



## Catholic High School Entrance Exam FAQs 2019/2020 School Year

The Catholic High School Entrance Exam will be administered on **Saturday, December 7, 2019 at 8 a.m.** Students may register for the test beginning on November 22, 2019. Consult the Catholic high school where the student wishes to enroll for the 2020/2021 school year for information on the pre-registration process. The entrance exam fee is \$25 payable either by credit card, cash or check to the school administering the exam. To find a high school where you would like to take the entrance exam, visit our [Find a School](#) locator.

**See the FAQ's below for more information on the Catholic High School Entrance Exam.**

### **Q: When do Catholic high schools give standardized tests for student acceptance and placement?**

**A:** All high schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago that administer an entrance exam will conduct it on the first Saturday in December. The entrance exam is used in conjunction with various student elementary records that parents provide to determine final acceptance. After students are accepted, some high schools may conduct further placement testing to determine the best course of study and appropriate academic levels for their students.

### **Q: What entrance exam do the Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago use?**

**A:** All Catholic high schools that administer an entrance exam will use the closed version of the High School Placement Test (HSPT) by Scholastic Testing Services, Inc. Information on this exam can be found at: [Understanding the STS' High School Placement Test](#).

### **Q: Where should a student take the Catholic high school entrance exam?**

**A:** It is important to take the entrance exam at the school where the student wishes to enroll in the fall and is 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 they do not initially test at that school.

### **Q: Do students register for the test?**

**A:** Yes. Prospective students may pre-register for the entrance exam beginning on November 22, 2019 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.

### **Q: What if a student misses the entrance exam date?**

**A:** 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.

### **Q: How can a student prepare for the high school entrance exam?**

**A:** The best preparation for the Catholic high school entrance exam is excellent academic preparation in elementary school. Some students also may benefit from knowing general test taking strategies and how to pace themselves while taking a standardized test. However, too much emphasis on the entrance exam or test preparation is likely to increase test anxiety and lower his/her test score. Test preparation will not raise entrance exam scores beyond a student's true or actual achievement level. Test preparation should be limited to reducing anxiety and becoming familiar with taking a standardized test under timed conditions. Be supportive and encourage your child to do his/her best. Getting a good night's rest and eating a healthy breakfast before the entrance exam is important as well.

### **Q: Can my child receive testing accommodations for the entrance exam?**

**A:** 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 individual high school for more information.

**Q: How do Catholic high schools make student placement decisions?**

**A:** 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.

***Points of reflection***

- Standardized tests provide valuable information about a student's academic readiness for a particular school.
- Standardized test performance is only one of several factors in Catholic high school admission and placement decisions.
- The Catholic high schools within the Archdiocese of Chicago are academically diverse. A student may be able to meet the academic challenges of a highly selective school but not be admitted because of a limited availability of open seats.

**Q: What can be done if a student is not accepted?**

**A:** If a student is not placed in his/her "first choice" school, parents are encouraged to apply to another Catholic high school. 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. One key to a student's high school academic success is to find a high school that best matches his or her current educational needs. Educational experience and performance in that Catholic high school will better enable him or her to grow academically, personally and spiritually.

**Q: What if test scores don't match grades or past test scores?**

**A:** There are many reasons why a student's high school entrance exam scores may not be consistent with his/her other grades or scores on other standardized tests. Although test scores are important, remember that a student's past academic record and other information will be considered in admission decisions along with test scores.