

## Catholic High School Admissions Meeting Wednesday, September 20, 2017

### Criteria for Admissions

Students apply to a Catholic high school by completing the high school's application form. Grades, tests scores, and in some cases, an interview is considered by the Catholic high schools in determining admission for each student. Each Catholic high school is unique and so is their admission's process.

### **High School Placement Test (HSPT)** Overview and Background

The *High School Placement Test (HSPT)* is a five-part multiple choice test of verbal, quantitative, reading, mathematics and language arts skills. The exam includes 298 questions and takes 3 hours to administer. This includes two short breaks and 30 minutes for distributing and collecting the answer sheets and test booklets. Subtests and standard testing time limits are as follows: 15 minutes for verbal ability; 30 minutes for quantitative ability; 25 minutes for reading achievement; 45 minutes for mathematics achievement; and 25 minutes for language arts.

Students completing the HSPT are ranked in percentiles and scored in relation to two normed groups: those taking the test on the same date nationally and those taking the test in the greater Washington area. Standard scores range from 200-800, with 500 as the mean. The Cognitive Skills Quotient for the combined verbal and quantitative ability scores is interpreted the same way as with the IQ test, with the average being 100. Scoring summaries include Total Cognitive Skills, Total Basic Skills and a composite score based on the five subtests.

STS first developed the HSPT in 1955. Since that time, STS has revised the HSPT annually in order to ensure its effectiveness for the schools using the test. The HSPT scores are one factor that 12 of the Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Washington consider when reviewing students' applications to their schools, though schools elsewhere also use this test to assist with educational diagnosis and awarding of scholarships. The Archdiocese of Baltimore and the Diocese of Arlington both utilize the HSPT for admissions purposes, and we have worked closely to align materials and procedures with these dioceses. For more information about STS and the HSPT, please visit the STS website *Getting to Know STS* at [www.ststesting.com](http://www.ststesting.com). For information about preparing for the HSPT, see the subsequent section of this guide titled *HSPT Preparation Recommendations and Resources*.

### Shadow Visits

Each child is allowed three (3) excused absences for Shadow Visits. Students are responsible for the work that is missed while shadowing. He/she must be prepared to take all tests/quizzes that were missed or that are scheduled for the day of his/her return. **Extra time will not be given to make up work missed on shadow days.**

The high schools have dress codes for students who are shadowing. Please ask each school what is expected regarding your child's dress on a shadow day. Keep in mind that your child will meet the school's admissions director and possibly school administrators. **Make a good impression.**

Shadow days do fill-up quickly, so **NOW** is the time to make your calls if you have not done so already. If possible, schedule your shadow visit when we are off from school (Election Day, Parent Teacher Conferences, etc.) or when school is scheduled here as a half-day.

**Do not cancel a Shadow Visit that is already scheduled unless it is a TRUE emergency!**

Please E-MAIL the Health Office when your child has a scheduled Shadow Visit.

### **Applications**

Each of our Catholic high school has its own Application and its own deadline for application submission. Please, take careful note of these deadlines.

### **High School Placement Test Prep Course**

A High School Placement Test Prep Course will be offered here at St. Elizabeth School. Information is enclosed in tonight's packet of information.

### **Attendance**

Attendance matters a great deal to the high schools. If your child is late or absent on a significant number of days, this could definitely impact admission to a Catholic high school. If your child had a number of missed days in grades six or seven, please notify Mr. Spadoni, via e-mail, so that he can explain this/these absence(s) on the recommendation form. Per our school's policy, please be sure to notify our health room.

## Catholic High Schools in the “Choice System”

Students may apply to THREE (3) of the Archdiocesan Catholic High School listed below. These Catholic high schools require the HSPT as part of their application process.

The Academy of the Holy Cross  
Archbishop Carroll High School  
Bishop McNamara High School  
DeMatha Catholic High School  
Elizabeth Seton High School  
Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School

Gonzaga College High School  
Our Lady of Good Counsel High School  
St. John’s College High School  
St. Mary’s High Ryken  
St. Vincent High Pallotti

## **For Students Applying to Catholic High Schools with Separate Admissions Processes**

Students may apply to ANY of the following Catholic high schools, which have their OWN admissions processes and admissions testing. Please contact these high schools for details regarding their admissions processes and admissions testing.

The Avalon School  
Brookewood Academy  
Connelly School of the Holy Child  
Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School  
Georgetown Preparatory School  
St. Anselm’s Abbey School  
Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

## **Mock Interviews with Mrs. Hirsch**

Several of our Catholic high schools require interviews for admissions and/or interviews for a specific academic program.

To help ease the stress and build one's confidence, Mrs. Hirsch invites all eighth grade students to schedule a time for a mock interview. Practicing one's interview skills can help one feel calm and self-assured during the actual interview.

Fifteen-minute mock interviews can be scheduled before and after school as well as during lunch.

Mrs. Hirsch will give all students a confidential feedback sheet with comments indicating strengths and areas to reinforce before the actual interview.

Students are asked to see Mrs. Hirsch to schedule their mock interviews.

## **Interviews**

Some of our Catholic high schools require face-to-face interviews. This is the time for your child to highlight his/her accomplishments and successes **WITHOUT** bragging. Interviews are NOT the time to share what scholarships, "offers," etc. your child received from a competing school. Practicing with Mrs. Hirsch and with you at home will help your child to understand the difference between relaying information rather than bragging about information.

Parent Interviews are sometime required. Parents should follow the same advice as listed above.

Note: This advice is effective later in life; however, my experience has shown that it does not bode well at the high school level.

## **Essays**

Essays must be written by the children and should be completed to the best of their ability. Parents/guardians are highly encouraged to review the final versions of the essays.

Poorly written essays, essays lacking substance, and/or essays not meeting the required expected length (one or two sentence answers) can and have placed children with solid academic scores and solid HSPT scores onto a school's wait list.

## **Tuition Assistance**

Each high school and the Archdiocese of Washington offer a variety of tuition assistance and

scholarship programs. Applying for tuition aid has no bearing on whether a student is admitted to a school. Tuition aid application deadlines are as early as December so families will know their tuition aid grants when they receive their notification letters from high schools in the spring.

### **Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance**

The *TADS Application Form for 2017-2018* must be completed and submitted to TADS by **Friday, December 1, 2017**, for families applying for tuition assistance from the archdiocese for a high school student. You can continue to check [www.adw.org](http://www.adw.org) for updates.

All tuition assistance obtained through the archdiocese is based on financial need. Archdiocesan tuition assistance is open only to students currently enrolled in or applying to Catholic schools located in the archdiocese, which includes Washington, D.C. and the five Maryland counties of Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's.

For help with tuition assistance, funding, and education resources, please call 301-853-5356, or send a message to [tuitionassistanceprogram@adw.org](mailto:tuitionassistanceprogram@adw.org).

### **Additional Transcripts**

St. Elizabeth School will mail transcripts to three high schools (the processing and postage for this is included in each child's graduation fee, \$175.00). Any additional transcript requests should be accompanied with a check for \$60.00 per school (the school's fixed fee for transcript transfers).

### **Scholarships**

Each Catholic high school offers scholarships based academic performance, musical interest, visual arts, etc. For specific information on scholarships offered, parents are advised to contact specific high schools for additional information.

### **Catholic Business Network Essay Contest**

All eighth grade students at St. Elizabeth School must submit an essay for the Catholic Business Network Essay Contest. Information will follow in the next several weeks.

### **Letters of Reference/Teacher Recommendations**

All of the "Choice Schools" accept the Form supplied to us from the Catholic Schools' Office of the Archdiocese of Washington (this can be found in your informational packet). Most of the Catholic Schools outside the "Choice" system do, as well. Georgetown Preparatory School, for example, DOES NOT accept this form. Separate recommendations are necessary.

Please feel free to ask those you know for a letter of recommendation. Don't overdue. Too many letters may send a red flag. Two to three letters, max, is my recommendation.

**“Archdiocese of Washington Catholic High Schools 2017 – 2018 Directory”**

Please find this booklet inside your folder. This book contains information on each Catholic high school in the Archdiocese and lists each school's Open House, etc.

**St. Elizabeth Catholic School**  
**Catholic High School Parent Meeting**

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s) in Attendance:** \_\_\_\_\_

**High Schools for Consideration:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

\_\_\_ **Yes, my child is scheduled for shadow visits. He/she is scheduled at the following school(s):**

_____	_____
_____	_____

\_\_\_ **Yes, my child will be registered to take the High School Placement Test (HSPT).**

\_\_\_ **Yes, my child will take the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT).**

\_\_\_ **Yes, my child will explore specialized programs for academic support at the following Catholic high school(s):**

_____	_____
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\_\_\_ **Yes, my child will explore honors programs at the following Catholic high school(s):**

_____	_____
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\_\_\_ **Yes, I/we are considering public high school. Our public school is:**

_____	_____
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\_\_\_ **Yes, I/we will explore a Magnet Program at the following school(s):**

_____	_____
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## Application Process Timeline (Parents of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students)

**September:** HSPT on-line registration opens. REGISTER NOW!!

Families complete on-line registration form, payment, and High School Choice(s):

- \$45: students' test scores are sent to three schools in the Archdiocese of Washington; OR
- \$60: students' test scores are sent to three schools in the Archdiocese of Washington PLUS one school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore or the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia.

**NOW:** Request applications from the Catholic high schools. Most, if not all, are on their individual websites.

**CHECK APPLICATION DUE DATES!**

Inquire at these high schools about:

- (1) available scholarships'
- (2) tuition assistance;
- (3) specialized programs, etc.

**Schedule Shadow Visits.**

**September 27:** Registration ends for the HSPT Review Course offered at St. Elizabeth School.

**October 11:** HSPT Review Course begins here at St. Elizabeth School (Mr. Spadoni and Mr. Whalen).

**CHECK THE DEADLINE FOR YOUR CHILD'S HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION!**

**October 31:** HSPT on-line registration closes (**no one may register for the HSPT after October 31, 2017**).

**November 20:** Parents/guardians return to the on-line registration form to make their high school choices. Students will select up to three (3) Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Washington to receive HSPT scores. Additionally, students may request to have test scores sent to one (1) in either the Archdiocese of Baltimore or the Diocese of Arlington. Please note that there is an additional \$15.00 fee to have HSPT scores sent to a fourth choice school (this is clearly outlined on the "How to Register for the 2017 High School Placement Test").

**CHECK THE DEADLINE FOR YOUR CHILD'S HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION!**

**November 27:** Students return the *Authorization to Release Records Form* to their 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher along with a copy of their HSPT registration confirmation letter (**print this once you've registered for the HSPT**



on-line).

**November 29:** HSPT is administered at St. Elizabeth School (12:15 p.m. dismissal for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students).

**December 1:** Deadline for submitting Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance Form through TADS

**CHECK THE DEADLINE FOR YOUR CHILD'S HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION!**

**December 10:** Window for selecting High School Choice(s) closes **(absolutely no changes to one's high school choice(s) can be made after this date)**.

**January 2017:** Test results are only sent to the school(s) provided on the student's HSPT Registration Form and will be mailed to parents/guardians in late January/early February. **Catholic elementary schools are not permitted to release students' scores.**

**February 15 - 22:** High Schools mail notification letters to applicants (no earlier than this date).

**February 16:** Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance decision letters will be delivered via e-mail to all applicants.

**Catholic High Schools  
Archdiocese of Washington  
OPEN HOUSES 2017**

**Saturday, October 14, 2017**

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.      Georgetown Visitation

**Sunday, October 15, 2017**

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.      Our Lady of Good Counsel  
12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.      Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart  
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.      Georgetown Preparatory School

**Sunday, October 29, 2017**

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.      St. John's College High School

**Sunday, November 5, 2017**

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.      Academy of the Holy Cross  
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.      Elizabeth Seton High School  
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.      DeMatha Catholic High School  
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.      St. Vincent Pallotti High School

**Sunday, November 19, 2017**

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.      Gonzaga College High School

# 2017 HSPT Review

St. Elizabeth School is offering a **five-week** review of the High School Placement Test (HSPT)

Students taking the course will be introduced to the types of questions presented in both the math and language arts sections of the test. Students will learn strategies to employ when answering the questions and each student will take a practice exam that will be evaluated by the instructors for strengths and weaknesses.

Day	Date	Time	Activity
Wednesday	October 11, 2017	<b>Dismissal - 6:30</b>	Practice Exam
Wednesday	October 25, 2017	Dismissal - 5:30	Skill Review
Wednesday	November 1, 2017	Dismissal - 5:30	Skill Review
Wednesday	November 8, 2017	Dismissal - 5:30	Skill Review
Wednesday	November 15, 2017	Dismissal - 5:30	Skill Review
Wednesday	November 29, 2017	<b>During school hours. 12:15p.m. dismissal for grade 8</b>	HSPT Test

\*Please note that the first week goes until 6:30p.m., and there is a week off between October 11 and October 25.

Instructors:

Math: Mr. William Whalen

Language Arts: Mr. Vincent Spadoni

The cost of the course is \$250.00 (includes the book).

Checks should be made payable to St. Elizabeth School.

*It is not necessary to take the course to prepare for the HSPT test. Students may purchase a handbook on their own and work independently or with a parent or private tutor.*

HSPT Review for Eighth Grade Students

**Please return form and payment to Mrs. Woo by Monday, September 27, 2017.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact and Phone: \_\_\_\_\_