

## Standardized Testing Overview – Sophomores

Dear Sophomores and Parents/Guardians of Sophomores:

While students won't begin the college counseling process until next fall, we want to give you some idea of how to prepare for that process. One important piece of planning is standardized testing. The purpose of this letter is to outline possibilities for standardized testing in the sophomore year and to provide information about registering for those tests.

Please note that our first College Night for 10<sup>th</sup> Graders and their parents will be held on Thursday, November 3rd @ 6:30pm in Gross Theater. For this program, we've invited a test prep expert from Compass Education group to speak with our families regarding the development of a sensible and individualized testing plan for each of our students. Topics to be covered include:

- Colleges' use of test scores
- ACT's rising popularity and how students might benefit
- The importance of SAT Subject Test choices and timing
- Implications of the College Board's "Score Choice" policies
- Trends in testing timelines, repeat testing, and test prep

### Some General Advice about Testing:

- Detailed advice for standardized testing should be individualized. What is recommended for one student should **not** be assumed to be appropriate for another student. Factors such as emotional and intellectual maturity, grades in specific courses, and adequate preparation time should all play a role in the decision-making.
- If standardized testing has not been one of your strengths, you'll be happy to know that colleges with "Test-Optional" admissions policies are becoming increasingly common. [The National Center for Fair & Open Testing \(click here\)](#) has compiled a comprehensive list of those colleges.
- While Horace Mann coursework is the foundation for this standardized testing, there are inexpensive ways to become familiar with the structure and form of the test. Test-preparation manuals such as those published by *Kaplan*, *Princeton Review*, and the *College Board*, are great options. Many test prep companies can also provide students with a full-length practice exam. Please contact the college counseling office if you have questions about other options for low- or no cost test preparation.

### Registration for Standardized Testing:

- Horace Mann is **not** an official test center for all exam dates. The importance of registering now is to give sophomores the best opportunity to take exams either at Horace Mann or a test center close to where you live. After registration, there is still some flexibility to make modifications to your registration details. Test type, test center, or test date changes can be made through the College Board website. There may be a fee for making those changes.

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- When registering online, you will need to enter HM's **(CEEB) school code: 333700**. This will ensure that the College Counseling Office receives your test scores and colleges, which may receive your scores, know where you go to high school.
- Students who have documentation on file with ACT or College Board (SAT) and have been granted extended time or other accommodations should indicate this at the time of online registration.
- If you receive financial aid to attend Horace Mann, it's possible that you may qualify for an exam registration fee waiver. You should reach out to the College Counseling Office.

Please take some time to review the following pages in this packet. They include registration information, some specific advice regarding SAT Subject Tests for sophomores, and an overview of tests available in the future. As always, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I look forward to seeing you on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Be well,



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## CURRENT SOPHOMORES – CLASS OF 2019

One of the most common questions from 10<sup>th</sup> grade families is whether students should plan to take the SAT or ACT exam. Fortunately, sophomores have plenty of time to make that decision and our College Night scheduled for November will offer some advice on that topic. In the meantime, it is possible that some 10<sup>th</sup> graders may decide to take SAT Subject Tests in Chemistry and/or U.S. History at the end of this school year. Please read through for information about those tests.

### Advice Regarding SAT Subject Tests

- Only **2-3** subject tests may be needed for the college application process. Unless a student really enjoys and has earned strong grades in U.S. History and/or Chemistry, there is **NO** need to rush into taking the corresponding SAT Subject Tests this year. In the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, there are more Subject Test options in English, Foreign Language, History, Math, and Science. Plus, students will be more sophisticated standardized test-takers at the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade than they will be at the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Horace Mann coursework can help students prepare for the various SAT Subject Tests. Still, in most cases, we recommend that students **(A)** take a full-length Subject Test for practice and **(B)** consider additional preparation on any topics not covered in our courses. Test-preparation manuals such as those published by *Kaplan*, *Princeton Review*, and the *College Board*, are inexpensive options. Many test prep companies can also provide students with a full-length practice exam.
- Many colleges will ask to see **ALL** standardized testing scores for applicants. Because students **may not** be able to suppress any official scores, students should assume that all of their official scores would need to be reported to colleges.

**While HM courses do not ‘teach to’ the corresponding SAT Subject Tests, our academic departments have offered some advice regarding which courses may best prepare our students to sit for U.S. History or Chemistry SAT Subject Tests:**

### U.S. History

- US History (10) students must prepare on their own. Those planning to take History electives in 11<sup>th</sup> grade could wait until the end of their junior year to take this exam.

### Chemistry

- Chemistry (10) covers all the topics and concepts that may appear on this Subject Test. However, students may want additional practice in answering SAT-type questions.

### Important Dates:

Date	Test	Registration Deadline
May 6, 2017	SAT Subject Tests in Chemistry and/or U.S. History	April 7, 2017
June 3, 2017	SAT Subject Tests in Chemistry and/or U.S. History	May 9, 2017

[Click here for SAT Subject Test registration information.](#)

