



Manatee High School
College Information Night for Juniors
January 18, 2024



PLANNING FOR COLLEGE/CAREER

MHS Resources for College and Career Planning

While students must decide what post-secondary education is right for them and their goals, there are resources to help students through the experience. We are here to help and guide students.

College and Career Center

Individual meetings are by appointment by completing a request for meeting form. Forms are available on the reception desk in Guidance. Students may stop in before or after school if they have quick questions or to pick up resource flyers. Services include:

- * resources for college exploration
- * college application assistance
- * resume samples and tips
- * college essay tips
- * SAT and ACT test information
- * scholarship opportunities
- * career exploration resources

School Counselors

Students may request an appointment with their counselor by completing a request for meeting form. Forms are available on the reception desk in Guidance.

Class of 2025 Schoology Course

A course has been set up in Schoology for the Class of 2025. Go to Schoology>Courses>Class of 2025. Click “Materials” (on the left) for flyers/handouts. Click “Updates” (on the left) to see new posts and scroll down for past posts.

Manatee High School Website

- The College and Career Center page on the MHS website provides information to students and parents related to college and career planning, including checklists and scholarships/financial aid. The site <https://www.manateeschools.net/manatee>. Click on the “Academics” tab, then on “College and Career Center”.
- The Guidance page on our website has your counselor’s contact information, information about community service procedures and Dual Enrollment details. Click on the “Academics” tab, then on “Guidance”.
- The Registrar’s page on the website is where you order transcripts for colleges and scholarships. Click on the “Academics” tab, then on “Registrar”.

Opportunity Board

Located in the hallway between the cafeteria and Media Center, the Opportunity Board is where we post scholarship opportunities, SAT/ACT test date reminders and college information.

MHS E- Newsletter

All families are encouraged to sign up to receive the MHS E-Newsletter for school news, important dates and reminders about programs at MHS. Go to the MHS website and [sign up](#) for the email newsletter.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

SAT/ACT

Students must register online to take the SAT and/or ACT. Students create an account and follow the directions to register for a test. There are registration deadlines, so plan ahead. Your SAT and/or ACT account is also where you will check for your scores. Be aware of registration deadlines. *NOTE – The SAT is transitioning to a digital test in the spring of 2024.*

Be sure to PREPARE for these college entrance exams! Students should study for these tests just like the preparation for any test. Carve out time each week to take practice tests, review study guides, quiz yourself on vocabulary, review math concepts, etc.

Fee Waivers for the SAT and ACT tests are available from school counselors for qualified students. Students may use the fee waiver for 2 SAT tests and 4 ACT tests. SAT – once you use the initial waiver, the second waiver will automatically post on your College Board account. ACT – see counselor for waivers.

CLT

The CLT is now used by Florida Public Universities (and a limited number of colleges across the country) for admission, as well as Florida Bright Futures to meet the test score requirement. The CLT is a remotely proctored exam, all online, with specific technical/computer requirements. Students must register online by the deadlines. Check that the colleges you are interested in accept the CLT.

Fee waivers are given once students complete the CLT [Financial Assistance Request Form](#). Only two per academic year may be granted.

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

SAT

The College Board has partnered with **Khan Academy** to provide free, online, personalized prep to help students improve their SAT scores.

Go to <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat> to learn more and to create your account.

- Personalized to you
- Official
- Interactive
- Instant

ACT

ACT provides free, online, personalized practice with **MyACT**.

Go to <https://my.act.org/account> to learn more and create your account.

- Free online test prep
- Free study guide
- Free online test prep events

CLT

CLT provides free online test prep at <https://www.cltexam.com/tests/test-prep/>

NOTE: When registering to take the SAT or ACT, be sure to request that the scores be sent to one of the 12 public universities in the state of Florida.. Or make sure you have sent them SAT or ACT scores after testing. That is how test scores are accessed for Florida Bright Futures scholarship evaluation.

Remaining SAT TEST DATES FOR 2023-2024

\$60.00

www.collegeboard.org

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Registration Deadline</u>
March 9	Feb. 23	Feb. 27
May 4	April 19	Apr. 23
June 1	May 16	May 21

**The SAT is now a digital test. It's important to download the Bluebook App and become familiar with the digital exam/practice!
Go to the College Board website for updates, changes and to register**

Remaining ACT TEST DATES FOR 2023-2024

\$68.00 – no writing

\$93.00 - with writing section

(Writing section required for some colleges- check each college for their requirements)

www.actstudent.org

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Registration Deadline</u>
Feb. 10	Jan. 5	Jan. 19
Apr. 13	March 8	March 22
June 8	May 3	May 17
July 13	June 7	June 21

Go to the ACT website for updates, changes and to register

CLT UPCOMING TEST DATES

\$59.00

REGISTER ONLINE AT <https://www.cltexam.com/tests/clt/>

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>
Jan. 27	Jan. 22
Feb. 15	Feb. 8
March 16	March 11
April 11	April 4
April 24	April 10
May 11	May 6
June 20	June 13

Go to the CLT website for updates, changes and to register

Post-Secondary Options: Decide Which Kind of Degree Is Right For You

Saying you want to earn a college degree could mean a number of things. Part of your college selection process should be thinking about what kind of degree you want to earn, and which college can get you there. Or consider the career you desire and what type of degree is needed. Here are some of your options:

***Associate Degree**

You receive an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree after completing two years of study that are similar to the first two years of a four-year college program. Community (State) colleges (like SCF) and some four-year universities offer associate degrees. After earning an A.A. or an A.S., some students transfer to a four-year college to complete the requirements for a bachelor's degree (in Florida we call it the “2+2” Program). Others enter the workforce right away. Many careers require only an A.S. degree.

***Bachelor's or Baccalaureate Degree**

You receive a bachelor's degree after completing a four- or five-year, full-time program of study at a college. The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Bachelor of Science (B.S.) are the most common. Other colleges award very specific degrees, such as the Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) or Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.).

***Vocational-Technical (Vo-Tech) and Career Colleges**

A vo-tech or career college (like MTC) offers specialized training to students who are interested in a particular industry or career. At these colleges, students are not required to take general education classes in all subjects. You take classes only in your field of study — for example, culinary arts, firefighting, dental hygiene or medical-records technology. The classes are hands-on career training for high demand jobs. When you complete your program, you receive a certificate of completion.

(Source: Adapted from College Board 2011)

Decide what is important to you in a college

Some things to consider:

- Size
- Location
- Available majors
- Cost
- Extracurricular activities

Read admission information for each college (college websites)

- Academic Profile –statistics from the previous year (GPA, test scores). How do you “stack up”?
- Required high school coursework, test scores, minimum high school GPA
- Essay, letters of recommendation
- Deadlines
- If considering 4-year colleges/universities, plan on applying to 4-6 schools

Finding the Perfect College

Most students want to find the “perfect” college. The truth is, there’s no such thing. You can find many colleges where you can be happy and get a great education. The college search is about exploring who you are and what you want and then finding colleges that will meet your goals.

BEFORE SEARCHING, CONSIDER THESE

8 FACTORS

Size

Location

Available majors and classes

Available extracurricular activities

Distance from home

Makeup of the student body

Housing options

Campus atmosphere

Questions to consider:

- Which of these aspects are things you feel you must have to be comfortable at a college?
- On which factors are you flexible?
- What do you want to accomplish in college?
- Do you want to train for a specific job or get a wide-ranging education?
- If you have a major in mind, do the colleges you are considering specialize in that major?

[Bigfuture.collegeboard.org](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org) is a great option to sort through the many options out there, based on your preferences.

Here are steps you can take to find colleges where you will thrive.

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Although it’s good to have some ideas in mind about what sorts of colleges will be right for you, stay open to all the possibilities at the beginning of your search.

TALK TO PEOPLE WHO KNOW YOU

Tell parents, teachers, relatives, friends, and your school counselor about your goals, and ask if they can suggest colleges that may be a good fit for you.

DON'T LIMIT YOUR SEARCH

At the start of this process, you may rule out colleges because you think that they are too expensive or too hard to get into, but this may not be the reality. Remember that financial aid can make college more affordable, and colleges look at more than just grades and test scores.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Once you have a list of schools, it’s time to do some research. To learn more about the colleges you’re considering, check out college guidebooks and websites.

Jot down your questions and get answers by:

- Talking to your school counselor or teachers
- Checking out colleges’ student blogs, if available
- Contacting college admission officials
- Asking admission officials to recommend current students or recent graduates with whom you can have conversations
- Visiting college campuses, if possible



COLLEGE PLANNING FAQs

CLASS OF 2025

Remember – “College” is any education you get after high school. What type of college is right for you?

WHEN DO I APPLY TO COLLEGE?

Most college applications to 4-year colleges/universities should be completed August-September-October of senior year. Each college sets their own deadline, so you need to make sure you read their instructions carefully and understand when you need to have the application completed and submitted. Many public universities in Florida have Nov. 1 deadlines/priority deadlines. Colleges like SCF and MTC have different timelines – SCF typically opens their application in October of senior year; MTC typically opens their application in February of senior year.

HOW DO I TO APPLY TO COLLEGE?

Applications are online. Go to the college website, look for the “Admission/Apply” tab. First – and most important – **read the instructions!** Each application is different and each college may ask for different information. There are multiple steps you must do by deadlines to have your application complete – like send transcripts/self-reported grades, send official test scores, etc.

HOW MANY COLLEGES SHOULD I APPLY TO?

Generally speaking, students interested in 4-year college/universities should apply to between 4-6 colleges. (some students apply to more – that’s up to you). Why? Because you want to have options. The colleges/universities cannot accept all the students who apply.

Students interested in starting at a 2-year college (like SCF) or who are interested in technical colleges (like MTC) may decide to apply to just one or two of those types of schools. Again, it’s always good to have options.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE ACCEPTED?

The requirements are different for each college. Students must research the schools they are interested in to see what is required – visit college websites, admission page. Requirements may include SAT/ACT test scores, transcripts, essay, information about extracurricular activities, etc. The packet of information you received in your U.S. History class had a list of the 12 public universities in Florida and their mid-range statistics on GPA, SAT and ACT scores for the students accepted last year. (a copy of the packet is posted on the College and Career Center page of the MHS website). These are not the requirements to be accepted but gives you an idea of past acceptance statistics. You can find this information for all colleges you might be considering.

Two-year colleges (like SCF) and technical colleges (like MTC) are different. Currently, the only requirement to be accepted is to graduate from high school with a standard diploma. There may be additional requirements for specific majors, like nursing or law enforcement, so do the research.

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE THE SAT/ACT?

Juniors should have taken or be taking them NOW. Most students take these tests 2-3 times.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GO TO COLLEGE?

Costs vary from college to college. That information is on college websites. They should all post an estimated Cost of Attendance, which includes the tuition and fees to pay for classes, cost of the residence halls, meal plan, books and supplies and miscellaneous expenses. These costs are before any financial aid or scholarships. The cost of a particular college and your family's ability to pay for it should be part of your consideration when researching colleges. Remember, there is financial aid to help pay for college – federal aid (the FAFSA), state of Florida aid, institutional aid, and private scholarships. You'll apply for aid senior year.



LINKS/RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PLAN FOR COLLEGE

- Class of 2025 Schoology Page – be sure you check the “Updates” section often, at least once a week.
- MHS College and Career Center web page – <https://www.manateeschools.net/domain/3113>
- Big Future – College Search/College Planning - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- College Board – www.collegeboard.org
- ACT – www.actstudent.org
- College Majors on Big Future - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/explore-careers>
- My Florida Shines – career exploration and self-assessments that may help you decide a major/career - <https://www.floridashines.org/find-a-career/plan-your-future>
- Xello – career planning – students have access through their ClassLink SSO
- State of Florida grants and scholarships (including Florida Bright Futures) – <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPHome/SAPHome?url=home>
- State College of Florida - <https://www.scf.edu/>
- Manatee Technical College - <https://www.manateetech.edu/>
- State University System of Florida - <https://www.flbog.edu/> (click “Universities” tab)

Common College Terminology

As students begin to research and apply to colleges, they will encounter terminology or lingo that they may not be familiar with. Here are some common terms you may encounter and what they mean.

ACT

A college entrance exam used by many colleges to help make admission decisions. Students must register online to take the exam.

CLT

The Classic Learning Test is a college entrance exam. It is now accepted by Florida Public Universities for admission as well as for Florida Bright Futures to meet the test score requirement. Students must register online to take the exam.

Common Application

The Common Application is a standard application platform accepted by almost 1,000 colleges. Students can fill out this application once and submit it to any of the colleges that accept it. It is IMPORTANT that students read the application instructions on the college websites before completing the Common Application. Many colleges use only specific sections of the Common App and/or have supplements that must be completed.

CSS Profile

A financial aid form produced by the College Board that is required by some colleges, including many highly selective colleges/universities. Check each college website to determine if they require the CSS Profile – many do not.

Early Action (EA)

An application option to submit the applications before the regular deadlines and get admission decisions from colleges earlier than usual. Early action plans are not binding, which means that you are not committed to enroll in that college if you are accepted early action. Read the information carefully on the college website before choosing to apply EA.

Early Decision (ED)

An application option to submit an application to your first-choice college before the regular deadline. Early Decision plans are binding. Students agree to enroll in the college if admitted and offered a financial aid package that meets their needs. Students should carefully discuss this with parents/guardians and their counselor before making the decision to apply ED.

FAFSA- Free Application for Federal Student Aid

A financial aid form produced by the federal government that determines eligibility for federal funds. ALL seniors and parents should complete the form starting October 1st of senior year. Many colleges/universities require a FAFSA be filed in order to consider students for their scholarships/aid.

FFAA-Florida Financial Aid Application

An online application for all state of Florida grants and scholarships, including Florida Bright Futures. Seniors apply beginning October 1st of senior year.

Modified Rolling Admissions

A practice of some colleges to review admission applications several times throughout the year. The college will post several deadlines and the dates when those applications will be reviewed.

Priority Date or Deadline

The date by which the application must be received. Deadlines are critical for college applications and students must know deadlines and give themselves ample time to complete the forms. Supplements to the application – like the application fee, transcripts, etc. - may also be required by the deadline. Again, students must read the admission instructions carefully on each college website.

Rolling Admission

An admissions procedure used by some colleges/universities where they consider each admission application as soon as all materials are received. The college then notifies students with their admission decision. Colleges that use rolling admission often begin offering admission to students as early as October of senior year, so students are encouraged to complete applications fall of senior year to be given the strongest consideration.

SAI – Student Aid Index

The Student Aid Index (SAI) is an eligibility index number that a college's or career school's financial aid office uses to determine how much federal student aid the student would receive if the student attended the school. The SAI is generated after the completed FAFSA is submitted.

SSAR – Self-reported Student Academic Record

An online form used by many public universities in Florida instead of a transcript. Students self-report all courses and semester grades that have been attempted (or will be attempted) for high school. It includes high school classes taken in middle school and dual enrollment classes. Colleges that require the SSAR have detailed instructions on their website. (Some out-of-state universities require a similar form called the SRAR – Self Reported Academic Record).

SAT

A college entrance exam used by many colleges to help make admission decisions. Students must register online to take the exam.

Transcript

The official record of coursework at a school or college. MHS transcripts are ordered online – visit the Registrar's page of the MHS website for instructions.



The College Essay

The college essay is your chance to use your voice to add to your college application. Many colleges require the essay as a way to hear from the student directly and to get a sense of who you are in your own words. It's a great opportunity to personalize your application beyond the grades, scores, and other information you've provided and can make a difference at decision time.

8 KEY POINTS THAT ADMISSION OFFICERS LOOK FOR:

- A command of the basics of good writing
- A direct answer to the essay question
- A strong opening paragraph that captures the reader's interest
- A comprehensive argument or narrative—make your point and stick to it
- A style that is comfortable for you and that is appropriate for the subject matter
- Correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Correct data—check your facts, dates, and names
- Succinctness—pay attention to the recommended length

WHAT THE ESSAY CAN DO FOR YOUR APPLICATION:

- Demonstrate your writing ability, a key component of success in college.
- Show that you have thought carefully about where you are applying and why you are a good match for the college, in your own words.
- Explain your commitment to learning and that you are willing and able to be a contributing member to the college community.
- Draw distinctions between you and other applicants, something that selective colleges especially rely on.

An essay will rarely take an applicant out of consideration at a college, but it certainly can elevate an applicant in an admission committee's eyes.

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

- Often you will be asked to write about a personal experience, an achievement, or a person who has been significant to you. Go beyond the what or the who and dig into the how and the why.
- If you write about a trip or event, describe how this experience affected you and is meaningful to you.
- If you are writing about a person in your life, be personal and specific, not just sentimental. Explain how or what this person did for you that is important to you.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Revise, revise, revise. Take the time to reread and revise. This process will help you develop a strong opening and a solid direction, and refine what you are trying to express.

Show, don't tell. Give readers such convincing evidence that they will come to the conclusion that you want. Provide detailed examples instead of providing a list of things.

Be authentic. Don't stress trying to write what you think they are looking for—just showcase who you are!

Just get started! Writing something meaningful can be a long process, so get started right away to allow for time to draft and revise. Be sure to write your essay long before the deadline.

Four Key Steps to Financial Aid

Class of 2025

1 Federal Aid -- FAFSA

THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL AID. The FAFSA is the *key* to federal grants (like the Pell Grant), federally backed student loans and work study. It is need-based aid. You can apply **OCTOBER of your senior year**. For the Class of 2025, you will need your/your parents 2023 federal tax information or tax returns. See the FAFSA website for details on how to apply and to access the application- <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

We encourage *all* families to complete the FAFSA even if you think you won't qualify -- colleges and many scholarships use information from the FAFSA to award their scholarships/aid. You can complete it even if you don't know where you will attend college/technical school. It's important to complete the FAFSA in October of senior year – be aware of deadlines each college may have.

2 State Aid – Florida Student Financial Aid

Seniors must complete the Florida Student Financial Aid application to be eligible for state aid, including **Florida Bright Futures**. Bright Futures provides scholarship money for students who will attend college in Florida. It is merit-based aid - eligibility is based on GPA, SAT/ACT scores **and** community service/work hours. See your counselor for more information and check the state website for any legislative changes.

Seniors must apply between October 1 and graduation to be eligible. Go to www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/ssfad/bf/ to apply. It's important that you know and understand the eligibility requirements and deadline!

All students should apply-- even if they are not sure if they will qualify, if they are not considering going to college, are planning to go out of state, are taking a year off or are enlisting in the military. There are state grants in addition to Bright Futures for which you may be eligible.

3 Institutional Aid

Check for scholarships at the college you will attend. Many offer scholarships through their financial aid office. Students may need to submit separate applications. Scholarships may be need-based and/or merit-based. Most require that the student have successfully submitted the FAFSA.

4 Private Scholarships

There are many national and local organizations that offer scholarships. Some are specific to a major, an ethnicity or require certain GPA/test scores, so students need to read each carefully for the eligibility requirements.

The College and Career Center at Manatee High School maintains a list of scholarship opportunities that is posted on the school website (<https://www.manateeschools.net/manatee>) – click on “Academics” then “College and Career Center” to see the link.