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