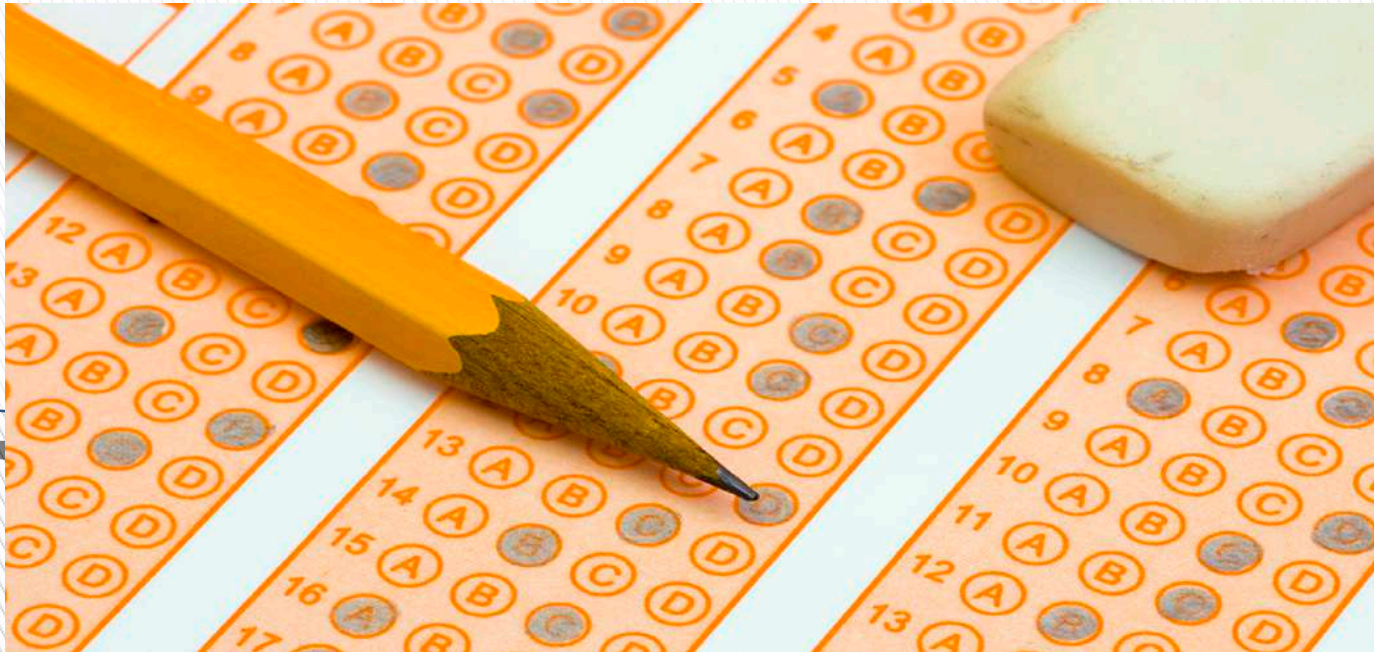




College Testing



Standardized Testing

- ▶ This presentation is an overview of the tests used in the college application process, and explains recent trends and score reporting practices.
- ▶ The information will help you and your student create a testing plan to discuss with your counselor.

November 2014



Admission Criteria

A majority of four year colleges and universities require some type of standardized testing as part of the admission process.

An increasing number of schools are Test Optional or some variation thereof (more about that later).



Testing Options

**ACT:
American College Test**



ACT

A curriculum-based achievement test as opposed to an aptitude test.

Assesses general educational development and the capability of completing college-level work.

More widely used in the Midwest and the South, gaining much more popularity in the East. More New York students took the ACT in 2013 than took the SAT.

Accepted by all colleges. Yes, that includes service academies.

Content areas of the ACT

- English (language usage)
- Math (including trigonometry)

• Reading

• Science Reasoning

• Writing (optional – some colleges require applicants to take this section of the test)



ACT Testing

- Offered 5 times per year in New York State
- Approximately 3 hours (3.5 hours with writing)
- Register online at www.act.org
- CSH is not an ACT testing center – students test at neighboring districts listed on the ACT website.

ACT Test Design

4 Required Sections

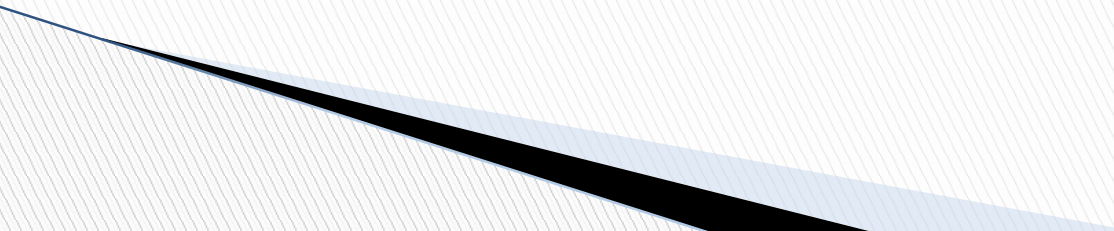
| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| English | 40 minutes |
| Math | 60 minutes |
| Reading | 35 minutes |
| Science | 35 minutes |

1 Optional Section

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Writing | 30 minutes |
|----------------|-------------------|



ACT Scoring

- Students receive a subject sub-score for each section. The range of scores is 6 – 36.
 - Students also receive a composite score which is an average of the 4 required sections
 - The Writing section is scored separately.
- 

Testing Options

College Board Tests:

PSAT/NMSQT

SAT Reasoning Test

Subject Tests

Advanced Placement Exams



PSAT/NMSQT

(this is one test)

▶ PSAT = Preliminary SAT

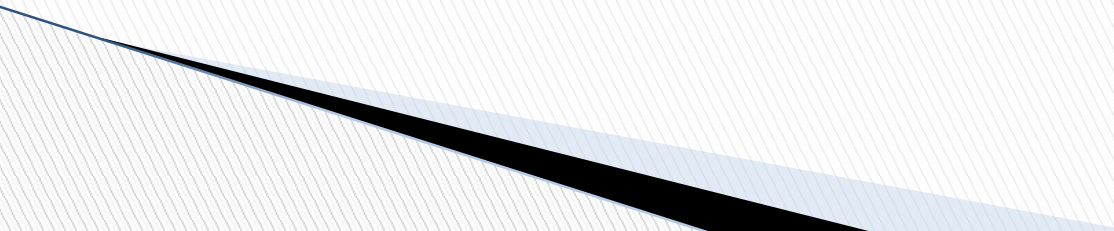
NMSQT = National Merit
Scholarship Qualifying Test

PSAT changes in fall 2015

➤ Use this link for details

➤ <https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/redesigned-psat-nmsqt>

PSAT/NMSQT

- Administered every October
 - Traditionally for 11th graders
 - 10th graders invited (about 1/3 of CSH sophomores take the PSAT, usually those accelerated in math)
- 

PSAT/NMSQT

Important Reminders

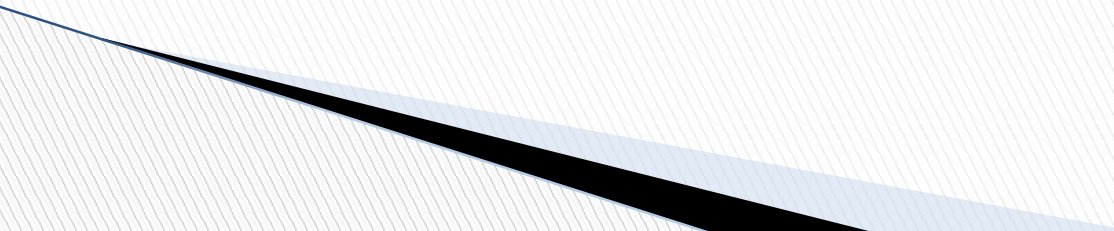
- ▶ PSAT/NMSQT scores are reported to the student and the high school ONLY.
- ▶ Colleges do not ask for or receive PSAT /NMSQT scores.
- ▶ Athletic recruiters might ask for these scores but they are only truly interested in SAT results.
- ▶ Colleges pay for lists of students interested in certain programs and who score in certain ranges. These lists generate the mail received by juniors and, increasingly, sophomores.

What is the NMSQT?

The PSAT:

is used as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, allowing high scoring students to compete for recognition and some scholarships.

allows colleges to identify and contact students who might be interested in their programs. (Student Search Service)



The National Merit Scholarship Program

Driven by the PSAT Selection Index

Commended Student: the top 50,000 students nationally (this may change with new PSAT)

Semi-finalist: Selection Index varies annually by state. CSH semifinalists:

Class of 2010 1 Semifinalist

Class of 2011 6 Semifinalists

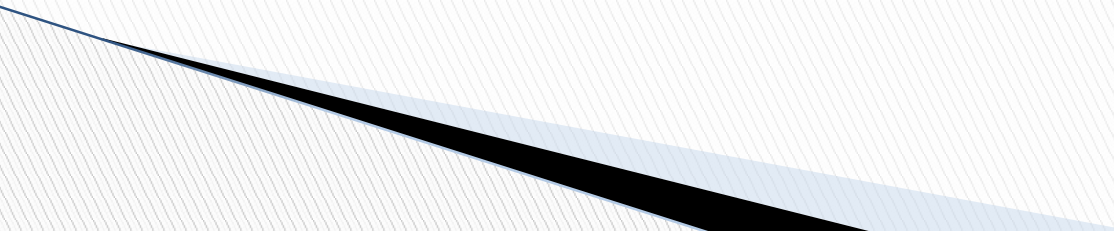
Class of 2012 6 Semifinalists; 1 Finalist

Class of 2013 2 Semifinalists; 2 Finalists; 1 Scholarship

Class of 2014 1 Semifinalist; 1 Finalist



The National Merit Program

- ▶ Finalists chosen based on lengthy application, grades and SAT scores.
 - ▶ Finalists may be eligible to receive merit scholarships if the college chosen participates in the program.
 - ▶ Many private companies also sponsor scholarship programs that are tied to PSAT scores.
- 

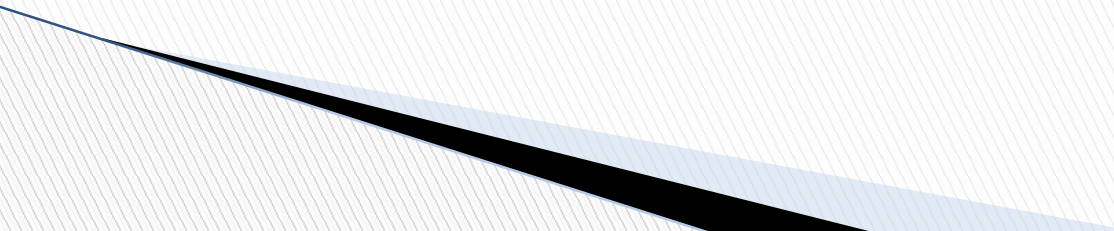
PSAT/NMSQT Test Prep

10th Grade – No prep. This might be the only time a student will be able to truly evaluate skill levels. Students receive a full length test when they register and should become familiar with the test format.

11th Grade – By this time, many students are involved in SAT test prep. Separate PSAT prep is not required though high scoring 10th grade students might consider prep in order to improve chances of raising their Selection Index scores.

Registering for the PSAT/NMSQT

Registration is completed online via instructions mailed to Grade 11 and Grade 10 families each summer by the Counseling Center.



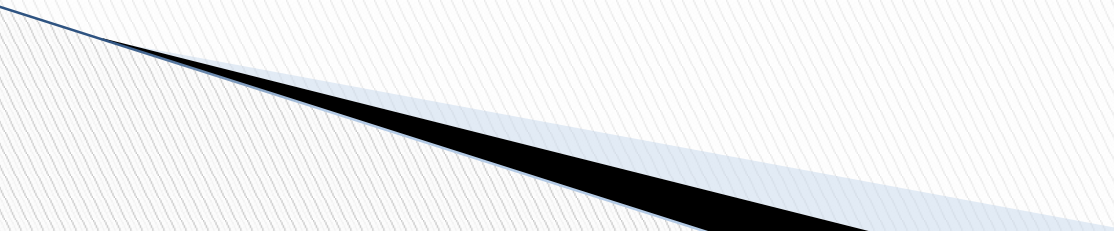
The Redesigned SAT

Visit the link below for full information about the new SAT to be administered for the first time in spring 2016.

<https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/sat/faqs>



SAT: Types of Prep

- ▶ –CSH students can use Method Test Prep, available in Castle Learning for free.
 - ▶ –Student can work with private tutors.
 - ▶ –Students take small group classes.
 - ▶ –Students can attend commercial programs.
- *Counselors do not make recommendations for any particular tutor or commercial program.
- 

Registering for the SAT

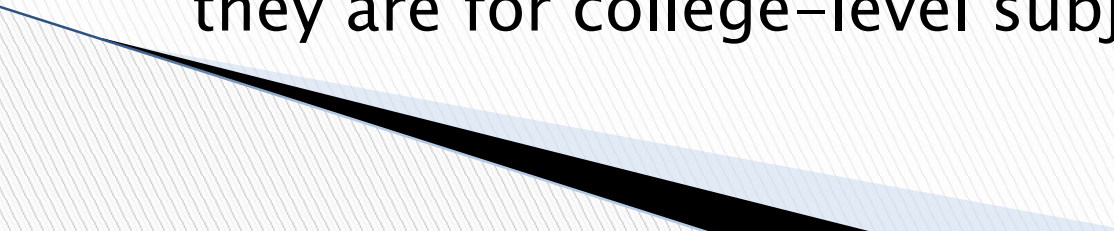
Registration for the SAT is done online at the College Board website: www.collegeboard.org

Students create an account through which they will register for exams and eventually forward scores to colleges, scholarship programs, or the NCAA.

Students with disabilities must apply and be approved to use testing modifications at least 3 months in advance of registration.



Subject Tests

- ❑ Formerly known as “Achievement Tests”
 - ❑ Measure knowledge and skill in particular subject areas. Students demonstrate mastery of these specific subjects.
 - ❑ Used by some colleges for admission. Used by others for course placement and advisement about course selection.
 - ❑ Provides a fairly reliable measure of how prepared they are for college-level subject work.
- 

The Subject Tests

Literature

United States History

World History

Mathematics Level I

Mathematics Level II

Biology E/M

Chemistry

Physics

Chinese with Listening

French

French with Listening

German

German with Listening

Korean with Listening

Spanish

Spanish with Listening

Modern Hebrew

Japanese with Listening

SAT Subject Test Design

- ▶ All are one-hour, multiple choice tests.
- ▶ Students may take up to 3 subject tests per test administration
- ▶ Some subjects offer two options:
 - ▶ Biology Ecological or Biology Molecular
 - ▶ Mathematics I or II (depends on level of math completed)
 - ▶ Languages with/without Listening

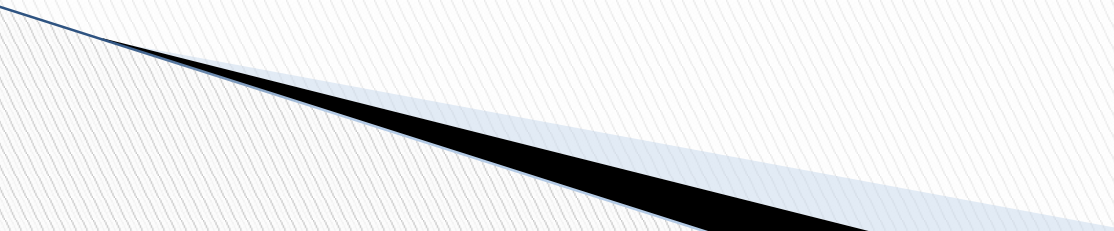
Who should take Subject Tests and when?

| SUBJECT TEST | WHO SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING THE TEST | EARLIEST RECOMMENDED TEST DATE |
|---|---|--|
| Literature | Students with superior ability to analyze literature | not before January of junior year |
| United States History | Students completing AP US History | May or June of the year the course is completed |
| World History | Students completing AP World History or AP European History | June of the year the course is completed |
| Math Level 1 | Students completing Accelerated Algebra 2/Trigonometry or Precalculus | June of the year the course is completed |
| Math Level 2 | Students completing Precalculus | June of the year the course is completed |
| Biology E – ecological emphasis or Biology M – molecular emphasis | Students completing AP Biology | May or June of the year the course is completed |
| Chemistry | Students completing Accelerated Chemistry or AP Chemistry | May or June of the year the course is completed |
| Physics | Students completing Accelerated Physics or AP Physics | May or June of the year the course is completed |
| Languages: Reading only French, Spanish, Italian German, Latin Modern Hebrew | Students completing Level 4 who are strong readers in the target language | Not before June of the year Level IV is completed unless the student is a native speaker |
| Languages with Listening | Native speakers and non-native | Not before June of the year Level IV is |

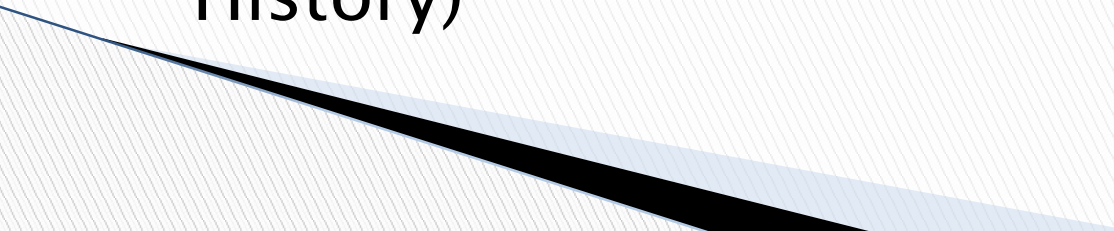
What is the best way to prep?

Students are encouraged to prepare for the Subject Tests. There is no “best” way to do so; it depends on the individual.

Students are encouraged to make Subject Test decisions in consultation with their teachers just after the mid-point of the school year in order to allow time for preparation.



Which Subject Test(s) should be taken?

- Most colleges do not have a preference for which tests are taken although there are exceptions. For example:
 - Students applying to engineering, architecture, or combined BA/MD programs
 - Colleges prefer that students not take both the regular exam and the listening exam in the same language.
 - Some colleges do not want exams in the same subject area (e.g., World History and U.S. History)
- 

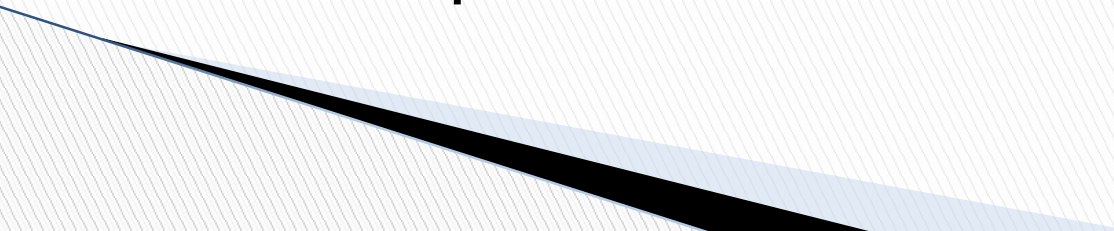
Registering for Subject Tests

- ▶ Students register through their online account at

www.collegeboard.org

- ▶ **Register by February 15** for your best chance at being placed at your first-choice testing site. Students **are not** guaranteed a seat at CSH in June at CSHHS and may have to take their exams at neighboring districts if they register too late. The logical and most in-demand time to test is at the end of a course, in June.

Current Trends in College Testing

- –Universal acceptance of the SAT or ACT by colleges and universities.
 - –A mixing and blending of scores at many colleges and universities (“superscoring”)
 - –Increasing number of CSHHS students taking the ACT as their test of choice
 - –More colleges and universities becoming “Test Optional”
- 

Test Optional Schools

Some schools do not require either the SAT or ACT.

Some do not require tests from students whose GPA is above a certain level or those who apply by a specific deadline.

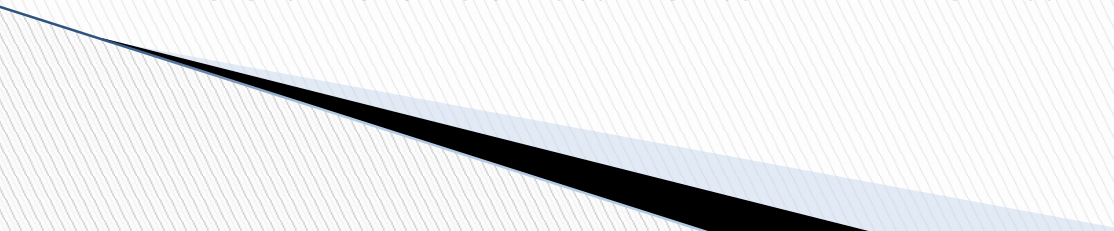
In place of the SAT or ACT they may require:

Graded Paper(s), an interview, additional essays, etc.

“FairTest” (<http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>)

lists all schools that are test optional, but be sure to read the footnotes as **Test Optional** can mean many things!

Advanced Placement(AP) Program

- ▶ AP courses are considered the equivalent of entry level college courses.
 - ▶ Currently, CSH offers many AP courses.
 - ▶ Students enrolled in AP courses must take the corresponding AP exams.
 - ▶ All exams are administered in May. The College Board establishes the dates and times of testing.
 - ▶ Students need not be enrolled in an AP course to take an AP exam.
- 

How are AP Scores used?

Scores range from 1 to 5. (F to A)

Depending on the college:

- ▶ some grant course credit *towards graduation* for scores of 3 or higher, however, the trend is scores of 4 or 5.
- ▶ some do not grant graduation credit but allow students to skip core requirements – (be careful about skipping math and science courses)
- ▶ some allow neither graduation credit nor AP courses to substitute for core requirements.

Students with Disabilities

- Both the College Board (PSAT–SAT) and ACT have procedures in place for students with documented disabilities to apply for testing or other accommodations.
- The decision to approve accommodations is made by each testing company upon a complete review of the student's documentation. Testing accommodations are not guaranteed.**

Students apply to the College Board in 9th grade. Students apply to ACT prior to taking their first test. Please apply 6 months in advance.

Important Web-Sites

➤ www.collegeboard.org

➤ www.act.org

➤ www.fairtest.org

➤ www.commonapp.org

➤ www.csh.k12.ny.us/ourschools

Click Jr./Sr. HS, then departments and follow the link to the Counseling Center

