



Rising Senior Meeting

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Waldrup photography



DISCLAIMER

INFORMATION GIVEN IS GENERAL AND MAY NOT APPLY
TO EVERY COLLEGE. FOR SPECIFIC COLLEGE
INFORMATION, CONTACT MRS. COBB & COLLEGE REPS.



College and Testing Information

If unsure of admission requirements or testing information for a particular college, contact Mrs. Cobb or the admissions representative.

Be careful of getting info from other parents, teachers, coaches, or students.



Avoid These Mistakes

- Applying too early or too late to colleges.
- Applying to very few colleges.
- Applying to too many top tier universities (not having a balanced list).
- Missing deadlines especially for scholarships or not applying for any scholarships.



Avoid These Mistakes (Cont.)

- Not taking your ACT or SAT early enough.
- Not taking these test again or prepping for these tests.
- Not visiting college campuses.
- Not reading emails or Class of 2026 posts from Mrs. Cobb.
- No Resume and/or Brag Sheet completed in Naviance



TRANSCRIPTS

- Transcripts may only be requested by the student in their Naviance account
- **Official transcripts will not be ready until mid August**
- Will send an unofficial transcript to parents/students by email listed in FACTS in June
 - Make sure to check transcript for any issues and let Mr. Hill know for any corrections.
- Will take two to three weeks to process transcripts at a college
- Selective colleges will recalculate grades from a transcript
- **We are non-ranking school**
- We are on a 4.5 not a 4.0 scale
- AP & Dual Enrollment receive 0.5 qualifier
- Turn in Official Transcript Release Form before requesting any transcripts(Handout)
- Check to make sure you are on track to graduate for credits
- Colleges will check the rigor of your course even senior year
- Grades count senior year, even after a student has been accepted!!



Why JPPI Does Not Rank Students?

At JPPI, not ranking students has never hindered college or military academy admissions.



- GPA differences are often as small as 0.001—making ranks virtually meaningless.
- Colleges use holistic admissions: GPA, course rigor, test scores, activities, and growth.
- Colleges recalculate GPAs on their own scale (4.0, 6.0, etc.).
- Class rank is not a consistent or accurate indicator of ability across schools.
- Ranking can lead to unhealthy competition and discourage academic risk-taking.



Graduation VBC

Thursday, May 21, 2026, 4:00 – 6:00 pm

All seniors will be given 14 tickets
(6 preferred and 8 general seating)

*All dates Graduation and Senior Events
are subject to change*



Honor Cord Policy

Only approved medals, cords, and sashes of achievement awarded by St. John Paul II Catholic High School may be worn at graduation.

(See Handout)



Save The Date(s)

Senior Fall Meeting - **8/6 4:30 PM** in the MPR.

This meeting will include any changes to admissions and paying for college. Will have several colleges available to discuss changes in admissions for 2025-2026 admission cycle.

More information sent out at the end of June.



Summer To Do List

- Located in Naviance with hyperlinks
- See Handout



Service Hours

- Must be entered in MobileServe
- Must have 75 hours by the end of July to apply for a senior privilege.
- They must be completed by the end of 1st semester of senior year.
- Hours are prorated by years of attendance
- **All must be completed by end of the 1st semester to be exempt for senior exams.**



ACT/SAT

- A few colleges will remaining test-optional for 2026-27
- Retaking your ACT or SAT can boost your chances for selective colleges and scholarships
- JP2 will offer an ACT Prep Class in the fall with Achievement Plus for the December ACT
- Lots of other test companies offer ACT and/or SAT prep classes
- Some (not all) colleges will Super Score for admissions and/or scholarships
- **WE DO NOT SEND TEST SCORES**
- May still need for English or Math placement in college

There are still several juniors that have not taken their ACT/SAT.



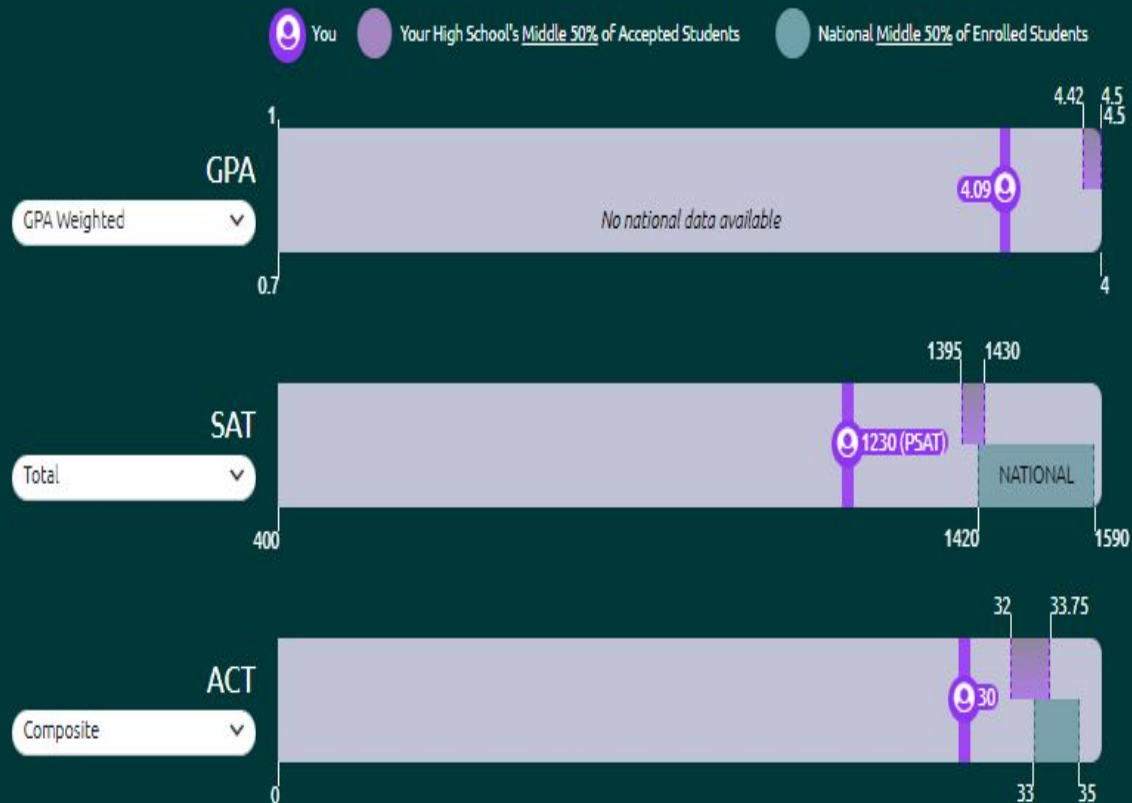
If applying to a highly selective school
make sure to have some safety schools
as well.

Please check Naviance to see if you
are a good match for this college.

How you compare with others who have applied to Vanderbilt University

This institution is a **Reach**: Your academic qualifications (GPA & test scores) **fall below** the academic profile of students nationally who are typically enrolled at this institution.

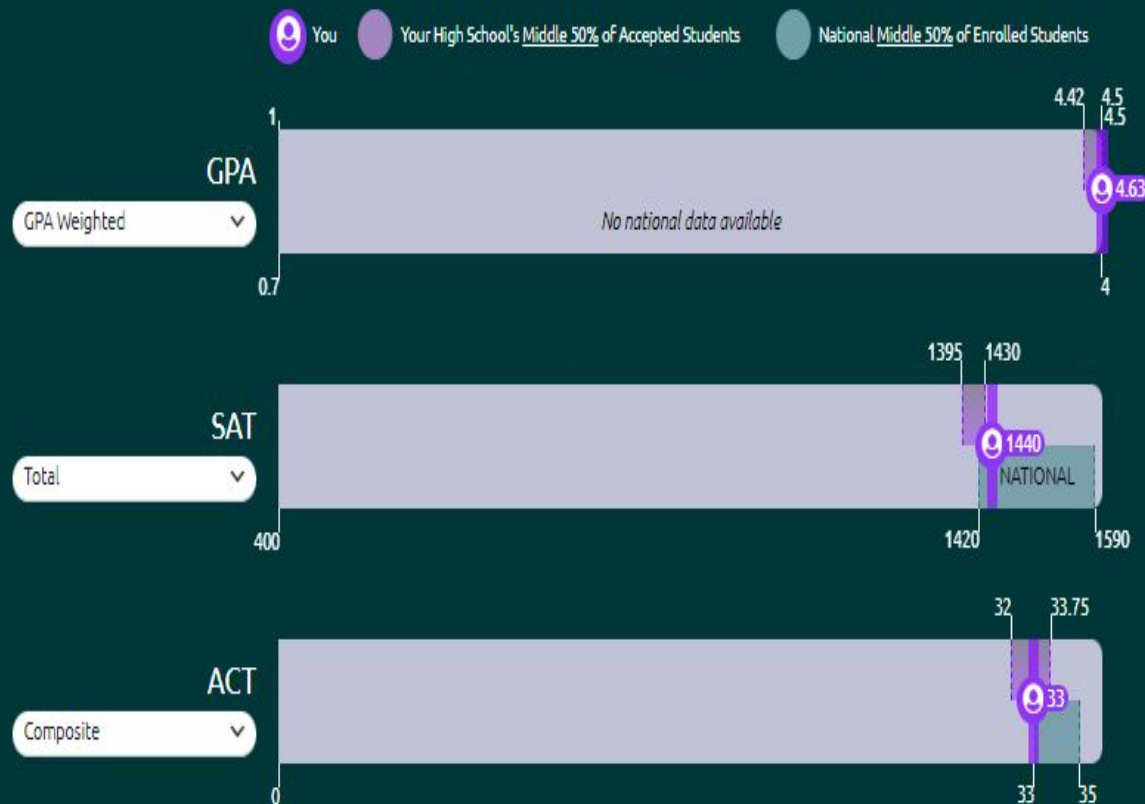
DENIED



How you compare with others who have applied to Vanderbilt University

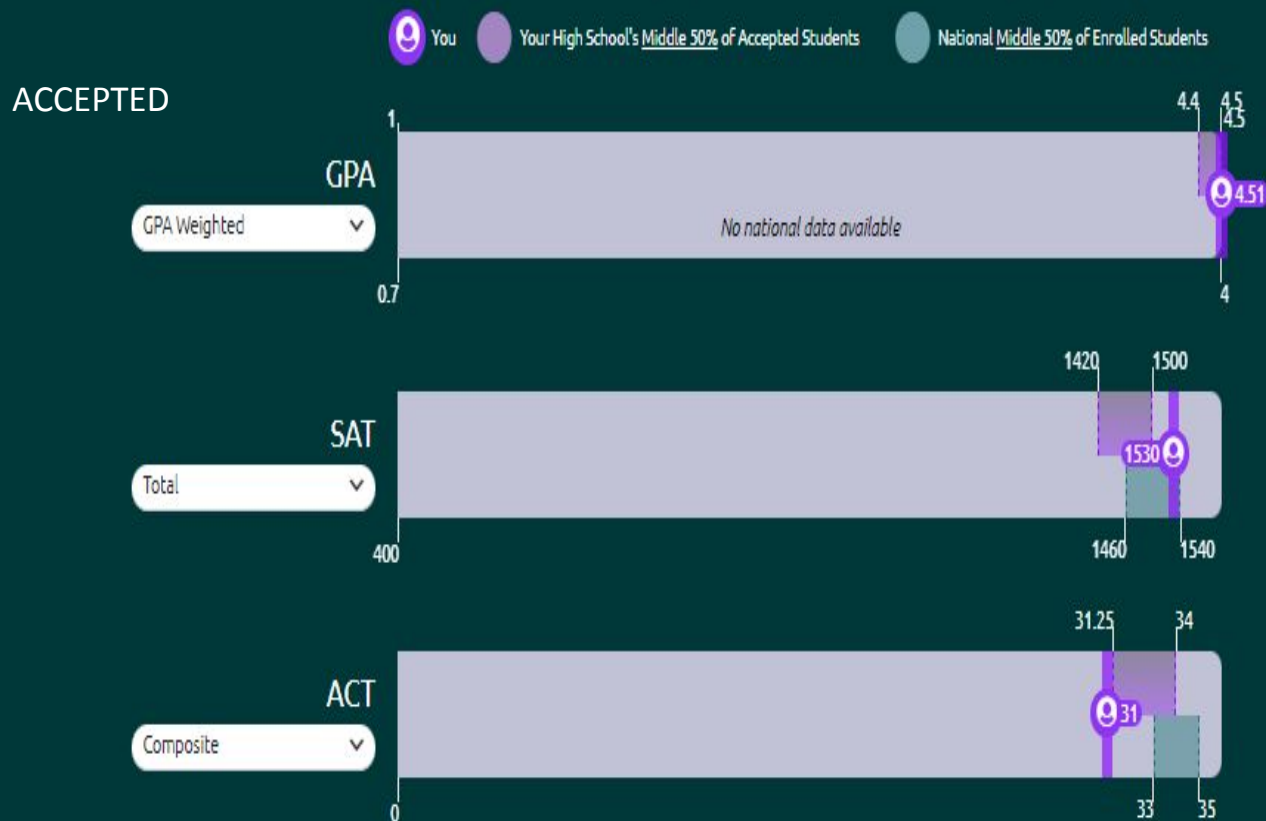
This institution is a **Reach**: Your academic qualifications (GPA & test scores) **fall below** the academic profile of students nationally who are typically enrolled at this institution.

ACCEPTED



How you compare with others who have applied to University of Notre Dame

This institution is a **Match**: Your academic qualifications (GPA & test scores) **are similar to** the academic profile of students nationally who are typically enrolled at this institution.





Naviance

- Make sure to have a list of at least 6-9 colleges listed in “Colleges I’m Thinking About”
- Will move over in July/August to “Colleges I’m Applying to”
- **Update Resume (Must be in Naviance)**
- Fill out Senior Brag Sheet
- You can still add to your list Senior Year, but try to be ready to start applying in August



College Reps & Visits

- Senior Year - Make sure to visit the reps when they come either during Falcon Flight Time, before or after school next year
- Visit college campus over the summer
- You will have 3 college visits for Senior year
- ***Make sure to set up an appointment with the Financial Aid Office when visiting colleges and the disability office regarding documentation needed in college for accommodations.***



College Applications



College Applications

- Most college applications will not open up until August 1st - Common Application.
- Be careful not to apply to the wrong admissions cycle (Apply fall 2026, not spring 2026).
- Try to have 6-9 colleges to apply to in the August.
- Check Naviance for admission stats



Direct to the Institution

- Apply directly to the college from their website
- Create an account for every school
- Request transcript in Naviance
- Sometimes easier than the Common Application



Common Application

- Not as Common as it seems
- Colleges add additional questions/essays besides the required essay, may have specific supplements and restrictions, and may require additional material
- If it says “Optional,” go ahead and complete. It is not optional for admission to selective schools. If it is not required, you do not have to complete.
- Will rank on academic achievement, extracurricular achievement, and personal qualities and character
- Lists the highest GPA in the class
- Make sure to mark Common App in Naviance



Applications To Avoid If Possible

- Universal College Application
- Coalition Application



Concourse

Enroll360 Match

Naviance students will be able to easily create anonymous profiles and receive direct offers of college admission and scholarships—with no applications required.

Will send a video with more info.

DEFINITIONS OF ADMISSION OPTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION



National Association for
College Admission Counseling
Guiding the way to higher education

STUDENTS: WHICH COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS BEST SUITS YOU?

Non-Restrictive Application Plans

Regular Decision

DEFINITION:

Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Rolling Admission

DEFINITION:

Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Early Action (EA)

DEFINITION:

Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.

Restrictive Application Plans

Early Decision (ED)

DEFINITION:

Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.

COMMITMENT:

BINDING

Restrictive Early Action (REA)

DEFINITION:

Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions.



Early Decision (ED) I & II(See Handout)

- Contractually Binding
- Can't Apply ED to another college/university
- Must attend college/university if admitted
- Deadline for ED I mid October to November
- Admissions notification usually early December
- Pool of candidates might be smaller but still competitive, so make sure you have the grades and test scores for a particular college/university



Early Action (EA)(See Handout)

- Non-Binding
- Can Apply EA to several colleges/universities
- Deadline typically between Mid-October and early November
- Admissions notification typically late December
- Restrictive Early Action is non-binding but may restrict the number of schools you may apply to EA.



Regular Decision(See Handout)

- No limit to the number of colleges/universities you can apply to
- Deadlines are typically early January or February



Rolling Admissions

- May apply as late as even July.
- There may still be certain deadlines for scholarships.



Always check each college/university for its decision policy and guidelines.



Honors Colleges

- May require a separate application.
- Higher admissions qualifications than the university admissions qualifications than the university requirements.
- Graduation requirements (Minimum GPA, minimum hours of Honors courses, etc.).
- Provide small, rigorous learning environment with designated classes across other schools and colleges (College of Business, Arts and Sciences, etc.).
- Typically provide separate housing.
- Many Perks
- Priority Registration
- Individualized Advisement
- Assistance with prestigious scholarships, fellowships, and internships.
- Separate facilities
- Special events
- ALWAYS CHECK THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY FOR ITS POLICIES.



AP Credits at College

- Check with college/university for its policy on credit for AP classes (see catalog)
- What score is required
- General Curriculum
- Honors college/program
- How is credit awarded
- Actual credit hours
- Prerequisite for higher level courses
- Could always consider CLEP exams
- Consider potential danger in skipping that college course



Hard Deadlines

- Application
 - Depends on choice of admission decision
- Housing
 - Must apply for housing by a certain deadline
 - Must pay deposit by certain deadline
- Financial Aid
 - Complete FAFSA by certain deadline. Opens October 1st
- Scholarships
 - Institutional
 - Private - will update list in Naviance

Keep a consolidated calendar for all dates and deadlines



Essays (Handout -Common App Essay Prompts) & Letters of Recommendations



Know the Purpose of a College Essay

- Add “flavor” to your application.
- Evaluate your writing skills.
- A measure of your interest.
- Looking for creativity.
- Make connections in your essay.



Keep Your Audience In Mind

- 2-3 minutes per essay.
- Lots of readers.
- Emotional impression about you, not an intellectual impression about your topic.
- Goal: “I really like this student.”



It's All About YOU!

- Think of a dressed-up version of emailing a good friend.
- Be yourself!
- Remember: Personality, personality, personality!
- They read your transcript to see what kind of student you are; they read your essay to see what kind of person you are.



What Should I Write About?

- Write what you know.
- Personal statement vs. research paper.
- Be Yourself! What makes you unique?
- Consider the word limit.
- Avoid big topics & long stories.
- Don't bargain on the personality of your reader.



A Few Writing Tips

- Write more than one essay!
- Grab your reader's attention in the first sentence.
- Final draft needs a personal statement & organization.
- Be concise.
- When in doubt, throw it out and start again!



Other Things to Avoid

- Expressions of self-pity, whining, boasting, sarcasm, bitterness, arrogance.
- Slang, profanity, bad grammar, incorrect spelling.
- Too much thesaurus.
- Exceeding the word count.
- Sports injury stories.
- Mission Trips.
- Political Extremism.
- No A.I. (ChatGPT)!!



PROOFREADING!!!

- Leave plenty of time for proofreading by others.
- Beware of personality edits.
- Choose “who” and “how many” carefully.
- Proof a printed draft.
- Read it aloud.



Recommendation Letters



Letters of Recommendations

- Must have an updated Resume in Naviance, not a paper copy.
- Must complete your Brag Sheet in Naviance, especially for Mrs. Cobb.
- Ask teachers first before requesting in Naviance
- Give teachers at least two weeks notice



Know the Purpose of a Recommendation Letter

- Add a sense of a student's contributions to the **classroom**, school, and community.
- Allow the college to learn how others perceive the student.
- Allow the college to understand the student's work ethic in the classroom.



Types of Recommendation Letters

- School/College Counselor Letters (*No need to request for Common App, I will automatically write a counselor letter and complete the counselor report*)
- Teacher Letters
- Community Letters (Try to avoid these)

Start thinking about recommenders over the summer, but do not request recommendations until August in Naviance.



School/College Counselor Letters

- Summarizes the whole student.
- Can focus on personal setback, structural impediments that affected a student's ability to certain courses, the student's aspirations, hopes, and dreams.
- Describes the student within the whole community and within the rigor of the school.
- All-Encompassing.



Teacher Letters

- Shows the lens of the learner.
- Explains how the student makes an impact in the classroom, on their peers, and how they react to challenges within the classroom.
- Focuses specifically on academics.
- Subject-Specific.



Community Letters (Not Recommended)

- Highlights attributes and contributions to community, team, workplace.
- Explains what makes the student stand out from peers.
- Broader Focus.
- Can include a coach, mentor, employer.



Asking for Letters (Start in August)

- Carefully choose your recommenders.
- Clearly define what you are asking the recommender to do.
- Give recommenders at least two weeks notice.
- Clearly state deadlines and preferred method of submission - Naviance or another application.



Final Notes

- Choosing a recommender that can speak to your abilities in the classroom is key.
- The best recommendations are honest and thorough:
 - Waiving your FERPA rights can help ensure all of your recommendation letters will be honest.
 - It signifies to college admission committees that each writer is being candid and has your support.



Final Thoughts “Before You Click Submit”

- Know the name of your college you are applying to.
- Know your deadlines!
- Check for spelling!
- Be honest on your applications.
- Read everything, including fine print!!
- Please be nice to admission counselors.
- Fee Waivers – Must qualify for free and reduced lunch at a public school.
- Start turning in all acceptances and scholarship information to counseling office as soon as possible.
- Don’t forget to send a “Thank You” email in the spring, even if declining the offer.
- Your emergency is not always my emergency.



Scholarship Websites

- Naviance – Sallie Mae
- www.fastweb.com
- www.scholarships.com
- www.collegenet.com
- www.finaid.org
- www.cappex.com
- www.unigo.com
- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>
- www.niche.com

State colleges will be available at the Senior Meeting in August to go over specific merit scholarships.



More Scholarship information at the
August 6th meeting.

FAFSA is set to open October 1, 2025,
but is subject to change launch date.



Student's Role

- The student should have the starring role in this process.
- The students should complete the application/essays and request the transcript.
- Students - DO NOT LOSE YOUR VOICE.

Parent's Role

- The parents can check for spelling and grammar.
- Parents should be supportive and try to avoid nagging.
- Parents can help manage deadlines.
- Parents will need to provide financial information for the FAFSA and scholarships.
- Explain any financial boundaries or geographic limits to your child.



Fall Senior Meeting Dates

Senior Fall Meeting 8/6 4:30 PM the MPR. I will send more information around the end of June. Will have info on scholarships, paying for college, FAFSA, etc...

Several colleges will be available to answer questions.



Free College Application Week(Tentative Dates)

- 3rd week of October
- 3rd week of February



Playing A Sport in College?

See Mrs. Cobb for help registering with the NCAA and NAIA.



**Please make sure to read
emails and info posted on
Class of 2026, especially from
the Counseling Office.**



Have a great summer!!





Resources

- [HTTP://WWW.THECOLLEGESOLUTION.COM](http://www.thecollegesolution.com)
- [HTTP://WWW.DIYCOLLEGERANKINGS.COM](http://www.diycollegerankings.com)
- [HTTP://WWW.USNEWS.COM/EDUCATION](http://www.usnews.com/education)
- [HTTP://WWW.PRINCETONREVIEW.COM](http://www.princetonreview.com)
- HOW TO PREPARE A STANDOUT COLLEGE APPLICATION
- BY ALISON COOPER CHISOLM & ANNA IVEY