



*Post-Secondary
Planning Guide*

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

School of the Arts

| Subject | Required Credits: SOTA Diploma | Required Credits: RCSD Diploma | Regents Diploma Exam Requirements |
|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| English | 4 | 4 | 65% on English |
| Social Studies | 4 | 4 | 65% on Global History & U.S. History |
| Math | 3 | 3 | 65% on 1 Regents Math Exam |
| Science | 3 | 3 | 65% on 1 Regents Science Exam |
| Foreign Language | 1* | 1* | |
| P.E. | 2 | 2 | |
| Health | .5 | .5 | |
| Arts | 8 | 4.5 electives | |
| Total Required | 25.5 | 22 | |

***Or score 65% on 8th grade Checkpoint A exam**

4 + 1 Pathways: student can be exempt from Global History or US History exam if 65% on one social studies exam and 65% on additional exam in math, science, LOTE Checkpoint B, CDOS Option 1 or 2, or IAAP Arts Pathway

Advanced Regents Diploma Requirements: Score of 65% on the following exams: English, Global History, US History, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Living Environment and one additional science exam (5 credit sequence in fine arts exempts students from Advanced Regents Checkpoint B exam Requirement)

Regents or Advanced Regents with Honors: Must achieve an average of 90% on required Regents exams.

Mastery in Math: score of 85% or above on three math exams

Mastery in Science: Score of 85% or above on three science exams

COVID-19 Updates: Counselors will work with students to communicate exam exemptions, Special Appeals and updates from New York State Department of Education

SELECTING A COLLEGE

It can be tough selecting a college. The college selection process takes a great deal of planning on your part. Your goal is to find a small selection of schools that will offer you the right combination of academic programs, atmosphere, activities, sports, and cost. To help you through the process, consider asking yourself the following questions:

- **LOCATION**
 - How far away from home do you want to be?
 - What is the furthest you can imagine driving/flying to get home?
 - How often do you think you will want to come home during the school year?
 - Do you prefer an urban, suburban, or rural environment
- **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**
 - Do the colleges that you are investigating offer the major(s) and/or programs that you want?
- **SIZE**
 - Would you feel comfortable on a large campus with lots of activities, students etc. or would you prefer a smaller school with smaller class sizes and a more intimate atmosphere. Sometimes even large campuses can seem small given the layout of the dorms, dining halls etc. A campus visit is recommended.
- **CAMPUS ACTIVITIES**
 - Do the schools you are considering offer the kind of activities that would interest you?
- **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**
 - Study Abroad Programs
 - Internships – unpaid work experiences
 - Coop Programs – paid work experiences
 - Support Services – tutoring/resource centers
- **COST**
 - Although cost will likely be a factor when considering which college to attend, we recommend that you NOT consider cost when applying. Once you have submitted your financial aid forms, you will receive financial aid packages from each school. Every college has a unique set of scholarships and money available for students. It is important that you wait to see your packages before making a final decision based on cost.
- **SELECTIVITY OF COLLEGE**
 - Each college/university has its own standard for accepting students. Admissions decisions are usually based on a student's high school transcript, standardized test scores (some are making submission of these optional), extracurricular activities, community service, portfolios, auditions etc. It is important that you apply to a wide range of schools to ensure acceptance. We suggest at least three but no more than five or six. Included should be:

- Safe School – Based on the school’s criteria, the student has almost a 100% chance of being accepted. For many students this would be a community college
 - Possible School – Good chance of acceptance but not a sure bet.
 - Reach or Dream School – The student would really love to attend but may not meet the school’s standards in all categories.
- **LIBERAL ARTS VS. CAREER PREPARATION**
 - Liberal Arts College – Will emphasize the need for a broad-based education in a wide variety of subject areas. Most professional careers such as law, education or medicine will require some graduate school or program once the student has graduated with an undergraduate degree from a liberal arts program.
 - Technical or Specialized School – Will prepare you for a specific career with or without the inclusion of some liberal arts courses

TYPES OF COLLEGES

- **COLLEGE:** An institution that offers educational instruction beyond high school level in a two-year or four-year program
- **UNIVERSITY:** An academic organization which grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two-degree-granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine, journalism, or agriculture). It is composed of a number of “schools” or “colleges” each of which encompasses a general field of study.
- **LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES:** A four-year institution which emphasizes programs or broad undergraduate education. Pre-professional or professional training may be available but is not stressed.
- **COMMUNITY COLLEGE:** Two-year institutions of higher learning that provide vocational training and academic curricula (terminal and transfer):
 - Certificate Program: NOT a college degree. Usually a year or less in length, this type of program focuses on career-related skills only, with no liberal arts. You cannot transfer to a four-year college
 - Terminal Course: Academic program consists of liberal arts and career-related courses. A student who completes it may or may not be able to transfer to a four-year college for further study without completing additional coursework
 - Transfer Course: Academic Program that is specifically designed to lead into a four-year course at another college or university. Transfer degrees are A.A. (Associates in Arts) degree and A.S. (Associates in Science) degree.
- **JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Two-year private institution offering similar programs to community colleges.
- **PRIVATE COLLEGE or UNIVERSITY:** Institutions of higher education that are financed privately. They are usually more expensive than state schools. The total cost of attendance may range upwards of \$50,000 each year

- **PUBLIC/STATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY:** A college or university that is funded mostly by the state or federal government. Tuition at these schools is usually lower than at private schools and therefore is generally more affordable.
- **HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES and UNIVERSITIES (HBCU):** These institutions were founded after the Civil War and in the early twentieth century when African Americans were systematically denied access to most colleges and universities in the United States. Today the population of HBCUs is predominantly African American, but people of all backgrounds may attend. Many students feel that the educational atmosphere is very supportive and offers opportunities for leadership roles on campus that would be unavailable at other colleges.

Technical/Vocational Education

- These schools offer programs for specific certificates or trades/vocations. A Vocational/Technical school may offer programs such as Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, HVAC or Electrical, Cosmetology, etc. There are even programs to prepare a student to enter the medical field as a technician for radiology or sonography, for example. These programs would prepare a student to enter into a specific trade, specific job, or earn a license through an apprenticeship program. There may be options to earn a certificate in one or two years.
- Below is a listing of possible Technical/Vocational Education programs. This is only a partial list. There are other options/programs available. Please speak with your school counselor to discuss your specific interests and goals.
 - Rochester Educational Opportunity Center (REOC)- www.reoc.brockport.edu
 - BOCES 2- Center for Workforce Development- <http://www.monroe2cwg.edu/>
 - Monroe Community College- www.monroecc.edu
 - SUNY Technical Colleges- www.suny.edu
 - Rochester Arc and Flame Center- www.rocafc.com
 - New York State Department of Labor Apprenticeship Field Office- (585) 258-8885
 - UNICON- Unions and Businesses United in Construction- <https://www.uniconrochester.com>

Armed Forces/Military Academy

Enlisting

- The military can offer many options to interested students including job and future career training as well as educational options. If you are interested you can reach out to local recruiters of the different military branches for additional information. Resources for contacting the various military units are also available in the guidance office. Below are listed the local recruiter contact numbers:
- Army - (585) 671-0188
- Navy - (585) 663-1749
- Air Force - (315) 789-0290
- Marines - (585) 621-2920
- Coast Guard - (585) 342- 4149
- NY Army National Guard - (585) 436-7234

ROTC

- Founded in 1916, ROTC stands for Reserve Officer Training Corps. It's a college program offered at more than 1,000 colleges and universities across the United States that prepares young adults to become officers in the U.S. Military. In exchange for a paid college education and a guaranteed post-college career, cadets commit to serve in the military after graduation. Each service branch has its own take on ROTC. Please refer to this link for more details on each of the branches and their offerings: <http://todaysmilitary.com/training/rotc>
- SUNY Brockport ROTC - (585) 395-2769

NROTC Scholarship

- Naval Reserves Officers Training Corps - <https://www.nrotc.navy.mil/scholarships.html>

Military Academy

- Pursuing an education at one of the four United States military academies can be very challenging and requires several important steps. In order to qualify as an applicant to a military academy, a student must seek congressional nomination as step one. Once a student secures a nomination from a congressperson, the application process closely follows the college application process. These academies offer a high level of education as well as specialized training to enter the military as an officer upon graduation. Many of the academies host summer programs that offer high school students opportunities to experience academy life.
- United States Naval Academy: <http://www.usna.edu/Admissions/Go-Navy.php>
- United States Military Academy: <https://www.usma.edu/admissions>
- United States Coast Guard Academy: <http://www.cga.edu/apply/>
- United States Merchant Marine Academy: <http://www.usmma.edu/admission>

Planning Calendar for Juniors

- **March**
 - National College Fair- March 16, 2026
 - SAT School Day - March 26, 2026
- **May/June**
 - Research colleges through SchoolLinks or College Board Big Future
 - If you are an athlete planning to continue playing sports at the Division I or II level register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (See Mr. Murphy for more details)
 - Talk with teachers before leaving school about letters of recommendations
 - After school ends, hit the road and get out to see some colleges- virtual tours may also be available online. It may be more valuable to visit a college during the academic year, but the summer offers a great opportunity to visit
 - Participate in a summer program to continue developing your academic and social strengths, skills, and talents while out of school
- **July/August**
 - Create a resume or brag sheet in SchoolLinks with your accomplishments, activities, and work experiences since you started high school
 - Continue visiting colleges, take tours, have interviews and ask questions!
 - Continue to refine your list of potential colleges
 - Begin to prepare for the application process
 - Create Common Application account (if needed to apply)
 - Draft application essays
 - Collect writing samples of your best work
 - Start work on Portfolio/ Audition Requirements
 - Start to check application deadlines and timelines
- **September/October**
 - Individual senior meeting with counselor
 - Retake the SAT - October SAT School Day
 - College applications- deadlines vary by school, we encourage you to complete applications by Thanksgiving break
 - Link your Common App with SchoolLinks
 - Request letter of recommendation from teachers (number required varies by college), have resume ready to give recommenders
 - Financial Aid- Complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and TAP (NY state Tuition Assistance Program) beginning **October 1, 2026**
- **November/ December**
 - Continue with college applications if needed
 - Complete financial aid forms
 - Research/Apply for Scholarships (SOTA Newsletter)
- **Spring**
 - **Enrollment deadline for most colleges- May 1, 2027**

Making the Most of Your Campus Visit

- **Admissions Visits and Interviews**
 - In general it is a good idea to have an interview with an admissions counselor at the school you are visiting. It is your responsibility to call ahead for a specific appointment with the admissions office.
- **Campus Tours**
 - A campus tour is an essential part of the college selection process. The best tours are given by student tour guides who work for the admissions office
- **Financial Aid Office**
 - While you are on campus, it is always a good idea to learn more about the financial aid process of that particular college.
- **Professors in your Possible Areas of College Major**
 - You should be able to set up an appointment with a professor through the admissions office. You can also ask for a phone number from them so you can call on your own to coordinate a meeting with a professor during your admission visit.
- **Dining Hall Visit**
 - Having a meal in the dining hall among a group of students tells you about both the quality of the food served there and the dynamics of the student population around you.
- **Talk to Students:**
 - Talk to as many students as possible during your college visit!

Top Factors Colleges Consider When Reviewing Student Applications

1. A high school curriculum that challenges the student
2. Grades that represent strong effort and an upward trend
3. SAT/ACT scores (if required)
4. Passionate involvement in activities, demonstrating leadership and initiative
5. Community service
6. Employment or out-of-school experiences (including summer activities) that illustrate responsibility, dedication, and development of areas of interest
7. A well-written essay that provides insight into the student's unique personality, values, and goals
8. Letters of recommendation from teachers, school counselor, and/or community member that give evidence of integrity, special skills, and positive character traits
9. Anything special that makes the student stand out from the rest of the applicants!

SPRING 2026
IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS

March 16: National College
Fair @ Convention Center

March 26: SAT School Day

April 14: College & Career Fair

May 4 - 15: AP Exams

June 9, 10 & 17, 18, 23-25:
Regents Exams

SAT Saturday Administrations

www.collegeboard.org

| <u>Test Date</u> | <u>Registration Deadline</u> |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| May 2 | April 17 |
| June 6 | May 22 |

Important Websites

- **SOTA Counselor Website**
 - <https://sota.rcsdk12.org/counselor-corner> - Counselor's Corner, Newsletter, Contact Information & Links

- **SchoolLinks**
 - [Loading your login page...](#) - ROConnect homepage

- **Test Registration**
 - www.collegeboard.org – SAT Registration
 - www.actstudent.org – ACT Registration

- **College Application**
 - www.commonapp.org – Common Application
 - www.suny.edu/student - SUNY Application
 - www.eduinonline.com - Common Black College Application

- **NCAA Eligibility Center**
 - www.eligibilitycenter.org

- **Financial Aid & Scholarships**
 - <https://studentaid.gov/> – Federal Student Aid
 - www.hesc.com – New York State Financial Aid
 - www.fastweb.com – Scholarship Search Engine
 - www.rochestereducation.org - Rochester College Access Network/Rochester Education Foundation

Local College Contact Information

Alfred State College
www.alfredstate.edu
1-800-425-3733

Alfred University
www.alfred.edu
1-800-541-9229

Finger Lakes CC
www.flcc.edu
(585) 394-3500

Genesee CC
www.genesee.edu
(585) 345-6800

Keuka College
www.keuka.edu
1-800-335-3852

Monroe CC
www.monroecc.edu
(585) 292-2200

Nazareth University
www.naz.edu
1-800-462-3944

Roberts Wesleyan
www.roberts.edu
1-800-777-4792

RIT
www.rit.edu
(585) 475-6631

St. John Fisher
www.sjf.edu
1-800-444-4640

SUNY Brockport
www.brockport.edu
(585) 395-2751

SUNY Geneseo
www.geneseo.edu
(585) 245-5211

University of Rochester
www.rochester.edu
(585) 275-3221

Notes

SchoolLinks - Use your District Login on ROConnect

CollegeBoard Account

Email Address _____

Password _____

Common Application

Username _____

Password _____

FAFSA

Username _____

Password _____

New York State TAP

Username _____

Password _____

Other

Username _____

Password _____