

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS - STEPS TO APPLY



Seniors: planning to apply to college? Great! College application season is open all year, but make sure you know your deadlines to apply as every college is different. The earliest deadlines are October 15 and November 1, so make sure you know when applications are due.

Naviance: Your list of colleges that you plan to apply to need to be listed in Naviance now, even if you don't plan to apply until later. As your counselor it is important to know what to expect in terms of transcripts, letters of recommendation and other forms. There are nearly 100 seniors, so please update your Naviance list now so that I can get all required admissions documents prepared in a timely manner.

NC Residency: Students who are residents of NC who apply to in-state colleges must apply for an NC Residency number. This is completed using the website <https://ncresidency.cfnc.org/residencyinfo/>. Metrolina students do not have an NC ID number so you should skip this box and use your social security number instead. You will need information from your parents such as driver's license number.

Transcripts come directly from the Guidance Office, but your permission must be granted to send them. Log on to Naviance, then Colleges, College I'm Applying To and request transcripts. Make sure you are careful to select the application process you used to apply (Common App or direct to institution) as they have separate requirements. Only request transcripts AFTER you have uploaded your application to the university. Step by step instructions are located on the MCA website under Academics - Upper School - Guidance.

Letters of Recommendation are sometimes required, but not always. Please read the admissions requirements for the schools you are applying to. If you need a teacher LOR, please ask a teacher in person and then request it in Naviance at least 2 weeks before the application deadline. Please pay attention to the due date! Teachers will prioritize the number of recommendation requests they receive according to the date they are due. Counselor Recommendations are automatic and I know when they are needed, so it is not necessary to ask me in person.

Common App is a centralized application system where you can "house" applications to multiple colleges at the same time. Not all colleges accept Common App (most private colleges do not), but most state universities do. You MUST match your Common App account to Naviance very soon in the process before you apply. This is done in the Colleges I'm Applying To tab - you will see large pink box at the top. Make sure you complete your FERPA form on Common App and WAIVE your right to review recommendation letters. Then you can match your accounts. All recommendation letters must be requested in Naviance (not in Common App). I have also created a handy cheat sheet for completing your Education section of Common App. You can find that information on the MCA Guidance Page [HERE](#). See me if you have questions.

College Admission Portals: after the application is submitted, transcripts are requested and test scores are sent (optional - depending on the college) you will likely be asked to set up an admission portal with the college. This is where you keep track of outstanding items needed to complete the application process. Do this right away. Check your emails frequently and respond accordingly.

Acceptance Letters - congratulations, the hard work paid off! Please forward your acceptance email or a copy of your acceptance letter to me for your graduation file. lisa.shields@fbcit.org

FAFSA: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid opens October 1 and families can apply at www.fafsa.gov.

Financial aid is the one area in college applications that I do not get involved in at Metrolina. It requires way too much personal information regarding families I work with and it can be very complicated. I would refer you to your financial advisor, accountant or work with a FAFSA expert to make sure you are completing it correctly.

There are tons of free online resources you can use, including: <https://www.cfnc.org/pay-for-college/fafsa-day/>, <https://www.getfafsahelp.org/cb> or <https://studentaid.gov/articles/breaking-down-fafsa-myths/>.

There is also a free FAFSA Day each year in October where you can get help from a real person. You can sign up for that on the CFNC website: <https://www.cfnc.org/pay-for-college/fafsa-day/>.