

## Packet Night Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Why is/isn't a particular school on my recommended list?

Lists of recommended schools are generated from information provided in the pre-surveys completed by parents and students, and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade interviews conducted by Tenacity staff. The recommended schools on your list match some or all of the things identified as important to you in high school such as sports and activities offered, academic focus, location, etc. A school may *not* be on your list if it did not match at least some of the things identified as important to you in high school.

### 2. Is there any other information that Tenacity used to create my recommended list?

Yes. In addition to the information provided by pre-surveys and student interviews, Tenacity staff rely on data produced by Boston Public Schools and the MA Department of Education. Some of the things we consider are high school graduation rates, college matriculation rates, and the level assigned to each school (including charter and private schools.)

### 3. Are these the only schools I can apply to?

No, if there are schools that interest you that are not on your recommended list, you are more than welcome to consider and apply to them, as many as you'd like. These lists are meant to be a starting place for schools that are likely a good fit for the student. We ask that you let Tenacity staff know if you would like to add schools to your list.

### 4. What do the numbers mean next to the school names?

The number represents Tenacity's ranking/suggestion as it regards best fit high schools for you. Our recommendations are based on information provided by you in your high school interview, parent preferences, AND insight from your Tenacity site. Some schools suggest that you need to rank their school number one on the choice form, while for others, an application can be more important than the ranking on the choice form. These numbers are meant to assist you in picking the order in which you select schools.

### 5. Can I fill out this school choice form now and give it to you?

No. The choice form included in your packet is a sample only! This is to make you aware of how to complete the process and what to look for during choice time (January-February). Most schools have the choice forms online so you may only get an email with the link to login and pick your schools. Other schools may decide to distribute the paper forms instead.

### 6. Should I complete these applications now and give them to you?

Yes. You can complete any paper application that is in your individual folder and turn it in to a staff member. Please note, the applications may not be submitted immediately as Tenacity applications are typically submitted as a group.

### 7. What if I already applied to some schools online?

Great, let the Tenacity staff from your site know right away when you submit an online application so they can keep track of all of your applications. Families should print out their online submission and hold onto it as verification that the application was submitted.

### 8. When do I find out about the exam schools?

Admission decisions will be sent to families in mid-March to the address and parent email address on file. Admission decisions are final and the exam schools do not have wait lists. BPS does not offer an appeal process since admission is strictly based on student academic performance.

**Criteria for admission:** The admission score is determined by equally weighting the ISEE score and Grade Point Average (GPA) — each counts for 50%; each section of the ISEE is equally weighted.

**9. Do I have to apply to all of these schools on my recommended schools list?**

No. These lists are meant to be a starting place for schools that are likely a good fit for the student. You can choose not to apply to the schools appearing on your list for a variety of reasons. We ask that you notify Tenacity staff if you would like to remove schools from your list.

**10. How can I find out what sports or clubs a school has?**

There are several ways to find this information. The school information packets in your folder will likely list the sports and clubs that are offered at each school, or at least a sampling of what is offered. Additionally, you could search a school's website for the information. Or, you could visit the school and ask the school representative about the sports and clubs they offer.

**11. Why do we need proof of residency?**

Some schools require you to provide proof of residency either with your application or when accepted to ensure that seats at BPS high schools are ONLY available to residents of Boston. Tenacity will make a copy of your documents (return it to you) and submit to the appropriate schools at the necessary time.

**12. Is there a way to know graduation rates or MCAS scores?**

There are several ways to find this information. In some cases, Tenacity staff might be able to tell you the answer. The school information packets in your folder will have MCAS (or PARCC) test scores available. Additionally, you could search a school's website for the information. Or, you could visit the MA Department of Education website to search for this data.

**13. Does this school require an application?**

Your recommended list of high schools indicates which Boston Public Schools require you to complete an application. All of the charter schools require an application to be entered into their lottery. Private and Independent schools also require applications and this will be indicated on your recommendation list. The requirements for each school's application process vary.

**14. Do they have Tenacity/Tenacity students at that school?**

Most likely. The Student and Family Support Coordinators in our College Prep Program will work with you at any high school you decide to attend. Our current Tenacity High School students attend more than 30 different high schools in and around Boston. Chances are there may be at least one who already attends a school you are considering.

**15. How will I get to that school? How far away is it?**

Depending on how far you live from the school, you may be a walker, take public transportation, or be driven by a friend or family member. High School students do not get yellow bus service unless specified in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), however, they may receive an MBTA student bus pass (M7). You can refer to the map of BPS schools for a better idea of school location. When you visit the high school, ask the school representative about the different options available for students to commute to the school.

**16. Can we go see the schools? Should parents go too?**

Yes, you should definitely go visit the schools you are considering. Tenacity plans visits to some high schools and it is recommended that you attend these when possible. Parents are encouraged to attend tours and open houses as well. There is a calendar of open house dates in your folder so you can be aware of the events already scheduled by individual schools.

**17. If I don't like the high school after my first year, can I transfer? Do I have to complete this same process in order to transfer?**

Yes, if you don't like your school after the first year, you can look into transferring to a different school. For many of the schools with applications, you will have to go through the application process again. For others, you would have to connect with the BPS Welcome Center to find out where space is available and make a change through BPS. BPS Welcome Centers are located at:

Dorchester: 1216 Dorchester Avenue—617-635-8015  
Roxbury: 2300 Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor—617-635-9010  
Roslindale: 515 Hyde Park Avenue—617-635-8040  
East Boston: 312 Border Street—617-635-9597

**18. Does the high school I select have an impact on the college I want to go to?**

The high school you attend could have an impact on your admission to the college you want to attend. However, taking full advantage of opportunities that your high school offers you in both academic, support, and extra-curricular activities is very important. Your grades and involvement in activities and engagement with your community all play a role in your college admissions process.

**19. If I know what college I want to go to, are there particular high schools I should consider?**

If you already have a college in mind, it may be a good idea to research which high schools have a track record of sending a number of graduates to that particular college. However, keep in mind that the high school you attend is not the only factor colleges take into consideration when making admissions decisions. No matter what high school you attend, you should take full advantage of the academic courses and extra-curricular activities offered that might prepare you for your dream college.

**20. If the high school I want to go to is ranked 4 or 5 by the State, should that worry me? Why or why not?**

Having a MA ranking of Level 4 or Level 5 may mean that there are changes ahead for the structure and governance of the school. It also may mean that there could be some additional resources and supports brought in to help the school make improvements. Tenacity doesn't often recommend level 4 and 5 schools, but specific circumstances may lead one of these schools to be on your list. For example, you are interested in a special program only offered at one of those schools. Ultimately your decision about high school takes multiple factors into account, not the least of which is the feel you get walking through the hallways, talking to current students, and feeling safe and comfortable. It is our strong advice that you visit the schools you are considering and talk with students and faculty and see how it feels before deciding.