

is generally recommended that you take a Subject Test if you have an 85 average or better in the particular course. For the other core areas when you should take the test is determined by how many years of preparation you've had and also by specific topics covered.

Because the SAT and ACT are scored so differently, we have included an SAT-ACT Comparison Chart (*) so that you can see how your scores translate between tests.

Extracurricular Activities and Community Involvement

Involvement in a variety of activities outside of the classroom is also very important. In school these could be clubs, sports, honor societies, peer tutoring or any other way to productively spend your time. Outside of school, volunteer experiences (such as youth group participation) or having a part-time job is the best way to show schools that you are a well-rounded, active member of the community as well as demonstrating responsibility and time management skills. The important thing is not to be involved peripherally in too many things, but instead to take active roles in the things that are important to you. Taking on leadership positions is a great way to indicate that you are ready for the demands of a college curriculum. Even if you have not been involved in a lot of these activities until now, there is still time. The best way to showcase your extracurricular involvement is to create an Activity Sheet/Resume (*), highlighting the activities that you are most proud of or where you were most involved. This should be a typewritten list describing your involvement. A copy of your Activity Sheet (*) should be given to your counselor during the spring of your junior year and then again when it's updated in the fall.

The Essay

The essay is your chance to show the college admissions office something about yourself that is not evident on your transcript or in your other recommendations. The most important thing to keep in mind is that the reader should know more about **you** when they come to the end of your essay.

Sometimes an application will indicate that the essay is optional. If you really want to be accepted to a school, no part should be considered optional. Take every opportunity to make the college see what a unique and wonderful person you are and this includes writing a great essay. Take advantage of Mohonasen's Essay Writing Workshop presented by a college admissions counselor in late September. Brainstorm essay ideas with your counselor and be sure to bring your drafts to your counselor or an

English teacher. Take advantage of the expertise around you to write an essay that will make the admissions office remember you!

To preview some sample essays, check out the online applications of some of your schools of interest or at www.commonapp.org. Go to the “download forms” tab on top and click “Application” to preview the entire application. Essay topics are at the end. You may find that you are able to use the same essay for more than one college application. It’s never too early to start working on your essays so give some thought to starting sooner rather than later!

Recommendations

Who Do You Ask?

Recommendations are another piece of the admissions picture that can help tip the scales in your favor if they are good. Students should ask teachers, counselors, coaches and club advisors from their junior and senior year. The people that you ask should be the ones who saw your excellent work ethic or major investment in their class or activity. Were you a leader in the class or sport? Was it an area in which you worked very hard to be successful? Did you put in extra time after school? If the answer to these questions is yes, then consider asking this person to write a recommendation for you.

When and How Do You Ask?

The time to ask is early in your senior year. Teachers may be asked to write recommendations for many students so they will need at least three weeks notice. As a rule, students are encouraged to ask their recommenders by the end of September. Students need to research how many and from whom the recommendations are required for each of their school choices. For instance, if you are applying to West Point, a recommendation from your physics teacher will be required. Students should complete a Mohonasen Recommendation Request Form (*) for each person they intend to ask, attaching a copy of their Activity Sheet (*) to the request form. Sometimes the college will have a specific Teacher Recommendation/Evaluation Form (*) that they would like filled out. This should also be attached to every request form. Each recommender should be asked in person first and then given the paper or email request soon after. Each recommender should be asked if they would like the paper forms to complete and mail in to each college or if they would prefer to complete their recommendation and required forms online (if applicable) before the Recommendation Form is given to them, as the attachments vary depending on the answer. If the recommender opts to complete their recommendation via paper, then, in addition to the Recommendation Request Form, you must also give them a stamped and addressed