

North Andover High School

College Bound Junior Night

2026



PANELIST



RELAX! TAKE A DEEP BREATH

There are over 5,300 colleges and universities in the United States, you will get in!



AGENDA

- SAT/ACT
- Naviance
- Creating a list of colleges
- Applying to college
- Financial Aid overview



GETTING STARTED

01. START TALKING!

Car rides, friends, dinner table, parents, siblings, teachers, guidance counselors, etc.

02. MAKE A PLAN!

Make a 5-year and 10 year plan. Where do you see yourself?

03. YOUR PREFERENCES

Have conversations about colleges, jobs, where relatives attended, what they do for work, what do others like and dislike about college.

04. 1 STEP AT A TIME

Get organized and set one goal at a time. The recommended timeline will help direct tasks you can tackle to keep you on track.

SAT vs ACT

SAT (www.collegeboard.org)

- Reading, Writing, & Math Sections
- Fully Digital
 - Same app used for PSATs and AP exams
- Total Testing Time: 2 hrs 14 mins

ACT (www.actstudent.org)

- English, Reading, Math Sections
 - Optional Science Section
 - Optional Writing Section
- Digital or Paper Testing Available
- Total testing time: 2 hrs 5 minutes
 - 40 minutes per additional optional section

Additional notes:

1. Register on the specific websites- both have for free test prep materials available
2. Keep your account & login info somewhere safe for easy sending
3. Be mindful of what each school and major requires
4. Students are responsible for sending test scores to colleges
5. If student has testing accommodations in school they may receive for tests, speak to guidance counselor about applying.

2026 SAT AND ACT TEST DATES

SAT Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
March 14, 2026	February 27, 2026	February 27, 2026
May 2, 2026	April 17, 2026	April 21, 2026
June 6, 2026	May 22, 2026	May 22, 2026
** August 25, 2026		
** September 12, 2026		
** Oct, Nov & Dec 2026		
ACT DATE	REGISTRATION DEADLINE	Late Registration Deadline
February 14, 2026	January 9, 2026	January 23, 2026
April 11, 2026	March 6, 2026	March 24, 2026
June 14, 2026	May 8, 2026	May 29, 2026
July 11, 2026	June 5, 2026	June 24, 2026

TEST OPTIONAL POLICY



*The number one question asked by the high school class of 2026 is,
"Should I take the SAT/ACT?"*

The answer is **YES**:

Test optional admissions may be here to stay for many but there are some schools that require it as a part of their admissions process.

Additionally, specific majors may require SATs/ACTs and/or some schools will offer merit based on test scores.

*NAHS Guidance recommends that you take the SAT or ACTs at least once.

*Keep in mind that you may choose to send your scores to some schools and not the others. Naviance is a helpful tool when making this decision!



SPRING TO DOs:

1. Standardized Test

Plan & Register for the SAT/ACT. We recommend once in the spring of junior year but there is always time to retake or take in the fall of senior year.

3. Finish Strong

In addition to working for your best grades, it is important to show your best student skills. And Get involved... It is not too late to make an impact!

2. Teacher Recommendation

Speak with the teacher in person in the spring of junior year to request a letter of recommendation. Follow up with the teacher in the fall to verify and update on deadlines.

4. Research

Use the resources available to you to learn about the wide variety of colleges/universities including info sessions/campus visits

RESOURCES



CollegeBoard.org



North Andover Guidance



Common App



FairTest.org



Naviance

NAVIANCE



<https://student.naviance.com/nahs>





RESEARCH IN ACTION

WHAT IS DEMONSTRATED INTEREST?

Engaging with colleges to show a genuine interest in their campus and community in a *concrete* way.

HOW CAN I ENGAGE WITH COLLEGES?

- **Visit** campus, take a tour (in person/virtual), attend an open house, meet with admissions
- **Get social:** follow on social media, open college emails, chat with admissions “chat bots”
- Attend an **event** on campus (athletics, drama, etc)
- Set up an **interview** or request to sit in on a class (if available)

A simple line-art icon of a lightbulb with a person's head inside, symbolizing an idea or question. It is positioned to the left of the title.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ON COLLEGE VISITS

- What is it like to live here?
- How do you get involved in the school community?
- What do you do on the weekends? Do most kids stay or go home?
- Do you have a car on campus? If not, is it easy to get around the city/town?
- Why did you choose this school?
- What do you like most about college classes?
- How do you balance your school work with your job/extracurricular activities/internship?
- Is there help with job placement after graduation?

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

COLLEGE REP VISITS

Each fall, juniors and seniors are invited to meet with college admission representatives at NAHS.

Registration is done through Naviance.

COLLEGE FAIRS

- NACAC Fair Boston:
April 27th & 28th, Boston, MA
- NACAC Virtual College Fairs
 - NEACAC College Fair:
Sunday, May 3rd, Merrimack College
 - Local college fairs TBA

CAMPUS VISITS

- Juniors have 3 college visits
- Seniors have 5 college visits

College visit forms must be returned to Guidance 2 days prior to college visit for absence to be considered documented

COLLEGE LIST

1-2

REACH SCHOOLS

These schools are usually the top choices and dream schools. It is okay to include long shots.

3-5

REALISTIC OR POSSIBLE SCHOOLS

Schools that possess the significant features a student desires and at which the probability of admission is slightly better than even.

1-3

SAFETY OR LIKELY SCHOOLS

Schools that have most of the features a student desires and at which the probability of admission is highly to certain.

*** One of these schools should also be financially safe

APPLICATION TYPES & DEADLINES



EARLY ACTION

Non-binding



EARLY DECISION

Binding



REGULAR DECISION



ROLLING ADMISSIONS

THE APPLICATION



- Application - You will need to list extracurricular activities, work experience
- Essay/Supplements
- Recommendations
- STARS if required
- Payment
- <https://www.commonapp.org/>

***EVERY SCHOOL IS DIFFERENT &
MAY HAVE DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS***



My Common Application



Profile



Personal Information



Address



Contact Details



Demographics



Language



Geography and Nationality



Common App Fee Waiver

▼ Family

▼ Education

▼ Testing

▼ Activities

▼ Writing

▼ Courses & Grades

0 college(s) require



This is a practice account. It cannot submit applications to colleges. If you'd like to change your account type, please review our [practice account FAQ](#) for more information.

Complete your Common Application

Preview

Address

Complete

Permanent home address*

430 Osgood St

North Andover, MA 01845-1999

United States of America

Change

Remove

Alternate mailing address (e.g. if you attend a boarding school or use a different mailing address)*

No alternate address

Send mail to a temporary or alternate address

Clear answer

Continue

Help & support

Search FAQs

Search takes you to the student solution center

Need Help?

Please use the link below to look for an answer to your question. Answers to most questions can be found in th...

▼ [Read full answer](#)

[All help topics](#)

REQUESTING TRANSCRIPTS

North Andover High School - Transcript Release Authorization Form - 2024 - 2025

I hereby authorize and request North Andover High School to forward transcript packages (which include transcripts and recommendations) to the colleges I have indicated below.

Name (please print)

Date

Signature

Guidance Counselor

1. Before submitting this form, students must complete the FERPA and match their Common App account on Naviance.
2. Pay on-line at our [payment portal](#) located on the Guidance website homepage.
3. This form must be turned in to Guidance at least 1 MONTH prior to the application deadline.

Application Deadline	Admission Type (circle one)	College/School - Which Campus (Address if not on Common App)	List teacher names who will be writing your Recommendations	Where are you applying? (circle one)	Guidance Use ONLY:
	Regular Dec. ED EDII Early Action Restrictive EA Rolling Priority		1. 2.	Common App Coalition App School Specific App Other: _____	M: ____ E: ____ NAV: ____
	Regular Dec. ED EDII Early Action Restrictive EA Rolling Priority		1. 2.	Common App Coalition App School Specific App Other: _____	M: ____ E: ____ NAV: ____
	Regular Dec. ED EDII Early Action Restrictive EA Rolling Priority		1. 2.	Common App Coalition App School Specific App Other: _____	M: ____ E: ____ NAV: ____
	Regular Dec. ED EDII Early Action Restrictive EA Rolling Priority		1. 2.	Common App Coalition App School Specific App Other: _____	M: ____ E: ____ NAV: ____
	Regular Dec. ED EDII Early Action Restrictive EA Rolling Priority		1. 2.	Common App Coalition App School Specific App Other: _____	M: ____ E: ____ NAV: ____

NAHS GUIDANCE USE ONLY:

Admin. Assistant Initials: _____

FERPA signed: _____ Teacher Recs: _____

Form Received in Guidance on: _____

Colleges Matched & Entered on Naviance: _____

Fee Paid: _____

\$ Amount _____

The image features a light blue sky with white clouds and a green landscape. Three graduation caps are shown: one large one on the left, one smaller one in the upper right, and one in the lower center. A hand in a blue sleeve is visible in the bottom right corner, making a peace sign. A large yellow banner is centered in the image.

FINANCIAL AID

COMPONENTS OF THE FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE

- **Need based/Grants** – students do not have to repay grants. They are typically given for athletics, academics, special talent, need-based, etc.
- **Merit based/Scholarships** – Students also do not have to repay scholarships. Scholarships can be awarded for athletics, academic excellence or special talent.
- **Loans** – These must be repaid. There are two types of loans: federal student loans and private loans.
- **College Work Study** – Work study allows colleges to hire students for employment to pay their own way as they attend college. You do not repay the money earned.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- FAFSA application : <https://studentaid.gov>

FAFSA uses the Student Aid Index (SAI) to determine eligibility.

College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile

- Each school has its own CSS Profile deadline, but many schools request applications by the students earliest deadline.
- <http://cssprofile.collegeboard.org>

The major difference between the FAFSA and the CSS Profile is that the FAFSA provides federal grants, loans, and other types of government assistance, and the CSS Profile is an application that universities use to gauge how much non-federal financial aid you need.

Massachusetts Educational Financial Authority (MEFA) : <http://www.mefa.org>

Upcoming Webinars:

- Financial Aid 101: March 18, 2026 6:30-7:30

Mass Educate

- Available to any Massachusetts resident who has earned HS diploma or equivalent.
- Have resided in Massachusetts for at least one year.
- Tuition and fees are covered with a minimum of 6 credits. Does not include textbooks or health insurance.

Tuition Breaks for families whose annual income is less than a certain amount.

Participating schools:

- MIT, All 4 UMass Campuses, Brandeis, Holy Cross, St. Anselm, UNH

New England Regional Student Program (NERSP):

As a permanent resident of a New England state, a student is eligible for Tuition Break when enrolled in a degree program offered by a specific public college or university in another New England state. Approved degree programs (associate, bachelor's and graduate) for residents of each New England state are listed on the **Find a Program** page.

Financial Aid and additional resources:

- NAHS hosts a Financial aid night in early Mid-November

North Andover Guidance Website offers links to local and national financial websites:

- [Financial Aid - North Andover High School](#)

Scholarship Opportunities:

- [Scholarships - North Andover High School](#)
 - Outside Scholarships offered through local and national organizations.
 - NAHS Guidance Scholarship Program are scholarships offered by organizations in the surrounding community.

ACTION ITEMS

- Have a successful Junior year: academics, extracurriculars, etc.
- Search and build list of colleges in Naviance
- Register for standardized test(s) - SAT in March @ NAHS
- Keep a file of usernames and passwords of all of your accounts (Naviance, College Board, Common App, FAFSA)
- Visit colleges in person or virtually
- Solidify recommendations (teacher & guidance counselor)
- Fill out Student/Parent Recommendation Form in Naviance
- Start Common Application
- Submit Transcript Release Form - 30 days before deadline
- Send official standardized test scores
- Complete FAFSA (CSS Profile)
- Submit application and supporting documents!





Q&A



Don't spend more than you can afford for your child's education.

“If your child did everything you asked and excelled in high school, saying no to her dream school seems like a betrayal.”

“The nature of a student's college experience – the work that he or she puts into it, the skills that he or she picks up, the self-examination that's undertaken, the resourcefulness that's honed – matters more than the name of the institution attended. . . . Education is indeed everything, but it happens across a spectrum of settings and in infinite ways.”



RECENT BOSTON GLOBE ARTICLE



COMMON APPLICATION ESSAY PROMPTS

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
 - The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
 - Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
 - Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
 - Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
 - Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
 - Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.
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