



FAMILY GUIDE TO

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS



2024 - 2025

**Virtual
FAFSA Completion
Webinar**

**October 10, 2024
at 6:00 p.m.**

**A link will be provided
at a later date**

This program is for all West Shore School District families

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I. INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a guide to college planning, decision-making, and placement. Used as a guide, it is especially helpful in providing ideas about the collection and analysis of admissions information. If you follow the procedures as suggested, the college entrance process will be less frustrating and frightening.

You are encouraged to take an active part in making decisions for your future. You will be much happier if you accept responsibility for your selections. Many individuals, however, within the District will be more than willing to help you clarify your options and recommend alternatives. Your counselor is ready to assist you every step of the way. Parents are also welcome and invited to utilize the District's counseling services when needed.

Stacy L. Thorpe
Cedar Cliff
School Counseling Dept. Chair

Aaron Walter
Red Land
School Counseling Dept. Chair

II. COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTS

Students planning to further their education may be required to take college entrance examinations. These tests are used along with the high school record to predict a student's chance of success in college. Generally, the first test taken is the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Some colleges will require the SAT of the College Board. Other colleges may prefer the American College Test (ACT).

Determining which tests are appropriate is each student's responsibility. It is most important that juniors review the website for each college they are considering. Particular attention should be paid to the section on "Admissions Requirements."

Students need to create an account and then register online at www.collegeboard.org for the SATs or www.actstudent.org for the ACTs.

TEST	USE	REGISTRATION FORMS	WHEN
PSAT/NMSQT	National Merit Scholarships Estimate Performance on SAT	Junior Counselor's Office	Junior Year
CEEB SAT I: Reasoning Test	College Admissions	Online	Junior/Senior Year

Cedar Cliff and Red Land High Schools have been approved as testing centers for the College Board Test (SAT). All tests are given on Saturday. The ACT is administered at Harrisburg Area Community College or Cumberland Valley High School.

**PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST/
NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (PSAT/NMSQT)**

Purpose

The PSAT/NMSQT score is used to estimate performance on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). It is a shortened version of the SAT. In addition to estimating performance, the PSAT/NMSQT is the route of entry to the National Merit Scholarship Program and the National Achievement Scholarship program for Outstanding African American Students.

The PSAT/NMSQT provides information that can assist in planning future education. It gives students and parents an idea of the student's ability to handle college work. The student's performance on the test can be compared with a national group of students planning to enter college.

Another feature of the PSAT/NMSQT is the Student Search of the College Board. Students who participate in the service will receive information from colleges or other post-secondary institutions about education and financial aid opportunities.

Description

The PSAT/NMSQT takes 2 hours and 14 minutes and consists of 2 sections: (1) the Reading and Writing Section, and (2) the Math Section. Most of the questions are multiple choice, though some math questions ask you to write in the answer rather than select it.

The following table shows how much time you get for each section and the number of questions for each test:

Section	Length (Minutes)	Number of Questions/Tasks
Reading and Writing	64	54
Math	70	44
Total	134	98

Dates and Test Centers: Thursday, October 17, 2024 Red Land High School (ID 391-325)
Tuesday, October 22, 2024 Cedar Cliff High School (ID 390-527)

Registration: School Counseling Office

Students are advised to obtain a booklet entitled **Student Bulletin** which contains a sample test and information on scoring.

THE SAT

The digital SAT is composed of two sections: Reading and Writing and Math. Students have 64 minutes to complete the Reading and Writing section and 70 minutes to complete the Math section for a total of 2 hours and 14 minutes.

Each section is divided into 2 equal length modules, and there is a 10-minute break between the Reading and Writing section and the Math section. The first module of each section contains a broad mix of easy, medium, and hard questions. Based on how students perform on the first module, the second module of questions will either be more difficult or less difficult.

Compared to the ACT, the SAT provides 68% more time per question:

Component	Time Allotted (Minutes)	Number of Questions/Tasks
Reading and Writing	64 (two 32-minute modules)	54
Math	70 (two 35-minute modules)	44
Total	134	98

Most of the questions are multiple choice, though some of the math questions ask you to enter the answer rather than select it.

On all questions, there's no penalty for guessing: if you're not sure of the answer, it's better to guess than leave the response blank.

The Reading and Writing Section

The Reading and Writing section presents short reading passages (or passage pairs) followed by a single multiple-choice question. Questions on the Reading and Writing section represent one of four content domains – Craft and Structure, Information and Ideas, Standard English Conventions, and Expression of Ideas. To help you budget your time, questions that test similar skills and knowledge are grouped together and arranged from easiest to hardest.

The test is divided into 2 modules, each of which includes questions from all four different domains.

What the Reading and Writing Passages Are Like

The passages in the Reading and Writing section range from 25 to 150 words. Passages represent the subject areas of literature, history/social studies, the humanities, and science.

What the Reading and Writing Questions Are Like

The questions on the Reading and Writing section fall into four content domains:

1. *Information and Ideas*
Measures comprehension, analysis, and reasoning skills and knowledge and the ability to locate, interpret, evaluate and integrate information and ideas from texts and informational graphics (tables, bar graphs, and line graphs).
2. *Craft and Structure*
Measures the comprehension, vocabulary, analysis, synthesis, and reasoning skills and knowledge needed to understand and use high-utility words and phrases in context, evaluate texts rhetorically, and make connections between topically related texts.
3. *Expression of Ideas*
Measures the ability to revise texts to improve the effectiveness of written expression and to meet specific rhetorical goals.
4. *Standard English Conventions*
Measures the ability to edit text to conform to core conventions of Standard English sentence structure, usage, and punctuation.

Start Practicing

Start studying for the digital SAT today by downloading Bluebook™ and taking a full-length SAT test in the same application you will use on test day. Full-length digital SAT practice in Bluebook familiarizes students with the test application interface and supporting tools and features like formula sheets, digital accommodations, and calculators.

From the My Practice dashboard on the College Board website, you'll immediately see your adaptively scored practice test results and a practice test review of the test items, the correct answers, and a thorough explanation of the answer.

Armed with a baseline understanding of your performance on the digital SAT, you can use your score results and individual item responses to delve further into digital SAT preparation content on Khan Academy®.

In partnership with College Board, Khan Academy has built a digital SAT course that includes videos, articles and worked examples designed to help you understand and experience what's new and improved about the digital SAT.

If you're testing with paper-based accommodations on test day, prepare for the digital SAT with our linear (nonadaptive) practice tests 1-4 available for download.

The Math Section: Overview

The Math section focuses on the areas of math that play the biggest role in college and career success:

- Algebra
- Advanced Math
- Problem-Solving and Data Analysis
- Geometry and Trigonometry

Like the Reading and Writing section, the Math section is divided into 2 modules. Over the course of the Math section, you'll answer multiple-choice and student-produced response questions that measure your fluency with, understanding of, and ability to apply the math concepts, skills and practices that are most essential.

Approximately 30% of Math questions are set in context. These in-context (“word”) questions require you to consider a science, social studies, or real-world scenario and apply your math skills and knowledge, along with an understanding of the context, to determine the answer to each.

Types of Math Tested

The math questions are divided into four categories. Questions from all four categories appear in each test module. Across each module, questions are arranged from easiest to hardest, allowing you to have the best opportunity to demonstrate what you know and can do.

Type of Math	Number of Questions
Algebra	13-15
Advanced Math	13-15
Problem-Solving and Data Analysis	5-7
Geometry and Trigonometry	5-7

2024-25 TESTING DATES	
SAT	Registration Deadline
October 5, 2024	September 20, 2024
November 2, 2024	October 18, 2024 at Red Land
*December 7, 2024 at Cedar Cliff	November 22, 2024
*March 8, 2025	February 21, 2025
May 3, 2024 at Cedar Cliff	April 18, 2025
June 7, 2025	May 22, 2025

*Starting in March 2024, the SAT is only available in a digital format. Students who need to borrow a device from the College Board will need to register and request their device earlier than the registration deadline – at least thirty (30) days before test day.

COST	SAT Reasoning Test	\$68.00
	Late Fee	Additional \$34.00

Students who receive free or reduced lunch can have the registration fee waived. Fee waivers are requested directly from the College Board during the registration process.

Registration

Registration is available online at: www.collegeboard.org. It is the student's responsibility to know what tests are required by their colleges, and the registration dates involved.

AP EXAMS (Optional)

The *Advanced Placement Program* is a cooperative educational effort designed to provide students an opportunity to complete college-level studies while they are in high school. The Advanced Placement examinations are offered annually and give high school students an opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement. The exams are administered during the weeks of **May 5 through May 16, 2025**. Although it is to a student's advantage to have taken an Advanced Placement course, it is not a prerequisite for participation in the testing program.

Exam registrations will begin in the Fall. Deadline to order without additional fee is October 31, 2024. Cost is \$99.00 per exam and \$53.00 for students who qualify for free or reduced lunch. Additional registration information will be provided by the AP Coordinator at each school.

Advanced Placement courses and examinations are offered in the following subjects:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Biology | Music Theory |
| Calculus AB | Physics C: Mechanics |
| Chemistry | Pre-Calculus |
| English Language and Composition | Psychology |
| English Literature and Composition | Statistics |
| Government & Politics - US | US History |
| Macroeconomics | World History |
| Microeconomics | Psychology |

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM ACT

Some colleges require the ACT instead of the SAT for college admissions and/or placement. The ACT includes tests in English usage, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

2024-25 TESTING DATES	
ACT Test Dates	Registration Deadline
October 26, 2024	September 20, 2024
December 14, 2024	November 8, 2024
February 8, 2025	January 3, 2025
April 5, 2025	February 28, 2025
June 14, 2025	May 9, 2025
July 12, 2025	June 6, 2025
TEST CENTERS:	Tests are locally administered at Harrisburg Area Community College and Cumberland Valley High School
COST:	\$69.00 (no writing)
To register online, visit ACT's website at: www.actstudent.org	
ACT plus writing option - \$94.00	

III. YOUR COLLEGE SELECTION PROCESS

Higher education is expensive and requires a large investment in both time and money. As you decide what you want from college, examine both the way you picture yourself now and the way you would like to see yourself in the future. It is important you give thoughtful and careful consideration to your career goals and the best way to reach them. Your personality, interests, experiences, ambitions, and dreams should be a part of the choices you make.

Compiling a List through Self-Evaluation

Begin by determining your strengths, weaknesses, expectations, and goals. After completing your self-evaluation, consider the characteristics you require in a college and determine their importance to you.

All students have access to an online tool called Naviance. This program will assist in career exploration, academic planning and college/career preparation. Counselors will be introducing Naviance to students in classrooms throughout the school year. Additional Web sites to explore post high school planning include: www.EducationPlanner.org, and www.CollegeBoard.org You should develop a list of

schools you would like to research more closely. After establishing your initial list, additional references giving more detailed information on your choices should be used. If you eliminate those institutions which do not meet the criteria you established, you will reduce your list to a size that will be realistic in terms of contacting for more information, visiting campuses, arranging interviews, and submitting applications.

Appendix A will help you determine and evaluate your priorities and expectations. In addition, the chart will permit you to compare colleges you are considering.

When selecting colleges, you may wish to divide your choices into three categories: Reaching, Average for Me, Secure. This will help assure your acceptance while also allowing you to apply at a possibly more competitive school. In dividing the colleges into categories, compare your admission qualities with those expected by the individual schools.

Reaching: This college's entrance standards may seem a cut above your qualifications. The college mean rank will be in the fifth above yours and the mean SAT scores will be 40 to 100 points higher than yours. Factors other than academic record that may affect chances for admission could include an unusually strong letter of recommendation, your essay or statement of purpose, the high school reputation, a parent who is an alumnus, or extracurricular activities.

Average for Me: This should be a realistic choice of a college, one which has admissions criteria corresponding closely to your credentials. The mean rank and yours should be in the same fifth and your SAT scores should be within 40 points of those given as the mean by the college.

Secure or "Safety" This is a college with an admissions policy clearly making you acceptable with a margin to spare. This college may seem below your potential. Choose the college with care as you might go there; this may include a community and/or junior college.

A student's college choice must be made sincerely and realistically. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of each college. Although you will probably not find a "perfect college", you can determine which colleges have the most characteristics you desire. Weigh the strengths and weaknesses to find the one most likely to meet your needs.

Once you have narrowed the number of colleges, you will be ready to begin the process of applying for admission and financial aid.

ASVAB Career Exploration Program

The *ASVAB Career Exploration Program* is an assessment tool to help students make career decisions. The focus of the program is to:

- Identify students' interests, skills and work-related values
- Match student interests and skills with occupations
- Learn where and how to get information on different careers
- Develop career decision-making skills

The key features of the *ASVAB Career Exploration Program* are:

- *ASVAB Career Exploration Guide* – includes a self-scored interest inventory and information about work values and occupations in line with student interests and skills. The guide has a series of activities that enable students to match their interests and skills with over 400 civilian and military occupations.
- *Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)* – an aptitude test
- *Military Careers, Occupational Outlook Handbook and O*NET Occupational Information System* – ways to use these career information resources

The *ASVAB* can help students confirm current college plans and identify other college options that may not have been considered. Having a good sense of career interests may help students when making decisions regarding a college major.

There is no relationship between taking the *ASVAB* and Selective Service registration. *ASVAB* information is not made available to the Selective Service system.

Registration for the *ASVAB* begins in October and continues through early November. The *ASVAB* is typically administered in mid-November.

IV. APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS

Types of Applications

In general, there are two types of application requirements. One is the application cutoff and stated reply date. You have until a certain date to apply. All applications are reviewed at the same time. All students are then notified of the decision at the same time. The other is the rolling admissions system. In rolling admissions, there is usually a deadline for the application but the applications are processed as they are submitted and the supporting documentation is received. Under this plan, it is advantageous for the student to apply early in the senior year; therefore, at a rolling admissions institution,

an application will be processed when the application, the transcript, the SAT or ACT scores, and the recommendations are received. As soon as the application is processed, the students will be notified of the admission decision.

Early decision programs are those in which the student does not want to attend college until after he or she has finished the twelfth grade but wants a decision on acceptance before January of the senior year. Most early decision programs require a student to complete his or her application procedure by early November. Some require a commitment to attend that school and the student must withdraw all other applications. The student is usually notified by late December.

Completing the Application

Most students should apply for admission during the fall of their senior year although it is very important to verify all deadlines with the college's admissions office.

Application Procedures:

As you prepare to apply to post-secondary schools, you will need some general and detailed information. Please follow the instructions listed below for submitting college or scholarship applications.

Important Points:

1. Applications take approximately 1-2 weeks for your counselor to process.
2. Applications are processed in the order they are received.
3. All Official Transcripts must be requested through Naviance.
4. The student is responsible for knowing all deadlines.
5. The CEEB code for RLHS is 391-325 and for CCHS is 390-527.
6. Scholarship information is available on Naviance.
7. Allow coaches, employers, etc. **two weeks** to write letters of recommendation. Include a resume and transcript. Follow up with a thank you note.
8. If a personal essay is required, please consult a teacher for proofing and editing.
9. Testing scores (SAT, ACT, AP) **will not** appear on the transcript. It is up to the student to send these scores to the colleges from their College Board or ACT account.
10. Teacher recommendation letters are requested through Naviance. Students should speak to their teachers in person before making their request via Naviance.

Online Applications

1. Complete the application on-line at the college website. Application fees can also be submitted online. Fees can range from \$35-\$75. Some colleges offer fee waivers to eligible students.

2. Some schools offer a “**Common Application**” which is completed only once, but can be sent to numerous schools. Separate application fees will be applied. Students create an account at www.commonapp.org, however transcripts and teacher recommendations are requested through Naviance.

It is helpful to develop a file for each college to keep your catalogs, applications, letters and records organized and accessible. Also, it is recommended that you put together a log of necessary application steps. **Appendix B** provides a log sheet to help with your organization. Additionally, all college applications will be tracked in your Naviance account.

V. VISITATION AND INTERVIEW

College Visits

The best way to learn more about a college is to visit the campus before applying. Most visits can now be scheduled on-line at the college website. If possible, plan to visit a college during the academic year, when students are in residence and classes are in session. Many colleges schedule regular campus tours conducted by student representatives. Some colleges will also arrange for you to spend the night in student housing if you write or phone in advance. If you plan to combine your campus visit with an admissions interview, be sure to call or email the admission’s office and set up an appointment before you arrive.

During the visit, walk around campus until you have a feeling for its size and atmosphere. Find out about the things that are important to you. You might be interested in how old or new the buildings and facilities are, how crowded the classrooms are, how large is the dormitory space, and what recreational facilities exist.

Plan to visit the student center, the cafeteria, and the library. Talk to students wherever you go. Ask about the social life on campus, student life-styles, and anything else that might help you decide if you would be comfortable at the college. Check bulletin boards to find out about student activities and cultural events. Try to attend some classes and meet with students and faculty in the area that interests you. Ask about specific course requirements, program flexibility, average study time, and academic pressures.

Schools now offer virtual touring so be sure to access the colleges’ websites for details. Freshmen and sophomores are allowed 2 visitations each year. Juniors and seniors are allowed up to six (6) days of excused absences for college visitations. At least one (1) day prior to a college visit, students should submit a completed College Visitation form to the main office.

The Interview

Some colleges require or recommend an interview or audition. Whether required or not, it is to your benefit to set up an interview. This interview is your chance to express your background, your interests, and goals, and why you are interested in that specific college. An interview can be very important at private or more competitive institutions. The interview is also your opportunity to assess the college. For this reason, an on-campus interview is best, but most colleges will arrange for you to be interviewed near your home if you live far from the college. Be prepared with your own questions. You can use this opportunity to get the information you need about a college to make your decision.

Preparation

A college interview is a two-way street. It is an opportunity for the college to get to know the student and for the student to get additional information about the college. Students must be knowledgeable about the school before going to an interview. Some chances for admission have been lost because a student did not familiarize himself with basic information about the school size, cost, majors, admission requirements, etc. A thorough review of the website should provide this basic information. A few hints in preparation for a visit are:

1. Schedule an appointment well in advance of the date you want to go. Most visitations can now be scheduled online at the college's website.
2. When you make the appointment for an interview, indicate if you want a tour of the campus and/or a meeting with the financial aid officer. Indicate if your parents will accompany you. Some colleges also like to interview parents.
3. Dress conservatively and neatly.
4. Maintain eye contact with the interviewer and show sincere interest.
5. Be honest about yourself, your interests, background, information, etc. Admit if you do not know something.
6. Before arriving for the interview, compose some relevant and pertinent questions about the college.
7. Be prepared for both a structured and unstructured-type interview.
8. Smile, relax, show a sense of humor, and be yourself. Try not to be nervous.

Questions, Questions, Questions

College interviewers are professionals who interview hundreds of applicants like you. Be prepared to give crisp, well-thought-out answers during the interview. A list of typical questions you may be asked would include:

1. Why did you apply to this particular school?
2. How did you hear about this school?
3. What other schools are you applying to?
4. Why did you select your particular major?
5. What were your major activities, interests, etc., in high school?
6. What contributions can you make to this school?
7. What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses?
8. What books have you read in the past year?

You should also be prepared to ask questions about the school which may need further clarification. This would indicate your interest in gaining the information necessary to make a decision about your future. A list of typical questions you may want to ask would include:

1. What are the academic requirements and your chances for admission?
2. What programs are available for financial aid?
3. When does a student declare a major?
4. What programs are available besides the traditional set of majors offered?
5. What guarantee of housing is given to students after the first year?
6. What percentage of students goes on to graduate and attend professional schools?
7. What programs are available for career planning and job placement?
8. Do students have access to computer terminals twenty-four hours a day?

After the interview, evaluate what you have learned by comparing and contrasting all facets of the college with similar colleges. Write a brief personal thank you note to the person who interviewed you. This will leave the interviewer with a positive impression of you and it could make a difference in your selection as one of the freshmen to be enrolled.

Meeting With College Representatives at Cedar Cliff/Red Land

Each fall, many representatives of colleges visit the high schools. The visits are announced on Naviance. Students in grades 10-12 must sign on Naviance. These are very informal group sessions, lasting approximately 30 minutes. You may have many questions or you may choose to simply listen to what the representative has to say about the college. These meetings allow you to learn a great deal about many different kinds of colleges and we encourage students to attend. Students are responsible for any classroom work missed while attending these sessions.

Visits for Fall 2023 will both be virtual and in-person, so please pay attention to how representatives have scheduled appointments.

VI. FINANCIAL AID

Currently, higher education can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to over \$60,000 per year. Because of spiraling costs, most colleges have over 50% of their students on some kind of financial aid. Much of the financial assistance awarded to those seeking higher education is being granted on the basis of financial need. Competitive scholarships for which you compete with others on the basis of merit, however, continue to be available and counselors can assist students in finding information on such scholarships. Because the two kinds of awards are so different, they are separated for discussion below.

Financial Aid and Verification of Need

Financial need scholarships are awarded on the basis of the ability of the family to pay for a student's post-secondary education. Most of the agencies granting such aid request information about the financial needs of each applicant's family.

You should complete the appropriate financial aid forms required by the colleges considered. These applications are available on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Most forms cannot be completed prior to October 1st of the senior year, but should be completed as soon as possible after that date.

Competitive Scholarships

Competitive scholarships include those awarded for special skills in such areas as athletics, music and art, as well as those awarded for academic accomplishments and ability. Several steps that will help in locating and/or qualifying for such scholarships follow:

1. As a junior, take the PSAT/NMSQT to compete for the National Merit Scholarships.
2. Email the financial aid office of each college in which you are interested and ask for information on competitive scholarships.
3. Review the scholarship list posted on Naviance for applications throughout the senior year.
4. There are a variety of free internet scholarship search sites. For example: www.fastweb.com or www.studentscholarships.org
5. Contact the personnel office of parents' employers and ask if scholarships are available.
6. Contact your pastor for information concerning church-sponsored scholarships.

A lack of money should not stop you from attending the school of your choice. Financial assistance is available from many sources. The Pennsylvania Higher Education

Assistance Agency (www.pheaa.org) has a wealth of information pertaining to college planning and funding opportunities. All post-secondary schools have financial aid officers who are experts in the financial aid process. These officers can furnish information about costs, assistance available, application procedures and deadlines, as well as other related matters.

VII. STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION

Colleges and universities vary widely in their criteria for admission; however, most have minimum high school requirements and tests which must be taken prior to acceptance. As mentioned previously, to be certain that you meet all the requirements, you must consult an updated website for the college you are researching.

Factors mentioned most frequently by colleges as playing an important role in their admissions decisions include the following: academic performance in high school (as indicated by school grade average and class rank); college board test scores; pattern of high school subjects completed; recommendations, and personal qualifications such as motivation, special skills or abilities, leadership capabilities, community or church involvement; and good moral character. Compare your own achievements in these areas with the college's stated requirements. Note that the more competitive the college, the more likely it is to consider personal qualifications in admissions decisions. The contact you have with an admissions officer through your interview, essay, and recommendations can increase your chances of being admitted to an institution.

Acceptance

Waiting to hear from the college or colleges of your choice is sometimes the hardest part of the college selection process. Even after you have heard from the colleges, you still may face some difficult decisions. Some of the most common problems students encounter at this stage are:

If You Are Accepted By More Than One College:

If you applied and are accepted to several colleges, you have to decide which to attend. You may already know your order of preference, but if you are still unsure, you may have to go through the decision-making process again; clarifying your objectives, getting additional information, and talking to your parents and counselors. Don't be surprised if all your efforts at deciding leave you with two or more colleges that seem to offer equal prospects.

If You Hear From Your Second-Choice College First:

Your final decision can be complicated if you have to respond to your second or third choice college before you have heard from your first-choice college. Often that response includes a substantial first payment of a tuition fee or dormitory charge. If this happens to you, ask your counselor for help in deciding on a course of action. Some

students are able to get a reply date extension. In this way, it is possible for a student to hear from all of the colleges before making a decision. Others solve the problems by making the required first payment to the second-choice college as a kind of insurance premium to cover the possibility of rejection by the first-choice college.

Final Comments

As you move into the spring of your senior year, you will have to make a final college choice. Keep in mind that your careful study and preparation to this point have focused your attention on one or more colleges that offer the best mix of opportunities, given your preference and needs. Your information may point clearly to one school or may require that you choose among several schools, all of which offer a high possibility of meeting your major needs. You may have to weigh the opportunities offered by a higher cost school against the greater financial burden you would have to carry there. Keep rethinking your goals and plans, and evaluate your options at each college. Talk them over with your counselors and your parents.

If you have done your homework to this point, you will have maximized your chances for selecting a college which meets your needs and preferences. Notify in writing all the colleges, to which you have applied, of your final decision. Turn your attention to the task of preparing yourself for the college you have chosen. Learning as much as you can beforehand about life at the college will help you get off to a good start when you reach the campus. Determine what you will have to do to take advantage of the many opportunities that college offers you.

Now that you are nearing the end of the college planning process, you can look forward to a new phase in your life. In many ways, you may be on your own for the first time. New freedoms will bring new responsibilities - among them the responsibility of ensuring the quality of your own education.

A good education will not just be given to you. You must work at it. Although college offers a rich assortment of educational resources, you will have to prepare yourself in order to take advantage of them. If you are aware of the unique educational opportunities your college offers, you can begin to benefit from them as soon as you arrive on campus. The pursuit of knowledge is an active process. It is up to you to determine the kind and quality of education you receive. Your own curiosity, hard work, and perseverance will make the difference.

VIII. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Grade 10

1. Investigate career information either online or by job shadowing.
2. Analyze the courses you should take in high school that will prepare you for the career(s) you are considering. If you are not certain about a career, a general college-prep curriculum will be suitable for most college majors.
3. Review College websites.
4. Obtain a pass to meet with college representatives who visit the high school.
5. Schedule an appointment with your high school counselor to discuss your post high school plans.
6. Visit one or more colleges during the summer before the junior year.

Grade 11

1. Continue to examine career possibilities and the education requirements for the career which interests you. Job Shadow.
2. Take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in the fall. This is a preview of the SAT. The PSAT is used to determine winners of National Merit Scholarships.
3. Find out about college admission procedures by thoroughly examining college websites and/or Naviance.
4. Take the American College Test (ACT) or SAT in the winter or spring.
5. Talk with your teachers and counselor about taking the Advanced Placement examination. Registration is through your AP Coordinator.
6. If you want to attend one of the Military Service Academies or apply for an ROTC scholarship, begin the application process in the spring.
7. List the colleges which interest you and try to visit one or more colleges during the spring and summer.
8. Learn more about specific colleges by meeting with college representatives who visit your high school.

9. Plan your senior schedule carefully. Select a full academic program. Check the college entrance requirements again to be sure you are meeting them all.
10. Complete and submit the NCAA Athletic Eligibility Form at the conclusion of the junior year. Register online at: www.eligibilitycenter.org
11. See your high school counselor for continued post high school planning.

Grade 12

1. Visit your high school counselor in the fall and keep your counselor informed of your plans. Ask questions because the counselor can aid you in exploring possibilities about admission to college, scholarships, financial aid, as well as your career choice.
2. Complete each college application and the financial aid forms before deadline dates. **This is your responsibility.**
3. If you need to submit recommendations from your teachers along with your college application, decide which teachers to ask. Request the letter of recommendation in person and then send the request via Naviance. Let the teachers know the deadline date and be sure to allow the teachers at least two weeks.
4. Visit any additional colleges you may have decided to consider.
5. In October or November, re-take any SAT or ACT tests. If you are seeking admission to a college which requires other tests, see your counselor. ***All SAT and ACT scores must be sent to the college FROM the testing agency directly. They will not appear on your transcript.***
6. During the winter/ spring, revisit colleges which have accepted you if you are not certain which college you want to attend.
7. After deciding which college you are going to attend, respond to each offer of admission.
8. Let your counselor know about your decision.
9. Take any Advanced Placement examinations for which you are prepared.

June - Graduation

Request that a final transcript be sent to your college through your Naviance account.

We trust that your high school experiences have been pleasant and valuable. Our sincere best wishes for a happy and successful future.

IX. COLLEGE ADMISSIONS GLOSSARY

Many books contain glossaries of commonly used terms. These terms vary from college to college. Specific college catalogs are your best source of information. Following are some commonly used terms:

ACCREDITATION: Recognition by an accrediting organization or agency that a college meets certain acceptable standards in its educational programs, services, and facilities. Regional accreditation applies to a college as a whole and not to any particular programs or courses of study.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: Admission or assignment of a freshman to an advanced course in a certain subject on the basis of evidence that the student has already completed the equivalent of the college's freshman course in that subject.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE: A degree granted by a college or university usually after the satisfactory completion of a two-year, full-time program of study, or its part-time equivalent.

BACCALAUREATE or BACHELOR'S DEGREE: A degree received after the satisfactory completion of a four-year, full-time program of study (or its part-time equivalent) at a college or university.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT (ACT): Test battery of the American College Testing Program, given at test centers in the United States and other countries on specified dates throughout the year. It includes tests in English, mathematics, reading, and natural sciences reasoning. The composite score referred to in some colleges' descriptions is the average of a student's scores on these four tests.

CANDIDATES REPLY DATE AGREEMENT (CRDA): A college subscribing to this agreement will not require any applicants offered admission as freshmen to notify the college of their decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1 of the year the applicant applies. The purpose of the agreement is to give applicants time to hear from all the colleges to which they have applied before having to make a commitment to any one of them.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE (CSS): A service of the College Board that assists post-secondary institutions, the federal government, state scholarship programs, and other organizations in the equitable distribution of student financial aid funds. By measuring a family's financial strength and analyzing its ability to contribute to college costs, CSS need analysis services offer a standardized method of determining a student's need.

CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE: PROFILE is a program of the College Scholarship Service. Many colleges and scholarship programs use the information collected on PROFILE to help them award non-federal student aid funds. Applications are available on-line at www.profileonline.collegeboard.com

DEFERRED ADMISSION: The practice of permitting students to postpone enrollment for one year after acceptance to the college.

EARLY ADMISSION: The practice of some colleges of admitting certain students who have not completed high school - usually students of exceptional ability who have completed their junior year. These students are enrolled full-time in college.

EARLY DECISION: Early decision plans are offered to applicants who are sure of the college they want to attend and are likely to be accepted by that college. An early decision application is initiated by the student, who is then notified of the college's decision earlier than usual - generally by December 15 of the senior year.

FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA): A financial information collection document of the College Scholarship Service used by parents of dependent students or independent students to supply information about their income, assets, expenses, and liabilities. The CSS uses this information in estimating how much money a family is able to contribute to a student's college expenses. This can be used to apply for a Pell Grant.

GUARANTEED STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM (GSL): A federal program that lets a student borrow money for educational expenses directly from the banks and other lending institutions (sometimes the colleges themselves).

NCAA INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY: Standards were developed in response to a disturbing number of college athletes who were not succeeding academically in college. Established by the President's Academic Reform Movement of 1982, the overall goal of Initial Eligibility was to expand the focus beyond athletes to student-athletes. The NCAA recognized that the freshman year is especially challenging. In addition to new studies and a new environment, student-athletes spend time and energy in competition.

Starting in 1986, before a student could participate in athletics his or her freshman year at an NCAA Division I or II institution, minimum academic requirements would have to be met. It should be noted that these Initial-Eligibility Standards relate to athletics only. They have no bearing on admission to college. Extensive research showed that the best predictor for academic preparedness - and success - was a combination of test scores and grade-point average in core courses. It was determined that these core courses would be academic in nature and prepare the student for collegiate academic challenges. (See Appendix C)

NEED ANALYSIS FORM: A financial information collection document used by parents of dependent students to supply information about their income, assets, expenses, and liabilities. Independent students file these forms for themselves. The information is then used to estimate how much money a family or student is able to contribute to a student's college expenses. In many cases a single analysis form is the only document that students need to submit to be considered for all types of institutional, state, and federal financial aid.

OPEN ADMISSION: The college admissions policy of admitting high school graduates and other adults generally without regard to conventional academic qualifications, such as high school subjects, high school grades, and admissions test scores. Virtually all applicants with high school diplomas or their equivalent are accepted.

PELL (BASIC) GRANT PROGRAM: A federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Congress annually sets the dollar range. A Pell Grant cannot exceed \$1,800 per year, but Congress can set a lower ceiling. Students apply directly to the federal government; the FAFSA can be used to apply for a Pell Grant, formerly the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Program (BEOG). Pending legislation could affect this program.

PENNSYLVANIA HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AGENCY DOCUMENT (PHEAA): A need analysis form used by Pennsylvania residents to establish eligibility for state aid. It is sometimes used to award institutional and campus-based federal aid and can be used to apply for a Pell Grant.

PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (PSAT/NMSQT): A shorter version of the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test administered by high schools each year in October. The PSAT/NMSQT aids high schools in the early guidance of students planning for college and serves as the qualifying test for scholarships awarded by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC): Programs conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the United States Air Force, Army, and Navy. Local recruiting offices of the services themselves can supply detailed information about these programs, as can participating colleges.

ROLLING ADMISSIONS: An admissions procedure by which the college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as school records and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision without delay.

SAT: The College Board's test of Critical Reading, Writing and Mathematical reasoning abilities, given on specified dates throughout the year at test centers in the United States and other countries.



INITIAL ELIGIBILITY FAQ 2023-24 ACADEMIC YEAR AND BEYOND

In January 2023, NCAA Divisions I and II adopted legislation to remove standardized test scores from initial-eligibility requirements for students who initially enroll full time in a collegiate institution on or after Aug. 1, 2023.

The questions and answers below have been developed to assist Division I and II member schools in implementing this new legislation and ensuring awareness regarding COVID-19 policies that may apply to students who initially enroll full time on or after Aug. 1, 2023.

FAQ Topics – Quick Links

[Initial-Eligibility Standards
— 2023-24 and Beyond](#)

[Submission of
Academic Documents](#)

[Academic Evaluations
Prior Classes](#)

Initial-Eligibility Standards – 2023-24 Academic Year and Beyond

Q1: What initial-eligibility standards apply to students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year and beyond?

A1: The following initial-eligibility standards apply to students who **initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year and beyond:**

INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS — 2023-24 ACADEMIC YEAR AND BEYOND		
Standard	Division I	Division II
Qualifier Athletics aid, practice and competition.	Complete Academic Record: » Core-course progression (10/7) before starting 7th semester;* » 16 core-course units in the required subject areas; » ≥ 2.300 core-course GPA; and » Proof of graduation.	Complete Academic Record: » 16 core-course units in the required subject areas; » ≥ 2.200 core-course GPA; and » Proof of graduation.
Early Academic Qualifier** Athletics aid, practice and competition.	Pre-7th Semester: » 14 core-course units in the required subject areas; and » ≥ 3.000 core-course GPA.	Pre-7th Semester: » 14 core-course units in the required subject areas; and » ≥ 2.500 core-course GPA.
Academic Redshirt Athletics aid (1st year) and practice (1st term).	Complete Academic Record: » 16 core-course units in the required subject areas; » ≥ 2.000 core-course GPA; and » Proof of graduation.	N/A***

*Students certified based solely on international credentials are exempt from the 10/7 core-course progression requirement. **Final high school transcripts are required. ***Please see linked resources for additional information regarding [Division I](#) and [Division II](#) standards.

Q2: Will automatic initial-eligibility waivers apply to students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year?

A2: Yes. **Division I students** who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year will receive an automatic initial-eligibility waiver if they:

- » Provide proof of graduation;
- » Meet the 10/7 core-course progression requirement (not applicable if certified based entirely on international academic credentials); and
- » Present 13 or more core-course units (max three-unit deficiency) with a 2.800 or higher core-course GPA (based on their final academic certification for qualifier requirements).

Division II students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year will receive an automatic initial-eligibility waiver if they:

- » Provide proof of graduation; and
- » Present 13 or more core-course units (max three-unit deficiency) with a 2.800 or higher core-course GPA in their final academic certification.

If students meet the automatic initial-eligibility waiver criteria, their Eligibility Center account will show Final Nonqualifier (DI) or Final Partial-Qualifier (DII) status with “Automatic Waiver Approved” in the I-E Waiver DI or I-E Waiver DII field.

Note: Automatic initial-eligibility waivers are reviewed annually and may be subject to change in the 2024-25 academic year and beyond.

Submission of Academic Documents

Q3: Will official academic documents be required for students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year?

A3: Official academic records are required for initial-eligibility certifications. If only unofficial records are available for students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year, they may be submitted to ec-processing@ncaa.org directly from the email address associated with the student’s Eligibility Center account and should include the student’s NCAA ID in the subject line.

Starting May 1, 2024, official academic records will be required and must be submitted via an approved channel for **domestic** and **international** students.

Academic Evaluations

Q4: Will there be any flexibility in the Division I core-course time limitation for students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year?

A4: Yes. For students who initially enroll full time during the 2023-24 academic year, up to six core-course units completed after starting the seventh semester (and before full-time enrollment) will be used in the student's initial-eligibility certification, regardless of whether the student graduated on time or when the courses are completed (i.e., during the academic year or summer term). Also, all core courses completed before full-time enrollment may be used in the Division I academic-redshirt certification.

Note: The legislated Division I [core-course time limitation](#) (and exceptions for [on-time graduates](#) and [students with education-impacting disabilities](#)) will apply to students who initially enroll full time in the 2024-25 academic year and beyond.

Q5: How will courses completed via distance, e-learning or hybrid options be evaluated for students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year and beyond?

A5: The Eligibility Center will require a program review for all courses completed via distance, e-learning or hybrid programs on or after Sept. 1, 2023. (For students who initially enroll full time in winter/spring 2024, such courses completed in the 2023 fall term may be considered in the initial-eligibility waiver process.)

However, a program review will not be required for distance, e-learning or hybrid programs that were offered by schools with NCAA-approved core courses in spring/summer 2020 or during the 2020-21, 2021-22 or 2022-23 academic years.

For parents administering home school curriculum, please review the information included in the Eligibility Center [home school resources](#).

Q6: How will pass/fail grades be evaluated for students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year and beyond?

A6: NCAA-approved core courses that receive a grade of pass and are completed on or after Sept. 1, 2023, may be used to meet core-course requirements and will receive the high school's lowest passing grade. (For students who initially enroll full time in winter/spring 2024, such courses completed in the 2023 fall term may be considered in the initial-eligibility waiver process.)

For core courses completed in spring/summer 2020 or during the 2020-21, 2021-22 or 2022-23 academic years that have been issued a grade of pass, the Eligibility Center will apply the credit earned in these courses toward the core-course requirement. If the student's core-course GPA would increase by assigning a value of 2.300, this value will be assigned to the passed courses. However, if the student's core-course GPA would decrease by including the 2.300 value for passed courses, the student's core-course GPA will be calculated based only on courses with assigned letter grades from previous terms (credit from these courses will still be applied toward the student's core-course requirements).

Q7: How will PSA review program tasks apply to students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year and beyond?

A7: Program tasks may be sent for courses completed on or after Sept. 1, 2023. (For students who initially enroll full time in winter/spring 2024, such courses completed in the 2023 fall term may be considered in the initial-eligibility waiver process.) However, program tasks will not be sent for courses completed in spring/summer 2020 or during the 2020-21, 2021-22 or 2022-23 academic years.

Note: Test-score inquiries will not be submitted for students who initially enroll full time in the 2020-21 academic year and beyond.

COVID-19 POLICIES — QUICK-REFERENCE CHART	
COVID-19 Policy	Application to Initial Full-Time Enrollees in 2023-24 Academic Year or Beyond
Alternative Initial-Eligibility Standards	New legislated initial-eligibility standards apply (no standardized test scores).
Unofficial Documents (Q3)	Applies to documents received in spring/summer 2020 through April 30, 2024.
Division I Core-Course Time Limitation (Q4)	2023-24: Applies to students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year. 2024-25 or Beyond: Does not apply to students who initially enroll full time in the 2024-25 academic year or beyond (except 2023 graduates or prior who delay initial full-time enrollment until 2024-25 or beyond).
Nontraditional Course Reviews (Q5)	Applies to courses completed in spring/summer 2020 through Aug. 31, 2023.
Pass/Fail Grades (Q6)	Applies to courses completed in spring/summer 2020 through Aug. 31, 2023.
PSA Review Program Tasks (Q7)	Applies to courses completed in spring/summer 2020 through Aug. 31, 2023.

Q8: What if students who initially enroll full time in the 2023-24 academic year and beyond do not meet initial-eligibility standards?

A8: The Eligibility Center will refer such students to the athletics compliance office of their NCAA member school to discuss potential options. Member schools may submit an initial-eligibility waiver for students who do not meet initial-eligibility standards.



Prior Classes

Q9: What academic standards apply to students who initially enrolled full time in the 2020-21, 2021-22 or 2022-23 academic years (including midyear enrollees)?

A9: [Click here](#) for information on the application of COVID-19 alternative standards based on initial full-time enrollment in the 2020-21, 2021-22 or 2022-23 academic years.

Note: For information on the Eligibility Center's COVID-19 response and amateurism requirements, [click here](#).

Q10: How will the Eligibility Center determine when students initially enrolled full time?

A10: The Eligibility Center will use information provided in student accounts along with enrollment verification tasking for some students to help ensure the appropriate initial-eligibility standard is applied. [Click here](#) for additional details regarding enrollment verification tasking.

High School Timeline

9th GRADE

REGISTER



- » If you haven't yet, **register** for a free Profile Page account at eligibilitycenter.org for information on NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.
- » Use NCAA Research's **interactive map** to help locate NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- » Find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses at eligibilitycenter.org/courselist to ensure you're taking the right courses, and earn the best grades possible!

10th GRADE

PLAN



- » If you're being **actively recruited** by an NCAA Division I or II school, **transition** your Profile Page account to the right **certification account**.
- » Monitor the **task list** and **sign up for text alerts** in your **Eligibility Center account** for next steps.
- » Research the admission requirements for NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- » At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attended to upload your **official transcript** via the High School Portal.
- » If you fall behind academically, ask your high school counselor for help finding **approved courses** you can take.

11th GRADE

STUDY



- » Ensure your **sports participation** information is correct in your Eligibility Center account.
- » Check with your high school counselor to make sure you're on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved **core courses** and graduate on time with your class.
- » Share your **NCAA ID** with NCAA schools recruiting you so each school can place you on its **institutional request list**.
- » Take **unofficial and official visits** to NCAA schools you're interested in attending and start applying early.
- » At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attended to upload your **official transcript** via the High School Portal.

12th GRADE

GRADUATE



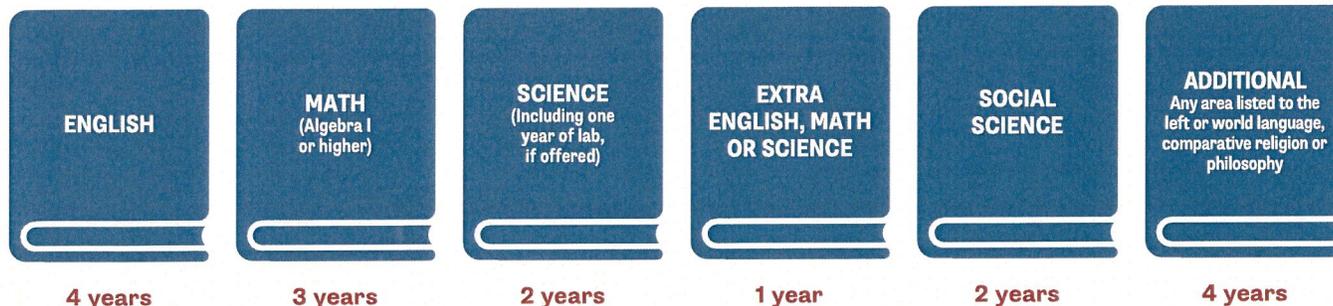
- » Be accepted to the NCAA school you plan to attend.
- » Ensure your **sports participation** information is correct and **request your final amateurism certification** beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your Eligibility Center account.
- » Complete your final NCAA-approved **core courses** as you prepare for graduation.
- » After you graduate, ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with **proof of graduation** via the High School Portal.

Division I Academic Standards

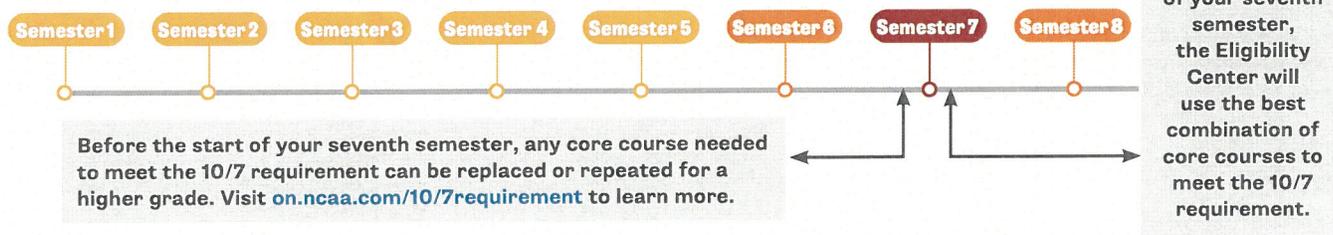
Division I schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:



1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:



2. Complete your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in eight semesters from your initial start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
3. Meet the **10/7 requirement** by completing 10 of your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math or science, before the start of your seventh semester.



» Students with solely **international** academic credentials (including Canada) are not required to meet the 10/7 requirement.

4. Earn a minimum 2.3 **core-course GPA**.
5. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with **proof of graduation** to your Eligibility Center account.
6. Receive academic and amateurism certifications from the Eligibility Center.

Example Schedule

How to Plan Your High School Courses to Meet the 16 Core-Course Requirement

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

9 th GRADE	10 th GRADE	11 th GRADE	12 th GRADE
(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social science and/or additional	(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social science and/or additional	(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social science and/or additional	(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social science and/or additional
4 CORE COURSES	4 CORE COURSES	4 CORE COURSES	4 CORE COURSES

Division II Academic Standards

Division II schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:

NCAA DIVISION II

MAKE IT YOURS.

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (Including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA ENGLISH, MATH OR SCIENCE	SOCIAL SCIENCE	ADDITIONAL Any area listed to the left or world language, comparative religion or philosophy
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

2. Earn a minimum 2.2 core-course GPA.
3. Ask your high school counselor to upload your final official transcript with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.
4. Receive academic and amateurism certifications from the Eligibility Center.

What If I Don't Meet Division II Standards?

If you have not met all the Division II academic standards, you may not compete in your first year of full-time enrollment at a Division II school. However, you will be deemed a partial qualifier. All Division II partial qualifiers may practice and receive an athletics scholarship but may NOT compete during their first year of full-time enrollment.

Division II Worksheet

Use the [Division II Worksheet](#) to assist you in monitoring your progress in meeting NCAA initial-eligibility standards. The Eligibility Center will determine your academic status after you graduate. Remember to check your [high school's list](#) of NCAA-approved core courses for the courses you have taken or plan to take.



ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

Academic certifications are required for all college-bound student-athletes planning to compete at an NCAA Division II school. If you're being recruited by a Division II school, below are the most common decisions you may receive once a certification has been completed.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

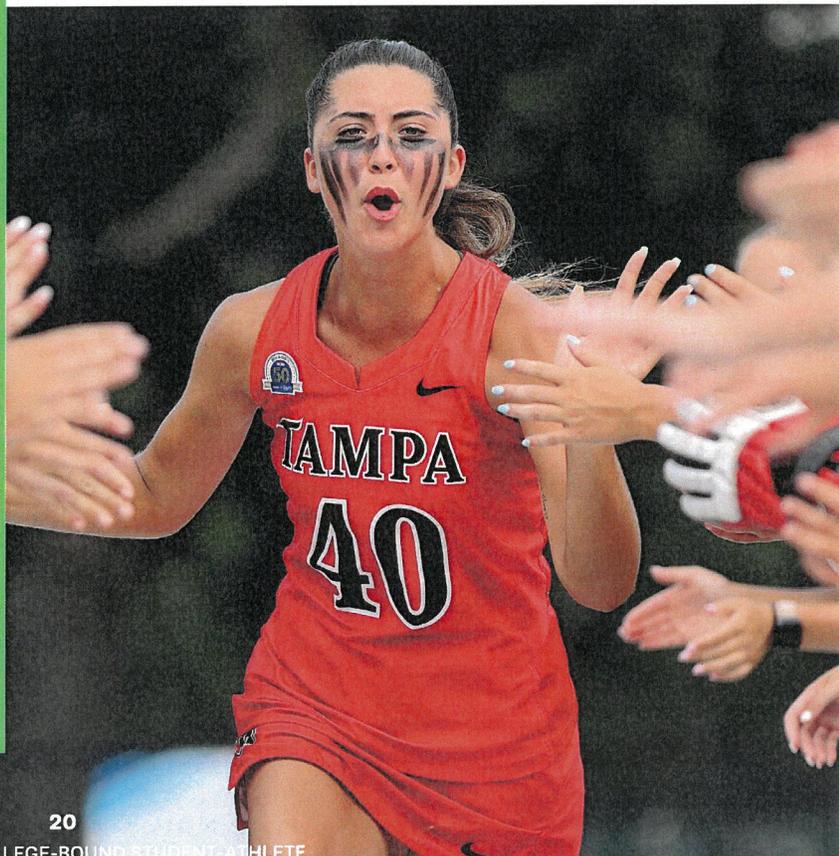
If you meet [specific criteria](#) after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division II and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

PARTIAL QUALIFIER

You may practice and receive an athletics scholarship but may NOT compete during your first year of full-time enrollment.





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The West Shore School District will provide to all persons equal access to all categories of employment in this District, regardless of race, age, color, creed, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, pregnancy, national origin, handicap/disability, or differently-abled status, in accordance with state and federal laws governing educational and vocational programs and in its recruitment and employment practices. The District shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

Inquiries concerning the application of Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, the ADA, and the implementing regulations may be referred to the Director of Human Resources, 507 Fishing Creek Road, P.O. Box 803, New Cumberland, PA 17070-0803, telephone 717-938-9577.