

MVHS COUNSELING NEWSLETTER



High School & Beyond Planning — News & Information

AUGUST

FOR FAMILIES OF 11TH GRADE STUDENTS

Welcome to Junior Year!

Junior year is very important because for most students and families, it is when college planning activities start to kick into high gear.

This fall, **your student can prepare for education beyond high school by taking the [PSAT](#)**. It is a good idea for students to take it even if they're not sure they want to go to a four-year college. The PSAT assesses academic skills and gives students the chance to practice for the SAT. PSAT scores can qualify students for the [National Merit Scholarship](#) competition. Therefore, even if your student took the PSAT as a 9th or 10th grader, they need to take it again as a junior to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship.

Your student's path after high school could include a four-year college, a two-year college, a CTE (technical college), military, or entering the workforce. To pursue those options, your teen should **prepare to take an entrance exam**. No matter what path your student chooses, it will likely require at least one entrance exam. Talk to your student's school counselor to learn more about which test your student should take, when, and how to get a fee waiver if necessary.

The SAT and ACT are the main entrance exams for four-year colleges. The PSAT is the practice test for the SAT. Students will begin to register for and take other postsecondary exams junior year, depending on which postsecondary path they choose, juniors may take other postsecondary exams as well. Students can learn more about each of these exams and the registration processes at the following internet sites:

- **Four-year colleges:** SAT, SAT Subject Tests: www.collegeboard.com and ACT: <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act.html>
- **Two-year colleges:** ACCUPLACER: accuplacer.collegeboard.org/student/practice
- **Military:** ASVAB: www.asvabprogram.com (also a great career interest inventory)
- Free test preparation is available on each of the tests' websites. Test fees may be waived for students who meet income eligibility guidelines. Talk to a school counselor to see if your junior is eligible for fee waivers.



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Did You Know?

Research indicates that “hope is a better predictor of college success and graduation than GPA and test scores.”

Myth Buster

MYTH: Standardized tests (ACT, PSAT, SAT) are more important than high school grades for college entrance.

REALITY: Performance in high school is a better predictor of college success than the standardized tests.

Colleges know that. That does not mean that most colleges do not look at your student's SAT or ACT scores.

Some colleges have more applicants than they can assess. These colleges may use SAT and ACT scores to determine if applicants will be admitted.

Standardized test are also important in qualifying for some for scholarships.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

- PSAT Registration: August 22-September 12th
 - \$20 payable in MVHS bookstore
- PSAT Test- October 24th

Student Checklist

- Consider taking a practice PSAT ([PSAT/NMSQT](#))
- Sign up for the PSAT
- **Make sure you take rigorous classes** a foreign language, dual-credit and honors courses.
- **Maintain a 3.0 GPA** by the end of 11th grade. **NOTE:** In-State colleges will recalculate your GPA and only look at the 16 core classes (Sweet 16) to do so: 4 English, 4 Math, 3 Science, 2 Social Studies, 2 World Languages, 1 Fine Art or CTE
- **Start your year off right by talking with your school counselor** about the year ahead. Confirm that your courses will put you on the right track for college admission. Be sure to ask about test dates for the PSAT, ACT, and SAT. You'll need to register up to six weeks ahead of time.

Family Checklist

- **Make sure your child meets with the school counselor.** This meeting is especially important this year as your junior starts to engage in the college application process. Learn more about the [counselor's role in applying to college](#).
- **Encourage your child to set goals for the school year.** Working toward specific goals helps your high schooler stay motivated and focused.
- **Help your child stay organized.** Work with your junior to make weekly or monthly to-do lists to keep on top of the tasks required to get ready for applying to colleges.
- **Help your junior get ready for the PSAT/NMSQT** in October.