

College search and application activities at NNHS: A four-year timeline

Freshman Year:

Overview – In freshman year, the focus is on awareness of postsecondary educational opportunities, and how current and future choices affect postsecondary options.

September – Counselors meet twice in their offices with small groups of freshmen. The focus is on orientation to the high school, academic and social adjustment, and making the most out of the high school experience. (see Freshman Guidance Seminar Booklet).

Ongoing – Counselors meet individually with students to discuss academic issues and extracurricular involvement.

Last week of February – Counselors meet once in their offices with small groups of freshmen. The focus is on appropriate course choice for sophomore year. Graduation requirements are addressed specifically and college entrance requirements are discussed more generally.

Spring – Counselors meet individually with freshmen about course choices emphasizing the importance of the right level of academic rigor for each student.

Sophomore Year:

Overview – In sophomore year, the focus continues to be on awareness of postsecondary educational opportunities and how current and future choices affect these options. A practice college admissions test with a career component is offered and students are introduced to some of the features of Naviance.

Ongoing – Counselors meet individually with students to discuss academic issues and extracurricular involvement.

October – Students are encouraged to take the PLAN test (a practice test for the ACT). Many sophomores (50 - 60 %) take the PLAN, which is administered on a designated Saturday in October. The PLAN has four academic sections (English, Math, Reading and Science) and a career interest inventory. The sub-scores and composite scores are based on national norms.

January – Sophomores who took the PLAN receive their results in an individual meeting with the counselor. The academic and career components are discussed in the context of academic achievement and future planning.

Last week of February/First week of March – Counselors meet twice in their offices with small groups in Sophomore Guidance Seminars. The focus is on appropriate course selection for junior year. At these meetings, students are given access to their own Naviance account. The academic planning and career exploration features of Naviance are explained and demonstrated.

Late March – Students identify and ask one teacher for one written Teacher Assessment.

May or June – Some sophomores take the SAT Subject Test in Chemistry.

Junior Year:

Overview – In junior year, the focus moves from awareness to exploration of more specific postsecondary educational opportunities. The emphasis is on college search and exploration. Students with the help of their counselors explore their own needs and wants, research and evaluate specific institutions of higher education, and look for ones that are good matches.

Ongoing – Juniors meet with their counselors about academic and college exploration issues. Juniors also use the college exploration features of Naviance including the “Scattergrams”.

October – Most juniors (70 - 80 %) take the PSAT (a practice SAT). The PSAT has three academic sections (critical reading, math, and writing skills). The sub-scores based on national norms.

October – Juniors (and seniors) and their parents attend two College Nights. These are two college fairs put on by the counseling department. Over 100 schools and colleges attend each night.

December – Juniors who took the PSAT receive their results in an individual meeting with the counselor. The results are discussed in the context of academic achievement. Requirements and options for future college admission testing are discussed.

January – Juniors begin to make individual appointments with a Career Center Counselor.

January - June – College planning appointments in the Career Center for juniors begin on the first day of second semester and continue to the end of the school year. All notes, lists, and college admission worksheets generated in the Career Center meetings are copied and sent to the student's regular counselor.

Early February – Juniors and their parents attend Junior Night. This program, presented by the Counseling Department, offers attendees a variety of workshops on various aspects of the college process to choose from. The program ends with a group meeting with the student's counselor.

Early February – Counselors meet twice in their offices with small groups about the college search and application process, including an overview of the use of Naviance for post high school planning (see Junior Guidance Seminar Booklet).

February - June – Students take the SAT (March, May, or June) and/or the ACT (February, April, or June). Counselors discuss taking SAT Subject Tests with many students. This discussion concerns whether Subject Tests are needed for the student, which ones to take, how many to take, and when to take them. Subject area teachers also advise students about taking Subject Tests.

Late March – Students ask one teacher to write a Teacher Assessment ; they can also ask one or two teachers for a Teacher Recommendation for college applications.

May – College Admissions Panel. Juniors and their parents attend a panel discussion of college admissions presented by the Counseling Department. Panel members typically include three admissions officers representing a private university, a private liberal arts college, and the University Of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Senior Year:

Overview – In senior year, the focus moves from exploration to the selection of specific postsecondary institutions for application. Counselors work with students to develop a final choice set, apply to specific institutions, and decide where to attend.

Ongoing – Seniors meet with their counselors individually about choosing and applying to colleges and other institutions. Students review their Senior Packets individually with their counselor. Counselors write Counselor

Statements for students with extenuating circumstances that need explanation to the colleges.

September – Senior Parent Night- Counselors meet with parents of seniors to discuss an overview of what to expect in the senior year and specifics about the college admissions process.

September – Counselors meet twice in their offices with small groups of Seniors. The focus is on the details of college application process (see the booklet and materials for Senior guidance Seminars)..

September - June – College planning appointments in the Career Center for seniors are ongoing until June. However, the vast majority of the Career Center's work with Seniors is September to January.

Fall – Students take SATs and/or ACTs. Many students take SAT Subject Tests. Many non-native English speakers take the TOEFL.

October – Seniors (and juniors) and their parents attend two College Nights.

Fall – Some English teachers provide assistance on the college essays for college applications.

November – The Counseling Department presents a Financial Aid Night for seniors and their parents.

November - June – Counselors work with students on college application issues.

Spring – Seniors receive most of their admissions decision from colleges.

May 1st – Common Reply Date