

# Looking Ahead: The College Application Process

Please Note: The following are components of the application process which you might be interested in now. Please encourage your student to adhere to any deadlines we provide.

## Senior Profile Survey

The Senior Profile Survey is required in order to obtain letters of recommendation from your teachers and counselor. The purpose of the Senior Profile is to assist those who will be writing college and scholarship recommendations for you. It includes information about your college choices, future goals, academics, activities, personal development and values. The effort you put into answering the questions and the insight you provide will help your recommenders to highlight your strengths and the qualities that distinguish you from other students.

## Contact Two Teachers

This spring or early next fall, you will begin the process by personally asking two teachers to write recommendations for you. On the Senior Profile Survey, you will be required to fill in their names and the required course information including your semester grades in courses you took from each teacher. This does not have to be a class that you received an A in. It is a good idea to choose a class that shows growth.

## How to locate and work on the Senior Profile Survey

(Student Instructions)

\* Parents and students have separate Naviance accounts. If you and/or your student have not yet registered for an account, please contact your student's counselor.

1. Go to: <https://student.naviance.com/am-hs>
  - You may also access the AMHS Naviance page by going to **am-hs.org**
  - click "**Academics**," then "**Counseling**." You will then see a "**Naviance**" tab.
2. Type in your email address and password.
3. From your homepage, click on the "**About Me**" label.
4. In the drop down menu, under "**Surveys**," click "**Senior Profile Survey**"
5. Students will begin their Senior Profile in their English 11 class. Students can edit their Senior

Profile anytime. Click "**Save & Return Later**" at the bottom of the page. Do not click "**Save & Submit**" until you are ready. Once you click submit, you will no longer be able to edit your profile.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your Senior Profile Survey must be complete by September 13th. No letters of recommendation will be completed for you until you submit your Senior Profile.

- Although not all colleges require letter of recommendation (particularly 2-year colleges and most 4-year public colleges/universities), almost all seniors will need letters of recommendation for at least one

college or scholarship, so plan to complete the Senior Profile Survey by September 13th. You will be able to meet all necessary application deadlines by taking this approach.

### **Important items for the fall**

- Completing the “Common Application” ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)) will save you a lot of time if you are applying to 2 or more of the 500+ colleges and universities that use the Common App.
  - You will only need to complete one application, including one personal statement and it can be sent to any of the participating schools. (Please Note: Some schools require supplemental information.)
  - You will need to link your student Family Connection account to your Common App account. We will provide additional information on how to do this during the summer family workshop and next fall.
- You will be responsible for ordering official copies of your SAT and/or ACT scores to be sent to the colleges & universities you apply to. (For SATs, go to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org); for ACTs, go to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).)
- Keep in mind that colleges and universities charge application fees. These can add up if you are applying to many schools, so be discerning in your choices. Try to keep your list to 3-8 schools.

### **Personal Statement Essay or Required Topic Essay**

- The personal statement option provides an important opportunity to share a significant experience or relationship that has helped shape you into the person you are today and how this will impact your future.
- Required essay topics are frequently more abstract such as: an analysis of a person or event of historical importance & how this is relevant to you; a discussion of your philosophy regarding an ethical position or an issue of global concern; or an assignment requiring you to use both creative and analytic intelligence to solve a problem and then write about it.
- The topic and quality of your essay are important. Understand that admissions representatives read hundreds of essays. Get a head start by going to the Common Application website and college websites to identify required topic essays and personal statement options used as part of this year’s applications.
- If you will be completing multiple styles of applications that require essays, choose a topic for your essay and short answers that you can use for most if not all of your schools. Remember that the college’s purpose in requiring the essay is to learn about YOU.
- In evaluating your essay, the college will listen for your voice. Your readers expect you not only to “illuminate” a decisive moment but also to “reflect” on it and “discern the impact” that this person, event or belief has had and will continue to have on your life.

### **College Selection**

- If you apply to a college under the **Early Decision** plan, and if you are accepted, the acceptance is ***binding*** which means that you must then withdraw your applications to all other colleges you have

applied to and attend the college where you were accepted Early Decision unless released by that institution.

- If you apply to a college under the **Early Action** or **Regular Decision** plans, you will have until **May 1** of your senior year to make a decision about where you will attend college and to submit your deposit. This gives you a lot of time to consider your options including the amount of financial aid and scholarships you are offered.
- In your junior year, try to visit colleges you are considering during vacations or on non-school days. You may also arrange visits during fall of your senior year.
- Take advantage of special Open Houses for prospective students.
- Realize that there is no single “perfect” school for you. Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each option and make an informed decision. The path we take in life is never linear; there are crossroads, divergent paths & curves with unlimited opportunities every step of the way.