

March 2018

Dear Juniors,

Although graduation may seem like a long way off, your college search process begins now! Planning for your post-secondary goals is a multi-step process. It requires your time, organization, and effort. This guide has been created for YOU and your families to use over the next year to inform you of all of the steps you need to take.

We cannot stress enough the importance of understanding the ins and outs of the college application process so that you can make informed decisions about your future. The College and Career Office will help you find your best fit, but you must also do your research. This process will require extensive discussions with your family.

The College and Career Office staff is located in Room 445:

Lorrie Director– College Counselor

Stephanie Gluck– College Counselor

Patricia Murdoch – Administrative Assistant

Hilliard J. Harper – Office Assistant

We look forward to assisting you with the college process, and helping with the many choices you will face in the coming year.

Best wishes,

Lorrie Director

Stephanie Gluck

College Counselors

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1. Checklist for College Application Process

We strongly urge you to keep track of important dates so you will not miss deadlines! Make sure that you give yourself plenty of time to study for standardized tests, and also to complete your applications. Use this timeline/checklist as a guide. ***Remember to check your emails DAILY!***

Junior Year

March – April

- Attend junior orientation session in your English Class.** The college counselors will go through the college application process step by step and answer any questions you may have.
- Register for Naviance if you have not already done so. See your guidance counselor if you lost your code. Use Naviance to help you with your college search!**
- Attend Junior Orientation for Parents on Tuesday, March 13, 2018 @ 6:30 pm.**
- Take the SAT on March 21 at Midwood. *There is no need to register, all juniors will be registered to take the exam. This exam will be administered without the optional essay.* Register to take the May/June/July/August SAT, ACT, and SAT II subject tests.** Check to see if your colleges require SAT II. Sign up and START STUDYING using Khan Academy on College Board for free SAT prep; financially eligible students can study for free with Kaplan/ACT prep.
- Get fee waivers for SATs and application fees** if you meet eligibility requirements (see Section 3).
- Attend Murrow/Midwood College Fair on Thurs., April 26, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm @ Murrow H.S.**
- Check bulletin boards in 445 and outside room 134.** Important information is posted about colleges, scholarships, summer programs, etc.
- Research and get involved in after-school and weekend programs** in your school or community including internship opportunities at a corporation or non-profit organization.
- Continue community service and extracurricular activities** that you began as freshmen or sophomores.
- Look for colleges or professional schools offering your program choice(s)** and find out admissions requirements.
- Start to determine your school preferences;** i.e., location, urban vs. rural setting, public vs. private, size of student body, student/faculty ratio, type of social life (fraternities, sororities, clubs, etc.).
- Begin to research summer programs and jobs.** Colleges pay close attention to how you spend the summer before senior year so make sure to choose an activity that you will grow from and enjoy. Note deadlines for applying to summer programs, internships, and jobs.
- Attend spring College Fairs in and around NYC - NACAC Fair 4/22 @ Jacob Javits Center.**
- Make an appointment with one of the College Counselors** (with Ms. Murdoch starting March 19).
- Have extensive discussions with your family** about your college options and how you will finance your education.
- Speak to college representatives** in the College and Career Office. Check your emails daily for updates and for a schedule of visits.
- Begin visiting college campuses** during spring vacation. Take a road trip!
- Start to ask teachers for letters of recommendation.** Many schools require teacher evaluations or recommendations. Check your college websites for a list of application requirements.

Checklist for Junior Year (Continued)

May – June

- Start working on your College Office File.** The documents are in your Naviance document library and on the Midwood website. **You need: Three short teacher references, a student profile, a student brag sheet and an optional parent brag sheet.**
- Take the SAT, SAT II, and/or ACT with writing. Register for Summer ACT/SAT!**
- Continue to search your colleges on Naviance!**
- Ask teachers for recommendations.** Many schools require teacher evaluations or recommendations.

Summer

- Participate in a summer program,** internship, youth employment or volunteer work.
- Visit more college campuses.** Call ahead or look on-line to set up tours, especially for the most selective colleges.
- Prepare your résumé** on Naviance (in the “About Me” tab)
- Work on your Common Application essay.**
- Prepare audition pieces or portfolios of your work** if the colleges and programs you wish to apply to require them.
- Take the August SAT**

Checklist for Senior Year

September

- If you did not have an appointment in the spring, make an appointment with a College Counselor.**
- Continue to explore college choices** using Naviance.
- Attend Early Decision/Early Action meeting if you are applying to colleges early.**
- Register for the October and/or November SAT Reasoning or Subject Tests, and/or the ACT.**
- Speak to college representatives** in the College and Career Office. CHECK YOUR EMAILS and the bulletin boards outside of room 115 and Facebook for a schedule of visits.
- Complete your College Office Files! This means your Student Profile, three short teacher references, student brag sheet, list of senior classes, and optional parent brag sheet.**
- Work on and revise essays for college applications. Pay attention to supplemental essays!**
- Ask teachers for recommendations if you haven’t already done so.**
- If you are applying Early Action or Early Decision, you must have your college office files COMPLETE NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2018.**

October

- Work on applications for November Early Decision/Early Action deadlines.**
- Come to the Midwood College Fair on Wednesday, October 24** to speak to college representatives and pick up information. Ask lots of questions!
- Continue to review your list of preferred colleges.**
- Work on college applications.**
- File the FAFSA for federal student aid!** You will use your parents’ 2017 tax return. Pay attention to deadlines! If your college requires the CSS Profile, you will need to submit this form as well.
- Check for scholarships** on midwoodhighschool.org and in the College and Career Office.
- Get fee waivers for SATs and application fees** from the College and Career Office if you meet eligibility requirements.
- Register for the December SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests, and/or ACT.**

Senior Year (continued)

November

- Finalize your list of colleges** (Private, Out-of-State Public, CUNY, and SUNY schools) to which you will apply.
- Hand in ALL Secondary School Reports and transcript requests to the College and Career Office no later than WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2018.**

December

- Research and apply for scholarships** online and in the College and Career Office.
- Notify the College and Career Office of Early Decision/Early Action results**, including offers of admission, denials, and deferrals.
- Withdraw all other applications as soon as possible if admitted to a college under a binding Early Decision agreement.**

January

- File the FAFSA application** as soon as possible. Pay attention to your college deadlines for filing financial aid documents. You will use your parents' 2014 tax information, and at a later date you will be able to update with the 2015 information.
- Check to see if any of your colleges require the CSS Profile on collegeboard.org**
- All males must register for Selective Service** upon turning 18 in order to be eligible for federal aid.
- Continue to research and apply for scholarships** on-line and in the College and Career Office.

February – March

- February 1st** is the priority deadline for CUNY applications.
- File the FAFSA** by February 15.
- Continue to research and apply for scholarships** on-line and in the College and Career Office.

April

- Receive acceptance/denial/wait-list notification letters from colleges** and inform the College Office.
- Bring all scholarship award letters** to the College and Career Office.
- Review and compare financial aid packages.**

May - June

- Send in your tuition deposit by May 1st** to accept an offer of admission.
- Notify schools in writing if you are declining their offers of admission.** (*See Appendix*)
- Complete and return Senior Questionnaires.**
- GRADUATION - Congratulations and good luck to all of our Midwood graduates!**

2. STANDARDIZED TESTING

MIDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE GUIDE

Currently, most colleges in the United States, and many international universities, use standardized tests in order to gauge applicants' future success in higher education. Colleges accept both the SAT and ACT equally. Pay close attention to those colleges and universities that require SAT Subject Tests as an admissions requirement. **Refer to Section 2A for test dates and registration information as well as SAT/ACT Score Comparison Table.**

SAT	ACT
No science section	Science reasoning section
No trigonometry section	Math sections include trigonometry
Vocabulary emphasized	Vocabulary less important
Non multiple-choice questions included	Entirely multiple choice
Guessing penalty	No guessing penalty
Some English grammar	English grammar tested
Math accounts for one-third of your score	Math accounts for one-quarter of your score
Questions range from easy to hard in most sections	Easy and hard questions mixed within sections
Roughly 140 questions	Roughly 215 questions

Examination	When to Take (Grade Level / Courses)	Comments
PSAT	11 th Grade (fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assesses critical reading, mathematics and writing skills ➤ The results of the 11th grade test determine if a student receives recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Program ➤ This is the best practice for the SAT examination ➤ Scores are not sent to colleges ➤ Test booklet and answer key are returned to student for study guide
SAT Examination	11 th Grade (spring) **NEW August 26, 2017 12 th Grade (fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The SAT is a 3-hour+ exam (3 hours 50 minutes with the optional essay) administered by the College Board. ➤ The scores are provided in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (200–800) and Math (200–800) for a total score between 400 and 1600. Scores for the Essay, if it is taken, are reported separately as three scores out of 8 points each. ➤ The SAT is offered several times during the school year. Carefully note registration deadlines. Some colleges will use the highest Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math scores for admissions, even if they are from separate test dates, provided scores from all those dates are submitted. (This is sometimes called “superscoring”; each college’s admissions office determines its own score use policy.) Through the College Board’s Score Choice option, students can choose which test exam dates to forward to colleges. Keep in mind that a few of the more competitive colleges are still requesting that all scores be sent.
SAT Subject Tests		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Register for subject areas that reflect your strengths. ➤ If you are currently taking an Advanced Placement course, consider taking the Subject Test for that area. ➤ Some colleges may require specific SAT Subject Tests; for example, if a student wants to apply for an engineering program, they may have to take Physics and Math 2. ➤ You may sit for up to three tests on any given test date. Most colleges requiring the SAT Subject Tests prefer to see at least two or three examinations. ➤ Please note that one cannot sit for the SAT and SAT Subject Tests on the same day.
ACT	11 th Grade (spring) 12 th Grade (fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This 175-minute multiple choice examination covers four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. There is also an optional writing section of 30 minutes. The test looks to assess <i>acquired</i> knowledge, that is, the subject and skills covered in high school courses ➤ Subject test scores are determined after throwing out any incorrect answers – only correct responses count! The four areas are then averaged together to come up with your overall composite score ranging from 1-36 ➤ This test can be taken <i>in addition</i> to or <i>instead</i> of the SAT ➤ When scores are reported to colleges, students can select which ACT scores to send ➤ Nationally, approximately the same number of students take the ACT as do the SAT Reasoning Test

It is your responsibility to request that the College Board or ACT send official test score reports directly to all colleges and scholarships that you are applying to. Make sure to request them well in advance so that they arrive before the college's deadline.

SCORE CHOICE: The SAT Score-Reporting Policy

The College Board has approved Score Choice which gives students the option to send SAT scores by test date in accordance with a particular college's score-use practice.

Facts on How to Use Score Choice:

- Score Choice is an option available to all students via their College Board accounts.
- Scores from an entire SAT test (critical reading, writing, and mathematics sections) can be sent; scores from individual sections cannot be selected independently for sending.
- Students can send any or all scores to a college on a single report – it does not cost more to send one, multiple or all test scores.
- Score Choice is an optional feature. Students should check the requirements of each college before opting to use Score Choice.

****A note of caution regarding sending SAT scores:**

If you wait to view your SAT score report in order to decide which scores to send then you will miss the opportunity to send four free score reports since this opportunity expires nine days after the test date.

Pay attention to your college deadlines and be sure to always send scores four weeks in advance.

2A: STANDARDIZED TEST DATES/COMPARISON TABLE

SAT / SAT Subject Test (website: www.collegeboard.org)

Date	Test	Registration Deadline	Deadline with Late Fee
May 5, 2018*	SAT & Subject Test	April 6, 2018	April 25, 2018
June 2, 2018*	SAT & Subject Test	May 3, 2018	May 23, 2018
Check www.collegeboard.org for fall 2018 testing dates			
Registration Instructions: Register online at the College Board website. Enter Midwood's CEEB Code 330775 on the registration form.			

* Test is administered at Midwood High School.

Sunday administrations are usually held the day after each Saturday date.

ACT Test (website: www.actstudent.org)

Date	Registration Deadline	Deadline with Late Fee
April 14, 2018	March 9, 2018	March 10-23, 2018
June 9, 2018	May 4, 2018	May 5-18, 2018
July 14, 2018	June 15, 2018	June 16-22, 2018
Check www.actstudent.org for fall 2018 testing dates		
Registration Instructions: Register online at the ACT website. Enter Midwood's CEEB Code 330775 on the registration form. This test is not administered at Midwood High School. Consult the website for test centers.		

Please reference the following excerpt from Princeton Review to find out how SAT scores compare to ACT scores:

"It is important to note that a student that scores well on the ACT is not guaranteed to have similar success on the SAT and vice versa. For example, say a student earns an ACT composite score of 31; colleges will view this score as being in the same range of a 1360-1400 on the SAT. But it does not mean the student will actually earn that score if he took the SAT. This relationship is merely a way of looking at the competitive equivalent of the two tests, and is not meant to be a predictor of student performance."

Concordance Table*

ACT <i>If you scored ...</i>	"NEW" SAT <i>It's about the same as a ...</i>
36	1600
35	1560 - 1590
34	1520 - 1550
33	1490 - 1510
32	1450 - 1480
31	1420 - 1440
30	1390 - 1410
29	1350 - 1380
28	1310 - 1340
27	1280 - 1300
26	1240 - 1270
25	1200 - 1230
24	1160 - 1190
23	1130 - 1150
22	1100 - 1120
21	1060 - 1090
20	1020 - 1050
19	980 - 1010
18	940 - 970
17	900 - 930
16	860 - 890
15	810 - 850
14	760 - 800
13	720 - 750

*2016 College Board

3. FEE WAIVERS AND OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

Use the chart below to estimate your financial eligibility for SAT/ACT Fee Waivers and college application fee waivers. **To obtain fee waivers, students must bring either the family's 1040 tax forms or Social Security benefit statements to the College Office for evaluation.** Students meeting criteria for fee waivers can get up to two (2) vouchers (includes junior and senior year) for each type of test: SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests, and ACT. They can also request four (4) College Board and four (4) NACAC fee waivers. A small number of CUNY fee waivers are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

APPLICATION FEE WAIVER GUIDELINES FOR SATs

Number of People in Household (Including Head of Household)	Gross Family Income in Preceding Calendar Year (for 2017-18)
1	\$22,311
2	\$30,044
3	\$37,777
4	\$45,510
5	\$53,243
6	\$60,976

*These are figures for the class of 2018. The updated figures will not be available until September, 2018.

Students who meet the criteria necessary to receive fee waivers may also qualify for **EOP / HEOP / SEEK / College Discovery** – federally funded programs that serve students who meet specific financial and academic guidelines. Academic qualifications vary from school to school and, in general, fall just below the regular admissions standards.

SEEK and College Discovery: Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) and College Discovery are the two educational opportunity programs of the City University of New York (CUNY). SEEK is available at CUNY's senior (four-year) colleges, whereas College Discovery is for CUNY's community (two-year) colleges. These programs provide concentrated and specialized advisement, remedial instruction, tutorial services, and a financial aid payment for textbook expenses.

EOP: The State University of New York's (SUNY) Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) provides academic support and financial aid to students who are at an academic and socio-economic disadvantage, but who show promise in mastering college-level work. These students may otherwise not meet admission criteria for the SUNY school of their choice.

HEOP: Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) is an optional program for private colleges in New York State. Colleges that choose to participate may have their own name for this program. The financial guidelines are the same as EOP and each college sets its own academic guidelines based on their general admissions standards. Students must demonstrate strong potential for academic success, but be ineligible for admissions under the school's regular admissions standards.

4. COLLEGE AND CAREER OFFICE PROCEDURES

- Make sure that your file in the College and Career Office contains the following items or your applications will not be processed:
 - Student Profile Sheet**
 - Three Teacher Reference Forms**
 - Student Brag Sheet**
 - List of Senior Classes**
 - Parent Brag Sheet (optional)**
- You must be registered on *Naviance* (<http://connection.naviance.com/midwood>). If you have not received your *Naviance* Registration Code, you can get it from your Guidance Counselor. **If you do not register, the College Office cannot process your applications.**
- In order to match your Common App to Naviance:
 - Complete the Education section on the Common App.
 - Add Colleges to Common App.
 - In the “My Colleges” tab, click on the first school in your list. Click on the “Recommenders and FERPA” link. Under the red box that says “For All Colleges,” click the “release authorization” button under “FERPA release” (Federal Education Right to Privacy Act). You will be prompted to waive your rights to see documents that are sent to your colleges.
 - When you are done clicking the FERPA waiver in the Common App, go to your Naviance Family Connection, enter the same email address you used for your Common App, and click “match.”
 - This will match your Common App to Naviance, allowing counselors and teachers to submit your documents electronically.
- You must submit your Secondary School Reports and requests for official transcripts to the College and Career Office **at least four (4) working weeks** prior to their deadline (see timeline above for dates). You must request official transcripts from the College Office for all applications and scholarships. Only transcripts sent directly by the College Office are considered official copies. Therefore, **do not ask your guidance counselor for a transcript.**
- If you are applying to a school via Common Application, your transcripts will be sent electronically from the College Office. If you are applying to a school that does not accept Common App, you must bring in an addressed envelope with two stamps for each school. **If your college accepts either Common App or their own app, please use only the Common Application for these schools.**
- **Fill out the Transcript Request form** (will be available in the fall) for all schools you will apply to; it must be signed by a parent or guardian. This is due along with the rest of your college file documents no later than September 27 for EA/ED, or November 14 for all other admissions deadlines.
- **In February**, complete the mid-year transcript request form for all schools requiring a mid-year transcript (CUNY schools do not require mid-year transcripts). If you did not apply via Common App, you will need to submit an envelope with one stamp to the College Office.
- **In May, fill out the Senior Questionnaire** indicating your admissions decisions and scholarship awards. **You will not receive your graduation tickets if you do not submit the Senior Questionnaire. In June, bring a stamped (1 stamp) envelope to the College Office** addressed to the admissions office of the college that you have decided to attend in the fall. The College Office will send your **Final Transcript** indicating that you have completed all graduation requirements.

4A: ENVELOPE FORMAT

All envelopes submitted to the College Office must be in the following format:

FRONT

Midwood High School
2839 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11210

STAMP] [STAMP

Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Name of College / University
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

BACK

YOUR NAME
YOUR OFFICIAL CLASS
COLLEGE DUE DATE

5. NAVIANCE

Midwood subscribes to the web-based college search/database program **Naviance**. Naviance can help you search for colleges based on your personal preferences for size, location, and social life. It also has extensive information on admissions standards for all colleges in the United States and many schools abroad. Using your own personal login and password, you can access your account which contains personal data, your GPA, rank, and test scores. You can then match your academic information with historical data of other students from Midwood High School to see where they got accepted, denied, and wait listed. This can help you determine which schools are reach, target, and likely. Be sure to pay attention to the college's acceptance rates to determine the selectivity of the college/university.

- You **are required** to go to the Naviance Family Connection website <http://connection.naviance.com/midwood> and register.
- The College Office cannot process your applications unless your account is activated.
- We use Naviance to send you important e-mails regarding your applications, scholarship opportunities, and college representative visits. Therefore, you must keep your personal email address up-to-date in your Naviance profile. Be sure to use a PROFESSIONAL email address!

Pay attention to the following features:

College Search: This function allows you to fill out a survey of your preferences for colleges. For example, you can decide geographic location, selectivity, whether or not you want a school with sororities and fraternities, gender of the student body, types of activities and sports teams available, etc.

College Match: This function matches you with schools that other students from Midwood have applied to who have similar GPA and SAT scores. You can generate a list of schools that you are "Most Likely" to get into, have an "Average Likelihood" of getting into, or are "Least Likely" to get into. These categories basically match up with those of likely, possible, and reach schools.

College Lookup: This function allows you to look up a specific school to find out general information and admissions data about that particular institution. You can check to see how your academic profile compares with that of previously admitted students.

My Colleges/Compare Me: When you have applied to schools, this function generates a chart that will give you an indication of where you might get in. Schools with green numbers generally admit students with lower averages and scores than you have, schools with red numbers generally admit students with higher averages and scores. (*See Section 5A*)

Scattergrams: Scattergrams are graphs that give you a visual representation of where you fall in relation to students who have applied to a particular school before. One axis shows GPA and the other shows SAT scores. You can see how you compare to students who were accepted, denied and wait listed. (*See Appendix D*)

Resources: Financial aid, scholarships, career search, career interest profile, test prep, college athletics and more. This function connects you to a list of important websites that can help you with your college search.

Resume: You can use Naviance to create a resume to send to your colleges. This is a great way to highlight your extracurricular activities, work experience, and more.


5A: NAVIANCE: eDocs


Electronic Documents


Through a student's Naviance account, all supporting documents are transmitted electronically. Naviance connects with most colleges through cyberspace. Once a student uploads their applied colleges to the Naviance account, teachers and counselor can upload supporting documents.

What documents are submitted through eDocs?

- The Midwood High School Profile
 - Student's Official High School Transcript
 - 1st Quarter and Mid-Year Grades
 - Counselor Letter of Recommendation
 - Teacher(s) Letter of Recommendation
 - Secondary School Report
- The symbols below indicate the method of submission associated with each college. It is important for students to understand each symbol and follow the directions below:

-  This indicates that this particular college does not receive documents electronically. (Students are expected to bring in an envelope addressed to the college with two stamps)

-  This indicates that the college is a common app school and all documents will be submitted electronically. You will not need to supply an additional paperwork to the college office.

-  This indicates that the college is NOT a member of the Common Application; however they will accept all the necessary documents electronically. You will not need to supply any additional paperwork to the college office.

5B: NAVIANCE SAMPLE SCREENS

Compare Colleges

The averages below are for students from your high school that have been accepted to that particular college. School averages are displayed in green when your number is higher and in red when your number is lower. Your PSAT score, if available, has been converted to the equivalent SAT score and compared to the average single SAT score of an accepted student. Your PLAN score can also serve as a direct estimate of your ACT score and can be compared to the average ACT score of an accepted student. The column labeled "Accept" shows the number of students accepted out of the number of students that applied.

::add another college

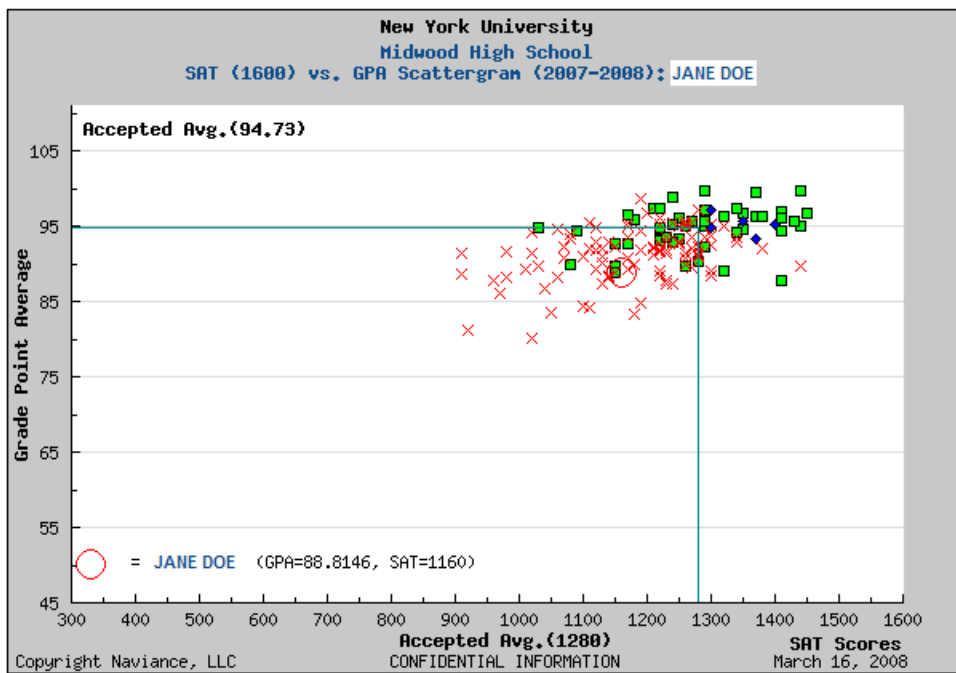
College Compare (2006 - 2008)

	GPA	PSAT to SAT 1600	PSAT to SAT 2400	Single SAT 1600	Combined SAT 1600	Single SAT 2400	Combined SAT 2400	PLAN to ACT	ACT	IB	Accept
JANE DOE	88.81	-	-	-	1160	1660	1730	-	-	-	-
Adelphi Univ	89.44	1090	1678	1090	1141	1678	1698	-	-	-	75/156
Baruch Coll	88.51	1123	1693	1123	1161	1693	1709	-	-	-	197/490
Boston Univ	94.57	1244	1904	1244	1295	1904	1922	-	-	-	71/196
Columbia Univ	97.65	-	1993	-	1333	1993	2010	-	-	-	8/174
Lehigh Univ	97.52	-	2040	-	1400	2040	2093	-	-	-	3/28
St. John's Univ	89.39	1123	1654	1123	1130	1654	1671	-	-	-	213/387
SUNY Stony Brook	91.38	1171	1782	1171	1218	1782	1801	-	-	-	335/734

College Scattergram

College:

Test type:



Graph Legend

- Accepted
- × Denied
- ◆ Waitlisted or Deferred
- ◆ Waitlisted or Deferred (Accepted)
- ◆ Waitlisted or Deferred (Denied)

6. COLLEGE SEARCH PROCESS

You are now ready to begin your college search. Information about colleges is available from many sources including reference books, internet, and your very own College and Career Office. **Be an informed consumer!! Learn as much as possible about your college choices and make wise decisions about where to apply.**

The most important thing to keep in mind when you create a final list of schools (including private, public out-of-state, CUNY, and SUNY) is that you must include reach, possible, and likely schools. Apply to:

- **Two to three (2 - 3) REACH schools** – colleges where your grade point average, percentile rank, and test scores are below the average for students admitted to that school.
- **Four to six (4 - 6) TARGET schools** – colleges where your grade point average, percentile rank, and test scores fall within the average range for students admitted to that school.
- **Two to three (2 - 3) LIKELY schools** – colleges where your grade point average, percentile rank, and test scores fall above the average range for students admitted to that school. **Remember, no school is "likely" simply because it will accept you. You must be happy going there.**

Refer to this list for tips to help you gather information so you can create your own list of schools that fit your interests and abilities.

- Use *NAVIANCE* to help you begin your search. Research schools that are reach, target, and likely based upon your GPA and test scores. You can also research majors, cost, and acceptance rates.
- Look through college guide books such as: *US News and World Report Ultimate College Guide*, *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, *Princeton Review Best Colleges*, *Fiske Guide to Colleges*, and *The College Board Book of Majors* to find schools that offer programs of interest to you.
- Talk to college representatives who visit Midwood on a regular basis. Check the bulletin board outside the College and Career Office for dates and times of their visits.
- Attend Edward R. Murrow's College Fair on Thursday, April 26 from 5:30 – 7:30 PM, and Midwood's fair in the fall. **ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS.**
- **Visit** college campuses either on your own or during college open houses.
- Visit websites of the colleges you are interested in. Explore virtual tours available on many college websites. Email admissions representatives with questions or for more information.
- Make an appointment with one of the college counselors to discuss your college selections.

7. COLLEGE APPLICATION TIPS

- **Waiving Rights to Review Recommendations:** We recommend that students waive their FERPA rights to review their recommendations. This means that the student may not look at his/her application materials after they matriculate at an institution. Although the decision to waive rights is a personal one, many colleges put more weight on teacher recommendations that a student has never seen because they most likely have a more honest assessment of the student.
- **Use the Common Application:** Over eight hundred private and out-of-state public universities accept the Common Application. This application will be available to you on August 1 at www.commonapp.org. Common App is the preferred method used by the college office because it links to your Naviance account, facilitating the submission of your school documents. Many schools also ask for a supplement to the common application, so check if your prospective schools require one. **We strongly discourage using the Common Application to apply to SUNY schools, unless the school is not available on the Common App.**
- **Applying to the City University of New York (CUNY):** You **MUST** apply on-line to any of the colleges of CUNY at www.cuny.edu. For a single fee, you can list up to six (6) colleges, in order of preference, on a single application. Since the cost is the same whether you apply to one school or six, you should consider choosing six options. The deadline for filing a CUNY application is February 1st, but we recommend applying early in your senior year. Specialized programs such as Macaulay Honors, Sophie Davis, and BA/MD have much earlier deadlines. Please check each college's website for additional admissions requirements.
- **Applying to the State University of New York (SUNY) schools NOT on Common App:** Some two-year SUNY schools have their own applications on their websites. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, but we recommend applying early in your senior year.
- **Applying to Colleges not on Common App:** Follow the procedures listed above for submitting an envelope addressed to the colleges that don't use Common App.

8. GUIDE FOR PERSONAL ESSAYS

The essay adds personality to your college applications! Your essay should reflect who you are, not who you think the colleges want you to be. Therefore, take some time to think about yourself and what is important to you. Brainstorm and use your voice – this is your time to shine!

Do not leave the essay to the last minute! Although colleges want to see your uniqueness, they will definitely look at how well you express yourself, use grammar, and support your ideas with examples. Careful editing will help you to avoid embarrassing typos, spelling mistakes, and incorrect punctuation. Ask a friend, teacher, or family member to read your essay to make sure it lacks errors and reflects your true personality. You may also want to try reading your essay out loud to check that it flows naturally.

ESSAY DOS:

- Focus on what makes you unique. What experiences have you had that influenced you and made you who you are today?
- Figure out what aspects of your personality you would like to emphasize.
- Choose a natural writing style.
- Back up your descriptions of yourself with events and facts that shaped who you are.
- Write a first sentence that really grabs the reader's attention.
- Make the conclusion clear and meaningful.
- Vary the length and style of the sentences to keep the reader interested.
- Complete several drafts of the essay to ensure that it expresses exactly what you would like it to express.
- **Make sure you actually answer the essay question!**

ESSAY DONTS:

- Do not try to impress the reader by using flowery, unnatural, or pompous language.
- Do not repeat information that appears elsewhere in your application.
- Do not over-use the passive voice.
- Do not write an essay that lacks direction and focus.
- Do not handwrite the essay or type in all capital letters.
- Do not have your parents or tutor write the essay for you. Colleges know phony writing when they see it!
- **Do not make grammar, spelling, or punctuation mistakes.**

9. TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Most schools require at least one Teacher Recommendation. It is up to YOU to research and know the requirements of your colleges! **These recommendations do not have any relation to the teacher references that you submit to the College and Career Office.** Letters of recommendation are sent electronically via Naviance if you are using the Common Application. Otherwise, you will provide your teacher with an envelope addressed to the school. Be sure to put one “forever” stamp on it!

When deciding which teachers to ask for recommendations, consider the following factors:

- Choose a teacher from your junior or senior year.
- If possible, choose a teacher that has known you for more than one semester.
- Choose a teacher who can write in depth about your academic and personal qualities.
- Consider teachers who express themselves well in their writing.

When requesting recommendations from teachers:

- Begin asking in spring of junior year! Or, ask for recommendations (at least) four weeks before the application deadlines so that they have plenty of time to complete the necessary documents.
- Speak to the teacher **IN PERSON** when they have a free period. **DO NOT interrupt** them while they are teaching a class!
- Do **NOT** email teachers to ask for a recommendation – you must speak to them **IN PERSON**
- Once the teacher agrees, you may request the teacher on Naviance
- Write thank you letters to all teachers who have written on your behalf.

10. COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

When researching your college choices, keep in mind that admissions personnel use many factors to determine whether or not to accept an applicant. Different colleges will place more emphasis on certain factors over others. For instance, one school may place a great deal of importance on a student's rank and GPA, while another school will focus more on the personal essay and teacher recommendations. Below is a list of the most common factors colleges will use when determining who to accept.

- Grade Point Average (GPA):

A	=	4.0	=	95-100
B	=	3.0	=	85
C	=	2.0	=	75
D	=	1.0	=	65
F	=	0.0	=	64 and below

Class Rank/Percentile** We do not use rank at Midwood, instead we report your rank in quartile; i.e. 1st quartile top 25%, 2nd quartile between 26-50th percentiles, 3rd quartile between 51st-75th percentiles, 4th quartile between 76th and 99th percentiles.

- Rigor of high school coursework (number of honors, gifted, and/or Advanced Placement classes). This is extremely important! Selective colleges want to see that you take challenging courses – even in senior year!
- Level of difficulty of senior program – all seniors should take English, Social Studies and at least three (3) other academic subjects
- Evidence of academic improvement over time
- SAT Reasoning Test / SAT Subject Test / ACT scores
- Recommendations from teachers
- Extracurricular activities, awards, community involvement, work experience
- Personal essays
- Interviews
- Demonstrated skills relevant to career goal, such as taking courses, volunteering or working in a related field

10. COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (continued)

As per the New York City Department of Education High School Academic Policy Reference Guide the following are achievements that support college and career readiness:

Earn any of these scores to avoid remediation at CUNY -

Reading and Writing:

- English Regents exam score of 75 or higher;
- SAT Critical reading score of 480 or higher;
- ACT English score of 20 or higher;
- CUNY Assessment Tests: Reading Test score of 70 or higher and Writing Test score of 56 or higher.

Mathematics:

- Any Math Regents exam score of 70+ AND a passing grade in Algebra II/Trigonometry or a higher level math course;
- Common Core-aligned Algebra I or Geometry Regents exam score of 70+ AND a passing grade in Algebra II or a higher level math class
- SAT Math score differs from college to college, with a minimum score of 510;
- ACT Math score of 21 or higher; or
CUNY Assessment Test (CAT) in Math score differs from college to college, with a minimum score of 35 on Math 1 and 40 on Math 2.

Admissions Requirements to CUNY Community Colleges: Candidates for freshman admission to an associate program do not have to demonstrate skills proficiency as outlined above to be admitted. However, entering students who are not proficient based on these criteria will be required to take the CUNY assessment test to determine if they require remedial coursework to build their skills in any areas which they have not met the proficiency requirement. Students who are in need of remedial coursework usually cannot begin a full program of college-level work in an associate program until they have completed remedial course and demonstrated proficiency in reading, writing, and math. Remedial courses do not bear credit towards a degree and tuition is charged for these courses. Students are strongly advised to demonstrate proficiency before admission to CUNY to avoid remediation.

11. CAMPUS VISITS

When searching for the right college, campus visits are a **MUST!** You can schedule a tour online by looking at the Admissions website for the colleges you are interested in. You can also schedule an interview if you'd like. If possible, plan your visit during the school term on a weekday so you can visit classes, talk to professors, and see how students live day to day. Some schools will even schedule overnight campus visits which will allow you to get a much more in-depth picture of campus life. A good idea is to visit during our school break in February and during spring break. Check the college website for a schedule.

During your visit make sure to interact with as many people as possible. Look at bulletin boards to see what kinds of activities occur on campus. Spend some time at the student center. Try the food! Can you picture yourself living at this campus for the next four years of your life?

Ask students what they like or dislike about their school and why they chose to go there. Take notes on the answers so that you can remember important details about each campus you have visited. Consider asking the following when you visit and tour a school:

- How large is the department you want to major in?
- How accessible are the professors?
- What are the most difficult required courses?
- What is the social life like? Are fraternities and sororities a major influence on campus? Does the college offer activities during the week and on weekends?
- Will you be able to keep a car on campus?
- What is the safety and security like on campus? If you work late at the library, how do you get back to your dorm?
- What percentage of students graduates in four years?
- What percentage of students continues on to graduate schools?
- What corporations recruit graduates on campus?
- What types of residence halls are available and how are freshman assigned to them? Are there special interest dorms? Do they guarantee on-campus housing for all four years? What does a typical room look like?
- What is the food like? What meal plan options are there? Are there several different cafeterias and can you eat in any of them?
- If you are not a member of a team, what athletic facilities are available and how accessible are they?
- What scholarships are available and how are candidates chosen?
- What do the buildings, classrooms and laboratories of the department you are interested in look like? Are they state of the art?
- What percentage of the student body receives financial aid?
- What do students do on weekends?

12. COLLEGE ADMISSIONS INTERVIEWS

The admissions interview provides an opportunity to give the Admissions Office more information about you that would not come across on paper. Admissions counselors often conduct interviews on campus, or you can schedule an interview with alumni in the New York City area.

Prepare for your interview ahead of time. Research the school, and create a list of questions to ask your interviewer. This makes a good impression and demonstrates your interest in the school. Present yourself appropriately during the interview – this includes paying attention to your style of dress and demeanor. Most importantly, though, be yourself and act naturally. If you feel nervous about the interview process, practice answering questions with friends and family beforehand.

After your interview, it is a good idea to write a note of thanks to your interviewer.

Admissions officers often use questions similar to those below. Use this list to practice your answers prior to the actual interview:

- Why are you interested in this school?
- How do you define success?
- Which of your accomplishments gives you the most pride?
- What type of person would you like to become?
- What values are important to you?
- What did you like most about high school?
- What person or event has had a significant impact on your life?
- What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience?
- What person living or dead do you most admire and why?
- Are there any circumstances which may have interfered with your academic performance?
- Have you participated in academic programs outside of Midwood?
- Have you had the opportunity to travel or live outside of New York City?
- What contributions would you like to make to the world?
- What was the last book you read?
- How have you spent your summers?

13. WEB RESOURCES

WARNING: Before using a website's services, be sure to check on the following:

- Do they charge a fee for their services? We **DO NOT** recommend you use any site that charges money.
- Check the site's privacy policy to ensure that they do not share or sell your personal information.

Generally websites with an *.edu* or *.org* address are safest to use. Those with a *.com* address are commercial sites and we urge you to be careful of scams (for example, *fafsa.com* charges \$80.00 to fill out the FAFSA which you can fill out at *fafsa.ed.gov* for FREE). Check the website <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edcams/scholarship> to track online scams.

The following is a list of sites that we recommend:

General Information:

<http://www.review.com> (Princeton Review)
<http://www.commonapp.org> (Common Applications)
<http://www.nymentor.com> (information on college and financial planning)
<http://www.petersons.com> (Peterson's Guide)
<http://www.mapping-your-future.org> (Mapping Your Future)
<http://www.collegeweeklive.com> (Virtual College Fairs)
[NYCCollegeline.org](http://www.nyccollegeline.org)

Scholarships, Loans & Financial Aid:

<http://www.fasfa.ed.gov> (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
<http://www.hesc.org> (New York State Aid-Tuition Assistance Program)
<http://www.fastaid.com> (Fastaid Free Scholarship Search)
<http://www.fastweb.com> (Fast Web)
<http://www.finaid.org> (FinAid)
<http://www.hispanicfund.org> (Scholarships for Hispanic Students)
<http://www.uncf.org> (Scholarships for African American Students)
www.chegg.com

Athletics/Athletes:

<http://www.ncaa.org> (National Collegiate Athletic Association)

SAT/ACT Information and Study Guides:

<http://www.number2.com>
<http://www.act.org> (American College Testing)
<http://www.collegeboard.org> (College Board Online)
<http://www.kaplan.com> (Kaplan Review)
<http://www.review.com> (Princeton Review)
<http://www.revolutionprep.com> (Revolution Prep)

APPENDIX: SAMPLE LETTER

To inform colleges that you will not attend and to thank them for their offer of admission:

Your Name
Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Director of Admissions
Name of College
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for admitting me to (college name), however, I regret that I will be unable to attend. I have decided after careful thought to attend (name of college and reason for decision – colleges like to know where accepted students are going and why).

Again, I appreciate your having accepted me.

Yours truly,

(signature)
Your name (typed)