

COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE

Plan Ahead! Know what colleges are looking for.

If you plan to apply to college senior year, you need to know how you can prepare yourself to be competitive for admission to a 4-year school college or university.

A Strong Transcript:

A Transcript is your official academic record, listing the courses you have taken, the grades you have earned, and the credits you have received.

- **Get good grades!** Your Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), the average of all of your grades for all years completed, is included on the transcript. Many colleges prefer students with at least a 3.0 (B average). The better your grades, the more college options you will have. Monitor your GPA throughout high school.
- **Take challenging courses!** The rigor of your high school courses is an important factor in the college admissions process. Colleges are looking for a solid foundation of learning that you can build on in college. To create that foundation, you should take at least 5 academic classes every year. Take the most challenging classes you can handle.
- **Go beyond minimum requirements!** The minimum number of credits required for graduation is 120, which include a specific number of courses you must take in each subject area. *If you are college-bound, you should plan to exceed the minimum requirements.*

NOTE:

Letters of recommendation
These testimonials are an important component of the college application. Work to build a relationship with your school counselor and teachers, so they know you well and can write stronger letters on your behalf.

Solid Standardized Test Scores:

It is never too early to start preparing for the SAT or ACT. Colleges use these tests to gauge your preparedness for college-level work.

- **Become familiar with both tests:** Visit www.collegeboard.com and www.actstudent.org to learn more.
- **Utilize test prep resources:** Utilize the free resource in Naviance Family Connection account called Prep Me, under Resources on the Home Page. Check the Test Prep Resource Page as well.
- **Take the PSAT and the PLAN:** You should take both practice tests when offered. MHS pays for all 10th graders to take the PSAT and the PLAN, and for all 11th graders to take the PSAT. Use the feedback and online resources to work on identifying areas to improve. The PSAT is also a *National Scholarship Qualifying Test* for Juniors.
- **Take the SAT and/or ACT:** You should take these tests in Junior and Senior year. Some students will also need to take SAT Subject Tests. (Visit www.collegeboard.com or see your counselor for more info)

Extracurriculars/Community Service:

- **Get involved!** Participating in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, etc.) and community service will enrich your life and your college/scholarship applications.
- **Research your options!** Visit the Family Connection Home Page for a list and description of all activities available at MHS.
- **Choose things that you enjoy or find interesting!** This will make the time spent on these activities much more fulfilling.
- **Keep track of your activities and accomplishments!** Maintain a resume on Naviance Family Connection under the About Me Tab (starting after grade 8).



2 Reasons You Want to Earn a College Degree:

1. Greater wealth!

Individuals with a 4-year college degree earn an average of \$22,000 more per year than those with only a high school diploma.

2. More security!

Individuals with only a high school diploma are about twice as likely to be unemployed as those with a 4-year college degree.

Visit Naviance Family Connection:

- Plan Early
- Set Goals
- Stay Focused

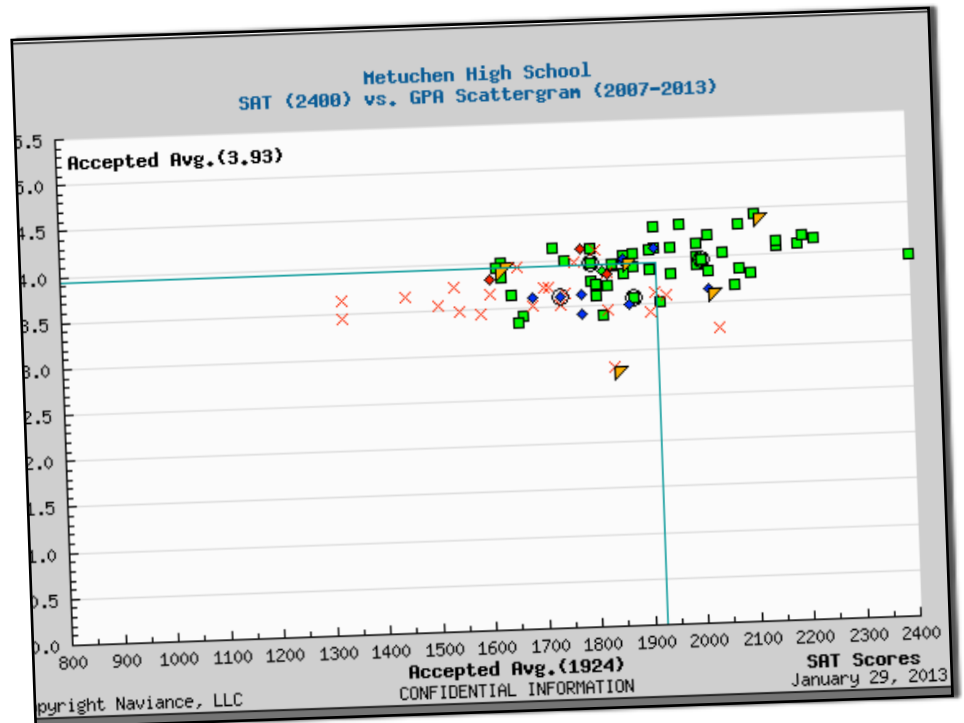
Account Access:

<http://connection.naviance.com/metuchen>

Student Accounts: All students have been registered on the site. If you need help accessing your account, please see your counselor.

Parent Accounts: Parents have a separate account. If you have not yet registered, please see your child's counselor for assistance.

Use the Tools on Naviance Family Connection to Learn More....



Above: Scattergrams allows you to gauge your admission prospects by comparing your the GPA and SAT scores to the school's averages.

EARLY RESEARCH AND EARLY EXPOSURE!

Start researching schools now!

The more you know about the admissions requirements of the schools you may be interested in attending, the better chance you have of preparing to meet their criteria. Use the college search resources on Naviance Family Connection to look up average Grade Point Averages, SAT/ACT scores and recommended coursework for different schools. Use this information to set goals for yourself.

Attend college fairs!

Local communities and organizations hold College & Career Fairs in the fall and spring. Attend these events each year to meet with College Representatives and learn more about your college options.

Step foot on a college campus!

Start visiting colleges as early as possible to gain first hand knowledge of what colleges are looking for in you and what you are looking for in a college. Early visits can be an eye-opener and will motivate you to work harder to achieve your goals.

Prepared by MHS Guidance & School Counseling Department