



The Six Major Standardized Tests

- **PSAT/NMSQT** – Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Qualifying Test Given each October to freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, it has the same format as the SAT I and can be a good practice test. The score during the junior year is the basis for selection for some merit scholarships. The top 0.5 percent of juniors in each state are selected as National Merit semifinalists.
- **SAT I: Reasoning Test with Writing** A four-and-one-half-hour test primarily multiple choice, that measures verbal and mathematical abilities. There is also a 20 minute timed essay. The SAT I should be taken in the second semester of the junior year and may be taken again in the fall of the senior year. There are seven test dates throughout the year: March/April, May, June, October, November, December, and January.
- **SAT II: Subject Tests** One hour tests, primarily multiple choice, in specific subjects. The SAT II subject tests measure knowledge of particular subjects and the ability to apply that knowledge. Students take up to three subject tests on one test date. Tests are given in May, June, November, December, and January. Many colleges require one or more subject tests for admission and/or placement.
- **ACT – American College Testing Program (also has an optional writing section)** Four 35- to 50- minute tests in academic areas of English usage, mathematics usage, reading, and natural sciences reading. You will receive four separate scores plus a composite score averaging the four tests. The ACT is commonly required by public colleges and some private colleges in the Midwest, West and South and is becoming more acceptable back East.
- **AP – Advanced Placement Exams/IB – International Baccalaureate Exams** Students enrolled in either AP or IB curriculum will have the opportunity to take exams in most subject areas each spring. Many colleges and universities will use AP and IB exam scores for placement. In some cases if you have taken AP or IB exams as a sophomore or a junior, those scores will appear on your high school transcript and may be used as a part of the admission process.
- **TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language** Students applying to a selective college whose native language is other than English may be required to take the TOEFL. The purpose of the TOEFL is to evaluate the English proficiency of people whose native language is not English. The Coordinator for International Students assists students in registering for and arranging transportation to the TOEFL tests