

What's Your Path?



Post-Secondary Planning For Juniors and Their Parents

Presented by the Guidance Department

Algonquin Regional High School

<https://www.nsboro.k12.ma.us/arhs#>

JUNIOR TIMELINE

JANUARY

- Students attend **What's Your Path, Post-Secondary Planning Part I** the week of **01/07/2019**.
- Parents attend **What's Your Path** on **Thursday, January 10, 2019** at **6:30 PM**.
- GPA (through sophomore year) will be posted on Naviance after workshops are completed.
- Counselors meet individually with juniors.
- Begin to investigate the different types of SAT/ACT preparation options.
- Prepare for midterm and semester final exams.
- Attend **College Admissions Counselor Panel Discussion for Juniors and Their Parents** on **Wednesday, January 30, 2019** at **7:30 am**.

FEBRUARY

- Students attend the **What's Your Path Part II** workshops on **Monday, Feb. 4, 2019**.
- Set up college tours (and possible interviews) with admissions offices during February Vacation.
- Be sure to send a "Thank You" note to the people who took the time to interview and/or show you around campus.
- Counselors meet individually with juniors.

MARCH

- Counselors meet individually with juniors.
- Course Selection for senior year begins **Monday, March 4, 2019**.
- Complete course selection no later than Friday March 15, 2019.**
- Check with the colleges you are considering to determine if you should be taking the SAT Subject test(s).
- Register for either a May or June SAT Test **with the writing section.**
- Register for either an April or June ACT test **with the writing section.**

APRIL

- Visit colleges during April Vacation, set-up tours and interviews with the admissions office.
- Send a "Thank You" note to the people you met with.
- Take the ACT test **with the writing portion** if recommended by your counselor.

MAY

- Take the SAT test **with the writing section.**
- Juniors attend **What to Do Over the Summer** workshops on **Monday, May 20, 2019**.
- Junior Parents attend **What to Do Over the Summer** on **Thursday, May 23, 2019** at **7:30 AM**.
- Continue to narrow down your college list.
- Check with the colleges you are considering if you should be taking the SAT Subject test(s).

JUNE

- Take the SAT Subject test (**only if required by the colleges that you are considering.**)
- Take the ACT test **with the writing portion.**
- Ask your Guidance Counselor any questions before you leave for the summer.

College Admissions Exams

The SAT and ACT are both curriculum-based standardized tests used by colleges for admissions purposes. Colleges and universities will accept either test interchangeably. That said, they aren't the same test. Here's a quick look at how they stack up against one another. Please refer to the chart on the following page for a comparison of the redesigned SAT and the ACT.

The SAT is comprised of the following sections: **Evidenced Based Reading & Writing, Mathematics,** and an **optional Essay**. **Although the essay is considered optional, we strongly recommend that students register for the SAT with the essay.** Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200-800 for a maximum score of 1600. The essay is also scored on a scale of 2-8 but will not be factored into the overall score.

The ACT is comprised of the following sections: **English, Mathematics, Reading, Science,** and an **optional Writing** section. **Although the Writing section is considered optional, we strongly recommend that students register for the ACT with the Writing section.** Each section of the ACT is scored on a scale of 1-36, and then averaged for a maximum score of 36 points. The Writing Test is also scored on a scale of 1-12 but is not factored into the composite score.

The SAT Subject Tests are designed to demonstrate academic achievement in specific subject areas. They are typically required by only the more competitive colleges for admission purposes, but a large number of colleges and universities do not require any of these tests. **While you're developing your potential list of schools, you should note whether or not your schools recommend or require you to take Subject Tests, and if so, which tests are required.** Colleges that require Subject Tests often want you to take either Math I or Math II, plus 1 or 2 subjects of your choice. If you need assistance with determining which tests to take, please stop by and see your guidance counselor.

Khan Academy is free personalized SAT prep offered through College Board. Students can link their PSATs to their Khan Academy account to create practice tests and video lessons tailored to their individual academic needs.

Test Optional Schools

Some schools do not require standardized testing. More than 1000 accredited colleges and universities across the U.S., acting on the belief that "test scores do not equal merit," do not use the SAT or ACT to make admissions decisions about a substantial number of their incoming freshmen classes. These institutions range widely in size and mission. To get a list of these schools go to www.fairtest.org. These are just a few examples of test-optional schools: Assumption, Bates, Bowdoin, Fairfield University, George Washington, Holy Cross, Merrimack, Roger Williams, UMass Lowell, and WPI.

SAT and ACT Registration Information

SAT & SAT Subject Tests			
Test	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline (<i>\$29 Fee Applies</i>)
SAT Test Only *	03/09/19	02/08/19	02/27/19
SAT & Subject Tests*	05/04/19	04/05/19	04/24/19
SAT & Subject Tests*	06/01/19	05/03/19	05/22/19
SAT & Subject Tests*	08/24/19	TBA	TBA
SAT & Subject Tests*	10/05/19	TBA	TBA
SAT & Subject Tests	11/02/19	TBA	TBA
SAT & Subject Tests	12/07/19	TBA	TBA

*Algonquin is a test site for these dates

- Register online at www.collegeboard.org
- We recommend you take the optional Essay portion of the test.
- Registration for the SAT with the Essay section is \$64.50.
- The SAT Subject Tests fee is \$26 + \$22 per additional subject test, language tests are \$26.
- The late fee is \$29.
- You cannot take the SAT and SAT Subject Tests on the same day.
- You may take as many as three SAT Subject Tests on a single day (1 hour/test), though many students plan to take only one or two tests on a given day.

ACT Test			
Test	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline (<i>\$27.50 Fee Applies</i>)
ACT	04/13/19	03/08/19	03/25/19
ACT*	06/08/19	05/03/19	05/20/19
ACT	07/13/19	06/14/19	06/24/19
ACT	09/14/19	TBA	TBA
ACT*	10/26/19	TBA	TBA

*Algonquin is a test site

- Register online at www.act.org
- We recommend you take the optional Writing portion of the ACT.
- Registration for the ACT Test with Writing is \$67
- The late fee to register is \$30



Getting Started

Start by logging onto the Algonquin website:
<http://www.nsboro.k12.ma.us/pages/ARHS>

Select the Academics tab followed by the Guidance link and view the following resources:

- Naviance – Click on this tab for a direct link to Naviance
- Course of Study – A list of the ARHS graduation requirements
- Course Selection- Dates/deadlines and tips.
- Testing Information – PSAT, SAT, ACT and AP information

Naviance:

The Algonquin Guidance Department uses Naviance as our main college counseling tool.

- To sign on to Naviance, go to the ARHS guidance webpage or log in at:
<https://connection.naviance.com/arhs>
- To log in– type in your full email address and the password you used last year during the sophomore workshops.

Please review the following information:

- About Me tab
- Official Things
 - Profile
 - Email: If you or your parents have a new email, please update by selecting the edit button.
 - Username: Your username is your email address. If you changed your email address, you will also then need to change your username by selecting manage my account.
 - GPA: Will be loaded after the workshop at the bottom of your profile.
- Career tab:
 - Do What You Are - Review this and look at the careers/majors suggested for you.
 - Career Interest Profiler - Take or Review. Look at careers and/or majors highlighted.
 - These tools will help you begin a self-assessment of your goals after high school.

Finding a Match: What to Consider

A good fit means you have found a school that contains some or all of the traits you are looking for in a school.

Think about:

- Reasons for going to college, the military, work, gap year ...
- Use your GPA and Career/Personality Profiles to make an accurate appraisal for reaching your goals.

Criteria to help you find the “good fit”:

Type of School: There is a pathway for every career; below are two popular options for ARHS graduates.

- Two year schools provide academic, vocational and professional education. Graduates receive an associate's degree, and have the option of continuing their education at a university or college.
- Four year schools are institutions of higher education offering majors in mainly non-vocational subjects. Students graduate with a bachelor's degree.

Public vs. Private: What's the difference?

- Public Schools: These schools receive funding from the state and offer lower tuition for in-state students. Often public schools will give admissions priority to students who are residents (live in state) over non-residents (those who live out of state). Requirements are often more rigorous for out of state students.
- Private Schools: Funding comes from tuition, investments and private donors, not from taxpayers. These schools often have more geographic diversity.

Locations:

- Distance from home: How much it will cost for you to return home? If it is a few hundred dollars, you will want to add that to your budget.
- Rural versus Urban: Consider accessibility & amenities. Do you like open spaces or cities?
- Would you prefer warm or cold weather?

Size - Big vs. Small:

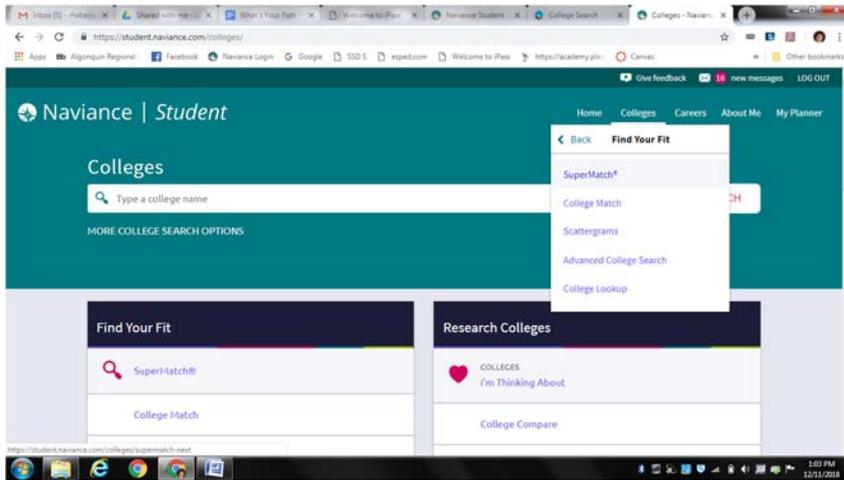
- BIG: Pros: Alumni networking, athletics, professional programs (business & engineering), variety of programs, different “colleges” within one “university.”
- SMALL: Pros: Specific areas of study, access to the faculty, class size & discussion, leadership opportunities, community feel, Alumni networking.

Selectivity: How difficult is it to get accepted?

College selectivity is the "**application-to-admit ratio**," or the number of students admitted compared to the number of students who applied. In other words, it is a percentage, such as 34% admitted. The lower the percentage, the more selective the school is. Look at your own grades and standardized tests scores to determine selectivity. If your grades fall below the average accepted students' grades, that school will be considered a selective school for you; in other words, it will be harder to get into.

Finding the Right Fit: How to do a Search

1. In Naviance, click on the College Tab and scroll down to Find Your Fit:



*Click on College Search for **Advanced College Search**

2. Select your criteria (type, location, size, majors, athletics...):



3. Look at the list of schools that match your search criteria. From here, you can view the colleges.
4. You can "save" each search and change your criteria.
5. After you "SELECT" your schools, then click "Add to Colleges I'm Thinking About." You will always be able to access this list in "Colleges I'm Thinking About".



Finding the Right Fit: How to do a Search continued

6. Assessing how you fit. The differences between “Reach”, “Match/Target/Realistic”, “Safety”:
A **match/target/realistic** school is one where your academic credentials fall well within (or even exceed) the school's range for the average freshman. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to be accepted to several of your match schools.

A **reach** school is one where your academic credentials fall below the school's range for the average freshman. Reach schools are long-shots, but they could still be possible.

A **safety** school is one where your academic credentials fall above the school's range for the average freshman. You can be reasonably certain that you will be admitted to your safety schools.

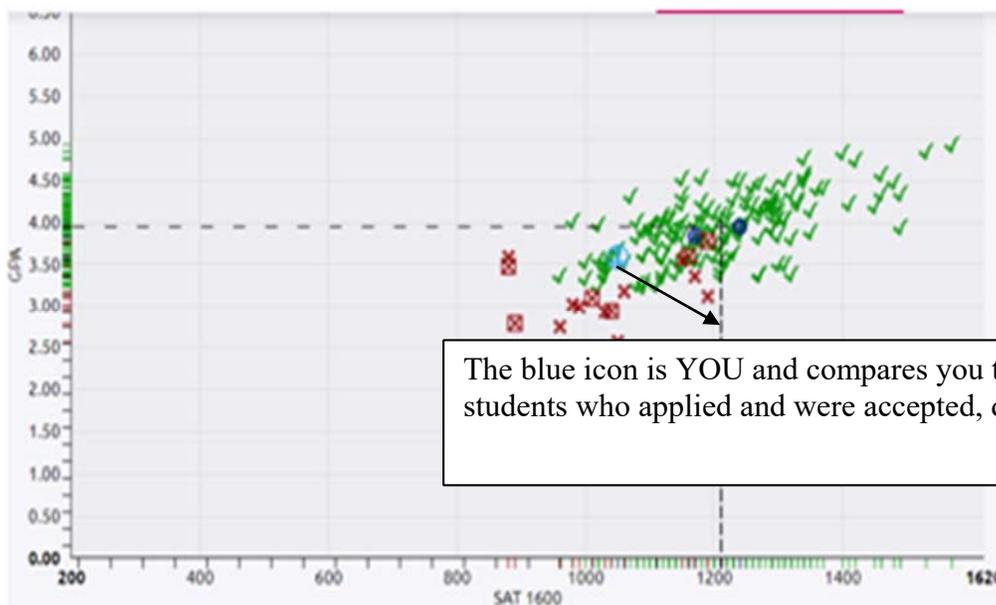
Apply to a few schools from each category. Organizing them into match, reach and safety categories will help you manage your expectations throughout the admissions process. And it will ensure that you set ambitious goals and give yourself some backup options. For more information please visit:

<http://www.princetonreview.com/college/match-reach-safety.aspx>

7. How to use Naviance data and scattergrams to help you determine where you fit:

Overlaps = this information is found on the overview tab; it shows the top 10 application overlaps where ARHS students have applied to compared to the college highlighted.

Scattergrams = these images are located under the admissions tab and display ARHS data from the past three years.



Navigating College Websites

Below is a list of the most important pages on a college website:

I. ADMISSIONS: Click on Undergraduate Admissions for the following information:

- **Admissions Visits:**
 1. **Tours:** Typically tours last 60-90 minutes. Generally they are student led and take you to the major parts of campus (often includes a visit to a dormitory). Check to see if you need to sign up online, or if you need to call ahead.
 2. **Information Sessions:** These usually last 45-60 minutes. Sessions are led by admissions representatives and give a full overview of the college, admissions data, application information etc. Sometimes there are student representatives also speaking. Many schools will offer tours & information sessions back to back; try to sign up for both.
- **Interview:** Does the school offer interviews? These can often increase your chances as it allows you to meet face to face with an admissions representative. Each school has their own way of scheduling interviews – many you can set up online, some you may need to contact admissions by phone, and some set up interviews with alumni representatives after you submit an application.
- **Deadlines:** What are the colleges' deadlines? Early Action, Early Decision, Regular Decision (we will give you more information about deadlines in the spring workshops).
- **Course requirements:** Some California schools require a full year of Fine Arts; while Algonquin does not. Double check requirements, including language & math on this page. *Keep in mind some majors will want specific course requirements, like Nursing or Engineering. Check the Academics page to find this information.
- **SAT, ACT, and SAT Subject tests:** Some selective schools will require the SAT Subject exams. Some schools are test optional. Check for that information here.

II. ACADEMICS: The academics page will list information on the majors offered at the college, as well as specific major requirements, departments, faculty, classes, and special programs.

III. CONTACT US: This page usually helps you to get on a school's email list; you can also use this page to ask questions. Try to find information on the school's website before you email the admissions representatives.

Navigating College Websites continued:

- **About-** Here you will find information on the school's mission statement, history, and philosophy. This page will often help you to understand the school's culture.
- **Financial Aid-** Information about cost, tuition, fees, and room and board. This page will provide financial aid deadlines unique to the college, as well as scholarship opportunities. Net Price Calculator found here.
- **Student/Campus Life-** Info on housing, organizations, clubs, sports, and upcoming campus events will be on this page.
- **Prospective Freshman/Future Students-** This page will usually provide links to all of the information above. It is a good starting point if you get stuck.

Getting on the Mailing Lists

Staying Organized is the Key!

- Start an email folder for each college that interests you.
- Keep copies of any communication you have with a college as well as application and financial aid information you receive.



Now that you have what you feel is a good college list to begin working with, it is time to get your name, email and/or address on their mailing lists so that their latest information as well as application information will be sent directly to you. Getting on those mailing lists is now easier than ever!

Pull up a college website on your computer. Go to their “Admissions” section. Usually you will find an inquiry form to complete and submit online. You’re done!

TIPS FOR VISITING A COLLEGE

A campus visit is a MUST – Nothing else can give you a sense of the campus and what it will be like to go there!

- You can go online or call the Admissions Office ahead of time to find out the tour schedule and reserve a spot if necessary.
- Meet with an Admissions Counselor, if possible.
- Take a student-led campus tour offered by the Admissions Office – this will give you a chance to talk with a current student.
- Remember – don't let the personality of the tour guide dominate or influence your impression of the college.
- Have questions ready – prepare a list of your own questions and some from your parents too!
- Read the bulletin boards, campus newspaper and other publications. What bands are coming to campus? What comedians? What speakers? What political groups are active? What functions or activities are popular? What seem to be the vocalized issues on campus right now?
- Sit in the student union or commons – have a soda and simply look around you. Does the atmosphere seem appealing to you? Do the people there seem friendly and happy?
- Arrange to sit in on a class if you can – it can be a very valuable experience.
- Be sure to check out sports or other major areas of interest to you while you are on the campus. If you want to talk with a coach or a department chairperson, be sure to call ahead and schedule an appointment.
- If colleges recommend interviews or if you have traveled a significant amount, you might consider having an admissions interview while on your visit. If you're unable to travel to the campus, admissions representatives will try to schedule interviews with potential candidates when they are in the Boston area or colleges will have alumni in the area interview potential candidates.

******Make sure to dress appropriately for the tour and possible admissions interview******

If you speak with other students, ask some of these questions:

- How many hours a week do you study? Is that typical of students here?
- Are there jobs on campus students can get?
- Do you have the chance to meet with professors outside of class?
- Do many students go home on weekends? Do you?
- How do you like the food?
- Where do students normally study? Library, dorm rooms, any other places on campus?
- What do you like most about this college? What do you like least?
- How easy is it to get the courses you want at registration?
- Do you feel safe walking around on campus? At night?

College Fairs/Tours/Interviews

Sample Questions You Might Ask:

- What is the most popular major on campus? Why?
- Are there different standards for applying and being accepted into a particular program?
- Is the college strong in my field of interest and if yes, how so?
- What are the extracurricular activities and cultural opportunities students are excited about and are most popular?
- Will applying for financial aid have an impact on the admissions decision?
- What major events are on campus each year?
- What do you think makes your college stand out from others?
- What is your job placement rate?
- How would you describe the personality of your campus?
- How easy would it be to start a club or organization on campus?
- What is the most remarkable feature of your school that you DON'T feature on your brochure?
- What are some popular internship positions available at your school?

***Be sure to ask any questions you may have that are specific to your interests:**

1. Do you have _____ as a sport?
2. Do you have a club for students interested in _____?
3. What internships do you have for students looking to study _____?
4. What kind of resources do you have for students academically outside of the classroom?

Tips for Attending a College Fair

College Fairs are a great place to gather information on numerous schools in a short period of time! You should plan on attending with your parents.

When attending a large fair, plan out what schools you want learn more about before going to the fair. Focus on those that are further away versus those that are in a closer proximity to you.

****Prepare a sheet of labels with your name, address, phone number and email to attach to the college information cards. This will save you time writing out your information. ****

Course Selection

March 4th- 15th

Remember what you take senior year counts!

Keep in mind, colleges want students to take their academics to the next level senior year, which means maintaining a full and rigorous course load. Here are some tips when planning your schedule for next year:

1. Do not take a light course load senior year. Colleges want students to continue to challenge themselves in the core classes. Strong course selection senior year can make a difference in some admissions decisions. It shows you have a commitment to your education, and you're ready to handle the academic challenges of college.
2. Take at least four out of the five major academics. That means if you decide to opt out of taking a world language course, you will want to take a lab science, math, English, and social studies class. Remember to take math your senior year, as you will be taking placement exams and want the information to be fresh in your mind.
3. Challenge yourself with appropriate rigor and classes that interest you. If you are interested in medicine or sports, take physiology. If you would like to help people, take psychology. Work with your teachers around their recommendations; they know you and the classes you will be taking. They can help you find the best fit.
4. Select classes that will challenge but not overwhelm you and balance your schedule. Remember many schools will see your first and second term grades from your senior year.
5. Colleges are looking for students who have academic interests and students who enjoy going to class. If they see you abandon classes or take a light load senior year, they may worry you will take the same approach in college.

Requirements vs. Recommendations:

On Naviance under the admissions tab, you will find what schools require and recommend in regards to academics. Students should try to go beyond what is required and achieve the recommended number of courses. Colleges often have the most up to date information on their websites, so make sure to look at the requirements on the admissions page in addition to what's listed in Naviance.

For example, UCONN requires two years of a foreign language at the high school level, but recommends three. Try for at least three years.

Course Selection Due By March 15th

Financial Aid & Scholarship Application Process

The Financial Aid and Scholarship application process begins in the fall of 2018. More information to come in our September workshop “The Nuts & Bolts of Applying to College.”

❖ Things you can do now:

- Visit www.mefa.org for financial aid information and help.
- Apply for a FAFSA ID number at: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/index.htm>

On-going scholarships are available on Naviance under the “Colleges” link in the “Scholarship & Money” section. Under this tab, is a link for the “National Scholarship Search.” Fill this out and you will receive information about scholarships that might be a fit!

❖ Websites for Scholarship Searches:

www.fastweb.com	www.scholarships.com
www.guaranteed-scholarships.com	www.collegeboard.org
www.collegeanswer.com	www.collegenet.com
www.mycollegedollars.com	

Upcoming Events:

Junior College Admissions Panel

Wednesday, Jan. 30, 2019
7:30 am in the auditorium

What to Do Over the Summer!

Junior College Planning for Parents
Thursday, May 23, 2019
7:30 am in the auditorium

NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIRS

THE BOSTON NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIR

Seaport Hotel & World Trade Center
Thursday, April 4, 2019: 9:00 am- 12:00 pm and 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm
Friday, April 5, 2019: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

The SPRINGFIELD NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIR

Eastern States Exposition (The Big E)
Monday, April 8, 2019: 9:00 am - 11:30 am & 6:30-8:30 pm

THE PROVIDENCE NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIR

Rhode Island Convention Center
Tuesday, April 9, 2019: 5:30pm - 8:30pm

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER VISIT:

<http://www.nacacnet.org/college-fairs/SpringNCF/Pages/default.aspx>