

Applying to High School



Components to Apply

- The Application
 - Paper or online
- The Essay(s)
- Standardized Testing
 - HSPT, ISEE, SSAT
- School Transcript
- Interview
- Recommendations
 - Teachers
 - Principal/Counselor
 - Personal
- Inquiry Form/Shadow Day/School Tour
- *Financial Aid Application*



The Application

- Each school will determine which application(s) they accept
 - Gateway to Prep Schools online application
 - <https://www.gatewaytoprepschools.com/>
 - Standard Application Online
 - <https://ssat.org/sao>
 - Ravenna Online Application
 - <https://www.ravenna-hub.com/login>
 - Online School Application
 - A school's own online application form found on their Admissions website
 - Printed School Application
 - A school's own paper application form



What is in the application?

- Biographical and background information
- Family information
- Information about your current school
- Standardized test scores or test plan
- Activities section: extracurricular, athletic, community service
 - Multimedia links
- Parent section
- Essay(s)



The Essay(s)

- An opportunity to learn about you through your own voice and writing style
- Should sound like you (not a family member or teacher)
- Schools may require one or more
 - Essay prompts from the school
 - A graded essay



Standardized Testing

- Each school will determine which test(s) they accept
 - High School Placement Test (**HSPT**)
 - Often used by Catholic high schools
 - <https://stsusers.com/stsusers/registration/static/boston.php>
 - Independent School Entrance Exam (**ISEE**)
 - <https://www.erblearn.org/parents/isee-overview>
 - Secondary School Admission Test (**SSAT**)
 - <https://ssat.org/>
 - Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (**MCAS**)
 - Public schools (such as, Abbott Lawrence Academy and Greater Lawrence Technical School) will typically require MCAS scores be sent



School Transcript

- An official record of grades from your middle school
 - You will need to request this from your school counselor/office

On the middle school transcript?

YES

- Courses Taken
- Course Levels
- Grades (term/final)

MAYBE

- Absences/Tardies
- MCAS Scores

NO

- Teacher Comments
- Grades from Individual Assignments



Letters of Recommendation

- Talk about you as a student beyond grades and test scores
- Each application/school has different requirements
 - Teachers: English, Math (might require *current year*)
 - Principal or School Counselor
 - Personal: mentor, coach, family friend (someone who knows you well, but is *NOT* a relative)
- Letters from school will discuss your academic ability, work habits, and involvement in the school community
- Personal letters will speak to your qualities and characteristics beyond school



Admissions Interview

- A meeting or conversation to get to know you better
 - Usually conducted by a member of the school's Admissions Office, an alumni (graduate), or a faculty/staff member of the school
- Asks questions about many topics,
 - Including family and background, academic and extracurricular interests, and why they are applying to the school
- Also an opportunity for you to ask questions about the school and what it is like to be a student there
 - Have some in mind that you would like to ask



Other Requirements

- **Inquiry Form**

- An online form on the school's Admission website that allows you to express interest in applying

- **School Tour**

- Allow you to see and explore the campus
- Typically conducted by a student trained to work in the Admissions Office
- Point out specific aspects of the school's facilities and features

- **Shadow Day**

- Allow you to spend time following a student through their daily schedule and experience classes and free time alongside that person



Other Requirements

- **The Character Skills Snapshot**
 - An online assessment that measures different qualities:
<https://ssat.org/snapshot>
 - A student SSAT account must be created to register for this assessment



Applying for Financial Aid

- Separate application than applying to the school
 - Though the school application might ask
- May have a different deadline than the school's application
- Will require a comprehensive application be filled out which may include:
 - Family income
 - Family assets
 - Family expenses
 - Bank account balances



Completing the Application

- **Know your requirements!**
 - Take the test(s) or complete the application(s) accepted by the most schools you will apply to
- **Keep track of deadlines!**
 - Use a spreadsheet or record in a notebook
- **Apply for Financial Aid, if applicable**
 - When your school applications are done, be sure you have completed your Financial Aid application(s) as well



Questions...

- ...about the school where you will apply or a specific piece of the application for one school:
 - Contact that school's Admissions Office
- ...about your application, support with an essay, help actually filling out the pages:
 - Your School Counselor
 - PALS Program: PALS@andover.edu

