

NAHS College Guidebook:

For parents and students in grades 9-12

2023-2024



**Presented by the
NAHS Counseling Department**

Prepared September 2023

Welcome to the College Selection and Application Process

The college selection process is designed to help students make thoughtful, researched decisions about colleges they will eventually attend. It is our hope that this research will help students select a school which will make them happy and one at which they will be successful. In the ninth and tenth grades, students will often stop by to ask general questions to understand the process and learn about colleges. This is the time to “play” with the process. Enjoy thinking about what life may have to offer in the future, imagine yourself at college, and have fun exploring different types of colleges. In junior year, it gets a bit more intense. Important college testing begins as does a more solid college search to find colleges which will make for a good “fit.” Most college research occurs in junior year. The senior year is a year of completing applications and scholarship forms and for making difficult decisions.

We hope you find these evening meetings helpful. *Please be aware that Seniors will be the first priority in the first semester. Junior college appointments will take priority in the spring. Please see your counselor's contact info on the next page. Counselors have set aside the following time below for general questions on the college process.*

2023-2024 College Counseling Office Hours

*A counselor will be available in the fall daily 7:40am-2:15pm for GENERAL questions.
To meet with YOUR assigned counselor, schedule an appointment.*

College Planning Meetings

Freshman & Sophomore College Planning Meeting

This meeting for 9th and 10th grade students is designed to help parents and students understand the college selection process. The discussion will include the different types of testing and exploring colleges. *Curriculum Night early 2nd semester.*

Junior College Planning Meeting

This meeting for 11th grade students and parents is designed to dive deeper into researching colleges and the college admissions process. Topics include testing, preparation, college attributes, and early decision, among many others. *Winter of Junior Year.*

Senior College Planning & Financial Aid Meetings

These meetings for 12th grade students and parents explain the college application process in detail. It will also cover the differences between financial aid and merit scholarships, how to increase chances for scholarship, and the FASFA. *Early Fall of Senior Year.*

Senior Classroom College Meetings

We will meet with seniors during class periods early in the year to explain the college application process, essays, letters of recommendation, and prepare students for their applications. *Mid-September.*

Individual student and parent meetings

-30 minute duration-

Upperclassmen can book an appointment online through the counseling website.

Seniors: Late August through May

Juniors: Late January through May

Given the volume of the assigned responsibilities of the counseling department, including the processing of college applications, we require a 2 week notice for any other paperwork that needs processed. College application paperwork has separate deadlines that are explained later in this guidebook.

Sincerely,

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Section 1:

PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

For the Fall 2023 admission cycle, NACAC member four-year colleges reported that the most important factors in admission decisions continue to be grades in high school courses and strength of the high school curriculum. [\(NACAC website\)](#) NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling).

How has the importance of admission factors changed over time?

The Fall 2023 survey represents NACAC's first data collection since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent wide-spread adoption of test-optional or test-free admission policies. As expected, the importance of test scores has substantially declined, while grades and strength of curriculum have remained of top importance.

PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING "CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE" TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2012 TO FALL 2023

	2023	2020 – 2022	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
High school grades in college prep courses	77%	—	73%	71%	77%	—	79%	82%	82%
Total high school grades (all courses)	74	—	75	81	77	—	60	52	50
Strength of high school curriculum	64	—	62	51	52	—	60	64	65
Essay or writing sample	19	—	23	17	19	—	22	22	20
Student's interest in attending	16	—	16	16	14	—	17	20	18
Counselor recommendation	12	—	15	11	15	—	17	16	16
Teacher recommendation	11	—	14	7	11	—	15	14	15
Extracurricular activities	7	—	6	4	8	—	6	10	7
Admission test scores (ACT, SAT)	5	—	46	52	54	—	56	58	56
Portfolio	5	—	6	5	6	—	7	6	5
High school class rank	5	—	9	9	9	—	14	15	13
Interview	4	—	6	4	5	—	4	8	7
State graduation exam scores	2	—	2	2	2	—	4	3	2
Work	2	—	4	2	3	—	1	3	1
Subject test scores (AP, IB)	1	—	6	4	7	—	7	8	5

High School Academic Performance

- GPA & Course Selection remain MOST IMPORTANT

Your Cumulative GPA (which colleges will use) is determined by your year-end grades throughout high school! Most NAHS teachers would agree that grades are often more of a reflection upon effort than ability.

Put another way . . .

Homework and Effort = Good Grades.

Your GPA allows colleges to compare students within the same school and same grades. The better your GPA, the more choices you will have when it comes time to select colleges. Grades are cumulative; they begin right now and will stay with you until you graduate.

Your Curriculum Matters! Colleges focus most on grades in the five core academic subjects; English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Global Language. Honors and AP courses are beneficial **IF** you maintain A's and B's in them. A grade of "C" or lower in Honors or AP will not necessarily help. For selective colleges students should have five core classes each year of high school. To be competitive at selective schools you will **need** to have Honors and/or AP courses.

The moral of the story is "**begin high school strong.**" Many students have had to change college plans because they didn't work hard in their first years of high school.

Essay/Writing Samples and Recommendation Letters (See Section 4 for details)

Activities, Leadership, Talent, X Factor

Contributions outside of the classroom are also very important to colleges. They like students active in their school and community. Use the first years of high school to get involved in activities. However, don't sign up for 12 different activities hoping to impress a college. Select a couple you are genuinely interested in and try to make an impact within those.

ACT/SAT Test Scores (Many Schools continue to be test optional for Class of 2024)

These tests are college entrance exams that you will begin to take in your Junior year. To prepare, all NAHS freshmen will take the PSAT 8/9, NAHS sophomores will take the PSAT 10 and juniors will take the PSAT NMSQT. The PSAT is a preliminary test similar to the SAT that will help you understand what to expect from these types of tests. Certainly these tests can enhance a student's profile and may be required in some instances, but are less important than your academic record.

High Test Scores, Leadership, Talent, Activities, and your Essays can add to your record, BUT they cannot make up for poor grades!

YOUR PROFILE

You are more than grades and test scores! Your interests, talents and hobbies are uniquely you. Colleges appreciate the experiences and gifts a student can bring to their student body. Exploring your profile as an applicant allows you to do a little soul searching as you consider *what you want* in a college too.

STRENGTHS (and weaknesses)

What are you good at? Will you want to pursue your strengths in college? How will your weaknesses affect your college success? Can your strengths make your application stand out?

INTERESTS

What subjects or topics do you find interesting? Do you have any hobbies? Are you involved in interests you will want to pursue in college? What activities do you enjoy? How will your interests affect your college applications and selections?

SERVICE LEARNING

What community service projects have you been a part of? If you have worked with the same community service project over time or have spent extra time it can be very helpful.

SENIOR SEMINAR

Your senior seminar project can be very helpful to you. It allows you to pursue a real interest and to develop it. It happens to look great on college applications as well.

TALENTS

Your talents could be athletic, artistic, musical, writing, or another talent that you may have. Talents would be considered to be exceptional strengths from which you may have received recognition from a district, regional, state, or national forum.

LEGACY

Where did your parents go to college? Some schools (especially private schools) will give extra consideration if a parent or relative attended that school and even more if they are a big donor.

DIVERSITY

Will you provide diversity at the campus you attend? This could be a male student at a predominantly female campus, a female at a science oriented campus, or it could be that you provide ethnic diversity to a campus. In all of these examples, a student can provide diversity to a college campus.

ESSAYS

Essays help others see who you really are, not just your numbers. They provide an opportunity for you to share your essence and the uniqueness of you!

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from teachers or another person can also give a college a view of who you are beyond the numbers.

UNUSUAL THINGS Do you have an interest in fencing? Are you teaching yourself Gaelic? Are you a speed skater? Are you a banjo player? Unusual interests can be very helpful in admissions. Colleges are looking for students with diverse interests.

What You Should Know About Ultra-Selective Universities

The 30-40 **ultra selective colleges** in the country typically admit between **5-20% of the strongest applicants.**

Examples:

Ivy League (Harvard, Yale, Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, Columbia, Princeton, Penn), Stanford, Duke, Georgetown, Rice, Amherst, Northwestern, Notre Dame, U of Virginia, U of California, WashU, UNC Chapel Hill

Luckily there are 3000+ other terrific colleges! Students can find an education equal to the schools above at many of them. But, if you are curious about ultra-selective schools there are a few things that you should know **NOW**.

- 1) **RIGOR!** You need to be a top student. This means that you will have taken AND succeeded in 8+ AP courses throughout high school. A rigorous curriculum is critical to be competitive at these schools. A 4.0 GPA without rigor will yield negative application results! Colleges evaluate the rigor of your schedule (AP and Honors coursework).
- 2) **GRADES!** You will need very strong grades to be a strong candidate. Most years our highest GPA is a 4.4-4.5 GPA. Students can be competitive with a 4.2 + GPA, but higher is better. It is possible to be competitive below this, but there must be something else compelling about the student.
- 3) **GREAT TEST SCORES!** You will typically need very strong test scores. At most of these schools the middle 50 percentile of students will have 30-34 ACT scores. Again, it is possible to be competitive below this, but there must be something else compelling about the student.
- 4) **X FACTOR!** Now comes the hard part and maybe the most important. A student with perfect grades, a great curriculum, and perfect test scores is NOT a guarantee of admission at selective schools. That part is expected. **It often comes down to a variety of other factors such a compelling “life story”, exceptional talent, potential contributions to their campus; state, regional or national recognition within an area of expertise; sought out athlete; diversity; and unique characteristics.** Being an involved, active student makes a difference. Explore your passions!
- 5) **AUTHENTIC!** Be yourself and be genuine. Students who get into these schools typically have a passion for learning rather than grades. Students who follow along with courses and activities because they are told to do so by counselors, books, or parents, read poorly in admissions at ultra-selective schools. Quirky, interesting students who learn because they are curious and passionate, read well in admissions.
- 6) **LUCK!** Be Lucky. We can't predict what needs each school must fulfill year by year. Perhaps the best oboe player graduates and that year they are in need of an oboe player. We simply can't control this factor, but you can still be the best you that you can be!

SchoolLinks

New Albany uses **SchoolLinks** to assist families and students with a variety of tools to help you explore and document your career and college options. This comprehensive site will allow you to complete a variety of tasks. The Counseling Center processes all college applications and transcripts through SchoolLinks allowing us to track the process and keep admissions data.

IMPORTANT & INFORMATIVE EMAILS

We regularly send email notifications to seniors, juniors and occasionally underclassmen with information of upcoming college related events, scholarships, class meetings, college fairs, and host of other meaningful information.

RESUME

List and describe your in-school and out-of-school activities. Log the dates and experiences starting your freshman year. While this is not required, it is super helpful come application time!

Go to "Your Profile" in SchoolLinks to develop a resume.

CAREER SEARCHES

There are interest and career searches which will help you explore many different career options and discover new possibilities.

*Click the **ACTIVITIES** icon and choose from various exploration activities such as: "My Goals", "Assessments" and "Learning". There are also links to career exploration activities to complete on your "To Do" list on your SchoolLinks Dashboard.*

RESEARCH COLLEGES

You can research colleges, conduct a college search, and view scattergrams of past New Albany students who have applied and been admitted to colleges.

*Click on the **COLLEGES** icon and select "College Search" and "Admission Stats"*

COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE VISITS

Juniors and seniors sign up to attend college visits through Your SchoolLinks Dashboard.

Click on "School Events", find the college visit you want and Click on "New Event"

COLLEGE LIST

Create & keep a list of colleges which pique your interest. Create a list of Likely, Target and Reach schools.

*Click on the **COLLEGES** icon and select "Favorites and Lists"*

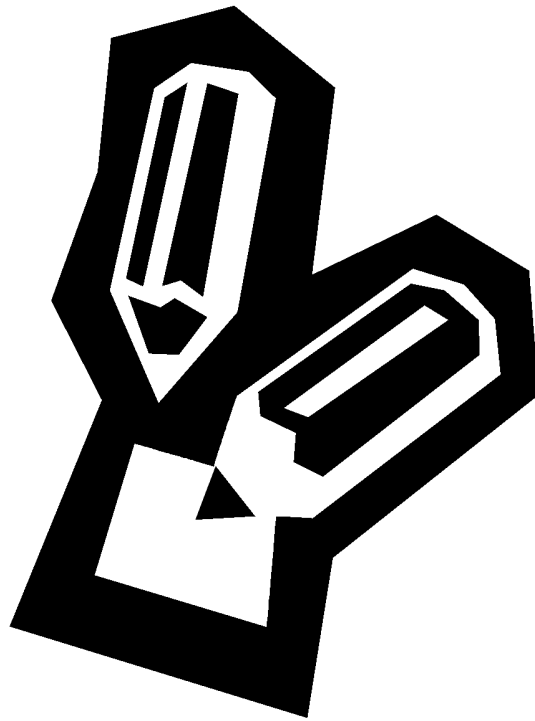
COLLEGE APPLICATIONS -APPLY & TRACK

You will be able to see the colleges you have applied to and see when your transcripts and recommendations have been sent.

*Under **COLLEGES** icon create a "Final List" and select "College Applications" to track materials*

There are many other possibilities within SchoolLinks you will find once you begin exploring!

Section 2:



**COLLEGE
TESTING**

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TEST UPDATES

1800+ Colleges currently Test Optional or Test Blind

What is a Test Optional College?

[This list](https://fairtest.org) (fairtest.org) includes bachelor degree granting institutions that do not require all or most recent U.S. high school graduates applying for fall 2024 to submit ACT/SAT results before admissions decisions are made. As the restrictions column indicates, some schools only exempt applicants who meet minimum grade or class rank criteria; others use ACT/SAT scores solely for course placement. Please check with individual schools for details.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS

WHAT ARE THEY?

Standardized tests which attempt to measure college readiness and predict future academic success of college applicants. They also assist colleges in comparing students from different schools and backgrounds. They include the ACT and the SAT.

WHEN DO STUDENTS TAKE THEM?

College bound students should take college admission examinations during the **late fall to early spring of the junior year**. More selective colleges often require more tests. Therefore, it is important to take the SAT and/or ACT tests early. *This is especially important for students considering applying early decision/action.* **Fall test dates of the senior year are best for re-taking tests to improve scores.**

PLAN AHEAD!

Each person's circumstances are different. Carefully determine both the best test(s) and time(s) for you to take them!

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Each test has a website and online registration. It is your responsibility as students and parents to register well ahead of the deadline dates.

NAHS ACT and SAT Code Number is 363630.

SCORE REPORTS ACT & SAT

*-Test scores are **NOT** reported on the NAHS transcript-*

Students must order official test score reports directly from ACT or College Board. ACT and College Board then send scores directly to the colleges requested. It may take WEEKS for reports to be generated, sent and uploaded to a college admissions office. To meet deadlines, we recommend sending scores a month or more in advance.

At the time of registration, students may opt to send up to 4 score reports to colleges **for free** on any given test date. Additional score reports can be requested online through the ACT and College Board websites.

Rush orders are available for an additional fee.

ACT & SAT TEST DATES 2023-2024

-check testing company websites for most accurate information-
New Albany High School Code: 363630

ACT - www.act.org

2023-2024 Test Dates (National)

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Regular Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Photo Upload and Standby Deadline</u>
Sept 9, 2023	August 4	August 18	September 1
Oct 28, 2023	September 22	October 6	October 20
Dec 9, 2023	November 3	November 17	December 1
Feb 10, 2024	January 5	January 19	February 2
April 13, 2024	March 8	March 22	April 5
June 8, 2024	May 3	May 17	May 31
July 13, 2024*	June 7	June 21	July 5

COST*	\$93.00 with Writing	\$68.00 without Writing	+\$44.00 Test Change
			+\$38.00 Late Fee
			+\$63.00 Standby Fee

*Fee waivers available in Counseling Center for students on free/reduced lunch

SAT - www.collegeboard.com
2023 - 2024 Testing Dates (National)

SAT Test Date*	Registration Deadline	Deadline for Changes & Late Registration
Aug 26, 2023	July 28, 2023	August 15, 2023
Oct 7, 2023	Sep 7, 2023	Sep 26, 2023
Nov 4, 2023	Oct 5, 2023	Oct 24, 2023
Dec 2, 2023	Nov 2, 2023	Nov 21, 2023

Mar 9, 2024 (Digital)**	Feb 23, 2024	February 27, 2024
May 4, 2024 (Digital)**	Apr 19, 2024	April 23, 2024
June 1, 2024 (Digital)**	May 16, 2024	May 21, 2024

COST*

Registration Fee \$60.00

Late Fee \$30.00

**Fee waivers available in Counseling Center for students on free/reduced lunch*

ACT or SAT - Which Gives You an Edge?

99% of schools in the United States will accept either SAT or ACT

The SAT and ACT are significantly different tests and, in many ways, measure different skills. Depending on your particular strengths and weaknesses, you may perform better on one test than the other so many students just starting into the admissions process take both the SAT and ACT. By taking both, they determine which test is better for them and then retake that test one or more additional times.

Comparison Chart from Tutor Doctor

www.tutordocor.com/central-ohio

SAT

NO SCIENCE SECTION

No science section! But ability to read basic scientific charts is tested throughout the Reading/Writing & Math tests.

SLOWER PACE

25% more time/question

Good for students who like time to think answers through and double-check.

MATH

No calculator section.

Included 13 fill in the blank ?'s

Formula sheet provided

10% Geometry

READING

Slightly slower pace

Slightly more difficult passages

WRITING & LANGUAGE

Very similar to ACT

WHO DOES WELL ON SAT?

Deliberate worker

Preferences or strength in reading

Experience or strength in literary analysis

ACT

SCIENCE SECTION

Tests scientific thinking, logic, and reading. Students not intimidated by science topics, the ACT may give an edge.

FASTER PACE

25% less time per question

Good for students who move quickly and can stay laser-focused.

MATH

Calculator allowed on all sections

Multiple choice only

No formula sheet

25% Geometry

READING

Very fast paced

Passages high school reading level

ENGLISH

Very similar to SAT

WHO DOES WELL ON ACT?

Fast-moving, quick and decisive thinker

Preference or strength in Math/Science

Pragmatic or practical writer

No matter which test you take, the SAT and ACT scores make up important parts of your application! Keep in mind, test scores are only one of several factors colleges use in making acceptance decisions. Your courses, grades, recommendations and personal essay or statement play very, very important roles in acceptance decisions as well. The good news is this: in the majority of cases, your daily work counts more in the admission process than those Saturday morning test sessions!

ACT Writing Test

Very few colleges still require students to submit a Writing test. SAT no longer offers it. Some college admissions experts believe preparing for the traditional college tests (SAT or ACT) may be time better spent than taking the ACT writing test.

If you register for the full ACT with writing, you will take the writing section after the four multiple-choice sections. Your score in the writing section will not affect your scores on the multiple-choice or your Composite score.

The writing section is a 40-minute essay test that measures your writing skills—specifically, writing skills taught in high school English classes and in entry-level college composition courses.

The section consists of one writing prompt that describes a complex issue and provides three different perspectives on the issue. You are asked to read the prompt and write an essay in which you develop your own perspective on the issue. Your essay must analyze the relationship between your own perspective and one or more other perspectives. You may adopt one of the perspectives given in the prompt as your own, or you may introduce one that is completely different from those given. Your score will not be affected by the perspective you take on the issue.

Five scores are reported for the writing section: a single subject-level writing score reported on a scale of 2–12, and four domain scores that are based on an analytic scoring rubric. The subject score is the rounded average of the four domain scores. The four writing domains are:

Writing Skills Measured by the ACT Writing Test

Ideas and Analysis Scores in this domain reflect the ability to generate productive ideas and engage critically with multiple perspectives on the given issue. Competent writers understand the issue they are invited to address, the purpose for writing, and the audience. They generate ideas that are relevant to the situation.

Development and Support Scores in this domain reflect the ability to discuss ideas, offer rationale, and bolster an argument. Competent writers explain and explore their ideas, discuss implications, and illustrate through examples. They help the reader understand their thinking about the issue.

Organization Scores in this domain reflect the ability to organize ideas with clarity and purpose. Organizational choices are integral to effective writing. Competent writers arrange their essay in a way that clearly shows the relationship between ideas, and they guide the reader through their discussion.

Language Use and Conventions Scores in this domain reflect the ability to use written language to convey arguments with clarity. Competent writers make use of the conventions of grammar, syntax, word usage, and mechanics. They are also aware of their audience and adjust the style and tone of their writing to communicate effectively.

Students are not required to take a test that they do not need to take, thus incurring unnecessary expense, and institutions have the freedom to require the tests that best meet their information needs.

SHOULD I TAKE A TEST PREPARATION CLASS?

Test preparation classes or tutoring are strongly recommended ONLY IF:

- they are affordable for your family,
- you have an honest, genuine interest in improving & doing your best on tests,
- you are willing to devote the time and work those test prep courses deserve,
- *you are considering schools where test scores play a critically important part in the admissions decision or in scholarship dollars.*

Test Prep Classes can improve your test scores; however, philosophical misgivings about test scores and professionally paid test prep classes still remain because:

- test prep classes enable students to “buy” short-term success -- the concept of “working for success over the long haul” has been cheapened.
- the College Testing Industry and all of the spin-offs associated with it have become far too dominant a voice in the college admissions process – they are calling the shots!
- all people are not “equally created test takers” – people need to understand that test scores do not always measure your ability to succeed in college.
- neither the ACT nor SAT measure “common sense or perseverance,” which arguably are the two most important college survival skills!

BUT – here’s the flipside:

- Colleges may use test scores for admissions purposes. Your scores impact which college you will get into and be kept out of – that’s too important to not give it your best shot.
- Many scholarship dollars are awarded based entirely on test scores. 1 or 2 points can mean the difference of thousands in scholarships or financial aid over a four-year period.
- This is a society where inferences are made quickly, routinely, but often erroneously about intelligence and test scores. For example, a 34 on the ACT – must be a genius. Someone with a 32 – less bright. Both great scores but the 34 gets the breaks!
- And finally, we are living in a time when “selective colleges” assume most everyone will take advantage of test improvement opportunities. A poll taken by a most selective college indicated that 92% of their admissions candidates took test prep classes.

Ultimately, generally you can improve your test scores by taking “test prep” classes. What you, the students and parents, have to figure out is their merit, value, and cost to you personally. “Are they worth it?” Only you can answer that question.

TEST PREPARATION RESOURCES

*This is a courtesy list provided for students & parents
and not necessarily an endorsement by the NAHS College Center.*

Name	Contact	Location	Guarantee
The ACT Review (Dr. Lynn Dailey)	614-834-8886 www.actreview.com	Capital University	No
Tutoring by a College Professor (Leslie Marx)	614-264-1110 www.tutoringprof.com	various	No
College Nannies & Tutors	614-761-3060 collegenanniesandtutors.com	New Albany	No
Kaplan	1-800-KAP-TEST www.kaptest.com	various	Yes, restrictions apply
Princeton Review	1-800-2REVIEW www.princetonreview.com	various	Yes, restrictions apply
BWS Educational Consulting (Brian Stewart)	614-353-4725 bwseducationconsulting.com	various	No
Tutoring Club	614-428-8886 www.tutoringclub.com	Gahanna/ New Albany	No, can retake course for free. Restrictions apply.
Tutor Doctor	614-493-2424 Tutordocor.com/central-ohio	In-home consultation	Yes, see website for details
Phil Schopick	614-783-0381 www.schopicktestprep.com	Bexley	No

Ryan Durcik	614-636-2357 ColumbusMathTutoring.com	New Albany	No; Math portion of ACT/SAT only
Dr. Ihab Ismail	614-738-0086 www.ihabismailphd.com	varies	No

2018 ACT/SAT CONCORDANCE TABLES



Table A1: SAT Total to ACT Composite.

SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT
1600	36	1250	26	910	16
*1590	36	*1240	26	900	16
1580	36	1230	26	*890	16
1570	36	1220	25	880	16
1560	35	*1210	25	870	15
1550	35	1200	25	860	15
*1540	35	1190	24	*850	15
1530	35	*1180	24	840	15
1520	34	1170	24	830	15
1510	34	1160	24	820	14
*1500	34	1150	23	810	14
1490	34	*1140	23	*800	14
1480	33	1130	23	790	14
1470	33	1120	22	780	14
*1460	33	*1110	22	770	13
1450	33	1100	22	*760	13
1440	32	1090	21	750	13
*1430	32	*1080	21	740	13
1420	32	1070	21	730	13
1410	31	1060	21	720	12
*1400	31	1050	20	*710	12
1390	31	*1040	20	700	12
1380	30	1030	20	690	12
*1370	30	1020	19	680	11
1360	30	*1010	19	*670	11
1350	29	1000	19	660	11
*1340	29	990	19	650	11
1330	29	980	18	640	10
1320	28	*970	18	*630	10
*1310	28	960	18	620	10
1300	28	950	17	610	9
1290	27	940	17	600	9
*1280	27	*930	17	*590	9
1270	27	920	17		
1260	27				

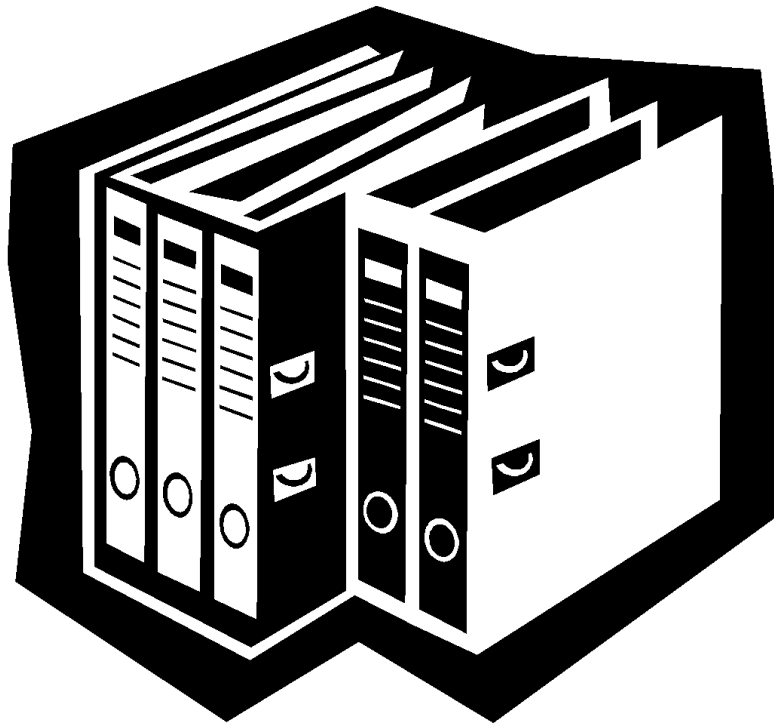
*Use this SAT score when a single score point comparison is needed.

Note: Concordance tables for the ACT Composite were derived from concordances of the ACT sum score.

Table A2 : ACT Composite to SAT Total.

ACT	SAT	SAT Range
36	1590	1570-1600
35	1540	1530-1560
34	1500	1490-1520
33	1460	1450-1480
32	1430	1420-1440
31	1400	1390-1410
30	1370	1360-1380
29	1340	1330-1350
28	1310	1300-1320
27	1280	1260-1290
26	1240	1230-1250
25	1210	1200-1220
24	1180	1160-1190
23	1140	1130-1150
22	1110	1100-1120
21	1080	1060-1090
20	1040	1030-1050
19	1010	990-1020
18	970	960-980
17	930	920-950
16	890	880-910
15	850	830-870
14	800	780-820
13	760	730-770
12	710	690-720
11	670	650-680
10	630	620-640
9	590	590-610

Section 3:



BUILDING THE COLLEGE LIST

BUILDING A COLLEGE LIST

Without question, developing a “good list” of potential colleges is the secret to success in the college selection process. “Good lists” always contain three **types** of colleges and a “**type**” of college is based on your **admission chances** at that school! You can rather accurately predict your chance of admission by comparing your profile (GPA, test scores, extra-curricular records, special talents, and written application materials) against the profile of the college.

Here are the three “types” of colleges:

- ❖ **LIKELY (formerly “Safe”)** -a college you would enjoy attending and where you have at least a **85 – 100 %** chance of gaining admission based on your existing records. **LIKELY schools are not inferior institutions!** Pick your **LIKELY** colleges carefully. Make sure you have more **SAFETY** schools on your list than **REACH** schools. **Spend the biggest part of your time in the college selection process picking **LIKELY** colleges!**
- ❖ **TARGET** -a college you would like to attend and one where you have about a **50 to 70 %** chance of being accepted. **TARGET colleges form the middle of your list.** It should not be too surprising to gain admission into two of every three or four **TARGET** colleges to which you apply.
- ❖ **REACH** -a college where you “dream about attending” but one where your chance of admission falls around the **15 to 40 %** range. **Do not spend the majority of your time choosing or visiting these schools -- concentrate on the two above (Safety and Possible)!** **YES** -- there is another category of school beyond the “reach” category. If your admission chance falls below **15%** -- then you might even consider that school a “Super Reach.”

As you go through the College Selection Process the names on your list will change; however, at all times, each of the colleges on your list should have some common qualities. Your list will be a good one if it includes **all** of the following:

- 1) Only colleges where you would be happy attending
- 2) Colleges which meet **your** specific needs (interests, programs, educational opportunities, internships, location, student diversity, housing etc..)
- 3) Colleges where you can succeed without being consumed (a fine line exists between working hard for success versus struggling for survival)
- 4) Colleges which are fully accredited and their name is recognized
- 5) Colleges you have already researched and have visited or are planning to visit
- 6) Colleges where you would enjoy having friends come to visit you
- 7) Colleges where you have great potential for growth the next four years
- 8) And, some colleges where you have a 90% plus chance of admission

BUILDING A COLLEGE LIST

(continued)

Why is it necessary to develop a good “College List?”

An appropriate or “good list” assures your acceptance into several colleges! It may also give you schools where you will find scholarship opportunities. Remember, when the College Selection Process is nearing its conclusion you want to have CHOICES!

There are many advantages to having choices:

1. Choices allow you to be more in control of this process
2. Choices allow you to “be a smarter consumer”
3. Choices allow you to compare

An inappropriate list is where you most likely will end up with only one letter of acceptance or admission! Unfortunately, when picking from one there is really no choice for you to make.

An unacceptable list holds the possibility, and a good one at that, that no college will accept you. Unacceptable lists usually result from either the parent or student not being realistic about the student profile and college admissions standards. Finally, unacceptable lists always result in needless, avoidable tragedies -- do not let it happen!

What Does a Good College List Look Like?

- 2-3 Likely Schools (You are sure you will be accepted to these schools) and you may be more likely to receive scholarship \$'s from these schools
- 2-3 Target Schools (You have a 50-70% chance of acceptance)
- 0-3 Reach Schools (You have 15-40% chance of acceptance)

MOST STUDENTS APPLY TO 5-8 Colleges.

Top Factors to Consider in Selecting Colleges

1. Size of College: How much personal attention do you want (or need) in college? The size of the college is the most important factor in determining this question. Colleges come in four basic sizes (like T-shirts): Small=less than 2,000 students; Medium= 3,000-10,000 students; Large=10,000 to 20,000 students; and XL=20,000+ students. This factor is one of the most important factors that you will consider. Many students find that they lean towards a couple of sizes – S/M or L/XL, but some students find that it doesn't matter to them at all. This is a personal process and you will have to determine what is best for you!

In General:

Smaller Schools

- smaller classes
- You will know your professors well
- You may have many opportunities for leadership
- Limited class choices and majors
- typically will cater to students more

Larger Schools

- larger classes (especially the first two years)
- often teaching assistants the first two years
- many more activities available
- larger selection of classes and majors
- students may need to be assertive

2. Where: Do you want to stay close or go far away? Is there a certain direction you want to go, N/S/W/E? If you want to go far away, are you an adventurous person? Are you really OK not visiting home on Thanksgiving?

3. City vs. College Town: What types of college activity do you want? How much activity around campus do you want? *In General:*

College Town/Small Town Colleges

- activities are usually campus based
- often a "traditional" campus
- sometimes can be difficult for internships

City Schools

- activities are often city based
- often an urban campus with less campus feel
- usually many internship possibilities

4. Field of Study or Major: Do you have a specific major that you are interested in or are you open? Undecided majors are the most popular majors at most schools. While it is certainly OK to be an undecided major, we do like for students to complete research to evaluate their interests. Liberal Arts colleges have a very different focus from universities, which are usually focused on specific majors.

In General:

Liberal Arts College

- students study a variety of subjects
- usually a bit easier to double-major
- generally smaller schools
- generally easier to be an undecided major

University

- students often focus on one specific major
- may be able to focus only on one field
- generally larger schools
- may have to select a major sooner

There are many other factors to consider as well, please see the next page!

More Factors to Consider in Selecting Colleges

Cost! (more on this in a few pages)

Selectivity – Can I get in?

Sphere of Influence (Reputation) – Will the school's reputation affect my job or graduate school opportunities?

Greek Life – Fraternities and Sororities

Male to Female ratio

Honor Code – Do they have one, would you like one?

Study Abroad – Does the school have their own programs and how supportive is the school?

Diversity – Is the campus diverse enough or too diverse for you?

Geographic Mix – Where are the students from?

Dorm Life – What are the dorms like?

Residential or Commuter – Do students stay on campus or go home on weekends?

Quality of Social Life

Facilities – Are the facilities up to your standards?

Distractions – Can I be successful?

Liberal campus vs. Conservative – Treehuggers vs. Preps and everything in between.

Opportunities in activities – Does the college have activities I want to pursue?

% who return for sophomore year – Do students stay for the next year? 80%+ is a good percentage here. It also tells you about financial aid.

% graduate in 4 years – How many students actually finish a degree in four years?

School Spirit – Are students excited to be at their school? How many school sweatshirts or hats do you see on your visit?

Athletics – Does the school have an athletic program that you would like to participate in or watch?

Honor Programs – Especially at larger state schools this may be a way to have smaller class sizes. What are the requirements?

Scholarship Opportunities – Am I qualified for scholarships at this school?

Need Blind – Is the school need blind or is need a consideration in admissions?

Big Fish/Small Fish – Do you want to be the big fish in a small pond or the small fish in a big pond?

Your "GUT" Feeling is also an important factor!

The College List Worksheet

MY ACT _____ MY SAT _____ MY GPA _____

Likely Colleges (85-100% chance for admission)

Your scores should be clearly higher than those listed.

1. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____
2. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____
3. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____

Target Colleges (50-70% chance for admission)

Your scores should be very similar to those listed.

1. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____
2. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____
3. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____

Reach Colleges (15-40% chance for admission)

Your scores should be just less than those listed.

1. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____
2. _____ ACT/SAT range _____ Avg. GPA _____

Research – Why it's important!

How many times have you heard someone say “My friend’s daughter hated (or loved) college X, you should not (or should) look into it.” My simple recommendation is to take this type of advice with a grain of salt! College X may not have been a good match for your friend’s daughter, but it may be the best match for your son or daughter! Everyone has different criteria for what constitutes a good college experience, find what **YOU** are looking for.

It is **thorough, solid research** which helps you determine whether college X is right for you, not hearsay and rumors. Think of yourself as a scientist – you don’t make a conclusion until you research the facts and consider the evidence. Do the same with this process. Observe, explore, document, and research – then decide if you want to apply to college X! I can’t tell you how often I hear a student say “I’ve heard from a friend at school X that it’s a great place, I’m going to apply there.” The student has completed no research, has no idea what to expect except what his friend has told him, and has no idea of whether college X is a good match for him. **Research now can save time and heartache later this spring and next year!**

WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION ABOUT COLLEGES TO RESEARCH THEM?

Look at the web, college viewbooks, college guides, and of course visit colleges. I’ve listed some resources below:

Web:

SchoolLinks (from your Classlinks Page)

www.collegeboard.com for the College Board’s comprehensive site

Print material:

Contact the college to request materials including viewbooks be sent to you.

Books:

(a few of the less known)

The Fiske Guide to Colleges (descriptions of colleges, not just data)

The College Finder

The Insiders Guide to Colleges from the Yale Daily Press (student descriptions of colleges – often very candid)

Visit!!!

THE COLLEGE VISIT -- A GUIDE

Who would purchase a \$50,000 to \$250,000 item without doing some researching and comparison? Would you invest that amount of money into an unknown fund or stock? Since the cost of a four-year college education is in that price range, THE COLLEGE VISIT is a must if you want to become a prudent and intelligent investor! Here are some things to keep in mind about visiting colleges:

1. Visitations should be prearranged. If possible, they should be made when school is in session and the students are there! When making arrangements for the visit, be specific about your personal needs and give the college(s) at least two weeks lead time to prepare for your arrival.
2. Visitation time should include ample opportunity for you to observe the students, tour the facilities, inquire about academic programs, and get a general "feel" for the campus. At least three to four hours is essential for a college visit. Driving by or driving through a campus is not a visit!
3. A checklist of things to do, places to see, and people to meet when you are planning your college visits is helpful.

BEFORE THE VISIT:

- Complete a New Albany planned absence form (3 permitted senior year)
- Email or call to confirm the visit time with the admission office
- Notify colleges of special requests, interests or needs you may have
- Verify appointments to meet with faculty member(s)
- Do your homework by reading any advance materials they send you or check out their website
- Request a meeting with the Financial Aid Office if desired

DAY OF AND DURING THE VISIT:

- Arrive well ahead of time, allow enough time to find a parking spot
- Eat and talk with the students. Sample the food -- you'll be eating it for 4 years!
- Be positive during your conversations. Let them be negative if they want to.
- Get a student newspaper -- read about current campus issues.
- If you have a question -- ask it! **TAKE NOTES!!**
- Before you leave make a list of the school's strong and weak points
- **Get the names or business cards of the people you meet**

AFTER THE VISIT:

- Send thank you notes to the people with whom you met (business cards).
- Complete your comparison chart of the colleges visited (record data quickly)
- Keep a file on each school (date of visit, application, communications, etc..)

No student should attend a college without visiting and no parent should send a son or daughter off to college without visiting either! Do family research. You are checking out a rather substantial investment!

Ask Questions on Your College Visit!

Questions to ask randomly selected students might include:

1. Are you happy to be here? If not -- why not?
2. Would you apply here if you had it to do over again?
3. What do you like most and least about this school?
4. If you could change anything here: what would you change?
5. What would you leave alone?
6. Is the classroom competition "cut throat" or supportive?
7. How do you find the residence halls, eating-places and scheduling?
8. Do full professors teach the classes and can you meet with them?
9. How big are the "big classes" and what is your "average size class"?
10. How did you end up at this college?
11. Is this a safe campus? Theft? What about the surrounding area?
12. What has surprised you the most since coming here?

You can also pick up "hints" about the personality of a college by noting your reception when you visit -- it will range from cold to cordial. What clothing items are carried in the school bookstore? What kind of vehicles are in the student parking lot? Those observations give a message about the general affluence of the student body. Observe other students' reactions to you and each other while they are on the way to classes -- do you get greetings or glares? Stressed or happy students? What are the "big" events on this campus? Do the students gather at a favorite spot? If so, visit that "spot" and observe. Count the number of their own college sweatshirts you see on those brisk fall and spring days. Are the students smiling, talkative, enthusiastic?

Do you see evidence of school pride or unity? Is there no doubt about the school colors or do you have to ask what they are? Are the library facilities computerized and are they linked with other libraries for more extensive researching possibilities? Are undergraduates allowed to use the more sophisticated research equipment? Is it a clean campus? What is the school newspaper talking about? Are there trees on this campus? Is everybody from New York, Ohio or Texas? Is the paint peeling or are the sidewalks cracked and broken? **Dorms:** Are they old, new, big, little, clean, trashed, cold, hot, windows, no windows, air-conditioned and don't forget to count electrical outlets in the room! **ASK and LOOK!** Remember, going here will cost big bucks!

A campus visit is like test-driving a vehicle. You would get behind the wheel of a car and take it on a road test before deciding to buy it -wouldn't you? "Test driving" discovers the personality of cars and colleges!

Notes for Students with a Learning Difference

First of all, understand the level of service you might receive from the college can vary greatly at the college you elect to attend. There are many colleges who have extraordinary programs for students with disabilities (We have listed some here). Your in-depth, thorough research is especially important to determine if the level of support will allow you to meet with success at college. We have put together a few tips below for students with disabilities:

1) You may apply for extra time on the ACT and/or SAT. There is an additional form to complete for each test and the determination for extended time is made by the testing agency, not New Albany. The testing agencies will review your IEP/504 and submitted documents to determine whether extended time will be granted.

ACT - There are two options - 50% extended time national testing at test centers and 100% extended time special testing at New Albany HS. Your disability will determine your accommodations. You will need to request for accommodations online through ACT every time you register for an ACT. You must apply by the regular deadline to be eligible for extended time and the school. Students on a 504 need to see their assigned counselor, and students on IEPs need to see Molly Salt to complete a release form. Please turn in the registration form (504 to counselors and IEPs to Ms. Salt) at least two weeks prior to any deadline. 504 release forms are available in the counseling center and IEP release forms are available in Ms. Salt's office.

SAT - You will complete the College Board's extended time application just once and will then receive a code which you can use to register for future exams with the accommodations you have been given. 504 students see your assigned counselor for the release form and IEP students need to see Molly Salt for the release form.

2) Many schools will have dedicated programs where students can receive accommodations, sometimes at an additional cost. The PLUS program at Muskingum, the SALT program at the University of Arizona, and Project EXCEL at the College of Mount St. Josephs are examples in which students receive exceptional support from the college in the form of tutoring, etc. You may need to apply to these programs separately.

3) Research the Office of Disability Services carefully to see what services are offered and how to take advantage of them. Most colleges will offer some type of services for students, but students will need to be advocates for themselves. Find out if the college provides the services that you require. **Schedule a meeting with the Office of Disability Services when you visit colleges.**

4) Apply to colleges early and to any special programs early. Applying early allows you to receive as much consideration as possible and also to take care of gathering any additional paperwork needed, MFE's, IEP's, medical reports, etc. *You may need to send IEP information separately and to apply separately to individual programs.*

5) Students must become their own self-advocate to succeed. Students who would like assistance at college should know the folks in the Office of Disability Services on a first name basis. It will be the student's responsibility to seek out assistance.

A Few Colleges that are Very Strong for Students with Disabilities

Adelphi University (NY)
U of Alabama - Birmingham
American International College (MA)
American University (DC)
U of Arizona - SALT program
Augsburg College (MN) - CLASS program
Barry University (FL) - CAL program
Bethany College (WV)
Centenary College (NJ)
Curry College (MA) - PAL program
Davis and Elkins College (WV)
U of Denver (CO) - LEP program
DePaul University (IL) - PLUS program
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Fairleigh Dickinson University (NJ)
Frostburg State (MD)
Gannon University (PA) - PSLD program
George Mason University (VA)
U of Hartford (CT) - Learning Plus program
Hofstra University (NY) - PALS program
U of Indianapolis (IN) - BUILD program
Iona College (NY) - CAP program
Landmark College (VT)
Lesley College (MA) - Threshold program
Lynn University (FL) - TAP program
Marshall University (WV) - HELP program
Mitchell College (CT) - LRC program
College of Mt. St. Joseph (OH) - Project EXCEL
Mercyhurst College (PA)
Muskingum College (OH) - PLUS program
New England College (NH)
University of New England (ME) - ILP program
U of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
U of North Texas
Southern Illinois University
Southern Vermont College
U of Tennessee at Chattanooga
University of Toledo (OH)
Ursuline College (OH)
U of Vermont
Vincennes University (IN) - STEP program
West Virginia Wesleyan College
Westminster College (MO)
Wingate College (NC)
U of Wisconsin
U of Wisconsin - Oshkosh
Wright State University (OH)

What You Should Know If You Want To Be A College Athlete

1. Be Realistic!

Understand that because you are a starter or because you might be a star at a small high school you may not be at the top of the college recruiter's list. Talk to your coaches to try to get an assessment of where they think you might be able to participate in college athletics. Include your club coaches and high school coaches in this process. College athletics is demanding to both your body and your academics, do your research to find the right fit for you.

2. Register for the NCAA Eligibility IF you want to play Division 1 or Division 2 College Athletics.

Division 1 schools are the ones we usually hear about; Ohio State, Michigan, North Carolina, UCLA, etc. They tend to be larger, but are not always large schools (ex. Xavier). Division 2 schools are usually smaller, but they can still offer athletic scholarships. **ONLY division 1 and 2 schools can offer athletic scholarships and many of these are partial scholarships!** For these schools you **MUST** register for the Eligibility Center to be eligible to play. The Eligibility Center gives you the academic stamp of approval (see next page).

Register in winter/spring of your junior year. Or NOW if a senior!

Register at www.eligibilitycenter.org/ Cost = \$100 (as of fall 2023)

3. Take your ACT/SAT at least once in junior year.

It simply gives you more options and choices as an athlete to begin your testing early. All juniors at NAHS will take the SAT in early spring, 2024.

4. Do as well as you can in school!

Good students have far more options in college athletics recruiting! You may also get scholarship money for academics!

5. Market Yourself!

Contact coaches directly with a letter and an athletic/academic resume or an e-mail. Some coaches may stick strictly to a region of the country or have a very small recruiting budget and so they may never find you! Help them find you. Visit www.ncaa.org to get great information on teams, leagues and records.

6. Work with and communicate with your high school/club coaches throughout the next year.

NCAA Core Eligibility Classes at NAHS (2023-24)

English

Introduction to Humanities -English
English 10 (CP & Honors)
English 11 (CP & Honors)
AP English 11
Intro to American Studies KC
English 12 (CP & Honors)
AP English 12
CSCC Comp 1&2
Intro to Literature & Language KC
Public Speaking (½ credit)
Creative Writing (½ credit)
Synergy (½ credit)

Social Studies

Introduction to Humanities - Soc Studies
World History
AP European History
American History (CP & AP)
Intro to American Studies KC
Government/Economics
AP Microeconomics
AP Government
Psychology
Sociology
The Quest for Justice KC
AP Psychology
AP Micro Economics
World Civilizations 1 & 2 CSCC
Critical Analysis of Vietnam War
Critical Analysis of Genocide

Math

Algebra 1
Algebra 1 Connections
Geometry (CP & Honors)
Geometry Connections
Algebra 2 (CP & Honors)
Algebra 2 Connections
Pre-Calculus (CP & Honors)
Calculus
Math 1, Math 2, Math 3

Math (cont.)

AP Calculus AB
AP Calculus BC
AP Statistics
Probability, Stats, and Discrete Math
College Algebra
Intro Math for Engineering App. WS
Advanced Quantitative Reasoning

Science

Honors Anatomy & Physio. Human Body
Biology (CP & Honors)
Hon Bio. with Biomed. Science
AP Biology
Physical Science
Physics (CP & Honors)
AP Physics 1
AP Physics 2
Chemistry (CP & Honors)
AP Chemistry
Environmental Science 1
ACS Chemistry
AP Environmental Science
Physical Geology (CP & CSCC)
Marine Biology
Senior Environmental Research (SERC)
Principles of Engineering
Zoology
Astronomy
Ecology

Additional Core Classes

Mandarin Chinese 1,2,3, & 4
Honors Mandarin Chinese 4
AP Chinese Language & Culture
French 1,2,3, & 4
Honors French 4
AP French
Spanish 1,2,3 & 4
Honors Spanish 4
AP Spanish

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

CLASS OF 2024

DATA AS OF 10/10/23
(6th Semester Data)

NUMBER IN CLASS: 363

***This number does not include students who have not yet received GPA at NAHS**

TOP GPA: 4.496

CUMULATIVE WEIGHTED GPAs

****NAHS does NOT report class rank to colleges****

Top 5%	4.3348
Top 10%	4.2400
Top 20%	4.0751
Top 1/3	3.9235
Top 1/2	3.6365

Section 4:



THE APPLICATION

Application Tips!

1. Be Accurate!

Use correct grammar and spell everything correctly. Always have another person look over your application before you submit it. Type essays and short answers in Word first, and then copy and paste into the application.

2. Your essay should be carefully crafted.

Write/rewrite/edit and review again. Did your personality come through? Can the way you think and feel come through?

3. Interview if given the chance to!

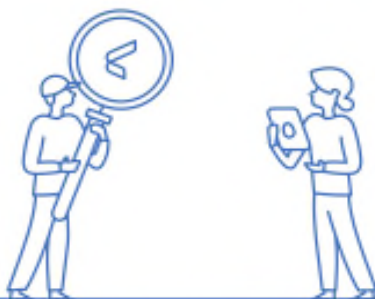
As you visit colleges this spring and summer many colleges will conduct interviews when you are on campus, particularly small colleges. Inquire about these as you schedule your visits.

4. Make contact with your admissions representative before/after applying

Affirm and reaffirm your sincere interest in the college with your representative. They are the person who will present you to the committee and they are the one you want to make your friend! Check in with them a few weeks after your application is sent to see if there is any other information they need and to make sure the application is complete.

5. Look out for each college's specific scholarship applications & find their deadlines. These will sneak up on you!

6. Print or download an electronic copy of your application for your records.



What is Common App?

Common App is a non-profit college access organization that helps students apply to college every year. Common App's free college application tool is designed to make applying to college faster and easier. With Common App you only need to use one system to apply to multiple colleges and universities. There are two main parts you fill out: a set of common questions and each college's own specific questions. The best part is you only have to fill out the common questions one time!

Common App is a place for you to learn about the college admissions process, understand how to plan and apply to college, and discover all that different colleges have to offer. It's a hub of information that can guide you through each step of the application journey. It's a resource that connects you with financial aid and scholarship opportunities.

Whatever questions you might have, we're here to help

Application guides to give you step-by-step instructions on completing your application.

A **college roadmap** designed to guide you toward your next destination — no matter where you start.

An **application dictionary** to help you understand the terminology related to college applications.

A **library of FAQs** to answer any question you may have, and a support team that's available **24/7/365**.

What's next

Visit commonapp.org to create your Common App account and start exploring colleges.

Common App at a glance

- More than 1,000 colleges and universities use Common App
- 250+ public colleges and universities
- 50+ international universities in 15+ countries
- 125+ MSIs
- 500+ without app fee
- 300+ test optional/flexible

Types of Admission Plans

Open Admissions - A school that admits every student who has met a set objective (usually a high school diploma).

Rolling Admissions - A school which has a Rolling Admissions policy admits students soon after they apply (generally 4-6 weeks). For instance, if you apply to a college which is a Rolling Admissions school in October you will likely know by December whether you have been admitted or denied.

Regular (or Single Notification Date) Admissions - This is used primarily by more selective institutions, though not always. In a Regular Admissions situation, a student applies to college by a prescribed deadline. The college then notifies that student of acceptance or denial around April 1st. Students then have until May 1st to make a decision.

REGULAR ADMISSIONS OPTIONS

EARLY DECISION (ED) - BINDING - This is an option some schools offer which will allow students to know of their acceptance or denial before April 1st. Students apply usually by November 1st - December 1st and are notified in December or January of the decision. It is **binding!!** If you are accepted, you **MUST** withdraw your other applications and accept this offer. **Students should only apply ED when they are sure that the college is their #1, first choice.** Generally, students have a slightly higher chance of getting in because the college knows that they are the student's first choice! You may **NOT** apply to more than one school ED.

EARLY ACTION (EA) - This is an option offered at some schools which allows students to apply early to a school, but they are not bound to that decision. Students apply early (generally in November) and then learn of their acceptance or denial usually in December or January. It is a way to notify colleges of your intention to attend their school if you are accepted early, though you are not locked into the decision as with ED.

ONE FINAL WORD: READ THE DETAILS VERY CAREFULLY!!!

Many colleges have some version of the above that may be their own hybrid. You will need to pay close attention to what the different plans are. You may see ED1, ED2, EA, Restricted Early Action, Single Choice EA, Early Notification, Rolling Admissions, etc. Read them carefully!

What Exactly is Early Decision?

It seems every time you open the newspaper or national magazines there is an article about applying to college as part of an Early Decision (ED) program. Claims about the importance of Early Decision range from small to extreme. So what is the truth? What exactly is ED? How much does ED affect admissions?

An Early Decision Program is a contract a student makes with the college which says "I will attend your college if you accept me." Students may apply to only one school ED. They may still apply to other colleges, but if accepted at their ED school they must attend that school. Students must apply early and they will hear back from the college early (usually on or about Dec. 15). Early Action programs are very different. In an Early Action (EA) Program students apply early and hear back from colleges early, but are not bound to attend that college.

So how much of an effect does all of this have on admissions? ED can have a definite effect at many schools, but not all. A recent study tried to put a number on this effect for most colleges. Their study showed that the effect of applying as an ED candidate gave the applicant the equivalent of an extra 100 SAT points. An EA candidate will see much less advantage if any at all, but they are not bound to a college.

Ultimately, the decision comes down to a very personal one. Your school counselor certainly will not even sign off on an ED application unless the student has visited. At New Albany, typically about 5-8% of a class will apply ED. Another 15-30% will apply EA. There are high schools (especially in the East) where 70% of the students apply ED. We do not think that percentage is healthy. High School students often change their mind over the period of several months (as many of us do). Students may feel certain of school X in September and get accepted, but then end up selecting school Y in April.

Does Early Decision Make Sense *for YOU*?

- ☐ I have visited several colleges and am absolutely sure this college is the one for me.
- ☐ I can afford this college.
- ☐ I am in a middle ground with admission. *Do not apply ED when you will clearly be accepted and do not apply ED when you have no chance for admission.*
- ☐ It is important to me to attend a selective college.

If you apply ED, do NOT put all of your eggs in one basket. Still be sure to apply to a range of schools including at least two safety schools. Be sure to still think in terms of *Every Choice* is a *First Choice*. You should still like all of the colleges to which you apply!!

5 ACTIONS TO COMPLETE YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

(2023-2024—Seniors Only)

ACTION 1 BUILD A GREAT LIST!

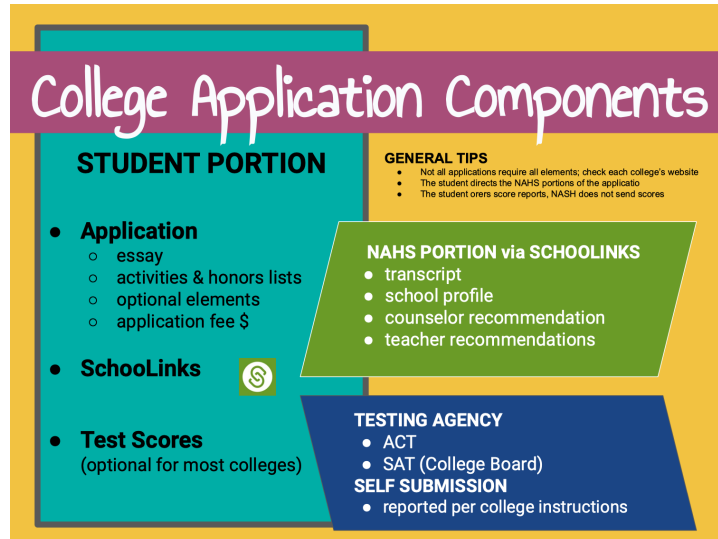
Have you identified schools you could see yourself attending? Do you have two safe schools you're sure will admit you & you would be happy to attend?

Most students apply to 4-8 colleges, we want you to have choices.

Create your list in **SchoolLinks** <https://youtu.be/6-MKaXFyym8>

- find the **"Colleges"** tab select **"School Search"** Explore colleges and "Favorite" colleges you are interested in and may apply to by *clicking on the heart*.
- find the **"Colleges"** tab select **"Final List"**. Add colleges to your final list designating if they are **Likely, Target** or **Reach** based on your profile.

Meet with visiting College Representatives! Look for visits in SchoolLinks events and listen to school announcements. Eventually sign up through SchoolLinks. Attend online visits available via college websites.



ACTION 2 COLLEGE APPLICATIONS & SCHOOLINKS

Apply to nearly all colleges online.

a) Directly through the college's website **OR**

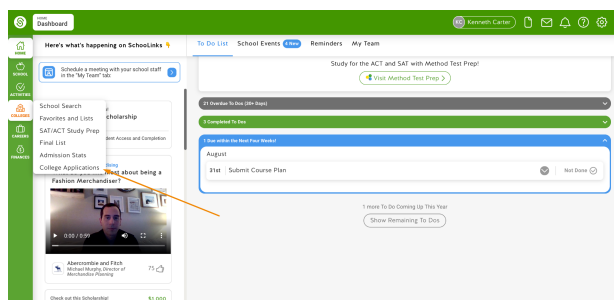
b) **The Common Application** www.commonapp.org

Connecting your **Common App** account to SchoolLinks requires the following 3 steps:

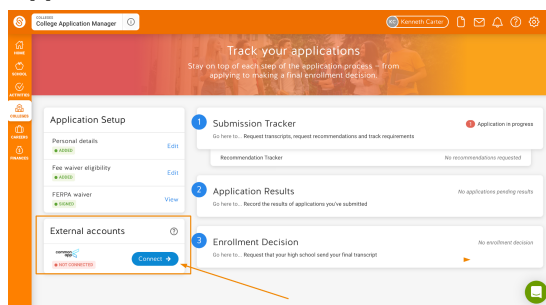
1. Linking your Common App Account

The first time that you use the **College Applications** manager in **SchoolLinks**, you will need to connect your **Common App** account.

Setting up Common App in SchoolLinks as a Student



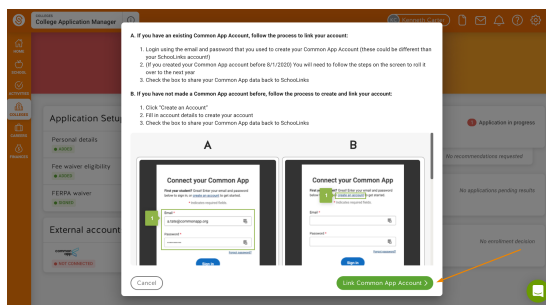
On the **College Applications** dashboard, click **Connect**.



You will see a list of instructions based on whether you

- A) have an existing Common App account or
- B) need to sign up for a Common App Account.

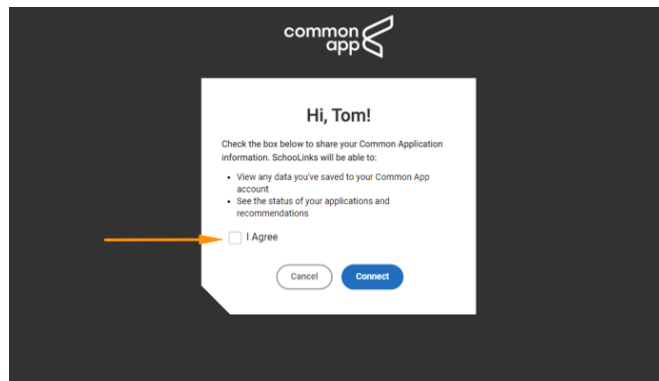
Click **Connect Common App Account** and Common App will open in a new tab.



Already have a Common App account? Login using the email and password you used to create your Common App account. **Note:** *If you created your Common App account before 8/1/2023, follow the steps on the screen to roll it over to next year.*

If you have NOT made a Common App account before, click “**Create an Account**” to fill in your account details and create a new account.

Check the box next to **I Agree** to confirm that you want to share your Common App data back to SchoolLinks. This is required to use Common App in SchoolLinks.



Once you have successfully linked your Common App account, you will be redirected back to SchoolLinks. You will now see your status as “Connect” on your External accounts card!

2. Adding New Albany High School

The next step in setting up your Common App account is adding New Albany High School. This helps Common App know where your application will be coming from.

- a. On the **College Applications** dashboard, *click **Login** in the bottom left section* to access Common App. *If you have already completed the previous step of linking your account, Common App should be open in a different tab.*
- b. On the **Common App** website, *go to the **Common App** tab and click open the **Education** section. Then click **Find School**.*
- c. *Find and select **New Albany High School** and click **continue**.*
- d. *Make sure your High School is correct. Otherwise, teachers and counselors will not be able to submit recommendations.*

3. Adding your first Common App School and Completing FERPA Authorization

Now that you have your account set up, let's add your first school! This will also allow you to complete the step of FERPA Authorization which must be done when you add your first school.

- a. On the **College Applications** dashboard, *click **Submission Tracker**.*
- b. *Select a school from your **Final List** to start tracking. You can also click **Add School** to search for additional colleges to track.*
- c. *Select the **Application Method** as **Common App**. Click **Save Application** to continue setting up this application*
- d. *Click **Add College to Common App** -the Common App will open in a new tab*
- e. *Login to your **Common App** account (if you're not already logged in)*
- f. *You will see this college added to the list of schools on your dashboard. Click into the school.*
- g. *Click on the **Questions** section under “**Application**” and complete the “**General**” section, particularly the “**Preferred start term**” & “**Preferred Admission Plan**” to establish a deadline for this application.*

Now that you’ve added this school to your applications in Common App, you can continue to apply through Common App with the results and status tracked through SchoolLinks!

Note: If you already added schools in Common App prior to linking your accounts, these will be added to your submissions tracker during the sync.

But let's not celebrate just yet - you'll need to complete the FERPA Authorization if you want to be able to request Teacher Evaluations for Common App.

- Go to the "**Recommenders & FERPA**" of this application. If you have not already added New Albany High School to the **Common App** tab, you will be prompted to do this first. See "**Adding your High School**" for additional instructions
- In the "**Recommenders & FERPA**", click **Complete Release Authorization**. Review the instructions about waiving rights. Selecting "**I waive my right to review . . .**" will allow teachers and counselors to submit confidential documents on your behalf. Once you add your signature, click Save and Close.
- Click back into the **SchoolLinks** tab on your browser and click "**Refresh Page**" in the popup.

You can now begin tracking your application on SchoolLinks!

ACTION 3 TRANSCRIPTS: SchoolLinks Application Manager

- Log into your **SchoolLinks** account, hover over the **Colleges** icon and click **College Applications**.
- Click the **pencil icon** next to the college (either under Incomplete or Completed & pending).
- New application? Click on "**Add application from list**" in the top-left, fill in the details of the type of application, and click **Save Application**.
- Next, you'll see the **application details** page. Notice that any required documents from counselors (like initial and midyear transcripts) **are automatically requested**. If there's something you would like added to this list, *reach out to your counselor* in the **Message Center**.

View history and status of requested documents by clicking **Show History** for more details. *Once the transcript is sent and viewed by the college you will see a Doc ID available from Parchment:*

Method: ApplyTexas | Type: Priority | Deadline: Jun 01 | Destination: In Network

STUDENT CHECKLIST

- Applying for Financial Aid? ☒ Yes ☐ No
- Submit Application ☐ Submit your application forms and any required essays.
- FAFSA Submission ☐ Complete your FAFSA and set up this school to receive your application on the School Selection Page.
- Test Scores ☐

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

3 Optional

Instructions from college: You will not need to send letters of recommendation with your application unless additional information is requested of you by an Admissions Counselor and is necessary to evaluate your application for admission to the university. If letters of recommendation or an essay are required, you will receive a letter from an Admissions Counselor requesting those documents. At that time, you should submit your essay and ask the appropriate people to submit letters of recommendation directly to our office. Letters of recommendation should be submitted by your high school counselor and two teachers.

[Request Teacher Recommendation](#)

COUNSELOR DOCUMENTS

We've researched what documents are required and automatically requested them from your counselor.

- Transcript**
 - ☒ Sent via Parchment (Doc ID: **XXXXXXXXXX**) 10/08/2021 by L...
 - ☐ Fulfilled 09/13/2021 by L...
 - ☒ Added 10/06/2021 as preset

[Hide history](#)

[Request Counselor Document](#)

ACTION 4

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (LOR) -only if needed!

Important Notes:

- **Many colleges DO NOT require a LOR** such as OU, Kent, BGSU, Akron, OSU.
- *Please DO NOT request a LOR if your colleges do not ask one.*
- Many colleges limit # of LORs. For example, OSU only takes 1! Therefore, DO NOT ask for more than will be accepted by your college(s)!
- **NAHS does not release LORs to students.**
- Teachers spend a lot of time outside of school hours writing on behalf of students. Please use your very best, most genuine manners when asking for letters and for showing gratitude.
- Provide teachers a copy of a resume or a list of your activities, sports, volunteer service, your intended major (even if undecided), etc.
- **ONLY NAHS staff can submit LORs through SchoolLinks.** If your recommender is not on NAHS staff, provide them with a link via common app or give them an addressed, stamped envelope to send the LOR directly to the college. Include a hard copy of any forms required.

Requesting a Teacher Recommendation (LOR)

All teacher recommendations (referred to as Teacher Evaluations in Common App) will be requested through SchoolLinks.

- Log onto **SchoolLinks**, click the **College** icon on the left navigation sidebar, then select **College Applications** from the drop-down menu.
- Click on the **pencil icon** of the college you want to request a teacher evaluation for.
- **Warning:** If you have not completed your FERPA Authorization for Common App, you will be required to do so before requesting teacher evaluations. If you have not completed your FERPA authorization, the following prompt will direct you to log in to Common App.
- In the **"Teacher Evaluations"** column, any required evaluations will be outlined in red. You will need to add a **"Recommender"** (the person filling out your Teacher Evaluation) for each required evaluation.

a. Request an new evaluation from a NAHS teacher/staff member

Search for them by name in the search field. If you choose this method, you will need to select the subject for which you would like an evaluation.

b. Choose an existing teacher evaluation/LOR to assign to this application

If you have already requested a teacher evaluation for another college, you can assign an existing teacher evaluation to this school. These teachers will show up as Pending, Declined, or Fulfilled depending on the status of the already submitted recommendation.

Request an evaluation from a new teacher who has a SchoolLinks account

c. Request an evaluation from someone outside of NAHS who does NOT have a SchoolLinks account.

*-click **Add them Manually**.* Provide their First and Last Name, Email, and Subject to request an evaluation from them. You will again need to select their subject in order to continue. Note: You must use the search first in order to see this option.

ACTION 5

SEND TEST SCORES TO COLLEGES

-if required/desired

[List of Test Optional Colleges](#) -Class of 2024

<https://fairtest.org/test-optional-list/>

To send test scores to colleges

- log into your ACT or College Board accounts
- follow the prompts to send the reports.
- ACT & College Board send score reports in batches. It is not an immediate process. To assure scores are received by the college deadline, **order reports weeks in advance!**

ACT: www.actstudent.org

SAT, Subject Tests, AP:

www.collegeboard.org

Note: ACT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests & AP scores are NOT listed on NAHS transcripts.

THE COLLEGE ESSAY or PERSONAL STATEMENT

If your application gives you the opportunity to write an essay – **do it!** The essay gives you a chance to add a personal touch to your application process. So, how do you make yours stand out from the rest?

The essay is your voice. It needs to add life, breath, vitality and feeling to an otherwise cold, fact-filled document. A good one becomes the heart of the application and pumps personality into an otherwise impersonal form. **The ESSAY is the most critical bit of personal communication in your application packet – more important than recommendations and more important than your counselor's comments!** They can be the difference between getting in or being rejected. Now, what should you write about?

If the application does not give you a list of essay topics, only your imagination and creativity limit you. Good essay topics are limitless. They relate or describe experiences, ideas, aspirations and feelings. Good essays are meaningful expressions of personal experiences or situations. Your essay should be filled with your passion, feelings, thoughts, values and visions. Be careful, an essay is not a travel log and does not declare that the applicant's life or death depends on the decision of the admissions committee reading it! **A good essay allows the reader to see who you are and understand what you are!** What values do you hold or what principles would you be willing to fight for? What are you determined to accomplish in your lifetime? How do you want to be remembered?

Your organization skills, ability to express thoughts, creativeness, imagination and writing expertise must be consistently displayed throughout the essay. Good essays are not cute, brash, blaming or caustic. They require work and do not magically appear. Carefully edited and to the point, good essays reflect an understanding of the rules of writing. They are begun, developed and finished with a purpose in mind. Good essays take time to develop and almost all evolve slowly! How do you begin?

- What do you want to write about? – begin by jotting down possible ideas
- How will you say it? – organize your thoughts by preparing an outline
- Start the writing, editing, re-writing, re-editing process -- it's now a draft
- Read it aloud several times -- does it sound like it should? Does it say what you want it to say?
- Ask several people to react to it (a peer, a parent, an English teacher, etc.)
- Rewrite it, re-read it, critique it, refine it – make it the best you can!

Essay Writing Tips

1. There are no right or wrong answers!
2. Answer the question that is asked.
3. Be well organized in the essay. Is there a beginning, middle and end?
4. Support your main ideas with examples. Show, don't tell.
5. Is it coherent? Does it flow and make sense?
6. Don't try to cover too much, rather focus on a specific idea.
7. Be grammatically correct - Proofread three times!
8. Get a second and third opinion, but remember that it is your essay.
9. Make it your voice - Feel free to use wit and humor (just not too much).
10. When in doubt, keep it simple.
11. Make it personal to you.

Essays for Common Application 2023-2024

(select one!)

Essay #1: Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

Is there something that has shaped you into the person you are today? It could be small or big. If you have had a major life event, this topic may be the perfect place to tell that story.

Essay #2: The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

This story is not about the obstacle, but about how you dealt with it and grew from it. It is OK to be personal (reasonably so) and to use a real obstacle. This is not the place for a “sort of failure that really sounds positive.” Everyone fails at something; how you handle it tells a lot about a person.

Essay #3: Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?

A tougher prompt than many others. This may require some soul searching. Can you remember standing up for a belief or an idea, perhaps at the family dinner table or out with friends? You may find a good story when you think more about it.

Essay #4: Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you? Think creatively about what you appreciate in your life. It can be a physical gift, an action, or even just a set of feelings projected in your direction. You can be familiar with the person who has inspired your gratitude, or simply reflect on the actions of a stranger. This essay is a great chance to share how you relate to others in the world, and how you repurpose good intentions.

Essay #5: Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

This is a great essay to tell a story in. This can be almost any topic and lends itself beautifully to your own life. This event can be small or big. One student wrote about a small moment she had in a car when she looked in the rearview mirror and realized she had become the person she wanted to be and it was outstanding. If you think, truly think, you can find many great topics for this essay.

Essay #6: Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more? Many students have a passion project or a research area that they are really into. This would be a great essay topic for them. Make sure to answer all of the questions in this prompt though!

Essay #7: Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Sample Essays (from the past)

The “YOU” Question (or tell us about yourself)

“Please complete a one-page personal statement and submit it with your application” **James Madison University**

“Give us your top ten list.” **Wake Forest University**

“Why do you do what you do?” **UNC Chapel Hill**

“Undergraduates at Emory and Oxford Colleges are offered countless opportunities to engage with the student body, the faculty, and your academic program of choice – from hands-on research to student organizations to volunteering. What are some of the programs and/or activities you would plan to get involved with on either campus, and what unique qualities will you bring to them?”
Emory University

Your approach: This direct question offers a chance for you to reveal your personality, insight, and commitment. Focus on specifics and try not to be too broad in your scope.

The “Why Us?” Question

“Why is UVM a good college choice for you?”
University of Vermont

“We would like to know what experiences have led you to select your professional field and objective.”
Boston University

Your approach: Make sure you know your subject well. Do your homework on the school, be sure it offers the major you say you are interested in. Don’t describe the pretty campus – be substantive. *This may be the most important essay in your application!*

The “Creative” Question

“Do you believe there is a Generation Gap? Describe the differences between your generation and others.”
Denison University

“Dog and Cat. Coffee and Tea. Great Gatsby and Catcher in the Rye. Everyone knows there are two types of people in the world. What are they?”
U of Chicago

“What’s your favorite word and why?” **U of Virginia**

“In the spirit of adventurous inquiry, pose a question of your own. If your prompt is original and thoughtful, then you should have little trouble writing a great essay. Draw on your best qualities as a writer, thinker, visionary, social critic, sage, citizen of the world, or future citizen of the University of Chicago; take a little risk, and have fun.” **U of Chicago**

Your approach: This is your chance to be creative. Just don’t forget to write an informed essay with accurate facts and grammar. When thinking about how creative to get, use your common sense. Being too creative or wacky won’t always help you.

College Essay Help

English teachers will be available to work with students by appointment.

Students should email teachers to set up appointments during:

- Office Hours from 7:30am – 7:40am
- After school from 2:15pm - 3:00pm
- Study centers if teacher is available
 - PSAT day

Susan Fischer, a former admission counselor, will be reading essays for seniors on October 4th and 18th. She will be available from 1:00-2:30. Slots will be available on a first-come, first serve basis.

Counselors are also available to read essays during their Drop-in Days.

College Essay Free Resources

How to Write a College Essay Step-by-Step: The Ultimate Guide

21 Essay Topics and Ideas

9 Ways To Start Your Essay

Revising

Personal Statement Examples

The Super Essay (Combining Prompts to Save Time)

The “Why Us” Essay

The “Extracurricular Activity” Essay

The Great College Essay Test

Recommendation Letters

Recommendation letters from teachers can be a valuable part of your student profile. They tell a college what kind of student you are and how you fit into our school setting. They can also tell the college what kind of athlete, musician, or humanitarian you are depending on who you have write them. Not all colleges require recommendation letters, but most will accept them. Some will require one, others three. I have enclosed some general guidelines regarding recommendation letters:

1. Ask someone who will write positively about you!

This may sound terribly obvious, but it often happens that a student asks a teacher or staff member who may not know the student well or is not inclined to write positively about them for reasons of convenience (passed the teacher in the hallway), etc. **Remember that the teacher's recommendation is confidential and will not be shown to you.** To be sure you have a positive recommender ask "Would you be comfortable writing a positive letter of recommendation for me?"

2. Ask someone to write about you who knows you well!

Students often think the principal or a senator will carry more weight in recommendation letters than teachers. This can be true if that person knows you well. If that is a person you've only met a couple of times and their letter is generic, it hurts you! Someone who knows you well and can relate a specific story or describe your behavior and attitude on a daily basis gives you the best possible chance for admission.

3. Ask at least TWO WEEKS in advance for your letter.

Never, never ask someone to write a letter the day before it is due! This is the single best way to get a poor letter of recommendation or a generic one.

4. AFTER you have asked your teacher directly, log into SchooLinks to request your recommendation be sent electronically.

Some teachers schedule an interview or ask for a resume before they write a letter for you so that they can get to know you better.

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW: AN OPPORTUNITY!

PURPOSE:

To give students an opportunity to

- talk about their accomplishments, interests, aspirations and reasons for attending college.
- ask questions specifically about the college and its programs.
- be their own best salesperson.
- it also allows the admission counselor to put a name, face, and application together

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW:

- **Prepare a resume.** This will help you organize things about your life, experience and education and then put them on paper. Take your resume with you to the interview. It will help the interviewer and encourage questions about your strengths or interests.
- Research the school thoroughly online.
- Schedule your visit and interview well in advance (re-check the date, time and location).
- Allow ample time to get there! Be on time! Parking is a major problem at most colleges!
- Dress appropriately! Blue jeans, tank tops and tee-shirts do not make a positive impression. On the other hand, a suit or dress might be overdoing it especially if the interview is going to be followed by a tour and visit to the new campus activity center.
- Introduce yourself with a firm handshake when you arrive at the admissions office. Let them tell you what you should do next! If they're behind schedule, show them how patient you can be!

DURING THE INTERVIEW:

- **RELAX** and think before you speak! When they ask the first questions, which most likely will be about you or your family, give them answers using a sentence or two. For example, if they ask, "Do you have any brothers or sisters?", let them know how many, their ages, where they go to school or what they are doing. Do not answer questions with short phrases or a single word!
- **Be confident** (not arrogant), honest, and natural. (It is OK to smile and laugh.)
- **Be willing to talk about yourself** – both strengths and weaknesses!
- **Ask your share of questions when given the opportunity! We would even suggest writing down 2-3 questions so that you can remember them when you need them.**

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO ASK MIGHT INCLUDE:

- How large will my freshman classes be on this campus?
- What majors do the students most often select here? .. least often?
- If I do not understand a concept, how easy will it be for me to see my professor outside of class time?
- Will professors be teaching all my classes here?
- How do I find out about campus activities, clubs and associations I might want to join?
- Will there be opportunities for me to co-op, intern, or experience job situations in my area of major?
- Are there activities planned for the entering freshmen?
- Are there campus traditions here? What makes them special?
- How hard is it to declare a major, switch a major or double major?
- What do the students do on weekends? Where do they go?

AFTER THE INTERVIEW:

Write a Thank You Note containing at least two specific recollections from the interview and send it directly to the person with whom you talked! For Example: I appreciate your advice about the dorms and which activities seem to be best suited to my interests and needs.

IN SUMMARY:

- Be confident – not arrogant!
- Admit both strengths and weaknesses.
- Accept compliments with a "thank you."
- Accept responsibility for your records, grades, etc.. Do not blame others. If you do, they will nail you!
- When you run out of questions say so. Remember -- a winner talks until the point is made – a loser until the point is dulled!

“Hooks” at Ultra-Selective Colleges

Admission at many “**Ultra-Selective**” colleges (*admit less than 30% of the applicants*) is anything but certain for even valedictorians and students with perfect test scores.

Decisions often hinge on many other factors including what contributions the students can make to the school and what is needed at that particular school that year. If you are a great applicant who happens to be a recruitable quarterback or oboe player and this year’s quarterback or oboe player is graduating, it might be your year. If the best quarterback or best oboe player is a sophomore, it might not be your year.

“**Hooks**” are characteristics that make you stand out in the application process. Students with “hooks” have a far higher likelihood of acceptance than those without them. At the most selective schools in the country, perhaps 10% of the great quality applicants are admitted. After reviewing applications and taking legacy admits, athletes, special situation students, etc., the real rate of admission for an “unhooked” student may be more like 5%. I have listed below some common “hooks” selective colleges look at:

Legacy Admits: If a parent has attended a very selective school, you may well have an advantage in the admissions process. Legacy students are accepted at a significantly higher rate than non-legacy applicants at SOME colleges, but not all. Being a legacy is far from a guarantee of admission, but it can certainly help.

Athletes: Very good athletes who also happen to be excellent students are a sought after commodity for ultra-selective universities. Student-athletes must meet academic index scores at many colleges to be considered for admission. Once a student is determined admissible, then that athlete has a far higher chance of admission than many other applicants. Coaches often seek to intercede on behalf of athletes in the admission process, and they are often successful!

Talent: You may have a special talent. It could be musical talent, acting, science, etc. Ultra-Selective colleges are looking for exceptional, national level talent in a variety of areas. If you have this level of talent, don’t hide it!

Minority Status: Many colleges look for underrepresented minorities to build a diverse college class. This could certainly reflect ethnic minorities such as Native American, Latino, and African American students, but it also reflects a variety of other possibilities such as students from Wyoming or females majoring in engineering.

The Unusual: Famous applicants like child actors, donors to the university, children of prominent politicians, and even students who have a fascinating background of poverty or hardship will often stand out from other applicants to these types of schools as well.

If you came to this page looking for fairness, we apologize. The reality of admission to these 1% of all colleges is a bit mysterious and frustrating to many students. If you have a “hook,” explore it, if not follow your heart and build a great list!

Winning the Heart of the Admission Counselor

There are many things you can do to improve your chances for admission if you are close in the admission process. The ideas listed here will work far better for you at smaller schools rather than larger state universities. Smaller schools rely on student engagement and have the time to look beyond numbers to see the match between the school and the student.

- 1) **Visit!** Visiting the school allows you to see it first-hand to find out if it is a match or not. The college also tracks this information, so they know whether you have visited. ALWAYS schedule your visit through admissions and take the student led tour!! Students who have visited are more likely to be admitted! **You can still be admitted if you have not visited, see the rest of the list, especially number 4.**
- 2) **Discover what interests you about a particular college and be able to articulate it.** Colleges are looking for students who will be great matches both academically and socially. These students are more successful in and out of the classroom. Be able to describe why school X is a great match for you.
- 3) **Write an essay that shows who you are and why the school fits you.** Your essay need not be brilliant, but it needs to let the admission counselor understand who you are, why you fit the school, and what you will contribute to their school. “Why us” essays are particularly important in this way.
- 4) **Meet the Admission Counselor and develop a relationship with them.** Ideally when your application arrives the admission counselor will already know you and have met with you or conversed with you. Admission representatives will visit our school this fall and are often available to meet with you when you visit the college. **ALWAYS attend the high school visit by a college that you have high interest in.** This gives you individual time with the admission representative. There is no quicker way to fall into disfavor than to miss one of these meetings with no other contact. You can also phone or email them, just don’t become a stalker!
- 5) **Interview if given the opportunity.**
- 6) **Consider applying Early Decision.** At most schools with an Early Decision plan you will have the best opportunity for admission when you apply as an Early Decision candidate.
- 7) **Demonstrate interest in your top colleges!** Visiting, meeting admission representatives, interviewing, Early Decision, emails, and phone calls are all forms of notifying colleges of your interest. Colleges track this information and it may come in useful for an admission representative to help “get you through committee.”
- 8) **Don’t let your parents do all of the talking for you!** Take charge and be the one who initiates conversation. Introduce yourself with a firm handshake. You will attend college, not your parents. If a question arises, make sure you are making the call or sending the email to the college, not your parents.

Notes