CLASS OF 2027
SENIOR PARENT MEETING

Senior Year Information

Presented by
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"When you visit a school, remember that you're trying to figure out if you want to 'BUY' a particular education - so you need to think like a customer who's shopping, not just someone who wants to 'get in.'"

COLLEGE VISIT PERMISSION FORM

Student:____is requesting permission to be excused on the following date/dates ____________________________for a college visit to____

To receive an excused absence for this purpose the student must obtain signatures from all his/her teachers, a parent, counselor, a school official, and a representative of the college. With exception of the college representative, this form is to be completed and returned to the attendance office at least one day prior to leaving. The student is also responsible for all make-up work.

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

1st hour____________________________________ 4th hour________________________________

2nd hour____________________________________ 5th hour________________________________

3rd hour____________________________________ Seminar________________________________

PARENT SIGNATURE____

COUNSELOR SIGNATURE____

HIGH SCHOOL OFFICIAL SIGNATURE____

= =

____ has visited our campus on
(Student)

____.
(Date)

SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE

____

CAMPUS VISIT

A campus visit is highly recommended! Although catalogs and websites introduce you to a college, nothing equals the experience of seeing it for yourself. Planning to visit during a school vacation is fine, but the best time to see a college is when students are on campus and classes are in session.

Before you visit the campus, consider some of the options below. It is important to develop a list of questions and to plan specific activities in order to accomplish your goals.

CONSIDER:

- a tour of the grounds and facilities.
- a meal in a college dining facility.
- a tour of a dorm or two.
- the names and locations of popular coffee shops or snack bars where you can meet students.
- permission to visit a particular class or to meet with a certain professor or coach.
- an appointment to meet with an admissions officer.

TYPICAL QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK ON A VISIT ARE:

ADMISSIONS

- What is the grade point required for entry?
- How is admission determined?
- Is there an application deadline?
- Is a deposit required? How much? Is it refundable?

GENERAL INFORMATION

- How many students are enrolled? How many are from other states?
- How many international students are enrolled?
- How large is the campus?
- What is the faculty-student ratio?
- What is the typical class size?
- How is the academic calendar set up? Are you on semesters or quarters (terms)?
- What is the surrounding community like?
- What is the average dropout rate?
- Will I have a faculty advisor?

COST AND FINANCIAL AID

- What amount should I estimate for books and supplies?
- How much should I plan for spending money?
- Are ATMs available?
- What Financial Aid programs are available?
- How do I apply for Financial Aid? What forms do I need?
- What are the deadlines?
- Are any special scholarships offered?
- Do you award athletic scholarships?
- Are there jobs for students on campus?

STUDENT LIFE

- Will I live in a residence hall? How many students per room?
- How are residence halls assigned?
- Do you have nonsmoking and nondrinking areas?
- What is your drinking policy?
- Do you have quiet halls?
- What kinds of things should I bring with me when I move in?
- Can I have a car on campus my freshman year?

ACTIVITIES

- What activities are available?
- Are there sororities & fraternities?

ATHLETICS

- What varsity sports are played?
- What division are you in? What conference? What colleges do you compete with?
- Do you have an intramural program?

ORIENTATION

- When is orientation? What do you do at orientation?
- Do I need to attend?
- Is there a parents' session?

PLACEMENT

- What is the school's overall job placement rate?
- What is it in my major?
- What are starting salaries for graduates of my major?

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR TOP THREE PROGRAMS?

WHAT MAKES YOUR INSTITUTION SPECIAL?

Dual Enrollment

- Must have a qualifying score on the PSAT or SAT, or Accuplacer to apply at Muskegon Community College (MCC).
- MCC credits are transferable. Students provided a Michigan Transfer Guide to assist in selecting courses.
- Grand Valley requires a 3.0 GPA. Student and a parent/guardian must meet with an admission representative prior to selecting a course.
- MCC – 3 credit hour class = $438 in county (plus books).
- Grand Valley State – 3 credit hour class = $2,076 (plus books).
- For the 26-27 school year, SLPS covers $1,005 per course
- Courses can be taken on campus, or online.
- Grades are added to the high school transcript, computed into the grade point average.
- Details available on the Spring Lake High School website under "Counseling Department".

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

APPLICATION

- Go to the college website and complete their on-line application.
- Pay the application fee by credit card on-line (preferred method). If paying by check or money order, mail the payment directly to the college.
- Application fees vary (MCC free, MSU $75, U of M $75).
- Many colleges, in October, will waive application fees.

SUBMITTING TRANSCRIPTS TO COLLEGES

- The Common Application – Students will be directed to the Common Application site through the college website. The transcript is uploaded by a counselor as part of the application process.
- Parchment – Colleges that do not use the Common Application will accept transcripts through an e-Transcript service called Parchment. All students at SLHS have an account with Parchment allowing each student to send a high school transcript electronically to the college of choice.

THE COMMON APPLICATION

- The Common Application allows a student to complete one application and send it to multiple colleges.
- Colleges requiring the Common Application will direct students to the application link.
- All information is submitted electronically, no envelopes or stamps are needed.
- Students must read instructions carefully to ensure all steps are completed.
- The Common Application may require one or more recommendation letters. The recommenders will be notified by email and be provided with a link to submit their information. Students will need to enter the recommenders email addresses as part of the application.
- Provide the recommenders with a Personal Data Form to assist in writing the letter.
- As a courtesy, students should ask recommenders in advance and give at least two weeks notice before any deadlines.
- Students can track when recommendations have been submitted through their online account.
- Once the Common Application is complete, it is the student's responsibility to direct the application to the college(s) of their choice.
- Once college(s) receive the application, students may be asked to complete supplemental information required by a particular school.
- Payment is completed online and costs will vary. If applicable, see your counselor for college fee waivers.

PARCHMENT TRANSCRIPT SERVICE

- After the online college application is submitted, the student is responsible for making a transcript request through Parchment (only if not applying through the Common App).
- Each request can be viewed online.
- The student can track when the transcript has been sent/received.
- School officials can also view student transcript activity.
- Letters of Recommendation can be added to student's e-delivery. A copy of the letter(s) will need to be given to Mrs. Zacek, she will upload to the student account.
- Additional feature: Admission predictor based on GPA and SAT/ACT score.

TESTING

- Identify schools to receive scores when registering for the ACT or SAT
- **Be advised** that it is the student's responsibility to send official score reports of their test score to their college/university (if they did not identify the school when registering)
- Score reports can be sent online from collegeboard.com (SAT scores) or from actstudent.org (ACT scores.
- The dates/deadline for remaining tests this academic year are available at sat.org/success or act.org.
- Colleges may also accept scores for tests taken in the fall. Check with your student's college of choice. Deadlines and testing dates can be found at the testing websites: collegeboard.com and actstudent.org.

ADMISSION POLICIES

- Each school has their own policy in responding to applications with most replying within 3 to 4 weeks (Grand Valley, Central, Western, Ferris, Northern and Eastern are examples).
- The University of Michigan will guarantee a decision by late January for those applying by November 1.
- Michigan State University will take 8 to 12 weeks due to a high volume of applicants Check school of interest for policies and deadlines.

AFTER COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

- Notify Mrs. Zacek of your acceptance in late April/early May.
- Many students will be accepted to more than one institution. Once a college has been selected, notify the schools that you will not be attending.
- Make sure to read your acceptance letter carefully and follow all instructions regarding deposits, enrollment, housing, orientation and financial aid.

Michigan Colleges that use the Common Application

Albion College
Alma College
Aquinas College
Baker College
Calvin University
Central Michigan University
College for Creative Studies
Cornerstone University
Davenport University
Eastern Michigan University
Ferris State University
Grand Valley State University
Hillsdale College
Hope College
Kalamazoo College
Kettering University
Lake Superior State University
Lawrence Tech University
Madonna University
Michigan State University
Michigan Tech University
Northern Michigan University
Northwood University
Oakland University
Rochester Christian University
Saginaw Valley State University
Spring Arbor University
University of Detroit Mercy
University of Olivet
University of Michigan
Wayne State University
Western Michigan University

There are over 1000 Common Application members.
Go to: www.commonapp.com for a complete list.

General Application Tips

- Read all directions carefully.
- Student takes the lead in the process.
- Proofread application and essay before submitting.
- Submit application well before deadlines. Do not assume everything gets uploaded/processed on deadline day.
- Frequently check student account to make sure application is complete (official SAT scores, high school transcript, letters of recommendation). Contact the college admissions office if items are missing.
- Michigan College Month Fee Waivers 2026 Fee Waivers

Public Colleges and Universities - 2024

School	In-State Tuition & Fees	Books & Supplies	On-Campus Living	Other Expenses	Off-Campus Living	Total (On-Campus)
Central Michigan University	$14,190	$1,240	$12,178	$3,450	$8,970	**$31,058**
Eastern Michigan University	$15,510	$1,000	$12,440	$2,904	$11,920	**$31,854**
Ferris State University	$13,630	$862	$10,660	$2,564	$8,700	**$27,716**
Grand Rapids Community College	$8,049	$616		$5,618	$5,618	**$18,972**
Grand Valley State University	$14,628	$780	$11,142	$2,477	$8,829	**$29,027**
Lake Superior State University	$14,266	$900	$11,207	$1,510	$9,130	**$28,983**
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	$17,228	$1,126	$13,856	$2,572	$13,856	**$34,782**
Michigan State University	$15,988	$1,334	$11,754	$3,592	$11,754	**$32,668**
Muskegon Community College	$6,990	$1,150		$4,232	$5,380	**$17,752**
Northern Michigan University	$13,304	$720	$12,752	$2,148	$10,850	**$28,924**
Oakland University	$14,694	$700	$11,309	$2,600	$8,232	**$29,303**
Saginaw Valley State University	$12,240	$1,120	$11,700	$1,220	$11,700	**$26,280**
Wayne State University	$14,297	$1,316	$11,762	$4,410	$12,104	**$31,785**
Western Michigan University	$15,298	$1,128	$11,713	$2,631	$11,713	**$30,770**

*total cost including off-campus living

Source: National Center for Education Statistics: https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/

Private Colleges and Universities - 2024

School	In-State Tuition & Fees	Books & Supplies	On-Campus Living	Other Expenses	Off-Campus Living	Total (On-Campus)
Adrian College	$40,556	$1,100	$13,424	$1,924	$13,424	**$57,004**
Albion College	$55,746	$850	$12,570	$950	$12,570	**$70,116**
Alma College	$47,430	$850	$13,128	$2,532	$9,154	**$63,940**
Aquinas College	$38,520	$2,098	$10,994	$2,098	$10,932	**$53,710**
Baker College of Muskegon	$12,810	$1,000	$7,600	$5,300	$8,800	**$26,710**
Calvin University	$38,670	$1,300	$11,950	$3,000	$9,600	**$54,920**
Cornerstone University	$29,100	$840	$12,200	$2,330	$8,900	**$44,470**
Davenport University	$23,324	$904	$11,366	$3,648	$5,080	**$39,242**
Hillsdale College	$32,092	$1,200	$13,180	$2,000	$13,180	**$48,472**
Hope College	$40,420	$1,150	$12,180	$2,040	$3,450	**$55,790**
Kalamazoo College	$58,764	$900	$12,084	$2,460	$12,084	**$74,208**
Kettering University	$46,380	$1,100	$9,500	$4,270	$9,500	**$61,250**
Lawrence Technological University	$41,872	$1,762	$11,670	$5,150	$11,670	**$60,454**
The University of Olivet	$33,076	$1,200	$11,886	$2,766	$10,500	**$48,928**
Spring Arbor University	$32,580	$800	$10,960	$1,780	$10,960	**$46,120**
University of Detroit Mercy	$32,300	$1,376	$10,738	$3,076	$12,198	**$47,490**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics: https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS DECISIONS

Admission to college is based on several factors:

ACADEMIC RECORD
The single most important credential in your application folder is your academic record (transcript). The courses you have taken, their levels of difficulty, and the grades you have earned are of utmost importance. Class rank, difficulty of courses taken, and your college entrance exam score are used by many colleges for admissions and placement.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION SCORES
The ACT/SAT college entrance exams may be required by four year colleges/universities and some two year colleges. When considered along with your academic record they constitute a reliable predictor of academic achievement for admission decisions. A solid academic curriculum can compensate for lower standardized test scores.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Extracurricular activities both in school and in the community play a role in the admissions process. Colleges frequently state that they look for students who will make a significant contribution to the college community. Colleges often look for that extra dimension – musicians, editors, actors, photographers, athletes, club officers, community volunteer workers. Special consideration is often given to students with these achievements on their records.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Some colleges will require letters of recommendation. The application will indicate if letters are required. Recommendations describe not only achievements and skills, but also character, integrity, and patterns of growth. Teachers' reports also play an important role in the selection process, particularly when the teachers know the student well and are willing to detail potential in specific areas.

ESSAYS
Colleges may ask you to submit an essay. There are many helpful websites offering tips to writing a successful essay. Check out www.collegeboard.com and type in "essays" to get started.

Post-Secondary Options Worth Consideration

Muskegon Community College

- Affordable option (tuition typically 1/3 the cost of a State college)
- Transferrable credits
- 80 degree and certificate options at Muskegon Community College
- Scholarships available
- Applied Technology Program – 14 Certificate, 8 Associates Engineering pathways for Bachelor's degree linked to Ferris State University, Western Michigan University, Michigan Technological University, Michigan State University, Grand Valley State University and Kettering University.

Thompson M-TEC (Located across from the Careerline Tech Center)

- Commercial and Residential Trades
- Health Sciences
- Manufacturing
- Office and Technology

Sturrus Technology Center (Located in downtown Muskegon)

- CAD
- Electronics and Automation
- Engineering
- Machining
- Materials
- Welding
- Fab Lab

Personal Data Form

Please complete this form when requesting letters of recommendation. You may need a letter of recommendation for college applications, scholarships and other senior activities.

DIRECTIONS:

- Make a copy of the Personal Data Form in your Google Docs and name it "Firstname.Lastname data form.
- Answer all questions thoroughly.
- When completed, share a copy of the document with your counselor and any other individual you have asked for a recommendation letter.
- **PLEASE NOTE: All requests for letters should allow AT LEAST 10 SCHOOL DAYS in order to give time to the recommender to complete the recommendation.**

Personal/Academic Information

Name	Email

OPTIONAL
SAT Overall Score
ACT Test Overall Score

List the courses you are scheduled to take your senior year.

1st trimester	2nd trimester	3rd trimester

List all the post – secondary options you are considering.

University/College/Community College/Trade School		

What is your intended major or area of study in your post-secondary plans? Describe your interest.

What is your intended career goal at this time? Describe your interest.

School Activities, Sports, or Clubs	Year of Activity				Description of Activity and any Leadership Positions.
	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr.12	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Community Activities (volunteer) and Community Service	Year of Activity				Description of Activity
	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Work Experience (paid)	Year of Activity				Description of Activity
	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Special Recognition, Awards, Honors (Academic & Extra-Curricular)	School Year Received				Description
	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	

List <u>three words</u> that you would use to describe yourself. <u>Explain</u> each with several sentences.

1.

2.

3.

What special talents (music, sports, theatrical, dance, art, video, technology) do you possess? <u>Explain</u> each with several sentences.

What obstacles (family, personal, illness, financial, etc.), if any, have you encountered? How did you overcome this obstacle? Explain with several sentences.

Do you feel that your academic record is an accurate reflection of your ability? Why?

******OPTIONAL******

Please note any additional information that may be helpful to your counselor or teacher in writing your letter recommendation.

Reminder: this needs to be shared with your counselor and any other individual that you have requested a recommendation letter.

Scholarship/Financial Aid
Institutional, Government and Independent Sources

Institutional Aid

- Aid offered from individual colleges - programs vary with each school.
- In most cases, your college application and transcript will be used to determine merit based financial aid for each particular school. Consult the scholarship page from your college of interest for details (for example, the Faculty Scholarship at Grand Valley State University awards up to $5,000 per year for students with a high school GPA of 3.6 and a 30 ACT or 1340 SAT).
- There are several Michigan Schools that use the *CSS Profile* as a supplemental form to determine qualifications for additional need-based, institutional aid. In State colleges using the CSS Profile are: Adrian, Alma, Hillsdale, Madonna, Olivet, Sienna Heights and University of Michigan.
- Keep student loans under control, consider number of years and monthly payment after college. Example: $25,000 borrowed at 3.86 interest = $30,231 total Payment = $252.00 per month over a 10 year repayment period (from www.direct.ed.gov).

Federal/State Aid

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after October 1. The FAFSA will require information from tax documents. Parents and student will need to report income tax information on the FAFSA.
- Colleges will use FAFSA information to determine eligibility for grants (free money toward college), government loans (low interest loans that must be re- paid) or work study (campus jobs to help defer college costs).
- The FAFSA can be submitted after October 1. Submit by March 1.
- The FAFSA requires a personal identification number (FAFSA ID) that is used in place of a signature once the form is complete. You may register at https://fsaid.ed.gov. The student and parent who completes the FAFSA, will need a FAFSA ID.
- Michigan Achievement Scholarships are available at getmimoney.org.

Independent scholarships

- Money offered through private sources.
- Check Counseling Office for list of scholarship opportunities.
- There are many online sites to put you in touch with available scholarships. See Web Resources on page 18 for more information.
- Local scholarship applications are available through the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation and Spring Lake Education Association.

Merit Based – Awards based on academic achievement such as GPA and/or SAT score.
Need Based – Awards based on the student and family's financial record.

Michigan Achievement Scholarship Opportunities

Community College

Interested in earning a skill certificate or associate degree? Or are you interested in starting at a community college and transferring to a university? The Community College Guarantee through the Michigan Achievement Scholarship could be for you!

- The Community College Guarantee helps recent high school graduates earn a skill certificate or associate degree at their local community college **tuition-free**!

  *when not a resident of the county student will pay the difference between in county and out of county rates.

- **All recent Michigan high school graduates** are eligible—regardless of family income.
- If you receive the federal Pell grant, you're eligible for a **$1,000 bonus** to help pay for living expenses like books, transportation, and rent.

Public or Private University

Interested in earning a bachelor's degree? The Michigan Achievement Scholarship could be for you!

- Those who qualify could receive **up to $27,500** to attend a Michigan public university, private college or university, or enroll in a four-year degree program at a Michigan community college. That's **up to $5,500 per year** for up to five years.

Career Training

Interested in developing your skills in a career training program? The Michigan Achievement Skills Scholarship could be for you!

- Those who qualify could receive **up to $2,000** per year for up to two years to earn an **industry-recognized certificate** for a faster track to a **high-paying career**.

WEB RESOURCES

Financial Aid

- Studentaid.gov – Access to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid
- Finaid.org – Information on loans (including a loan calculator, government assistance, scam alerts and more.

National Scholarship Sites

- Fastweb.com - Scholarship search
- Scholarships.com – Scholarship search
- myscholly.com – Phone app/Scholarships
- scholarshipbuddy.com – Scholarship search

Local Scholarships

Scholarship information 2026-2027

Career Search

- Mymajors.com – Interest inventory-college/career links
- Mycollegeoptions.com
- Naviance
- Occupational Outlook Handbook – Information on specific careers (including future growth rate and salary projections) www.bls.gov/ooh/

Michigan Colleges

- Macrao.org – Instant access to all Michigan colleges

Athletics

- web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/ - NCAA Clearinghouse. DI and DII
- playnaia.org – Eligibility center for NAIA schools

SENIOR CHECKLIST

FALL 2026

- Attend Financial Aid Presentation at high school
- The FAFSA can be completed after October 1 of 2026. Students are required to report income information from an earlier tax year (2025). For the best opportunity at receiving need-based awards, submit the FAFSA as early as possible.
- Register for a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) at https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch. The student and parent who will be completing the FAFSA will both need a FSA ID.
- Complete college applications and pay attention to deadlines. Set a goal to have college applications submitted by November 1
- If your college application requires an essay, have someone review your work before submitting.
- Meet with college/military representatives visiting Spring Lake High School in the fall of 2026 (Check daily announcements for the day/time of visits).
- Visit colleges (if you have not done so already).
- Attend the "Senior Exit Interview" scheduled with your counselor to complete a graduation audit and discuss future plans.
- Check registration deadlines for the SAT/ACT if planning to retake the SAT or ACT. Many colleges will still accept scores taken in the fall of senior year for admissions and/or scholarships. Testing dates for the SAT/ACT are available at the College Board website www.collegeboard.com and at www.act.org Check with the admission office at colleges of interest for their specific SAT/ACT policy.
- Get off to a good start academically and stay with a challenging senior schedule. Prove that you can do college level work.

WINTER/SPRING 2026/2027

- Complete any additional financial aid application(s) that may be part of each specific college application. i.e. University of Michigan requires the CSS profile for incoming freshmen
- Apply for local scholarships: Grand Haven Area Community Foundation – online application available in December of 2026. Spring Lake High School Scholarships – available in March/April of 2027.
- Grades still matter! Many colleges will request grades from term 1 & 2. Colleges reserve the "right to rescind" if grades show a significant decrease and/or students drop challenging courses. Strength of schedule is one of the criteria used for acceptance; keep the schedule reported on the application. Final transcripts will be sent in June.
- Review/respond to all correspondence from your college regarding deposits, housing, financial aid and orientation.