Class of 2026

Post-Secondary Guide

2025-2026

Manville High School

1100 Brooks Blvd
Manville, NJ 08835
908.231.8500
CEEB Code: 310749

Post-Secondary Student Timeline

AUGUST

For all post-secondary accounts, portals, applications, etc… please use a PERSONAL email. It is recommended to create a new email that can be shared with your parent(s)/ guardian(s). This will help with keeping track of any deadlines, missing documents, or follow-up information.

Note: Parent(s)/Guardian(s) be sure not to email admissions reps for your student but rather *encourage your student to send the email in their own words.*
Please see email etiquette in the Post-Secondary Resource guide below.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES
College Application Submission Guide
College Admissions Checklist

August 1ˢᵗ- Common Application releases application for Fall 2026

Common Application:
- Create a Common App account
    - Begin filling out your demographic information (application) and adding colleges to your Common Application Dashboard.

Explore SCOIR:

- Log into your SCOIR Account
    Username: School Email
    Password: Temporary Password was sent when we made accounts. Please update it to your own personal password if you haven't made an account yet.
    - Complete SCOIR profile (demographic information, activities, achievements, etc..)
    - Use your SCOIR to explore colleges
    - Please refer to this **College Admissions Checklist** document to get started.

- College Visits **through SCOIR**:
    - Click on Colleges
    - Under Research Colleges you will see College Visits
    - Click on College Visits
    - You will see a list of all the Virtual College Visits at MHS. Please make sure you register ahead of time.

Essay:

- Begin brainstorming your college essay. *Check out College Essay Tips in the Post-Secondary Resource Guide.*
    - Essay prompts for Common Application 2025-2026 will not be released until August 1st.
    - If colleges do not accept Common Application, please refer to their individual website for their specific college essay prompt (for example RVCC has their own application process)

Entrance Exam Preparation:

- Create a study plan and register for *College Entrance Exams*. See Test Dates/Deadlines below.
    - **SAT**:
        - In-school SAT in the Fall (sign up form will be here once it's available)
        - Track your practice through College Board
        - **ACT**: ACT Academy

More Colleges/Universities are becoming Test Optional schools (no entrance exam required). Check out an updated list of Colleges/Universities.

College Exploration:

- Review Post-Secondary Resources below to assist in college exploration process
- Use SCOIR to explore colleges and add to "My College" list.
- Go on Virtual College Tours!

It is suggested to create a college list of 10 schools that you want to apply to for next year. A few things you want to consider when choosing schools: GPA, SAT/ACT Scores, Major, Size, Location, etc...

Determine if the school is a REACH (your gpa and sat/act scores are lower), TARGET (your gpa and sat/act scores match), or SAFETY (your gpa and sat/act scores are higher). This will give you an idea of your chances of acceptance to the school. You definitely want to have at least (2-3) REACH; (4-5) TARGET; (1-2) SAFETY.

Career Exploration:

- Start Career Exploration to determine what major/career pathway you're interested in.
    - Login into SCOIR and complete the YouScience or other career quizzes
    - NJCAN
- Determine based on your career what type of education you will need.

SEPTEMBER

Common Application:
- ○ Create a [Common App](#) account
- ○ Read over the [first-time student guide](#)
- ○ Review Common Application, check your [GRAMMAR](#) (spelling, punctuations, capitalization, etc..). *Ask someone to look it over for you!*
- ○ Continue to build your College List by adding your colleges to the Dashboard *(if the college does not appear on the college list then refer to the individual college website).*

Essay*:*
- ○ Complete a first draft of your common application essay. It is highly encouraged to have others read over your essay(s) before submitting it to colleges!
- ○ *Check out College Essay Tips in the Post-Secondary Resource list below.*

Not all colleges utilize common application. Please be sure to check the college/university website to determine their application process.

SCOIR:

- ● Connect your SCOIR and Common App accounts (this is a new feature! You should be able to select an option on your home screen to connect the two accounts)

Letters of Recommendation:

- ● Determine who will ask to write your letters of recommendations.
    - ○ At least (2) Teachers; (1) Other: Coach, Mentor, etc..; Counselor).
- ● Complete a [BRAG SHEET](#) and provide it to your counselor or teachers. This is also on SCOIR.

** Important: Check out this video for instructions and etiquette on how to request your [Letters of Recommendation](#) **

Entrance Exam:

- ● Prepare *College Entrance Exams*. See College Entrance Test Dates/Deadlines below.
    - ○ **SAT**: *Check out 2025-2026 [SAT Updates](#)*!
        - ■ In-school SAT in the Fall
        - ■ Track your practice through [College Board](#)
    - ○ **ACT**: *Check out 2025-2026 [ACT Updates](#)!*
        - ■ [ACT Academy](#)

OCTOBER

FAFSA and the NJ Alternative Application
- Determine if you can fill out the [FAFSA](#)
- **Alternative Application:**
    - Review the alternative application [eligibility](#)
    - Complete [NJ Dreamers Alternative Financial Aid Application](#)

Determine if the college/university you're applying to also requires you to submit a [CSS Profile](#)

College Application Process:

- Attend the College Application Boot Camp with your counselors (in the Fall)
- Prepare to submit your early action applications. Follow the **[College Application Submission Guide](#)**.
- Meet or contact college representatives
- Request your letters of recommendations.
- Sign-up for **Instant Decision Days**
- Begin to finalize your College Essays (send it to teachers)!
- Continue your applications. Be sure to review them all before the deadlines! Request any documents needed from your school. Determine what schools you need to send transcripts to.
- Use weekends to visit [Open Houses!](#)
- [NJACAC College Fairs](#)

NOVEMBER

November 1st and November 15th are traditional Early Action/Decision deadlines (Check specific policy for each college). Some schools may have a priority deadline for scholarships!

Note: YOU WILL NEED TO COMPLETE THE ENTIRE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST BY THIS DATE TO APPLY BY THE DEADLINE

- Meet or contact college representatives
- Request your letters of recommendations.
- Sign-up for **Instant Decision Days**
- Begin to finalize your College Essays (send it to teachers)!
- Continue your applications. Be sure to review them all before the deadlines! Request any documents needed from your school. Determine what schools you will need to send transcripts.
- Use weekends to visit [Open Houses!](#)
- [NJACAC College Fairs](#)

DECEMBER

December 1st- FAFSA Application Opens. *[Find the latest Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) news and documents.](#)*

2026-2027 Financial Aid Update!

Financial Aid Process:

Step 1: Create [FSA ID](#) for both parent and student (You will use the same FSA ID all four years in college). Write this down and keep it in a safe place. [Check out this Video! How to create your FSA ID.](#)

Step 2: Complete [2026-27 FAFSA Application](#) - *not released until sometime in December, do not complete before the application is released!*

To complete the [*Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®)](#), you will need:

- Student Social Security # or Alien Registration Number (if you are not a U.S. citizen)
- Parent Social Security #, *if not applicable student will enter 000-00-0000*
- Your 2023 federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned. (Note: You may be able to transfer your federal tax return information into your FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.)
- Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable)
- Records of untaxed income (if applicable)
- An FSA ID to sign electronically.

If you are a [dependent student](#), then you will also need most of the above information for your parent(s).

After you complete the FAFSA Application be sure to create a [NJ FAMS](#) Account.
Do NOT use your School Email!

College Application Process:

December 1st- Additional College & **Scholarship Deadline** (Check specific policy for each college).

*Early Action/Decision applicants will start to hear back from schools.

- Continue your applications. Be sure to review them all before the deadlines! Request any documents needed from your school. Determine what schools you will need to send transcripts.
- Organize the emails you receive from colleges! Most schools will send you login information to create an applicant portal. Be sure to follow the instructions to create the account. Log in to check your status and any materials missing

JANUARY - APRIL

- January 1st and 15th are the traditional regular decision due dates for applications.
- Complete Scholarship Applications to supplement tuition costs (MHS Local Scholarships, Private Scholarships, and School Specific Scholarship Applications)
- Review Financial Aid Packages from separate colleges

MAY

- Notify colleges/universities of your decision!

College Entrance Exam Dates

ACT Test Dates & Deadlines

ACT Test Date	Registration Deadline	*Late Registration
September 6, 2025	August 1, 2025	August 19, 2025
October 18, 2025	September 12, 2025	September 30, 2025
December 13, 2025	November 7, 2025	November 24, 2025
February 14, 2026	January 9, 2026	January 23, 2026
April 11, 2026	March 6, 2026	March 24, 2026
June 13, 2026	May 8, 2026	May 29, 2026
July 11, 2026	June 5, 2026	June 24, 2026

*Late Fee Required

To register: www.actstudent.org

SAT Test Dates & Deadlines

SAT Test Date	Registration Deadline	*Late Registration
August 23, 2025	August 8, 2025	August 12, 2025
September 13, 2025	August 29, 2025	September 2, 2025
October 4, 2025	September 19, 2025	September 23, 2025
November 8, 2025	October 24, 2025	October 28, 2025
December 6, 2025	November 21, 2025	November 25, 2025
March 14, 2026	February 27, 2026	March 3, 2026
May 2, 2026	April 17, 2026	April 21, 2026
June 6, 2025	May 22, 2026	May 26, 2026

*Late Fee Required

To register: www.collegeboard.org

SAT School Day Test

SAT Test Date	Registration Deadline	SAT Scores Available
TBA	TBA	TBA

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<u>Post-Secondary Resource Guide</u>

COLLEGE ORGANIZER
College Deadline Organizer
College Tracker
SCOIR (update your college list in SCOIR)

STUDENT ATHLETES
NCAA Eligibility Process
NCAA Student Guide

COLLEGE & CAREER EXPLORATION TOOLS
SCOIR
College Scorecard
Niche
NJCAN
Explore Careers

ENTRANCE EXAMS
ACT **(College)**
SAT **(College)**
ASVAB **(Military)**

COLLEGE ESSAY TIPS
College Essay Guy
Princeton Review College Essay Advice
8 Tips for Crafting Your Best College Essay
How to Write a College Essay

Read essays that worked:
John's Hopkins University Admitted Students
Tufts University Admitted Students
12 College Essays that Worked

EMAIL ETIQUETTE
Email to Admission Rep

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES

Financial Aid
Federal Student Aid
State Student Aid
CSS Profile (some colleges may request you to submit a CSS Profile)

Credible Scholarship Websites:
Scholarships.com
Cappex Scholarship
Fastweb Scholarship
JLV College Counseling Scholarship Suggestions

Post-Secondary Resource Guide

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS

Vocational:
[RVCC Workforce Training Center](#)
[Hunterdon County Poly Tech](#)
[Middlesex County College](#)
[Career Tech NJ](#)

Military
[Army](#)
[Marines](#)
[Navy](#)
[Airforce](#)
[National Guard](#)

ROTC:
[ROTC Programs](#)

Gap-year:
[Gap Year Association](#)
[AmeriCorps Programs](#)
[NJ Workforce One Stop Career Center](#)

Workforce:
[Middle Earth Visions Program](#)