College News

The PSAT is offered once each year in the month of October. Students sign up for the PSAT/NMSQT at their local high school or at another high school in their community. This test is administered by high schools, not through the College Board's national testing centers. Online registration for the PSAT/NMSQT is not available.

➡ In 2014, high schools may administer the PSAT/NMSQT on Wednesday, October 15, 2014 or Saturday, October 18, 2014. At OPHS we will be administering the test on **Saturday, October 18, 2014**.

➡Registration will begin on **September 22nd** and run through **October 16th** at the OPHS Student Store.

🖨 [Click here for a flyer about the 2014 PSAT](#)

So who should be taking the PSAT?

The PSAT was originally created as a "practice" test to be taken by Juniors in the fall of the 11th grade year in preparation for taking the "real" SAT in the Spring. The PSAT's Score Report Plus is designed to help students determine their strengths and weaknesses by providing personalized feedback on academic skills and to help them determine what subjects to focus their preparation on for the "real" SAT - also known as the SAT Reasoning Test. Although the PSAT is based on curriculum that most high school students have taken through the beginning of their junior year - at Oak Park High School we have many 10th and even 9th grade students who are already pursuing advanced curriculum in mathematics (i.e. Algebra II or higher), along with Honors and/or AP Science, English and History courses. For these advanced students taking the PSAT in the 9th and 10th grades simply provides them valuable test-taking practice, and a very concrete way of tracking their academic growth over time.

Note: Beginning in October 2015 (for the class of 2016), students will be taking the new "Redesigned PSAT." Please see the section below for more information.

The Redesigned PSAT/NMSQT is aligned with the redesigned SAT and will launch in **October 2015.** Like the SAT, the redesigned PSAT/NMSQT will measure the skills and knowledge that are essential for college readiness and success.

Taking the Current PSAT/NMSQT

The current PSAT/NMSQT continues to serve students in the high school class of 2016 and younger by:

- Helping them improve skills necessary for college success.
- Raising awareness about college planning and engaging them in the process.
- Supporting access to AP through AP Potential™.

- Providing educators with tools to monitor student performance and adjust curricula.
- Providing college planning resources such as Student Search Service® and My College QuickStart™.

In addition, the PSAT/NMSQT will continue to help students in the 11th grade prepare for the SAT and compete for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation in the fall.

The College Board is preparing concordance tables so students and educators will be able to relate scores on the current PSAT/NMSQT to scores on the redesigned PSAT/NMSQT.

About the Redesigned PSAT/NMSQT

The PSAT/NMSQT is an important part of the College Board's effort to deliver opportunity to all students. The redesigned exam will:

- Support college readiness and success for all students, with a clear focus on the skills and knowledge that matter most for college success.
- Encourage students to take full advantage of the opportunities they've earned through their hard work.

Fewer than half of the students who take the SAT are college ready. The redesigned PSAT/NMSQT will provide educators with an early opportunity to:

- Measure and follow student performance.
- Pinpoint areas for development.
- Prepare students for the redesigned SAT.

Overview Comparison: Current and Redesigned PSAT/NMSQT:
This high-level comparison between the current and redesigned PSAT/NMSQT highlights major design features of the two exams. The first table provides a comparison of the major features, the second table provides a comparison by test, and the third table compares the score components. It is important to note that while the information in these tables represents our best understanding of the nature and features of the redesign, some specific elements, such as timing, length, and reported scores, are subject to revision based on ongoing research. For even more information about the Redesigned PSAT go to: https://www.collegeboard.org/delivering-opportunity/redesigned-psat-nmsqt?ep_ch=PR&ep_mid=10940153&ep_rid=38378130

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) is an independent not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance. NMSC conducts two privately financed annual competitions for recognition and college undergraduate scholarships — the National Merit® Scholarship Program and the National Achievements Scholarship Program. Through the National Merit Program, NMSC also conducts competitions for Special Scholarships sponsored by corporate and business organizations. High school students who meet published entry/participation requirements enter these competitions by taking the Preliminary SAT as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (e.g. NMSQT ®), as juniors. Each year's test is the entry vehicle to a specific annual competition. As co-sponsor of the test, NMSC receives the scores of all students who take the PSAT/NMSQT. Selection Index scores (verbal + math + writing skills scores) of students who meet NMSC

program entry requirements are used to designate high scorers to receive recognition. In both the Merit Scholarship® and Achievement Scholarship® competitions, students who qualify as Semifinalists, and then meet academic and other standards to advance to the Finalist level, are considered for scholarships. NMSC identifies candidates and sends scholarship applications to them through their high schools. For more information about the PSAT/NMSQT and NMSC scholarship programs click on the links above, or go to the national merit at the following hyperlink: www.nationalmerit.org

➡️For more information about the new UC Policy with respect to the National Merit Scholarship Program click here: UC & National Merit link.

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES FOR SENIORS:

- **October 1 - Nov. 30, 2014: T**he window for submitting the CSU application opens on 10/1. The deadline to submit for most CSU's is 11/30. For more information go to the CSUMentor application
- **October 8, starting at 5:30 p.m. at Agoura High School.** College Knowledge Night will be held. The evening will include speakers and vendors on various topics associated with the college application and admissions process. Click here for more information
- **October 12 (9-11am) in G9:** College Essay Writing Workshop by Dr. Kathy Schultheis.
- **Nov. 1 - Nov. 30, 2014:** The UC applications has been open since 8/1 for students to work on. The window to submit the UC application is 11/1 - 11/30. For more information go to the UC System application page **Nov. 21, 2014:** This is the deadline for students to request a letter of recommendation for any application with a deadline prior to January 15th. Counselors and Teachers must have a minimum of 3 weeks lead time for all recommendations! The Counselor's Checklist must be completed in order to request a recommendation from any teacher or counselor. For more information click here to jump to our Letters of Recommendation page
- **Jan. 1, 2015:** Federal Financial Aid applications (FAFSA's) may only be submitted after this date. Paper forms will be available in the Counseling Office. However, the preferred method for submission is via internet through their website at: http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/ Students should begin having mature conversations with their parent(s) about what they observe and hope for in their future. Make sure to address issues like college location and costs. If the cost of a college is a concern, parents & students should log onto one of the many websites that will help provide the family "EFC" (estimated family contribution). For more information about the Financial Aid processes go to our Financial Aid & Scholarships web page.
- **January 6, 2015 (6:30pm - 8pm) in the Pavilion**. Financial Aid Workshop for parents and students. To assist them in understanding the College Financial Aid process.
- **Feb. 15, 2015:** Many private schools also require the CSS Profile to apply for privately endowed scholarships. It can be accessed at https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/prf/index.jsp complete the CSS PROFILE before your earliest college or program priority filing date. At the very latest, you must submit your PROFILE Application by February 15.
- **March 2, 2015**: Deadline to submit the Cal Grant GPA verification form to apply. Click for more information: http://www.oakparkusd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=1080
- **Mid-March, 2015** is when most UC and CSU schools begin notifying applicants of admission or denial. Berkeley and UCLA are the last to send notices (surprise, surprise)
- **Spring Break 2015:** Spring Break is the time to make final visits to schools that have made them offers of admission. This is also the month students will begin notifying schools of their decisions. Information about scheduling trips to UC & CSU campuses can be found at the following link on our website UC Campus Events & Tours
- **May 1, 2015: Commitment Deadline!** Students must formally confirm acceptance or declination of an offer of admission by this date.
- **May & June, 2015:** are critical months for seniors because last semester grades do count! Spring semester classes (that were listed on the student's admission application) that are dropped or not passed with at least a "C" may result in a college rescinding its offer. Most competitive universities expect seniors to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in the senior year

NAVIANCE parchment EXCHANGE THE COMMON APPLICATION For Undergraduate College Admission

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT SUBMISSION & COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

One of the most significant developments in the college application process over the last decade has been how colleges now prefer to receive applications, transcripts, and letters of recommendation electronically.

At Oak Park High School we strive to be on the cutting edge in supporting our students with their applications. To that end, we have been using the NAVIANCE program since 2009 to not only assist parents and students with college research, but also to submit documents electronically (i.e. transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc...). NAVIANCE eDocs gives us the ability to transmit documents to the 500+ colleges who use the Common Application, and an additional 1,600+ colleges through Naviance eDocs with deliveries by Parchment Exchange.

The good news is that electronic document submission (via NAVIANCE the Common App & Parchment Exchange), has dramatically reduced the amount of paper that students and the school have to prepare and mail. It has also provided an added level of security because each of these services has tools that verify document submission.

In NAVIANCE, once a student loads a school into the **"colleges I'm apply to"** page under the **"colleges"** tab, they will be able to determine which schools accept electronic document submissions (of transcripts, and letters of recommendation) by viewing the following icons:

This is a Common Application school. All transcripts and letters of recommendation, and other supporting documents will be transmitted electronically to these schools via the Common App.

This is also an electronic school. If they require a transcript or any other supporting documentation these too can be transmitted electronically via Naviance eDocs.

This is <u>not</u> an electronic school. They require transcripts and supporting documentation to be mailed via USPS. For this kind of school you must either provide a stamped pre-addressed envelope to the OPHS Registrar, or we can put the transcript and/or letter of recommendation in a sealed envelope for you to pick up and mail yourself.

➡ To view the list of destinations that accept electronic transmission of documents through Naviance eDocs: http://exchange.parchment.com/hp2/general/edocs_destinations.jsps If your school/destination is on this list make sure you have added it to your list of **"colleges I'm applying to"** in the "colleges" section of Naviance.

So, if everything is electronic - why do we still get notices that documents have not been received?

It is very frustrating for students, parents and OPHS faculty to receive this kind of communication from colleges when we know that the documents were prepared, paid for, and submitted on a timely basis. More than 1,600+ non-Common App schools accept electronic documents from Naviance eDocs via with deliveries by Parchment Exchange. Both the Common App and Parchment Exchange provide document verification reports to NAVIANCE.

 Parents and students can confirm in NAVIANCE that their documents were submitted in the **"colleges I'm applying to"** page. If OPHS has submitted your documents you will see **"initial materials submitted"** next to the school in

the **"Office Status"** column. If the Office Status still shows **"Pending,"** you should contact your OPHS Counselor. You can also check to see if your Teacher Recommendations are **"completed"** as well!

→ Click here for a tutorial on Managing your Common Application

When a student creates an account in the Common App Online, the student must first identify Oak Park High School (CEEB code 050006), as their **"Current or most recent secondary school attended."** Once they do this, students will receive a prompt explaining that all of their school forms will be completed through NAVIANCE. He or she will then identify one counselor and one or more teachers. After a teacher or counselor is added to a student's list of school officials. Applicants are then able to monitor when individual teachers and counselors have submitted their various forms in the **"Assign Recommenders"** section.

The **"School Report"** in the Common Application includes the following 4 documents in one packet transmission:

1. The Common App's Secondary School Report evaluation form completed by your OPHS Counselor

2. An OPHS School Profile

3. Counselor's Letter of Recommendation

4. The Student's Initial Transcript

➡️**Here is a sample of how this section will look in the Common Application Dashboard:**

⬍ My Colleges (14)	⬍ Deadline	Application	Writing Supplement	
▶ Boston College	11/1/2013	•	•	🗑️
▶ Boston University	1/1/2014	•	•	🗑️

➡️**You can track Counselor School Reports, and Teacher Evaluations in the "Assign Recommenders" section:**

Boston College

Questions

Assign Recommenders ✓

Preview and Submission - Common App

Writing Supplement

Preview and Submission - Writing Supplement

Art Supplement

Boston University

California Lutheran University

Dartmouth College

Harvard College

New York University

Stanford University

University of Colorado Boulder

University of Michigan

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

University of Pennsylvania

University of Redlands

University of San Francisco

University of Southern California

✓ **FERPA Release Authorization**
I have authorized release of all requested records covered under the FERPA act and have not waived my right to access. show details

✓ **Counselor**
Your school is using Naviance eDocs for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. If your counselor wishes to submit forms via mail, you can download printable forms that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

Offline Forms

- School Report
- Optional Report
- Mid Year Report
- Final Report

Debi Fries School Counselor	**Invited: 9/5/2013**
School Report	*Submitted:* 10/3/2013
Optional Report	
Mid Year Report	
Final Report	

• **Teacher**
Your school is using Naviance eDocs for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. Once your teachers submit their recommendations online you will see the status below. If your teacher(s) wish to submit forms via mail, you can download printable forms that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply. offline form

Required: 2   **Allowed: 3**

Kathleen Schultheis English	**Assigned: 10/12/2013**
Teacher Evaluation	*Submitted:* 10/11/2013

How do Common Application Colleges receive School Forms that were submitted online?

Common Application members log in to a secure Website where forms submitted online – via either the Common App Online system or NAVIANCE – can be downloaded. This is the same Website where members have downloaded the applications and supplements submitted by students for the past decade. The institution receives the online portion of your application once you electronically sign the application and click the "Submit" button. Your application is then instantly made available to the institution, but it may take several days or more until the institution actually views your application. The institution will not see or know the specifics of your online application until you complete the steps involved in the submission process, which typically includes the payment of an application fee, submission of any required supplements, and acknowledgement of the accuracy of your application by use of the electronic signature.

Fall 2014 , EA

✓ Application   Submitted - October 14, 2013
  Common Application
  Member Questions
  Assign Recommenders

✓ Writing Supplement   Submitted - October 14, 2013

I've submitted my Common Application to multiple institutions, but some schools say they haven't received them yet!

Once your application has been submitted, it is the college's responsibility to download your application, and School Forms from the Common App. If you are concerned that an admissions office hasn't received your application, ensure that your application shows green and complete on the My Colleges page (check out the status legend), then contact the school directly. Please provide them with your **Common App ID** so they can search for your record appropriately. Once a school has downloaded your application from the Common Application & School Report Forms it will look like this:

✓ Counselor

Your school is using Naviance eDocs for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. If your counselor wishes to submit forms via mail, you can download printable forms that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

Offline Forms

- School Report
- Optional Report
- Mid Year Report
- Final Report

Randall McLelland School Counselor	**Invited:** 9/4/2013
School Report	*Downloaded:* 10/28/2013
Optional Report	
Mid Year Report	
Final Report	

I created alternate "versions" of my Common Application for a few schools, and some of them have not received my School Forms - why is this?

The Common Application allows students to create as many as 10 separate "versions" of their Common Application. The Common App does <u>not</u> allow us to submit documents electronically to alternate versions - only to the first version. If you did create alternate versions, you must provide hard copies of the School Report and Teacher Evaluation forms to your teachers & counselor, along with stamped, pre-addressed envelopes so we mail the forms (and your transcript).

Note: A high percentage of Common Application schools already have supplements as part of their application so they have provided a way for students to personalize their applications. Creating different 'versions' of their Common Application is one of the most common reasons that School Forms aren't able to be matched to the student's application.

➡️**For more questions about the Common Application go to their Applicant Help Center at**:

https://appsupport.commonapp.org/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=33013

What if my college is a non-Common App school, but NAVIANCE says it accepts Electronic Submissions - how can I verify that my documents were sent?"

As previously referenced, more than 1,600+ non-Common App schools <u>do</u> accept electronic documents from Naviance eDocs. In addition to the **"initial materials submitted**" notification on your **"colleges I'm applying to"** page in

NAVIANCE, this service also provides an internal **"Submission Status"** report with more details. Your OPHS Counselor can provide you with a copy of your **"Submission Status"** report that verifies your documents were submitted by OPHS, and whether they have been downloaded by the college. This report also contains a unique "**eDocs ID"** confirmation number for each document. A sample report will look like this:

Submission Status

Application	Document Type	Date Created	Author	Status	Date Submitted	Submitted By	ID
U of Arizona	Initial Transcript	09/23/2014	Pat Ramirez	Delivered	09/28/2014	Randall McLelland	RPCWR4M
U of Oregon	Initial Transcript	09/23/2014	Pat Ramirez	Delivered	09/28/2014	Randall McLelland	RPCWROP
Arizona State Univ	Initial Transcript	09/23/2014	Pat Ramirez	Delivered	09/28/2014	Randall McLelland	RPCWR0L

Some Feedback From Colleges:

Depending on the time of year it can take colleges 4-6 weeks to process your documents and acknowledge receipt to you directly. If you feel it's necessary to contact the school, make sure to ask how long it takes them to process document so you can make sure that amount of time has passed since you received their last confirmation. To help parents & students better understand this process we have some feedback from 3 popular schools - Indiana, Arizona, and Texas about the time it can take to process a student's application:

- **INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BLOOMINGTON**

- We're glad that so many students want to come to IU, but processing all of the applications we receive takes time. Once your application is complete, you should receive information about your decision in four to eight weeks.
- We do indeed accept forms such as transcripts and recommendations electronically via Naviance eDocs!
- Please note that it may take up to two weeks from the time that your application materials are received in the Office of Admissions before your status is updated online and you can see that the materials have been received.
- Thanks for your patience. You can check your status by logging in to **OneStart** if you have already set up your IU computer account.

 UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

We do accept transcripts via the Naviance eDocs service. However, the processing time for submitted documents can be 4 to 6 weeks and, as such, students may receive correspondence from our office during that time indicating non-receipt. The transcripts do not need to be sent again. If you still have concerns, please feel free to contact our Admissions hotline.

 At the **University of Texas** in the best of circumstances, it can take two or three days for items you submit online to appear in your **MyStatus** page. Items you submit in paper form (by mail, for example),

may take two or three work weeks to show up, especially near the deadline. And as the deadline approaches, the Office of Admissions can receive thousands of documents by mail each week.

Document uploads: Electronically formatted documents are uploaded to our computer system and matched with individual application files. At this point they appear in **MyStatus**. If you submit several items in one envelope or package, they may not all be processed at the same time. Different areas of the office process different kinds of documents, and what needs to happen and how much time it takes to complete each process varies. So one or more of your items may show up on your **MyStatus** page a couple of days before another.

So, what should parents & students do when a college tells you they have not received documents that NAVIANCE says have been sent?

- Even in this electronic era it is important to understand that there is still a "human" element to the college application process in College Admission offices. They are overwhelmed with documents (both paper and electronic), and it simply takes time for them to work through them all.
- Contrary to what most of us imagine, electronically submitted document are <u>not</u> automatically matched to a student's application. A human being must download the document, match it to the student's application, file it, and then log it in the student's applications status portal.
- Re-sending documents in the middle of the application crush does absolutely nothing to help the process. Even though it might make us feel better, it only adds another item that has to be logged in and reviewed. These "re-sent" documents ultimately add no new information, and actually end up delaying the review of a student's application.
- Bombarding them with phone calls and emails also takes away precious human resources from the application review process.

▶If you absolutely feel it is necessary to contact a school about missing documents, make sure you have done your homework first! Preparing to contact a school should include the following:

1.) If it is a Common App school: make sure you have confirmed the **"submitted"** and/or **"downloaded by college"** dates of the documents from your Common Application. Make sure you have these dates, along with you Common App ID when you contact the school. Also, make sure to check whether created any alternate "versions" of your Common Application for one or more of your schools.

 2.) If it is a non-Common App school: make sure you have confirmed in Naviance that **"initial materials submitted,"** is posted. If Naviance <u>does</u> show that your documents were submitted, you can contact your OPHS Counselor for a "Submission Status" printout. When you speak to the Admission office you should quote the "Naviance eDocs ID" number to them to help them locate the missing document(s).

 3.) Students should <u>always</u> be part of any communication with a college! Whenever a parent contacts a school by themselves, the college representatives begin to wonder just how independent and ready the student really is for college. Colleges will put notes in the student's admission files as to how many times they have called, and who made the calls.