



Catholic High School Admission and Registration Parent Guide, 2018/2019 School Year

Dear Parents and Guardians,

What an exciting time for you and your 8th grader! After many years of elementary education, your son or daughter is about to embark on a new journey into secondary education. These are very formative years in your child's life and the decision of where they attend high school can have lasting effects on college acceptance, scholarship potential and their ultimate success. The Archdiocese of Chicago has many academically excellent and affordable high schools that will help to prepare your child for college and beyond. By attending a Catholic high school, your son or daughter will also be surrounded by caring, nurturing faculty that will work together with you to promote Gospel values and help to form him or her into a faith filled, respectful, responsible young adult. We encourage you to reach out and get to know the admissions directors, administration and staff of the Archdiocese of Chicago high schools in the coming months to help you make this important decision.

MATCH AND FIT PHILOSOPHY

The diversity of educational programs available throughout our Catholic high schools enables us to provide the best match and fit between potential students and our school programs. The term **match** refers to the alignment between a student's elementary credentials such as: grades, standardized test scores, strength of curriculum and the high school's academic program. The term **fit** is more broadly defined and refers to the other factors that would promote a successful high school experience such as: size of the school, location to home, level of inclusivity/diversity, extracurricular activities offered and the cost of tuition.

RECRUITING EVENTS

Our Catholic high schools will hold a variety of events to highlight the unique features of each school. These events serve as a way to assist students and parents in making informed choices regarding appropriate secondary education and finding the high school that will have the combination of programs and services that constitute the best match and fit to ensure the ultimate success of your child. Some of these events include:

ON-SITE VISITS

Recruiters from the various local Catholic high schools will come to your child's elementary school. They will bring pens, pencils, and printed materials from their school and let 8th graders know about the other opportunities they have planned for prospective students.

Your child may be asked to fill out an informational card, including their name, address and telephone number. To maintain confidentiality and secure important personal information, please note your child's information is **NOT** shared or distributed to any outside or third parties. It is only used to remind students about upcoming events at the high school in which the information is provided, and **ALL** extraneous communication with your child will cease once your child takes the entrance exam at their first-choice school. Please speak with your child about whether you approve of them providing personal information prior to a site visit if you do not want to receive these invitations.

SHADOW DAYS

Shadow days are a great way to experience a "day in the life" of a high school student. Each Catholic high school will establish its own procedures regarding registration for shadow days. Consult the high school at which your child wishes to shadow for more information. Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago acknowledge and uphold all elementary school policies regarding shadow days. Please check with your elementary school and follow their procedures regarding the number of shadow days allowed and the procedure for reporting absences for shadow days.



OPEN HOUSES

Several open houses are offered by Catholic high schools throughout the school year. Open houses offer an opportunity for prospective students and their parents to tour the school, meet the faculty/staff and ask any questions you might have.

Follow each school's procedures for open house visitation. Dates can be found on their respective websites.

ENTRANCE EXAM

All Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago that provide an entrance exam will administer it on **Saturday, December 1, 2018 at 8 a.m.** Students are highly encouraged to take the entrance exam at their first-choice high school. Merit based scholarships are often tied with testing at a particular school and a student will miss an opportunity to earn one if he or she did not initially test at that school.

ENTRANCE EXAM PRE-REGISTRATION

Prospective students may pre-register for the entrance exam beginning on November 17, 2018 up until the date of the exam. Contact the individual high school for their pre-registration process. Parents are **NOT** to pre-register their child at various high schools as this will create logistical problems if there are multiple "no shows" the morning of the exam. If for whatever reason your child does not complete the pre-registration process, they will be treated as a "walk-in" on the morning of the entrance exam. However, parents of "walk-ins" will need to provide the school with their emergency contact information that morning.

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAM

All Archdiocesan high schools that administer an entrance exam will now use the HSPT (High School Placement Test) from Scholastic Testing Services, Inc. This will help to facilitate the admissions process for any students that are not accepted to their first-choice school. Information on this exam can be found at:

[Understanding the STS' High School Placement Test.](#)

ENTRANCE EXAM FEE

There is a standard entrance exam fee set by the Archdiocese of Chicago's Office of Catholic Schools at **\$25** per tester. You will need to follow the instructions of the high school where your child will be testing regarding the collection of this fee.

ENTRANCE EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS

For students needing extended time or other testing accommodations, please contact the school's Admission Director. You will be asked to provide appropriate documentation of an IEP/ICEP, 504 Plan or psychoeducational testing in order for your child to qualify for any testing accommodations. Each high school may determine which accommodations they are able to provide during the exam as well as set a timeline for the requests. Contact the individual high school for more information.

MAKE-UP EXAMS

If for some reason your child is not able to take the entrance exam on the designated day due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, all Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago will offer an alternate date. Please check with the individual school for the date of the make-up. **Please Note:** A student who tested at an Archdiocesan Catholic high school is **NOT ELIGIBLE** to take an entrance exam at another site in order to honor the reliability and validity of the original exam. It would create an unfair advantage for some students to be allowed to take the entrance exam multiple times at several locations.



FINANCIAL AID

Our schools adhere to strict financial aid policies to protect prospective students from exploitation. All Illinois High School Association (IHSA) rules and regulations must be followed including:

- Scholarships, grants, work-study, and monetary awards of any kind may not be offered or promised to individual students until they have been accepted for admission to the school.
- No numerical amount of aid can be promised or awarded before the entrance exam or acceptance to the school.
- Athletic scholarships of any kind may not be offered or promised or awarded.
- IHSA policy prohibits:
 - Individual home visits and any contact (including phone calls) for athletic recruitment by administration or coaches;
 - Gifts, scholarships, or financial aid for talented athletes;
 - Leadership awards based solely on athletic ability.

All Catholic high schools provide need based financial aid. Merit based and specific scholarships are also available. Visit the financial aid page on each school's website for more information. Many outside organizations also provide assistance. Some of these include:

Big Shoulders Fund <http://www.bigshouldersfund.org/>

Big Shoulders Scholarship Granting Organization <https://www.bigshouldersfundsgo.org/>

Empower Illinois Scholarship Granting Organization <https://empowerillinois.org/>

Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund <http://www.dmsf.org/>

Madonna Foundation <https://www.madonnascholars.org/>

HFS Chicago Scholars <https://www.hfschicagoscholars.com/>

HighSight <http://www.highsight.org/>

LINK Unlimited <http://linkunlimited.org/web/>

Standing Tall Charitable Foundation <http://www.standingtallfoundation.org/>

Asian Youth Services <http://www.asianyouthservices.org/>

TIMING OF FINANCIAL AID PROCESS and AWARDS

The individual school will provide information on how and when to apply for financial aid. Please note that completion of financial aid forms does not guarantee preferential admission. Your son/daughter must take the Catholic High School Entrance Exam on December 1 to be considered for admission. Financial aid awards will be made based upon the criteria each school independently establishes. Financial aid award offers will be made **after** the student is accepted but **prior** to registration so families can make informed decisions about enrolling and will fully understand the true cost of tuition.

STUDENT RECORDS

In addition to your child taking an entrance exam, you must also sign a release of records at your child's elementary school. Once this is done, your child's records will be sent to the high school where he or she tested. Catholic high schools do not solely rely on the entrance exam for acceptance. Standardized test scores, as well as report cards and teacher recommendations, are all used to paint a picture of the whole student to discern probable success, match and fit.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION

Each Catholic high school has its own procedures for using the entrance exam results. Generally, high schools use the exam scores in conjunction with other information about a student's academic record when deciding to accept or place a student to ensure academic success. Some other considerations could include: other standardized test scores administered by the elementary school, report cards and principal/teacher recommendations. Each school determines its own priorities in the acceptance and placement decision process.

**ACCEPTANCE LETTERS**

The date you and your child will receive an acceptance letter will depend on which Catholic high school your child tested. Acceptance letters may be sent out **any time after the test date on December 1, 2018, but no later than February 1, 2019**. If your child is not accepted at his or her first choice high school, please contact the Admissions Director and request that the entrance exam results be sent to another Catholic high school of your choice. Then contact the Admissions Director at the new school to begin the admissions process. There are many options available to any student seeking a Catholic secondary education and the various schools in the Archdiocese work together collaboratively to share information to assist families in this process.

FRESHMEN REGISTRATION

If accepted, your child will be invited to attend a freshmen registration session. Out of respect for each other, high schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago relinquish the right to initiate contact with a student once a student has tested or registered at another Catholic school. If at some point you and your child change your mind about attending a particular school, you must let the Admissions Director at the high school where your child initially tested know, and request your information be sent elsewhere. Once this is done you may begin a conversation with another Catholic high school.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the high school recruiting or admissions process, please contact any Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic high school for more information or contact Dr. Maria Hawk, Regional Director of Secondary Schools and Board Development, at Maria.Hawk@archchicago.org or at 312.534.5204.

Best Wishes,

Dr. Maria Hawk
Regional Director of Secondary Schools and Board Development
Archdiocese of Chicago