Cook. Within this office, you can find a number of resources related to the endeavor that is the college search process including but not limited to: books, pamphlets, and various informative materials. This is also where Mrs. Cook has visits from college representatives to meet with students in a small, more personalized setting where students can ask questions and gather more information about that particular institution. This office is also one location where students can turn in their Transcript Request Form(s)(more on this on page 30).

Finally, another item to consider is our Career Connections Program, run by Mrs. Bucciarelli, who is also located in our College and Career Center. This is an exciting program of experiential learning. Among many other things, Mrs. Bucciarelli is available to meet with students who are looking to pursue Explorer Posts, shadowing, and/or internship opportunities. This is an important step in the process as it relates to helping your student either figure out or rule out a potential career path, and subsequently their college major.

As a reminder, this chart below shows the Counselor Assignment breakdown for the Class of 2026:

Counselor	Last Name Begins With
Ms. Butterman	A – Cas
Mrs. Iannopollo	Cat – Fo
Ms. Laraby	Fr – Lo
Ms. Herne	Lu – Pac
Ms. Ferriter	Pag – Sch
Ms. Bush	Sco - Z

Beginning the College Search Process

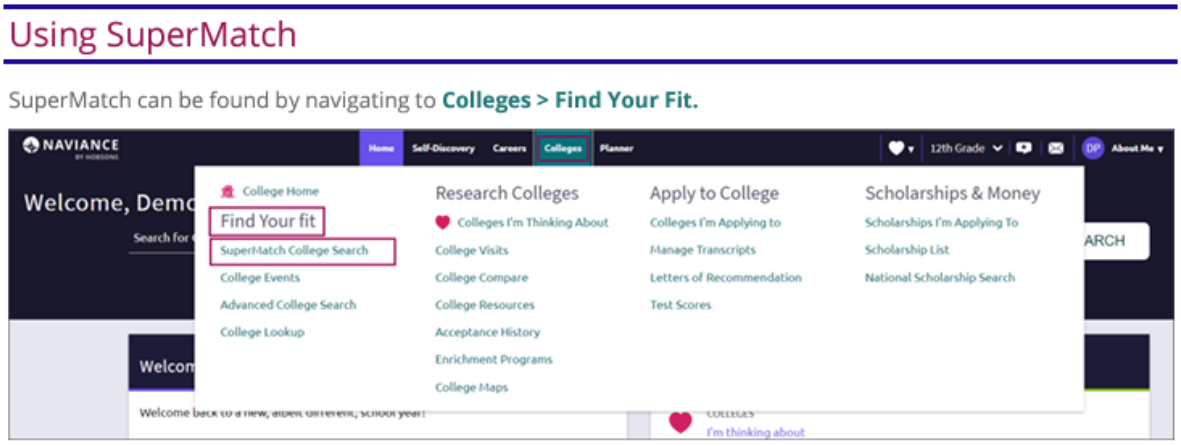
There are a variety of ways for students to begin the college search process. As Juniors, Counselors do deliver classroom guidance related to this endeavor. Students are also encouraged to meet individually with their counselor to discuss options. This can absolutely occur as often as the student wants or needs, but more so in Junior year, typically in the Spring.

In addition, students and parents/guardians should work together to search for potential colleges. Students should reflect carefully on what characteristics they would like in a college. Characteristics include, but are not limited to:

- Degree Types Offered
- Location
- Available Programs/Majors
- Size
- Cost
- Selectivity
- Retention rate
- Graduation and job placement rates
- Religious affiliations
- Athletics
- Internship Opportunities

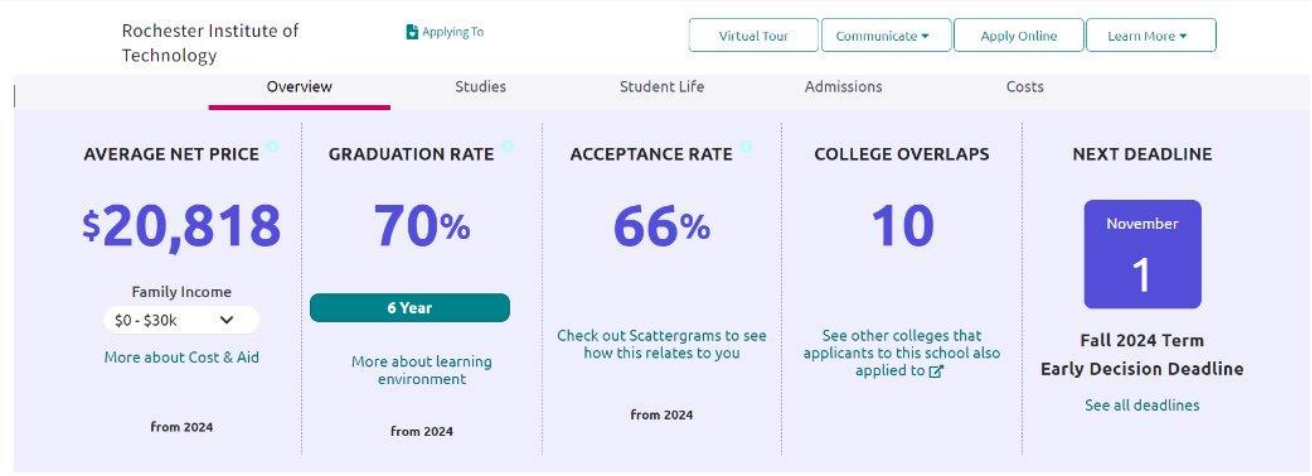
Remember to keep an open mind. For example, some students are surprised by their comfort at a very large school once they visit the campus, even though they thought they wanted to attend a small school about the size of IHS (approximately 1,200 students).

After engaging in reflection and conversation about the characteristics of potential colleges, the next step is to do a web-based college search. Most often students start with Naviance*. There is a great feature in Naviance called SuperMatch College Search. This tool makes it even easier for students to explore their options and discover colleges that are a match with their academic profile and a fit with what they're looking for in a college experience.

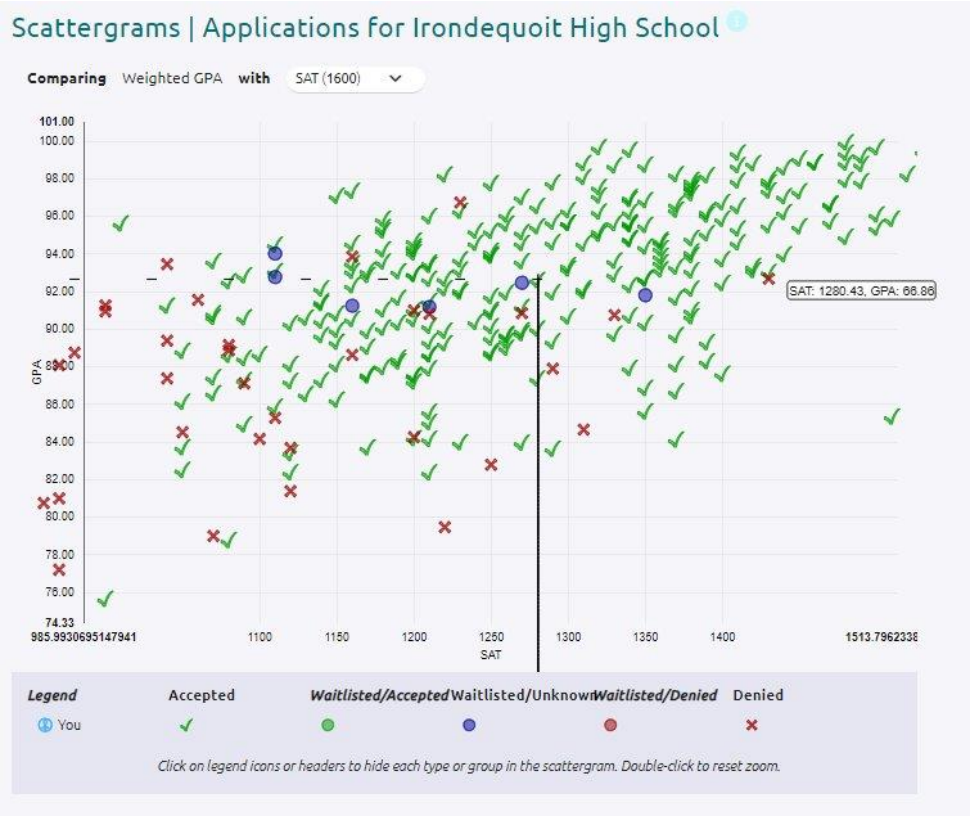


*A disclaimer about Naviance is that unfortunately, the site does not always have the most up-to-date information. Students are always encouraged to go directly to the school website itself to verify requirements. If there are any discrepancies, **please** contact that school directly!

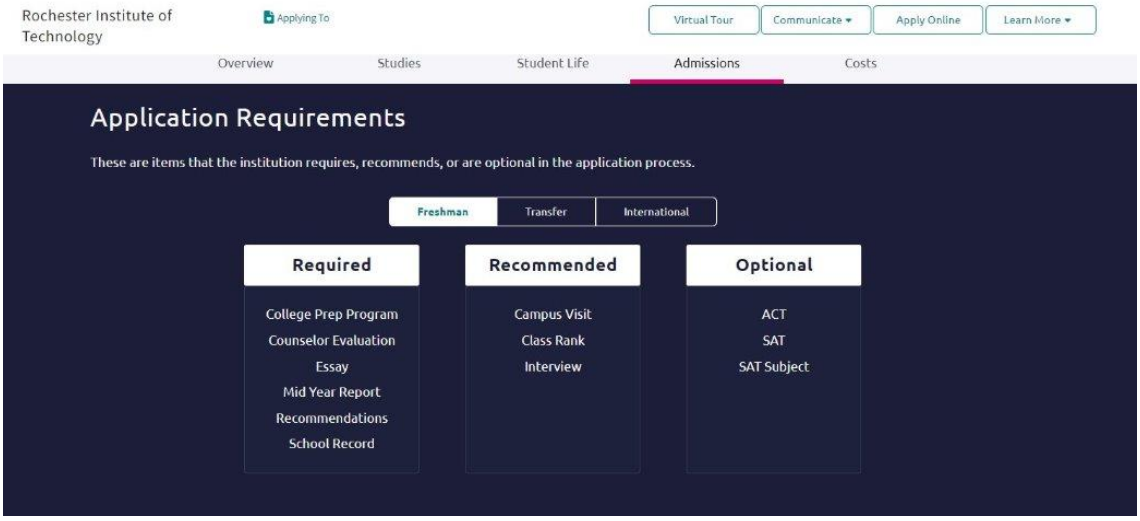
The following information are snippets of what Counselors provide Juniors during classroom/group guidance in the Spring which is still relevant as a student enters Senior year. The example immediately below is the information you can expect to see when searching for a specific school within Naviance:



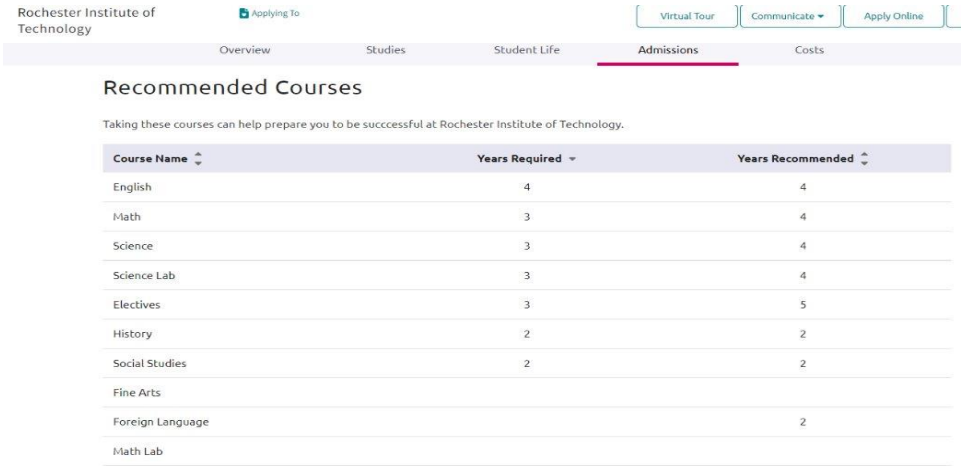
Students often also find the Scattergrams (example using RIT is continued below) to be helpful. It allows students to see the GPA and standardized test scores of students from IHS who have applied to a specific school. Keep in mind that these graphs offer a simplified picture of the acceptance rates for colleges, since the graphs cannot show the other qualities of our students that may have helped or hindered their application, such as extracurricular activities or special talents. Even so, the Scattergrams can help you gauge whether a school might be a Reach, Match, or Safety (more on this on page 7) school for you.



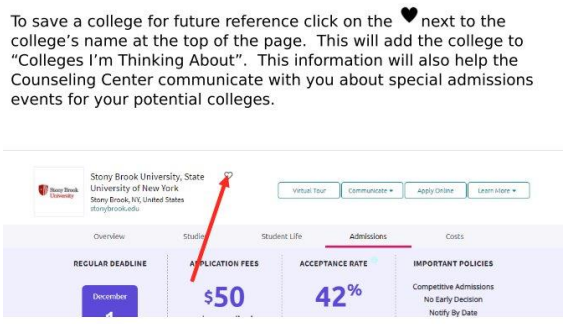
College research in Naviance continued:



Below is an example of how many years of each subject the college recommends taking during high school:



So that students don't have to continue searching the same college, they may save it for future reference:



There are many other websites that can be valuable resources in the college search process, including but not limited to: www.collegeboard.org; www.petersons.com; www.collegeconfidential.com.

Types of Undergraduate College Programs

Program	Description	Typical Length
Certificate	Career-specific training, usually very hands-on.	6 month – 2 years
Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS)	Career-specific, generally designed for students to enter the work force after completion.	2 years
Associate of Arts Degree (AA) and Associate of Science Degree (AS)	Program designed for students to transfer to a 4-year college to complete a Bachelor's Degree, referred to as the 2+2 program.	2 years
Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA) and Bachelor of Science Degree (BS)	Traditional 4-year college degree program.	4 years
Bachelor's/Master's Degree Combined Program	Student completes a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in an accelerated time period; also known as 3+2 or 3+3 program.	5 – 6 years

College Choices

Most students apply to 3 – 6 schools:

Reach Colleges	Match Colleges	Safety Colleges
These are some of your top choices, but ones where your chances of admission are lower. This may be because your qualifications match or fall slightly short of the college's average, and the competition for the limited places in the freshman class is intense.	These are colleges where you fit the general admission criteria and have a good chance of getting in. They should have the things you are looking for in a college, and you should be excited to go to school there.	These are colleges whose requirements mean there's little chance you won't be admitted. You can afford to attend, and you'd be excited to go to school there.

College Visits

Visiting a college is the best first-hand view of a college. As much as it is feasible, students should visit prospective colleges to get a feeling about the school. Spending time on a campus gives you a glimpse into the lives of students and the "vibe" of a school. A college visit will often increase or decrease a student's interest in that college.

To make the most of the visit, contact college admissions to find out their visitation policies. Many colleges require that you register for a campus tour in advance. Plan to spend about two to three hours at a college. If possible, visit while school is in session, as the feel on college campuses during breaks and summer is very different. In addition to a campus tour, many schools offer information sessions or opportunities to speak with admissions officers. Many schools allow prospective students to sit in on a class, too. Keep in mind that attending one class will only give you a snapshot of the academics at the school. You may happen upon a class that is not interesting to you or a professor that is less than engaging. At the same time, you may stumble upon a class taught by the most popular professor on campus.

In addition to the "official" parts of the visit, make sure to speak with the experts – the students! They know the most about what it's like to be a student there. Make sure to walk around on your own, too, to see the parts of a campus not highlighted on the tour.

Other tips:

- Do your homework: research the school beforehand and be ready to ask questions
- Make sure you know your basic academic information (Grade Point Average [GPA], Test Scores, and courses you've taken)
- Register with the Admissions Office; many schools consider "Demonstrated Interest" in the school as part of the application process
- Try to meet your Admissions Representative so they can put a face with a name, if you meet this person more than once, they will track this as part of Demonstrated Interest; they may also be the person reading your application
- It is okay if you cannot visit every school before applying, but try to get there before making a final decision about where to attend
- Take pictures and write down your impressions as soon as possible after the visit; details of the visits will begin to blur together
- Pick up a college newspaper and check out the flyers posted around campus to get a sense of the extra-curricular activities and school culture
- Write a thank you email to your admissions representative after a visit
- Ask for an application fee waiver; sometimes they will be provided without asking, but other times they will provide one only upon request

College Admissions Representative Visits to IHS

Admissions Representatives from colleges and universities visit the IHS College and Career Center in the Fall. Juniors and Seniors who would like to attend an informational session should check with their teachers first. The schedule of upcoming visits is found in the College and Career Center or on Schoology. To make the most of the visit, students should prepare for it as they would for a college visit. It is most helpful to have specific questions about the college prepared in advance. This is a great way for college admissions officers to familiarize themselves with you. As already noted, oftentimes the person that comes to visit will be the person reviewing your application if you end up applying.

College Fairs

Operating similarly to when an individual Admissions Representative visits IHS, a college fair is when a group of colleges and universities are present in a booth-/table-style configuration. They often arrive with pamphlets, data, and "swag" to take with you. There are typically yearly fairs that occur throughout the local area, but also within IHS. Be sure to check with Counseling or the College and Career Center to verify dates and locations. It is another great way for college admissions officers to familiarize themselves with you. Once again, the Representative present at the Fair could be the person reviewing your application if you end up applying.

College Interviews

The college interview is a great way to give your application a face! Often, it is an exchange of information – you learn about the college while the college learns about you. We recommend that if a college conducts interviews, you should take advantage of the opportunity.

Types of Interviews

Not all schools offer interviews and among the schools that offer interviews, there are different types of interviews. Some schools will require interviews for certain programs or majors. Some interviews are simply informational – they are an opportunity for you to get to know more about the school and for the school to get to know more about you. Still others are considered evaluative – the interviewer will likely write a report after the interview which will be used in the admissions process.

You could find yourself interviewing with an admissions officer, a student, or an alumnus. Other less formal interview situations include group information sessions with admissions staff and current students, and high school and local college fairs. If you want to attend a music, drama, or dance school, plan on performing an audition or submitting a portfolio.

For more tips and help preparing for a college interview, please see your Counselor.

How are Applications Evaluated?

Colleges typically look at a wide variety of components when reviewing a student's application. Most colleges agree that the strength of a student's transcript is the most important factor in the admissions decision. Students should research each college's criteria, as it does vary. For example, a liberal arts college may greatly value the application essay, whereas a large university of 20,000 students may rely primarily on a student's transcript and SAT/ACT scores if required and/or taken. The table below shows the relative importance of different factors in the admissions decision.

Percentage of colleges attributing different levels of importance to factors in admission decisions:
First-Time Freshmen, Fall 2023

Factor	High Importance	Moderate Importance	Low Importance	No Importance
Grades in College Prep Courses	76.8	15.1	4.9	3.2
Grade in All HS Courses	74.1	18.9	5.4	1.6
Strength of Curriculum	63.8	22.7	10.3	3.2
Positive Character Attributes	28.3	37.5	18.5	15.8
Essay or Writing Sample	18.9	37.3	26.5	17.3
Student's Demonstrated Interest	15.7	27.6	25.4	31.4
Counselor Recommendation	11.9	40.0	27.6	20.5
Teacher Recommendation	10.8	40.5	28.1	20.5
Extracurricular Activities	6.5	44.3	30.8	18.4
HS Class Rank	5.5	22.4	43.2	29.0
Admission Test Scores SAT/ACT	4.9	25.4	38.9	30.8
Portfolio	4.9	10.8	24.3	60.0
Interview	4.3	8.6	32.4	54.6
Work	2.2	30.8	40.0	27.0
State Graduation Exam Scores	1.6	6.5	18.4	73.5
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	1.1	22.2	29.9	50.8

Source: NACAC Admissions Trends Survey, 2023

Standardized Testing
IHS CEEB Code: 334810 (required for registration)

What are the tests?
Due to the COVID pandemic, many colleges have elected to make standardized tests an optional part of a student's application packet, while other colleges may still require that prospective students submit standardized test scores. Many colleges continue to keep a test optional policy. Standardized tests provide data for a college to evaluate you as they are nationally administered. Even if these tests are not required, some students should still consider taking them as the results could enhance their application. Also, some *scholarships* require a minimum test score to be met before accepting applications. The most common tests, the SAT and ACT, are accepted interchangeably. Please see page 30 for a chart of upcoming dates these exams will be administered. Below is an overview of the common standardized tests:

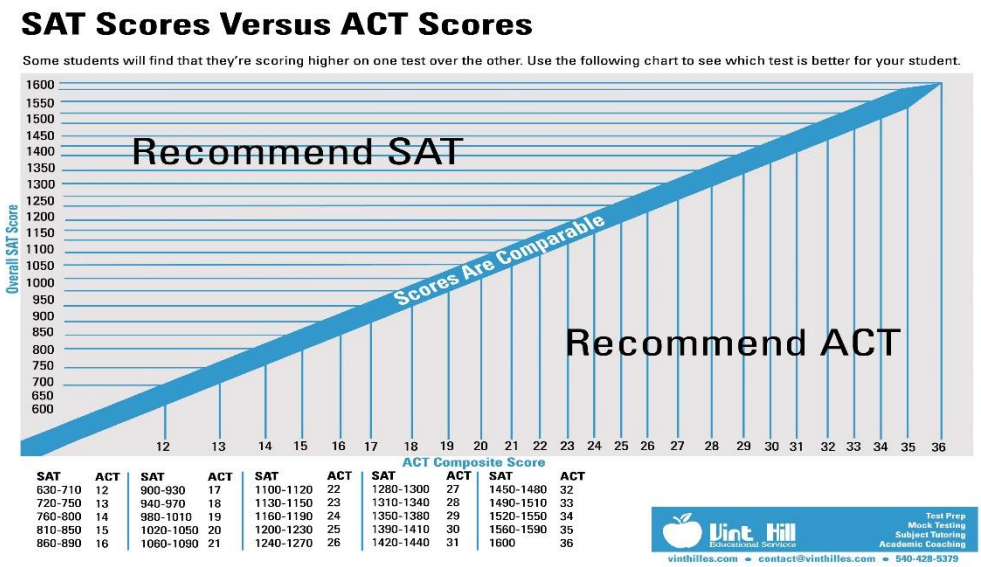
The Practice Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT)
This test is offered once a year in October and allows you to practice for the SAT. We recommend that juniors take the PSAT as it is an exam aimed at students in 11th grade who are entering their third year of high school level math. The PSAT is divided into two main sections: evidence-based reading and writing, and mathematics. Scores from the PSAT are never sent to colleges, but the results are used as the qualifying measure for National Merit Scholarships. We strongly recommend that all 11th graders take the PSAT as it is considered the best practice for the SAT.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) – www.collegeboard.org, https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/
Like the PSAT, the SAT test includes two required sections: Evidence-based reading and writing, and math. For most students, the recommended testing time for the SAT is in the spring of 11th grade and can be taken a second (or even third) time in the fall of 12th grade. Registration for the SAT is online at the website above. The SAT is offered seven times a year. It is often offered at IHS, but students are eligible to take it at other locations, as well.

The SAT	What To Expect
Scoring	- No wrong-answer penalty - Score is out of 1600 o 800 for Math o 800 for Evidence-Based Reading and Writing - Subscores and insight scores available
Anatomy	- 1 Evidence-Based Reading and Writing test o 65-minute Reading section o 35-minute Language and Writing Section - 1 Math test o 55-minute section with calculator o 25-minute section without calculator - 4 answer choices for multiple choice questions
Timing	- 3 hours
Administration	- Available in print and digitally - Fewer questions with a greater focus on in-depth analysis of content and evidence

Math	- Concentrated focus on: o Problem-solving and data analysis o "The Heart of Algebra" o "Passport to Advanced Math" - Real-world problem solving accompanied by informational graphics - Calculator permitted for 37 questions; not permitted for 20 questions - Multiple choice and grid-in questions; 1 Item Set grid-in question
	- Evidence-Based Reading o No Sentence Completions o Test understanding of passages from US and World Literature, History/Social Studies, and Sciences (500-750 words) - Writing and Language o Test "Expression of Ideas" and "Standard English Conventions: through passages relating to Careers, History/Social Studies, Humanities, and Science o All questions pull from extended prose (400-450 words)

The American College Test (ACT) – www.act.org
The ACT is an entrance exam used by colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It is a multiple-choice, pencil-and-paper test administered by ACT, Inc. Subjects tested on are English, Math, Reading, and Science. This test is offered multiple times a year and can be taken at participating testing centers in and around Rochester.



The ASVAB is an amazing free test that is offered to Juniors and Seniors. The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a standardized test on science, math, and language. This aptitude tests matches students with possible career paths. Although it is linked with the military, there is absolutely no obligation to join any military branch.

How are they used?
Standardized test results, if required by colleges are one piece of your college application. Whereas high school curriculum varies in every high school, the SAT and ACT are standardized. Therefore, these tests are one way colleges can compare students from different schools and even different parts of the country. Even so, colleges consistently rank the strength and rigor of the high school transcript as the most important in a student's admissibility to college.

You may find that more and more schools are becoming "test-optional" or have taken a hiatus from requiring standardized tests as part of their admission criteria due to Covid. Some of these institutions are phasing the exams back in, so be sure to check to make sure the status of the school when searching. There is also a growing list of institutions that do not require standardized testing, which can be found at www.fairtest.org. See page 32 for dates and deadlines.

A note about your scores is that IHS does not send SAT and ACT scores to colleges. This is your responsibility.

- Log in to your account at www.collegeboard.org to send SAT scores
- Log into your account at www.act.org to send ACT scores

Fee Waivers and Testing Accommodations

With school meals being free to all students, we wanted to remind parents about the importance of continuing to complete the Free and Reduced Lunch Application annually. Students who remain eligible qualify for other reduced or waived fees for things such as SAT/ACT exam fee waivers, AP exam fee waivers, college application fee waivers, and more. Please reach out to Food Services to receive the link to apply.

Students with a documented disability may be eligible for testing accommodations. There is a separate application process for this that Counselors will automatically process for students, typically prior to the student's 10th grade year. If a student is newly classified or has a new Section 504 Plan, rest assured that your information will be submitted. That said, given that College Board and ACT are their own entities, there are no guarantees that your specific accommodations will be approved.

Free Resources & Practice Exams

Official College Board SAT Online Resources	www.collegeboard.com
Official ACT Online Sources	www.actstudent.org
Khan Academy	www.khanacademy.org

Financial Aid and Scholarships

The financial aid process is an extremely important part of the college choice process for many families. It can also be a confusing part of the process. **The most helpful piece of advice we can offer is to be in contact with college financial aid representatives.** During the college application and financial aid application process, direct specific questions about the financial aid process to the college's financial aid office. Even before the application process, though, area college financial aid representatives are happy to answer questions about financial aid. Feel free to call an area college's financial aid office, such as the office at Monroe Community College, SUNY College at Brockport, or the University of Rochester, just to name a few. Also, IHS also has a yearly Financial Aid Workshop which is part of the Post-High School Planning event where a financial aid representative graciously presents to prospective college students and their parents. This year's event will tentatively be on **Wednesday, 11/12 from 5:30PM – 8:00PM** (subject to change). Please also check the High School website for advertisement of this event.

Another helpful tool is the **College Net Price Calculator (NPC)**. The net price of a school is the college's cost of attendance minus the grants and scholarships you receive. The net price you pay for a particular college is specific to you because it is based on your personal circumstances and the college's financial aid policies. The NPC is a free online tool that gives you a personalized estimate of net price. By providing personalized estimates, net price calculators offer a more informed way of deciding which colleges you can afford. Knowing your net price: gives you the best idea of what you'll pay for a particular college; makes comparing colleges easier; and widens your choice of colleges so you can focus on fit instead of price. Please see **bigfuture.collegeboard.org** for more information.

Students who would like to apply for federal forms of financial aid must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, referred to as the **FAFSA**. Aid from the federal government can take the form of grants that don't need to be paid back, and loans that need to be repaid according to the terms of the loan. The application is online and requires parent information. **Starting on October 1st of Senior year, families can complete the FAFSA at www.fafsa.gov using their completed tax return from 2 years prior.** Families will hear this referred to as the prior-prior tax year. For example, a student planning to enter college in September 2026 will use tax information from 2024 to complete the FAFSA.

Keep in mind that although the FAFSA opens on October 1st, each school has different financial aid deadlines. After the FAFSA is completed and signed using your FSA ID, the family will receive an Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) amount. This is the amount that the federal government determines a family can afford to contribute to the student's college education and is the number that all colleges will use when determining how much federal aid will be awarded to a student. Often, families find that this number is larger than they feel they can afford to contribute. Other families have an expectation that a student will pay for college; however, the EFC is still based on parent and student income information. Students should carefully compare the financial aid packages for each school to which they are accepted before making a final decision. Depending on a family's financial situation, a school that has a more expensive price tag can be more affordable once factoring in financial aid and scholarships.

New York State has its own financial aid application called NYS TAP (Tuition Assistance Program), which can be used for education in NYS-based colleges. Families can complete the TAP application immediately *after* filing their FAFSA. A link is provided to bring students directly to the TAP application from the FAFSA, and much of the information from the FAFSA will be pre-populated into the TAP application if families choose to complete the TAP application from this link.

Some colleges ask for additional financial information to determine school-based aid. These colleges often also require the CSS/Profile application. Always check the financial aid website for each prospective college to determine their scholarship process. Keep in mind that some colleges set earlier application deadlines for students who want to be considered for school-based scholarships.

Students can also choose to apply for scholarships to help offset college costs. Students can visit the College and Career Center for updated scholarship lists. Please also see "Scholarship Tips and Tricks" on page 32 for more information.

For additional financial aid information, visit the website: www.finaid.org. It is an easy-to-navigate site with helpful information.

Junior Year Checklist

Please note there are additional documents on Schoology within the Counseling Center folder to help with these items below

☐ CONTINUE TO DO WELL IN YOUR CLASSES.
- If you are struggling, make sure you ask for help

☐ IF YOU ARE INVOLVED IN EXTRACURRICULARS, GREAT! IF NOT, FIND SOMETHING TO GET INVOLVED IN.
- Remember depth of involvement is more impressive than breadth (you don't have to do everything if you do a few things well)
- If you are hoping to play DI or DII athletics at college, access the NCAA Eligibility Center (web3.NCAA.org) and talk to your school counselor

☐ UPDATE RESUME ON NAVIANCE
- Include all extracurricular activities, honors/awards, work experience, etc.

☐ RESEARCH CAREERS

Four-year college specific

☐ DO COLLEGE RESEARCH AND COLLEGE VISITS

☐ UPDATE NAVIANCE - COLLEGES I'M INTERESTED IN

☐ COMPLETE COLLEGE TESTING (SAT/ACT)
- Although all students now get free lunch, if you think you qualify for a fee waiver please have your parents fill out the application with Food Services; you will need to see your Counselor before you register

☐ CONSIDER WHO AT IHS YOU WILL WANT TO WRITE YOU A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
- If no one comes to mind, develop those relationships this year!
- If applying to four-year colleges, you'll likely need at least one teacher letter of recommendation; a lot of colleges also ask for a counselor letter of recommendation

SENIOR CHECKLIST – COLLEGE

NAME: _____ NAME PRONUNCIATION: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ PHONE CARRIER: _____

TO DO:

- ☐ College research and visits
- ☐ Review Schoology information
- ☐ Complete college testing
- ☐ Update Naviance résumé
- ☐ Request recommendation letters on Naviance
- ☐ Complete Senior Fall Survey on Naviance
- ☐ Match Naviance and Common App
- ☐ Complete Common App or individual college application
- ☐ Submit applications
- ☐ Submit transcript request form to Mrs. Cook
- ☐ Apply for financial aid
- ☐ Stay in contact with schools applied to

COLLEGES I'M APPLYING TO:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

MAJORS I'M INTERESTED IN:

_____

_____

_____

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:

_____

_____

_____

☐ SCHOOL COUNSELOR_____

SAT DATE: _____

ACT DATE: _____

SENIOR CHECKLIST – COLLEGE

SAT DATES:

Test Date	Reg. Deadline	Late Registration
Aug. 23, 2025	Aug. 8, 2025	Aug. 12, 2025
Sep. 13, 2025	Aug. 29, 2025	Sep. 2, 2025
Oct. 4, 2025	Sep. 19, 2025	Sep. 23, 2025
Nov. 8, 2025	Oct. 24, 2025	Oct. 28, 2025
Dec. 6, 2025	Nov. 21, 2025	Nov. 25, 2025
Mar. 14, 2026	Feb. 27, 2026	Mar. 3, 2026
May 2, 2026	Apr. 17, 2026	Apr. 21, 2025
June 6, 2025	May 22, 2026	May 26, 2026

ACT DATES:

Test Date	Reg. Deadline	Late Registration
Sep. 6, 2025	Aug. 1, 2025	Aug. 19, 2025
Oct. 18, 2025	Sep. 12, 2025	Sep. 30, 2025
Dec. 13, 2025	Nov. 7, 2025	Nov. 24, 2025
Feb. 14, 2026	Jan. 7, 2026	Jan. 21, 2026
Apr. 11, 2026	Mar. 6, 2026	Mar. 24, 2026
June 13, 2026	May 8, 2026	May 27, 2026

NCAA INFORMATION:

- ☐ Talk to your Counselor to confirm NCAA coursework eligibility
- ☐ Create an account at http://web3.ncaa.org.ecwr3/
- ☐ Review NCAA Guide for College Bound Student Athlete in Schoology or online

SENIOR FALL SURVEY:

Scan the QR Code to complete the Senior Fall Survey:

Special Considerations

First Generation (also known as First-Gen)
First-gen student means that your parents either did not attend or did not complete a 4-year college or university degree. Some colleges and universities use a different definition, so be sure to ask your admissions counselor, academic advisor, or a faculty member to learn more. Often an institution may have a program geared toward students to encourage retention.

Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP)
This is a New York State program that serves residents who are both educationally and economically disadvantaged. Economically disadvantaged students are members of a household where the total annual income of such household is equal to or less than 185 percent of the amount under the annual United States Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. Each participating HEOP institution establishes its own criteria for educationally disadvantaged, which includes, but is not limited to, the following factors: predicting a student's probability of academic success, non-admissibility to the college's normal admissions standards, and/or to the college at the matriculated status in a degree program. Students who think they may qualify may visit: https://www.nysed.gov/postsecondary-services/higher-education-opportunity-program-heop.

Student Services
For students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan, students will want to ensure that the institution they are applying to is equipped to help you navigate the college experience. If when going on a campus tour or visit, you are encouraged to locate where it is and perhaps make an appointment ahead of time to find out all they can offer or provide you with. Another possible service to connect to is the Adult Career & Continuing Education Service-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) which is a free New York State program provided to eligible residents with a qualifying disability. Students who are receiving special education services should connect with their assigned Case Manager to facilitate this process.

The College Application Process

The following sections describe the college application process for Irondequoit High School students.
Throughout the process, students are encouraged to maintain close contact with their Counselor. Students are also encouraged to reference the instructions in this guide, as many of students' most common questions may already be answered.

The Roles and Responsibilities of High School Faculty, Students, and Parents in the Application Process

Student responsibilities
The student has the primary role in the college application process. Students need to complete college applications, request school documents, request test scores, and manage their college application process. Students need to make certain that their applications are complete, and students should be the primary contact person with college admissions offices. Admissions counselors feel strongly that students applying to college should be in charge of their own college application process, including making phone calls to admissions offices with questions, managing online accounts, and completing their own applications.

The process for completing college applications at IHS is highlighted in the sections below with step-by-step directions.

Counseling Center responsibilities
The Counseling Center will send the following supporting documents to the student's college choices:

- Official transcript
- Counselor letter of recommendation, if needed
- School Profile
- Midyear grades (sent automatically)

In general, counselor letters of recommendation are required or recommended for 4-year schools and are not required (or generally accepted) for 2-year schools. Students do not need to request a counselor letter of recommendation separately; the blue Transcript Request Form indicates a spot to check this off if needed.

Teacher responsibilities
Teachers send letters of recommendation to colleges in support of a student's applications. Students must follow the process for requesting teacher letters of recommendation as indicated on page 25.

Parent responsibilities
Parents serve an important role in the college application process through their support of their child throughout the process. Parents can provide support to their child by helping them create an organizational system throughout the process. Parents can support their child in completing college applications by engaging in conversations with their child on how to focus their answers on their application, and also by proofreading applications. This is a wonderful time for parents to give their child the reins, allowing their child to complete their own applications and take charge of the process. During the financial aid process, parents will need to take on more of a direct role, as the FAFSA requires parents to provide information.

Application Types

Early Decision versus Early Action or Regular Deadline: Which should I pick?

Each college/university has individual admission deadlines. Here is some information to help you choose which deadline makes the most sense for you!

Early Decision: This is an earlier admission deadline and is a BINDING CONTRACT. Students applying to a school as an Early Decision student are committing to attend this school if accepted. Once accepted, the student will need to withdraw all other college applications. Students can only apply to one (1) school Early Decision. Students should also ask about the school's policies with regard to financial aid packages. A note that some schools may sometimes also have up to two (2) rounds of ED pools of applicants.

Early Action: This is an earlier admission deadline which allows students to have the process completed and decision sent to them earlier. This is not binding, and students can apply to as many colleges as they want with an Early Action status. Another important application type to consider is Restrictive Early Action, also known as single-choice Early Action. Only a few highly selective universities have this type, usually Ivy League institutions.

Regular Decision: This is the traditional deadline a school will offer.

Rolling Admission/Deadline: This admission deadline does not have a set date; applications are accepted and reviewed as they come in on a rolling basis. We strongly encourage students to complete their applications in the Fall, even if the school they are applying to has a rolling deadline.

Open Admissions – Typically, community colleges have open admissions, meaning that students with basic credentials, such as a high school diploma or GED, are eligible to enroll. Please note that some programs at community colleges are not open admissions but are competitive. Some examples include nursing programs, veterinary technology, and engineering programs.

Instant Decision: A student can meet with a college admissions representative and immediately learn if they will receive admission. Our College and Career Center does have a few of these each Fall. Students should sign up with Mrs. Cook for an interview time slot and have their applications submitted prior to the date. The dates are still to be determined and posted in the Class of 2026 Schoology page.

Additional Information about the Application Process

With the advent of technology, there is increasingly a lot of information to keep track of. For the college application process in particular, students need to be organized and prepared to manage multiple accounts. Some examples of electronic accounts that students can expect to manage are Naviance, Common App, and specific college application accounts.

Common Application (www.commonapp.org)

More than 900 colleges use the Common Application as their college application. The Common Application allows students to complete one main application for multiple Common App member colleges. In addition to the main application questions, students complete supplemental questions particular to each college. The application is completed entirely online. A note about applications through the State University of New York (SUNY) system is that while they do have their own application system, it is typically easier to apply through Common App. Lastly, the Counselors will be holding Common App workshops during certain lunch periods in mid-October to help students who have specific questions as they complete their application.

The Counselors will be holding Common App workshops in the College and Career Center in the Fall. Please see the Class of 2026 Schoology page for the dates.

Students may only attend a session that is during their lunch or an Independent Study. If a student is not able to attend one of the above dates and needs more help, they are encouraged to reach out to their Counselor.

Other college application sites

While the SUNY system does have its own college application system, it can be clunky and cumbersome. If at all possible, we still recommend that you apply via Common App (especially if applying to other schools that are not SUNY). If a college is not listed in Common App, then you will have to apply via their website.

A note about applying to SUNY schools, every year there are two (2) weeks where students can apply to up to five (5) SUNY schools for free: **10/20/25 – 11/3/25**!

High school class rank

Irondequoit High School does **not** release rank. Most applications give students the option to report rank or not. For certain scholarships or other applications, rank is required. Please reach out to your Counselor as you will be given a percentile rank only.

Midyear grade reporting and 1st quarter grades

The Counseling Center sends out first semester grades in early February. Grades are sent to each school for which a student completed a blue Transcript Request Form. Students **do not** need to request midyear grades; they are sent automatically. Most colleges do not want to see 1st quarter grades. Instead, they prefer to receive the midyear grade report. However, there are some schools that may request the 1st quarter report card. If a college requests 1st quarter grades, the student is responsible for sending the report card.

National Decision Day

Every year, May 1st marks the deadline that students must commit to their chosen college or universities. Typically, there is an event each year at IHS celebrating this momentous date.

Final Transcripts

As high school comes to a close, Counselors make classroom visits of graduating Seniors in order to administer the Senior Survey through Naviance. This Survey gives the student the opportunity to let IHS know the admission decisions of each of the institutions to which they may have applied. This data then informs the Scattergrams that were noted earlier in this Guide. In addition, an imperative part of this Survey is selecting which institution the student is attending and therefore will need the Counseling Center to send their Final High School Transcript. Students who do not take this Survey when Counselors are in classes will have their cap and gown held until they are able to complete it!

In addition, students may receive many emails from their college of choice after their deposit is submitted that they need the student's Final High School Transcript. These emails are often "canned" in nature and are auto-generated by that institution. Given that schools in New York State end later than schools in other parts of the country, students' Final Transcripts are **not** ready or available to be sent until at least July 1st each year.

Transferring Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Credit Courses

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their college receives AP Exam scores and transcripts from any dual credit courses taken at IHS. While the class was taken at IHS, the college offering the dual credit must validate a student's grade on an official transcript from the college. AP exam scores must be validated by the College Board through an official score report. Below are the websites for requesting these documents.

AP Credit:

- Each year a student takes AP Exams, they can send one free score report to a college; score reports include both this year's and past AP exam scores
- Any Senior who takes an AP Exam in May should indicate the college that they will be attending
- If you would like to send a score report and did not take an AP exam during your Senior year, you can pay a $15 fee to request score report to a college
- For all score reporting, go to the website: https://myap.collegeboard.org/login
  Sign in, Select My AP Profile, Select the Score Send Tab, Select Score Send, and follow the instructions

Dual Credit Courses taken at IHS:
Transcripts must be requested at the specific college in which credit was earned.

MCC Dual Credit Courses: www.monroecc.edu/go/registration (Official Academic Transcript)

RIT Dual Credit courses: http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/registrar/academic-transcripts

Naviance

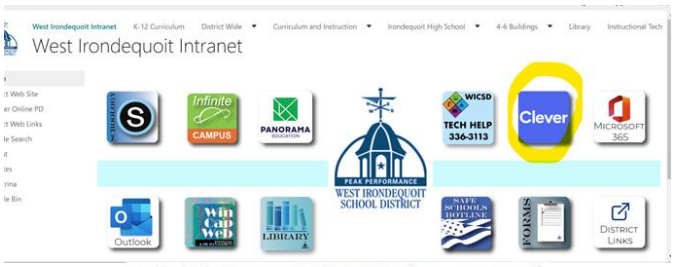
Naviance is our college and career exploration program. Students are exposed to Naviance each year to work on different components of the post high school planning process. Every student has an individualized log-in. Some features to note:

- Résumé Builder
- Career Exploration
- College Search Options
- "Favoriting" a school (clicking the ♡) adds it to the "Colleges I'm Thinking About List" which identifies students to notify for college rep visits
- Tracking Colleges/Universities of Interest
- SuperMatch College Search

Students will submit all college materials through Naviance for the application process including requesting letters of recommendations from teachers. Students who apply to college through Common App can also match their application with Naviance (see next page).

TO ACCESS NAVIANCE:
On student laptop - Launch Google Chrome Browser
Click "Clever" App
Click "Log in with Microsoft"
Click "Naviance" App

Also, see the following graphic on how to access:







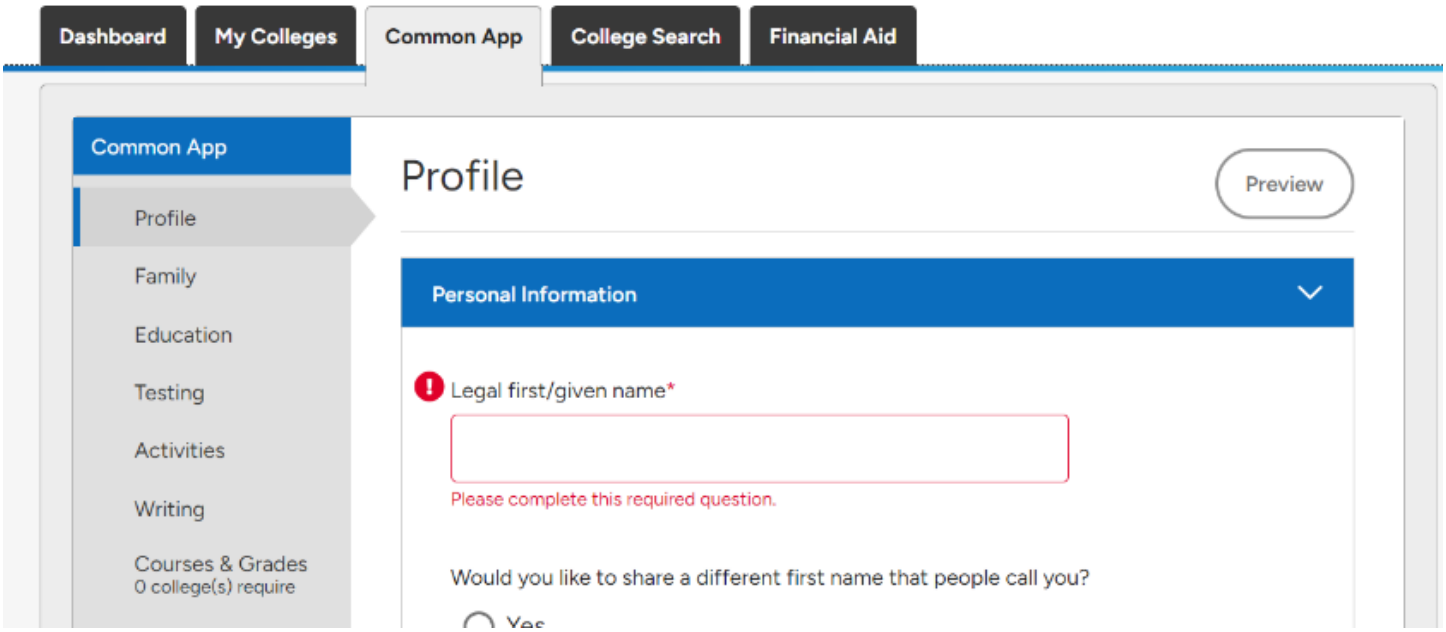
Matching Common App and Naviance Accounts

Create Common App Account at www.commonapp.org

DO NOT USE YOUR SCHOOL EMAIL ADDRESS. PLEASE USE A PROFESSIONAL GMAIL, YAHOO, ETC. ACCOUNT.

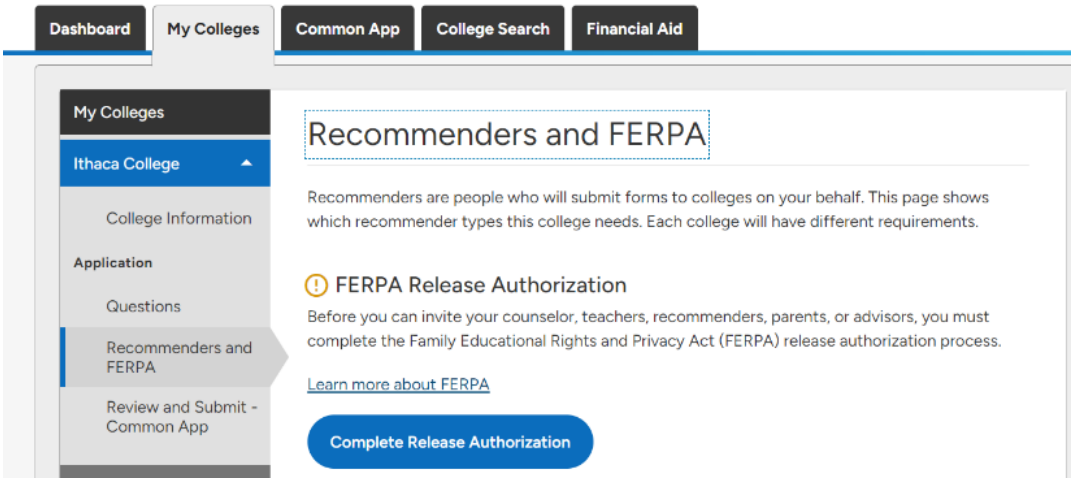
Create a list of colleges you will be applying to using the "College Search" feature. You can search for colleges by name or location. Select the college and add it your list.

In the Common App Tab, add our high school under the Education Section.



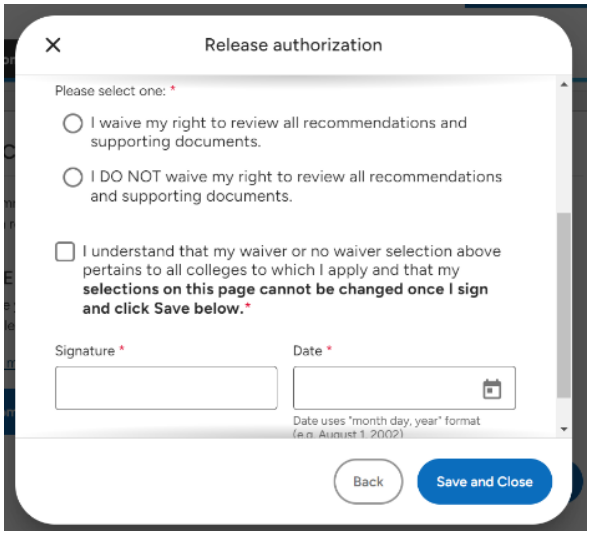
Helpful Information for Completing the Education Section

Current or most recent Secondary School
School Lookup: Irondequoit High School
Date of Entry: September 2022
Boarding School: No
Grades
Graduating class size (approx.): 297
Class Rank Reporting: None
GPA Scale reporting: 100
Cumulative GPA: email your counselor
GPA Weighting: Weighted
Current or Most Recent Year Courses
Course Scheduling System: Semester
Under the My Colleges Tab, click on a college and then "Recommenders & FERPA"



Complete FERPA Release Authorization -- start by clicking "Complete Release Authorization" and read through the Release authorization. Check that you understand and click Continue.

The FERPA Form will pop up. You need to read through it and check the box. Click Save and Close. Another pop up will appear. Select, "I waive my right to review all recommendation and supporting documents" and check that you understand that your waiver pertains to all colleges that you apply to. Type in your full legal name, the date, and click Save and Close.



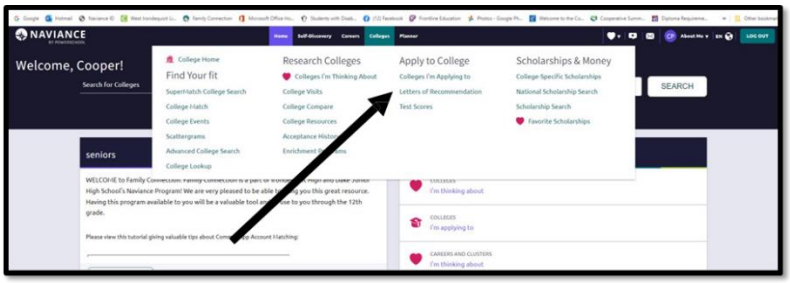
Log in to your Naviance account.
Go to Colleges Tab (or on Home Screen) and click on "Colleges I'm applying to"
Click on "Match Accounts"



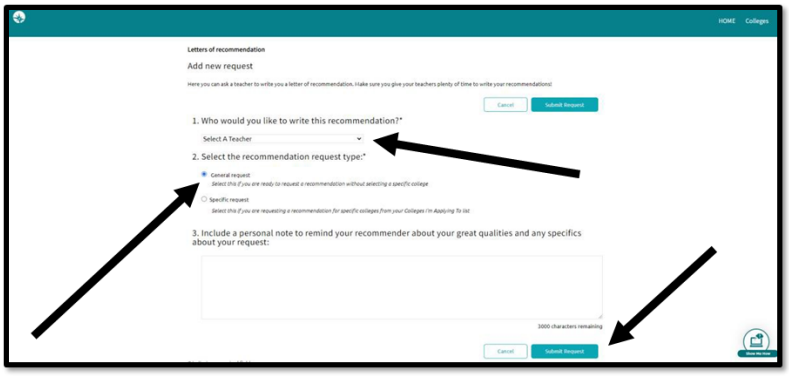
Once you click Match Accounts it will take you to the Common App log in page. Enter your email and password for Common App. Once you click "Sign In" it will automatically match the account. You have now successfully matched your Naviance and Common App accounts.

Naviance Student Guide for Requesting a Teacher Recommendation

1. Update your résumé in Naviance so that your recommenders are well informed of your strengths and activities.
2. Have a face-to-face conversation with your potential recommender. At the end of the conversation, give them the completed salmon-colored Teacher Recommendation Request form (see page 29). This conversation should occur **no less than 2 full weeks prior** to any deadlines.
3. Log into Naviance and select "Colleges" along the top.
4. Select "Letters of Recommendations" from the menu.



5. Select "Add request"
6. Choose your writer's name from the list and select "General Request" in item #2. It may also be helpful to write a brief message, such as: "Salmon sheet forthcoming." Lastly, click "Submit Request".



Instructions for how to add a recommendation to your Common App outside of Naviance

(To be used with individuals who student knows in a different context or does not work at IHS. Example: a coach or employer)

Please note: this procedure should be used for recommenders who are considered "Other Recommenders" and not considered "Teacher Recommenders." Teacher Recommenders should be added through Naviance. Please refer to the directions on how to add teachers through Naviance. In addition, if a teacher at IHS serves as a Coach but is not or has not been the student's teacher, student would still follow **this** process of adding them as an Outside Recommender!

1. Log into the Common app and go to the "My Colleges" tab
2. Open up a college on the left (it doesn't matter which one) and click on "Recommenders and FERPA"
3. Click on the blue icon "Invite Recommenders" at the top of this page. Then click on "Invite Other Recommender" in the window that pops up
4. Type in the name and information about the non-teacher recommender. Once you click add an email will be sent to that person asking them to create a common app account and upload their letter for you.

The above steps only need to be done one time for each recommender, regardless of how many schools you want them to recommend you for.

Once you have invited an "other recommender" to the common app, you need to associate them with each college you want their letter submitted for. Follow these steps for each college:

1. Log into the Common app and go to the "My Colleges" tab
2. Open up the college you want them to recommend you for on the left and click on "Recommenders and FERPA"
3. Scroll down to the "Other Recommender" section
4. Use the drop down to select the person you want to use for this college and press "assign"
5. Press "continue" to save

Once saved, this window will update to indicate once the letter has been uploaded and assigned. Prior to that, it will show you that the email has been sent and ask if you'd like to resend the email to the person.

You can also delete or change the recommender for any college up until you submit this college in the common app.

Student Athletes: National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

Student-athletes interested in pursuing Division I or Division II athletics in college need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at the conclusion of their Junior year. In addition, students should learn about NCAA student-athlete requirements at: https://web3.ncaa.org. Students interested in Division III athletics should follow the process at each individual college.

College Application FAQs for the Class of 2026

Please find below the most commonly requested data on college applications:

High School CEEB Code: 334810
Class Size: 297
Cohort (or Entry Date): September 2022
Date of Graduation: June 2026
Class Rank Reporting: "None"

Counseling Office Fax: 585-336-3121
Counselor's Title: "School Counselor"
GPA Weighting: "Weighted"
GPA Scale: 100

(As a reminder, IHS does not report rank; please see your Counselor if it is needed for scholarships as you will be given a percentile rank only.)

Apply!

Pay close attention to deadlines and consider that the Counseling Center has twelve (12) school days to complete a blue Transcript Request Form. This Form also has a spot to indicate if a Counselor Recommendation is needed. There are institutions that will allow Counselor materials to be submitted after the deadline, but if this is not made expressly clear anywhere, **then assume that all materials need to be sent in by the deadline**. A reminder that students need a separate Transcript Request Form for each individual institution they apply to (for example: if they apply to five (5) schools, they will need five (5) Transcript Request Forms). Once filled out, students can turn in their form(s) to either Mrs. Cook in the College and Career Center, or Ms. Blyszczak in the Counseling Center.

What to Be Prepared For

Acceptances

- Yay!

Waitlist

- Make your Plan B (deposit on 2nd choice school, etc.)
- Keep in contact with your admissions rep, send updated materials

Letters of denial

- It's okay to grieve your loss

Timeline

April = Making your final decision: what school will be the best fit for YOU, Pro & Con list of all accepted schools

May 1 = Decision Day - you HAVE to put in a deposit

June/early July = Final Transcripts – NO SENIORITIS :-)

Teacher Recommendation Request

Date: _____

Dear: _____ (teacher),

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation for me. I recognize that your time is valuable, and I appreciate your extra effort on my behalf. I have completed a resume which you can access within Naviance to help with the writing process.

Please upload my recommendation to Naviance. In addition, you will need to complete the Common App Teacher Evaluation.

Deadline to have letter uploaded in Naviance: _____

Thank you again for your help through this very important process.

Sincerely,

_____ Signature

_____ Name (Please Print)

***** Important Student Reminder *****
Resume must be completed before giving this recommendation request to a teacher.

IHS Transcript Request Form

Fill out this form for EACH college you apply to.

WE HAVE 12 DAYS TO PROCESS THIS REQUEST – PLEASE DO NOT EXPECT THIS TO BE COMPLETED TODAY!

>>>> Turn this form into MRS. COOK in the College and Career Center <<<<

Student Name: _____Counselor: _____

Personal Email: _____Cell #: _____DOB: _____

Name of Institution/Scholarship: _____Deadline: _____

CHECK ONE: **Early Decision** (Binding) _____**Early Action** (Non-Binding) _____**Regular/Rolling:** _____

How did you apply? Circle one: **COMMON APP – SUNY APP – COLLEGE WEBSITE – OTHER**

Checklist for **COMMON APP** submissions:

_____I have completed my Common App "FERPA Release Authorization."

_____I have MATCHED my Common App with Naviance.

_____I have added this college to my Common App "My Colleges" tab.

_____Did you indicate on your application that you qualify for a fee waiver? Circle one: YES NO

_____I have requested my TEACHER RECOMMENDATION(S) on Naviance *and* in-person.

Check which items you would like IHS to send:

_____Official High School Transcript

_____Counselor Recommendation

_____Teacher Recommendations

List NO MORE than four (4) Teacher Recommendations **in the order you would like them sent**.

1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____ 4. _____

IHS does NOT send SAT or ACT scores. Go to CollegeBoard.org or ACT.org to send scores.

Student Signature: _____ Parent Signature: _____
(If student is under 18 years of age)

For Office Use ONLY:
Date Received: _____Date to Counselor: _____Return by: _____Counselor Initials/Date: _____
Date sent: _____Notes: _____

COLLEGE ENTRANCE TESTING DATES

2025-2026

TEST	EXAM DATE	DEADLINE/ REGISTRATION	FEE	WHO SHOULD TAKE THESE TESTS?
PSAT/NMSQT Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test and National Merit Scholarship Test	**October 11, 2025**	PSAT/NMSQT Sign-Up 2025-2026 https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?subpage=design&token=82215d4ba931430aba1666b3f54ad054&id=2jBOXgFFtk-7qhRfh908zeHNJ7AbpPtBg0fD2P4WlCVUMVc3TjBENTc3UzVUR0NNT0NRVDBMOTNCNy4u	**$30.00**	**All college-bound Juniors and sophomores** **Fee Waiver available**
SAT Scholastic Aptitude Test CEEB CODE - 334810 TEST CENTER - 33-812 All tests are digital and require a school issued device www.collegeboard.org	**October 4, 2025** **November 8, 2025** **December 6, 2025** **March 14, 2026** **May 2, 2026** **June 6, 2026**	**September 19, 2025** **(Late registration date Sept. 23)** **October 24, 2025** **(Late registration date Oct. 28)** **November 21, 2025** **(Late registration date Nov. 25)** **February 27, 2026** **(Late registration date Mar. 3)** **April 17, 2026** **(Late registration date April 21)** **May 22, 2026** **(Late registration date May 26)**	**$68.00 for each test** **(Late registration fee is $34.00)**	**College-bound Seniors should take the October or November test.** **Juniors should take the March, May, or June test.**
ACT* American College Test *We are not a testing site for this exam. Please visit the website below to find available locations. www.act.org	**October 18, 2025** **December 13, 2025** **February 14, 2026** **April 11, 2026** **June 13, 2026**	**Sept. 12, 2025** **(Late registration date Sept. 30)** **November 7, 2025** **(Late registration date Nov. 24)** **January 9, 2026** **(Late registration date Jan. 23)** **March 6, 2026** **(Late registration date Mar. 24)** **May 8, 2026** **(Late registration date May 29)**	**$68.00 for each test (Late registration fee is $38.00)**	**College - bound Seniors should take the October or December test. Juniors should take the April or June test.**
ASVAB Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery	**November 19, 2025**	**Nov. 19, 2025**	**NO FEE**	**This is for Sophomores, Juniors & Seniors interested in career exploration. (See Counselor for details)**

*** For a complete list of testing dates offered at other local schools please go to www.collegeboard.org and www.act.org. ***
Not every test is offered at IHS. Please go to the website to check available locations