

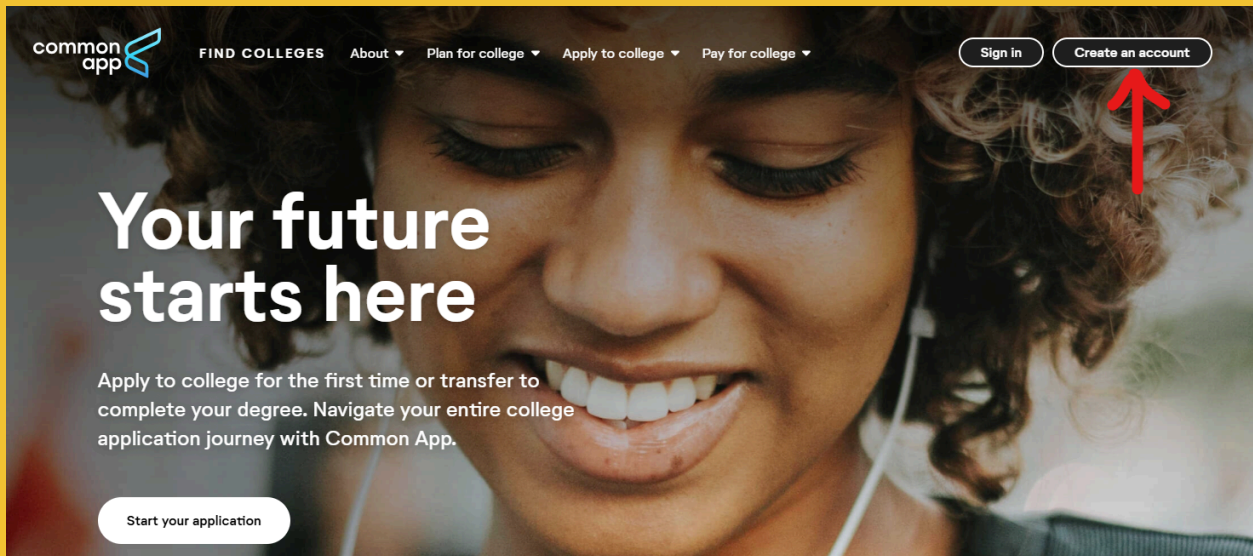


DHHS College Application Guidebook

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Creating a Common Application Account

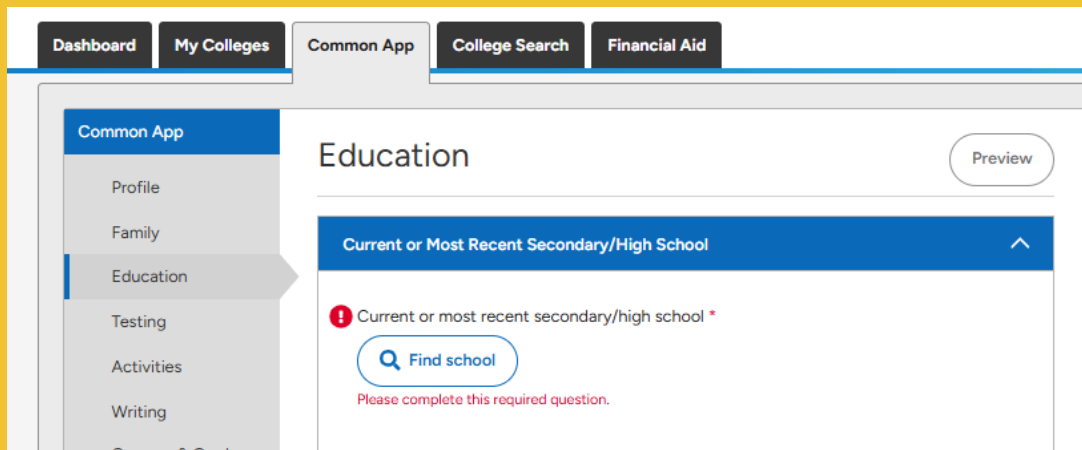
- ★ Visit www.commonapp.org
 - Click “create account” in the top right corner of the screen
 - Enter required information
 - Keep your username/password in an accessible location- you will be logging in frequently



Completing FERPA Release Authorization

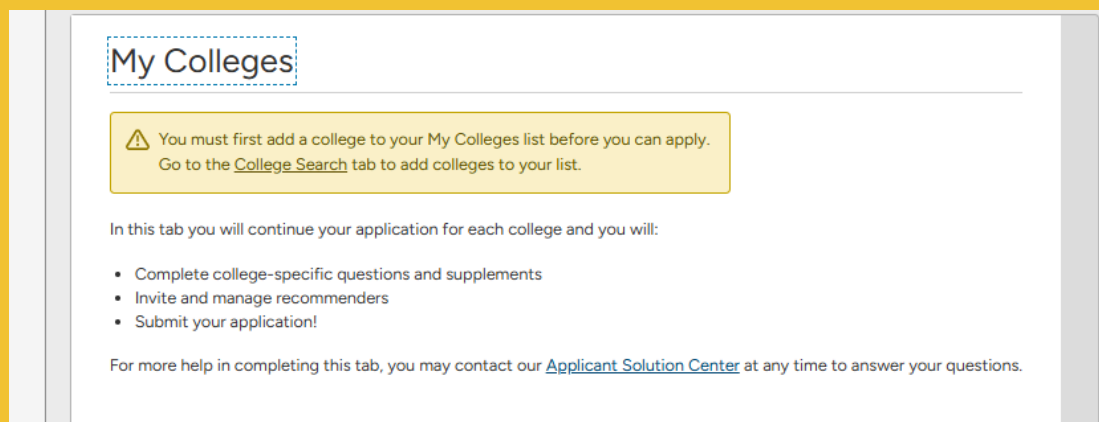
Complete these steps Common App steps *ASAP*, prior to working on the rest of application:

- ★ Add DHHS in the “Education” section



The screenshot shows the Common App interface. At the top, there are tabs: Dashboard, My Colleges, Common App (selected), College Search, and Financial Aid. On the left, a sidebar menu lists: Common App, Profile, Family, Education (highlighted), Testing, Activities, and Writing. The main content area is titled 'Education' and has a 'Preview' button. Below the title is a section header 'Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School' with an upward arrow. A red error message states: 'Current or most recent secondary/high school *'. Below this is a 'Find school' button with a magnifying glass icon. A red note at the bottom says: 'Please complete this required question.'

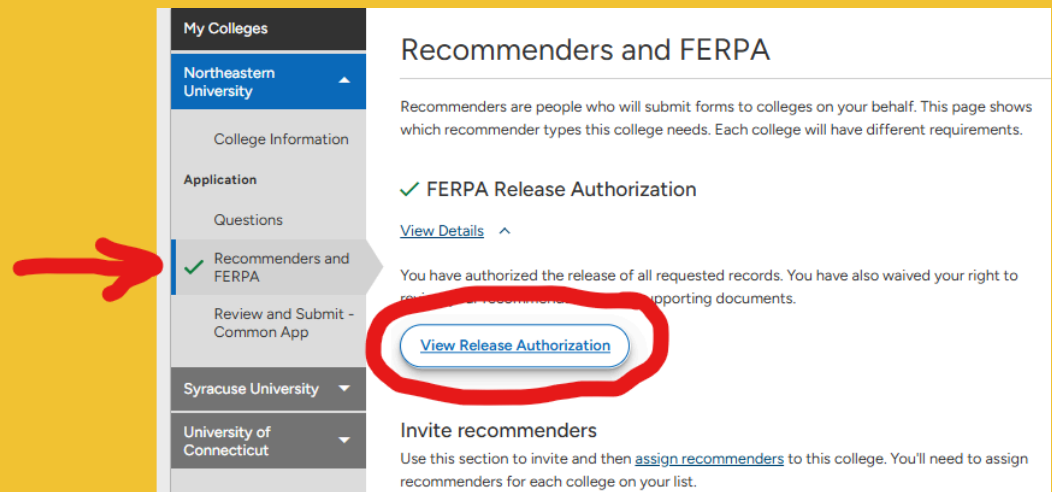
- ★ Add at least one college to “My Colleges”



The screenshot shows the 'My Colleges' section of the Common App. The title 'My Colleges' is at the top. Below it is a yellow warning box with a triangle icon: 'You must first add a college to your My Colleges list before you can apply. Go to the [College Search](#) tab to add colleges to your list.' Below the warning box, text reads: 'In this tab you will continue your application for each college and you will:'. A bulleted list follows: 'Complete college-specific questions and supplements', 'Invite and manage recommenders', and 'Submit your application!'. At the bottom, text says: 'For more help in completing this tab, you may contact our [Applicant Solution Center](#) at any time to answer your questions.'

★ Complete your FERPA Release Authorization

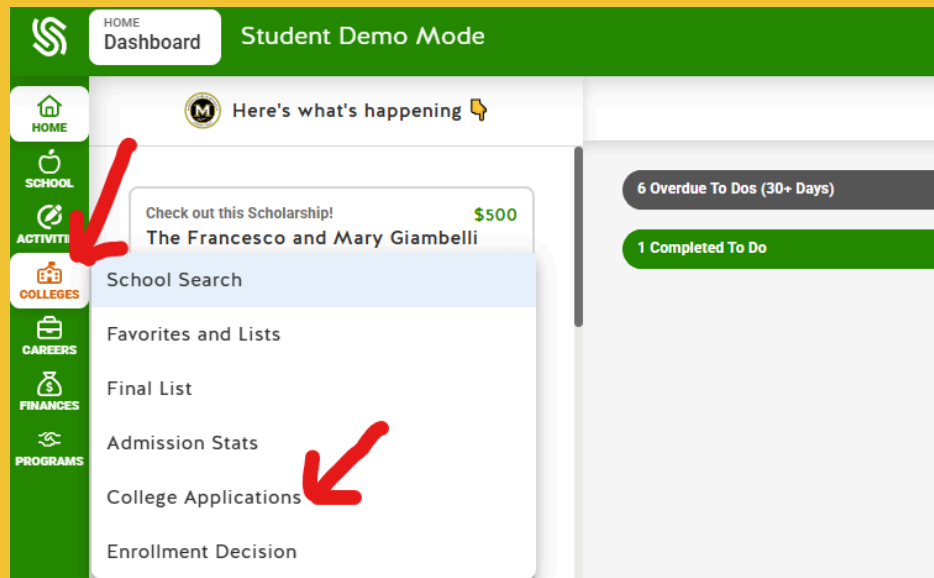
- Click on “My Colleges” and select any school on the left side of the page
- Click on Recommenders and FERPA, then View Release Authorization



- Follow instructions and complete the form
 - You only need to do this once- you will not complete the form for every college
 - It is suggested that you waive your right to review all recommendations so the admissions team is assured they are receiving a candid evaluation from your teacher

Setting up College Application Manager in SchoolLinks

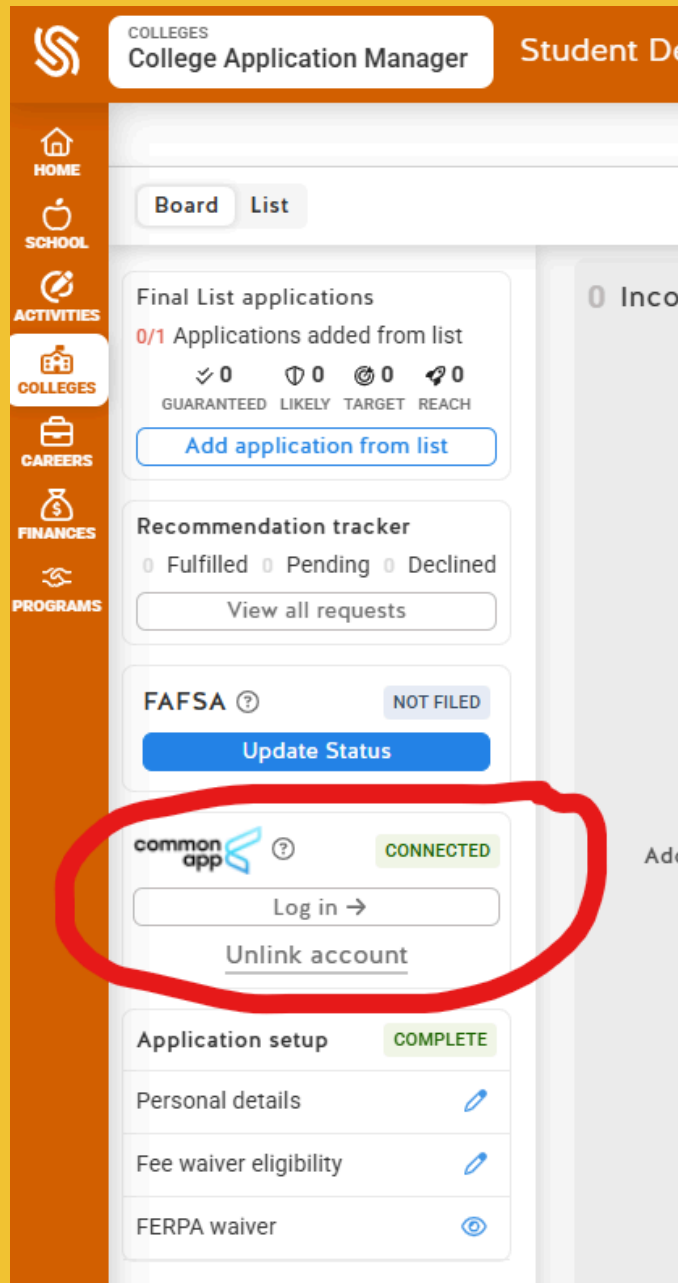
- ★ Log in to your SchoolLinks account (remember to sign in with your Madison Google account)
- ★ Click “Colleges” then select “College Applications”



- ★ Follow the instructions and complete the required information
 - If you qualify for a fee waiver (ex: you receive free/reduced lunch), check the appropriate box so your application fees can be waived
- ★ Complete the FERPA waiver
 - SchoolLinks requires you to complete a FERPA waiver that is similar to the Common App FERPA Release Authorization
 - As suggested with your Common App, it is recommended that you waive your right to review recommendation letters
 - It is **essential** that you select the same option you selected when signing the Common App FERPA, regardless of whether or not you waive your right to review letters

Linking Common App to SchooLinks

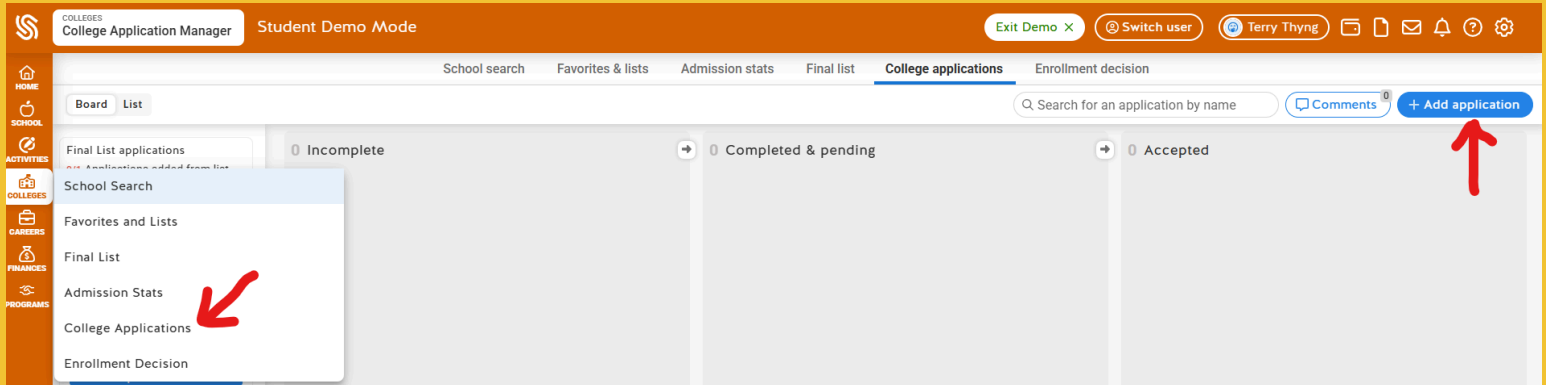
- ★ Under “Colleges” click the “Connect” tab to link your accounts
- ★ A new window will open and you will need to login to your Common App account
- ★ Once you agree to link the accounts, all colleges listed on your Common App will appear on your SchooLinks application list



Adding Non-Common App colleges

★ Add colleges that do not accept the Common App to your SchoolLinks college list

- Under “Colleges” click “College Applications” and then click on the “Add application” tab at the top right of the screen

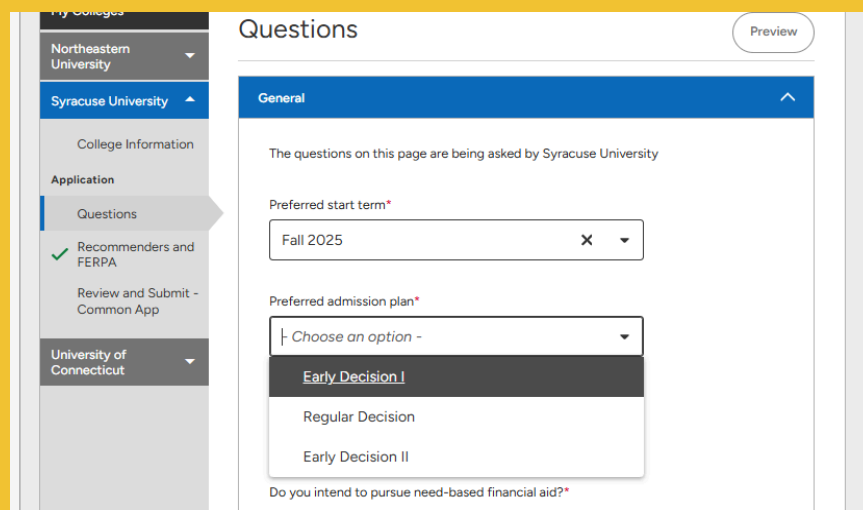


- Choose the “application method” and the “application type”

A screenshot of the 'Endicott College' application form. The header shows the college name 'Endicott College' with a logo, and links for 'Admissions', 'Application Info', and 'Financial Aid'. Below the header, there is a section for 'Application status' showing 'In Progress' with an edit icon. A message box states: 'We've added the application method, application type and document destination available for this college. If you can't find the option you're looking for, let us know in the chat.' The 'Application Method' section has a single option, 'School-specific online app', which is selected and highlighted with a blue border. The 'Application Type' section has four options: 'Early Action Nov 1', 'Early Action II Dec 15', 'Early Decision Nov 1', and 'Regular Decision Feb 15'. Below these is an 'Application deadline' section with a dropdown menu labeled 'Select month and day' and a calendar icon. The 'Doc Destination' section is partially visible at the bottom.

Requesting Teacher Recommendations on SchoolLinks

- ★ Prior to requesting teacher recommendations, login to your Common App and select your admission plan (early decision, early action, regular decision) for each college on your list so the teacher will know your deadline
 - You will find this in the “Questions” section on Common App for each college- it is typically one of the first questions under “general”
 - You do not need to complete ALL of the questions prior to requesting recommendations, you just need to select your admission plan

The screenshot shows the 'Questions' section for Syracuse University on the Common App. On the left is a navigation sidebar with options: 'My Colleges' (showing Northeastern University and Syracuse University), 'College Information', 'Application' (with sub-options: 'Questions' (highlighted), 'Recommendations and FERPA', and 'Review and Submit - Common App'), and 'University of Connecticut'. The main content area is titled 'Questions' and has a 'Preview' button. Under the 'General' tab, it states 'The questions on this page are being asked by Syracuse University'. There are two required questions: 'Preferred start term*' with a dropdown menu showing 'Fall 2025', and 'Preferred admission plan*' with a dropdown menu showing 'Early Decision I' (selected), 'Regular Decision', and 'Early Decision II'. At the bottom, there is a question 'Do you intend to pursue need-based financial aid?*'.

- ★ On SchoolLinks, click “Colleges” in the side navigation bar, then select “College Applications”
 - Click on the pencil icon next to the application for which you want to request a teacher recommendation
 - Find the “Teacher Recommendations” column and click “Add Recommender”
 - Search for your teacher and click “Add Recommender”
 - The number of recommendations required and/or accepted will be listed here- if the college only accepts one letter, **YOU MAY ONLY SEND ONE LETTER**, so be sure to select the teacher whose recommendation you actually want the college to receive
 - You will need to request teacher recommendations for each college application *separately*
 - if you add additional colleges to your list at any point, you will need to come back and request teacher recommendation for each of those colleges

Managing Outside Recommendations

- ★ If someone outside DHHS (ex: coach, employer, retired teacher) is providing a recommendation, you will need to follow alternate procedures to ensure your letter is received by the college
 - Click “Add them manually” at the bottom of the search results
 - Note: the “Add them manually” option only appears after you search using the search bar
 - Add all of the required information, then click “Add Recommender”

The screenshot shows the 'College Application Manager' interface for Rice University. A modal window titled 'SELECT TEACHER' is open, allowing the user to choose a teacher for a recommendation. The modal has two tabs: 'SELECT TEACHER' (active) and 'ADD DETAILS'. Under 'Select the recommendation type', there are two options: 'General (Most common)' (selected) and 'College-specific'. Below this, the user is prompted to 'Select a teacher to complete a recommendation for Rice University'. A search bar contains the text 'james'. Below the search bar, two teacher entries are listed: 'Alice James' with email '388b1212944e2c7d329ecc2e03c75422@sl.com' and 'Ben James' with email 'kristamahoney@gmail.com'. The 'Ben James' entry is highlighted. Below the list, there is a link that says 'Don't see your teacher listed? [Add them manually](#)'. At the bottom of the modal, there is a 'Cancel' button and a 'Next →' button. A note at the bottom of the modal states: 'Counselor recommendations are automatically requested if required by the college.' The background shows the 'Rice University' page with a sidebar containing links to HOME, SCHOOL, ACTIVITIES, COLLEGES, CAREERS, FINANCES, and PROGRAMS.

Sending SAT/ACT scores to colleges

- ★ Even if you have entered your scores on your Common App, this may not be sufficient
- ★ Review the testing policy on the college website to see if an *official* test report is required
 - Visit the admission page of the college website and look for first year student application instructions/requirements
- ★ If an official report is required, scores must be requested and sent directly from collegeboard.org or act.org
 - Scores can take several weeks to process and to be received by the college so be sure to make the request well before your deadline

Completing the “Courses and Grades” section on Common App

- ★ Some colleges require you to enter all of your DHHS courses and grades on your Common App
- ★ If a college on your “My Colleges” list requires you to complete this, it will be listed in the “Courses and Grades” section on the Common App

The screenshot shows the Common App interface for the 'Courses & Grades' section. The top navigation bar includes 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid'. The left sidebar has links for 'Profile', 'Family', 'Education', 'Testing', 'Activities', 'Writing', and 'Courses & Grades' (which is highlighted). The main content area is titled 'Courses & Grades' and includes a 'Preview' button. It lists colleges that require this section: 'Required' (Purdue University, The University of Arizona) and 'Not Used' (Northeastern University, Syracuse University, University of Connecticut). Below the lists, there is a question 'I can access a copy of my transcript(s) or official grades*' with 'Yes' selected. A 'Continue' button is at the bottom right. A 'Need help?' sidebar on the right contains search and FAQ links.

- ★ Click “Yes” for “I can access a copy of my transcript or official grades”
 - Download an unofficial copy of your transcript on SchoolLinks (Go to “school” then “record requests” then “download unofficial transcript”)
 - See your School Counselor if you need assistance
- ★ Click “Edit 9th grade” to begin entering all courses you have taken at DHHS

Instructions for completion:

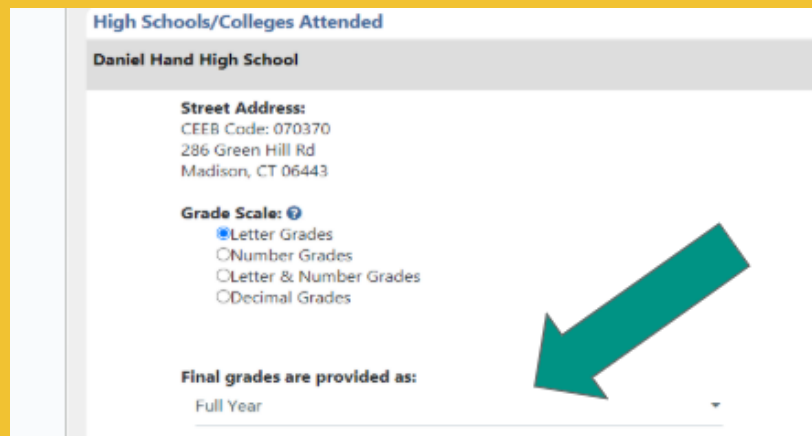
- ❖ Choose A-F- under “Grading Scale”
- ❖ Select “Yearly” (not “Trimester”) under “Schedule” since the DHHS transcript only reflects final *yearly* grade for each course
- ❖ Add each course name **EXACTLY** as it appears on your transcript
- ❖ Select the course level for each course
 - Select “college prep” for all level 2 courses
 - Select “Honors” for all honors/level 1 courses
 - Select “Advanced Placement (AP)” for AP courses
 - Select “Dual Enrollment” for all early college experience courses (if the DHHS course is both AP and ECE, you may select either)
 - Select “Regular/Standard” for all electives and other unlevleed courses (ex: Independent Project, Health)
- ❖ Be sure to enter the correct final grade and credit you earned for each course

Completing the STARS (Self Reported Transcript and Academic Record System)

- ★ The STARS is an additional step in the application process that is required by many colleges
- ★ Visit <https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com/Login.aspx> to view a list of colleges requiring it and to create your account
- ★ View the instructional video on how to link and submit your STARS to colleges <https://youtu.be/kMqWuquw3HY>

Instructions for completion:

- ❖ Courses, grades, and credit need to appear **EXACTLY** as they do on your transcript
- ❖ Since DHHS reports only final letter grades, be sure to select “Letter Grades” for the grading scale and “Full Year” (do not select “trimester” since the transcript shows your final grades, not your trimester grades!) when setting up your account:



High Schools/Colleges Attended

Daniel Hand High School

Street Address:
CEEB Code: 070370
286 Green Hill Rd
Madison, CT 06443

Grade Scale: ☒ Letter Grades
☐ Number Grades
☐ Letter & Number Grades
☐ Decimal Grades

Final grades are provided as:
Full Year

- ❖ When answering the class rank/size question, click the box that states “This school does not provide rank information or I do not know it”
- ❖ When entering coursework:
 - Choose the *Subject Area* and the *Generic Course Title* from the drop down menu
 - Manually enter the *Course Name* exactly as it appears on your transcript
 - Select the *Course Level* from the drop down menu
 - Choose either Honors, AP, Dual Enrollment, Level 2, or Level 3 for each academic course
 - Choose Standard for all electives and other required non-academic courses (ex: Health, Independent Project)

- Select “Full Year” for **ALL** courses, even those that only run one or two trimesters, since the DHHS transcript just reflects final grades, not grades for each trimester
- Enter the Final Grade you earned. Choose “In Progress” for all senior year course grades
- Enter the correct credit earned (the default on the form is 1.0 credit- be sure to override the default to add the correct credit earned)
- When prompted to enter your “annual GPA,” select the option “I have not received an annual GPA for this academic year.”
- ❖ Once you have completed each section, you are ready to review and submit

Additional steps AFTER submitting:

- ❖ You will need to link your STARS to each college- colleges CANNOT see the information on your STARS until it has been linked to your application!
- ❖ The linking process varies by college so refer to each individual college’s linking instructions
- ❖ Most colleges will send you instructions via email or post instructions on your application status portal

*****Your STARS is not complete until you have linked it to each college. If you do not do this, your college application will be considered incomplete!!!*****

Financial Aid

★ FAFSA

- If you intend to apply for any federal financial aid, you must complete the FAFSA <https://studentaid.gov/>
- FAFSA is available beginning October 1st
- Deadlines for submission vary by college, but it is strongly recommended that you complete the form as soon as possible after October 1st
- Students and parents each need to create their own accounts
- Students and parents each must complete their own forms

★ CSS Profile

- Some colleges require the CSS Profile <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/> *in addition* to the FAFSA
- Check the Financial Aid page of each college website to see if it is required or view the list of participating colleges on the College Board website <https://profile.collegeboard.org/PPI/participatingInstitutions.aspx>
- CSS Profile is available beginning October 1st
- See college website for deadline

Application Portal accounts

- ★ Most colleges require you to create an application portal account once your application has been submitted
- ★ Check your email for instructions and login credentials
 - It may take up to 1-2 weeks to receive the information about your application portal account
- ★ It is essential to create your application portal account as soon as possible to ensure your application is complete
- ★ Application Portals allow you to:
 - Check the status of your application
 - Track received materials
 - Submit additional any additional materials
 - View admissions decisions
 - Review financial aid offers