



High School Placement Test

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

OVERVIEW

What is the HSPT?

The HSPT is a standardized, timed test required of every 8th grade student applying to attend a Catholic high school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. It contains five sections. The first two sections measure verbal and quantitative ability. The next three sections include questions related to reading comprehension, mathematics, and the components of written language. The HSPT questions are designed to test students at their curriculum level.

How is this test used in the admissions process?

The HSPT is an assessment tool used by the high schools for admissions, scholarship selection and course placement. Each high school has its own guidelines for evaluating applicants for admission, including performance on the HSPT. The Students should contact the admissions department of their schools of choice with any questions regarding the school's admissions process.

How Do The HSPT And Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE) Differ?

All incoming 9th grade Catholic school students are required to take the HSPT during their 8th grade year. The ISEE is used for admission to area independent, non-Catholic schools. Both of these tests are admissions assessment tools. They test similar abilities and skills, but the testing results are scored against different comparison groups. The HSPT compares each student's correct score to a National norm (a large group of students of similar age across the U.S.). The ISEE does a similar comparison, but the correct responses are compared to a smaller population of students.

Are there accommodations available for students with a service plan, IEP or a recent evaluation that specifically outlines the accommodations needed?

Yes, every testing site offers extended time to students with a documented need. Other accommodations vary according to the testing site. All documentation of needed accommodations must be received by the testing site no later than November 13, 2015. Please contact your chosen testing site for information regarding accommodations offered for the test. For more information about service plans visit www.archbalt.org/schools.

LOGISTICS

When and where is the HSPT administered?

The High School Placement Test (HSPT) will be offered on December 5 and December 12. Each Catholic high school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore will host the test on one of those two dates. Eighth grade applicants may take the test at any site. If you are applying to Bishop Walsh School, please contact the school directly to schedule a testing date.

What time does the HSPT start? When is it over?

You are expected to arrive at 8:30am to check in. The test lasts from approximately 9am-12pm.

What is the pre-registration process for the HSPT ?

You are encouraged to register for the HSPT via the online registration portal, which can be found at www.archbalt.org under the Catholic Schools tab. Links to the registration portal may also be found on each high school's website. When you register online, you will receive a confirmation number that needs to be brought to the testing site on the day of the test. If you cannot access the online registration portal, please call the testing site directly to register. If you walk in on testing day without pre-registering, the testing site will have to ensure that enough proctors are available to accommodate all walk-ins. Please note: students may not walk-in and request any testing accommodations. If this occurs, the student will be asked to test on another date.

What is the cost and payment process?

The cost of the HSPT test is \$40. This fee can be paid online by credit card or upon arrival on testing day by cash only. The \$40 fee covers the cost of scoring the test and sending score reports to parents and to those high schools chosen by the student. Note: score reports may be sent to as many as three high schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore as well as a fourth choice school in the Archdiocese of Washington.

How to change the ranking of high school choices?

The online registration for the HSPT opens on September 8th. We recognize that students spend the next few months attending Open Houses and shadow days at various high schools. During these events, a student may or may not change their minds on the order of first, second and third choice schools. Any student can re-enter the online registration portal and edit information already submitted. Simply use your email address and confirmation number to enter the portal. Information can be edited up until the Thursday before the test.

What is needed on testing day?

If you have pre-registered and paid online, you only need to bring your confirmation code and two number 2 pencils. If not, you will need to bring \$40 in cash and all necessary personal information to register. Remember, walk-ins may not be able to test if space is limited.

Are breaks offered during the testing period?

There will be brief breaks between the five sections of the test. Some test sites provide water and encourage students to bring a snack. Students with extra accommodations may receive more frequent breaks. Parents of students with extra accommodations should keep this in mind when planning pick-up because the test will last longer than three hours.

Are calculators permitted?

Students may not use a calculator; however, if a student with a diagnosed learning disability requires calculator use as indicated in their service plan then that can be coordinated with testing sites prior to arrival.

What happens if i'm late on the day of the test?

If a student arrives after the test has begun, he/she will be asked to leave and register for another test date.

What happens if there is inclement weather on the day of the test?

In the case of inclement weather, the Archdiocese of Baltimore will release a weather statement on their website, www.archbalt.org. Also, all pre-registered students will receive an email with the weather announcement. If a testing date in December is cancelled, students will be directed to register for a newly scheduled date.

May I take the test more than once?

No. The HSPT is taken only once and cannot be repeated under any circumstances.

Will there be a make-up test?

Each year the Archdiocese of Baltimore determines whether a make-up test date is needed. due to inclement weather, excessive absences, etc., If a make-up date is added, the online registration portal will reopen. This is not an opportunity to retake the HSPT; doing so will invalidate your scores. If you missed the test you pre-registered for in December, contact the testing site for information. The HSPT may only be taken once and only by 8th grade students.

Can 7th graders take the HSPT ?

No. The HSPT is designed to test the knowledge and achievement of an 8th grade student and scores are compared to that age group. If a student intentionally takes the HSPT as a 7th grader, the score achieved will be used as their final score and the student will not be permitted to take the test the following year.

SCORING

When will scores be sent?

Score reports are electronically generated and parents can choose at the time of registration whether to receive an electronic copy or a printed copy. Parents can expect to receive their copy within a month of their child's completion of the test; however, electronic copies may arrive sooner. The schools chosen by students to receive their scores will be sent the reports directly by STS. Families do not need to provide a copy to the high schools. If a student is applying to more than 3 schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore or more than 1 school in the Archdiocese of Washington, the parent will need to send their copy of the score report to those additional schools. STS will not send reports to any additional schools.

How do I read the scores?

The Scholastic Testing Service, Inc. (STS) includes a key on each score report. The HSPT score report includes five sections – verbal, quantitative, reading comprehension, mathematics and language. Each of these scores is used to calculate a composite score. The sub scores provide information on a student's strength of knowledge in three different areas. It is important to review the full-range of scores, not just the composite score. The HSPT compares each student's correct score to the national norm (a large group of students of similar age across the U.S.). The score represents not the percentage correct, but where that score falls COMPARED to the large group of students. For example, if you take the HSPT and earn a score of 75%, this means your correct answers are where 75% of the norm group scored; it does not mean that you answered 75% of the questions correctly or 25% incorrectly. The score is a comparison of test performance, not a measure of actual performance. Any questions regarding the interpretation of the HSPT scores should be directed to the admissions office of your high school of choice.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Should I complete the questions if I'm not exactly sure of the correct answer?

It is recommended that students answer all questions as there are no penalties for wrong answers. The proctor will explain all of the testing details prior to the start of the test.

Are prep courses a good way to prepare for the HSPT ?

The Scholastic Testing Service, Inc. (STS), which administers the HSPT, offers the following guidance for students who want to prepare for the HSPT:

Testing can be a rather anxious, but also, exciting experience for students and their parents. We receive many questions from parents inquiring on how their child can prepare for the HSPT®. STS offers the following tips to best prepare for a successful testing experience:

- Listen to and read the directions for each subtest carefully.
- Pace yourself – Time limits are set for each subtest. The test administrators should announce when time is halfway through so you can determine if you are working at a pace that will enable you to finish. Try not to spend too much time on one item.
- Read each question carefully.
- Work out the problem – Calculators are not permitted for the Mathematics subtest. You may use scratch paper or your test booklet to do any figuring.
- Answer every question – If you are unsure of an answer, take your best guess. Your score is determined by the number of items you answer correctly; there is no penalty for answering incorrectly.
- Check your work – If there is time left, go back and review your answers. Check to make sure each item has only one response. Throughout the test, continuously check that the answer you are marking on your answer sheet corresponds to the item number in the test booklet.
- While there are many test prep guides, books, and courses on the market available for purchase, STS is in no way affiliated with any of these products and does not endorse them. STS believes that parents and teachers are best advised to avoid expensive preparation materials and to trust that a well-rounded education is the best form of test preparation.