



Class of 2026

College Planning

September 2025



Counseling Support Team



Erica Lang
A & C/B & E



Nicole Drangstveit
B & E



Paige Swanson
E & M



Beth Cordes
Health Science



Kelsey Larue
Human Services



Sarah Dehkes
S & T/Health



Lisa Trembl
Alpha



Jenny Kusske
Omega



Learning Objectives



-
- Building a College List
 - Application Requirements
 - Financial Aid
 - SchooLinks
 - Organizing a College Search
 - Applying to College
 - Transcripts
 - Letters of Recommendation
 - Testing
-



College Research

- College Visits (virtual, at SHS, or in-person)
- SchoolLinks
 - School Search
 - College Application Manager
- College websites
 - Admission requirements
 - Majors



Determining Fit

Can I See Myself Here?



- Do they offer my major?
- Will I be successful?
 - Consider class sizes, academic support, mental health support, culture, activities...
- Location
- Values, interests, character of institution and students?



Can I Afford this School?

- SchoolLinks
 - College Financing
- Check college's website for scholarship offers.
- Financial Aid Night at SHS
 - October 2nd
- SHS scholarship page!
- Net Price Calculator



Will I Be Accepted?

- Look at acceptance rates, average GPA, average ACT, etc.
- Use SchoolLinks - Admission Stats to determine the likelihood that you will be accepted. "Reach, Match, Likely"

Know the Requirements



Application Deadline Options

- Rolling, Early Action, Early Decision (binding), etc

Test Scores

- Retaking (October 18 & December 13)
- Test Optional vs Required, etc
- How to send

Letters of Recommendation

- Are they required or considered? Not all schools want/need letters of recommendation
- Academic teachers preferred
- Give at least 2 weeks for recommenders to write letters

Essays/Personal Statement

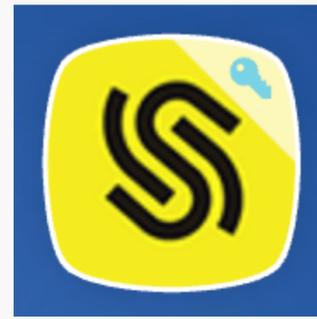
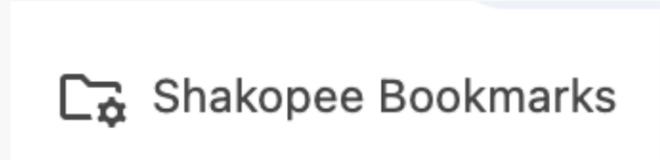
Transcripts

- Will be sent by counselor when application is entered in SchoolLinks College Applications

****Typically, 2-year colleges will only need an application and a transcript sent to them****

Log Into SchooLinks

1. Shakopee Bookmarks
2. Login with your ClassLink Launch Pad
3. Click on SchooLinks



Onboarding

- **Follow the Onboarding Prompts when you log in**

SchooLinks - College Applications

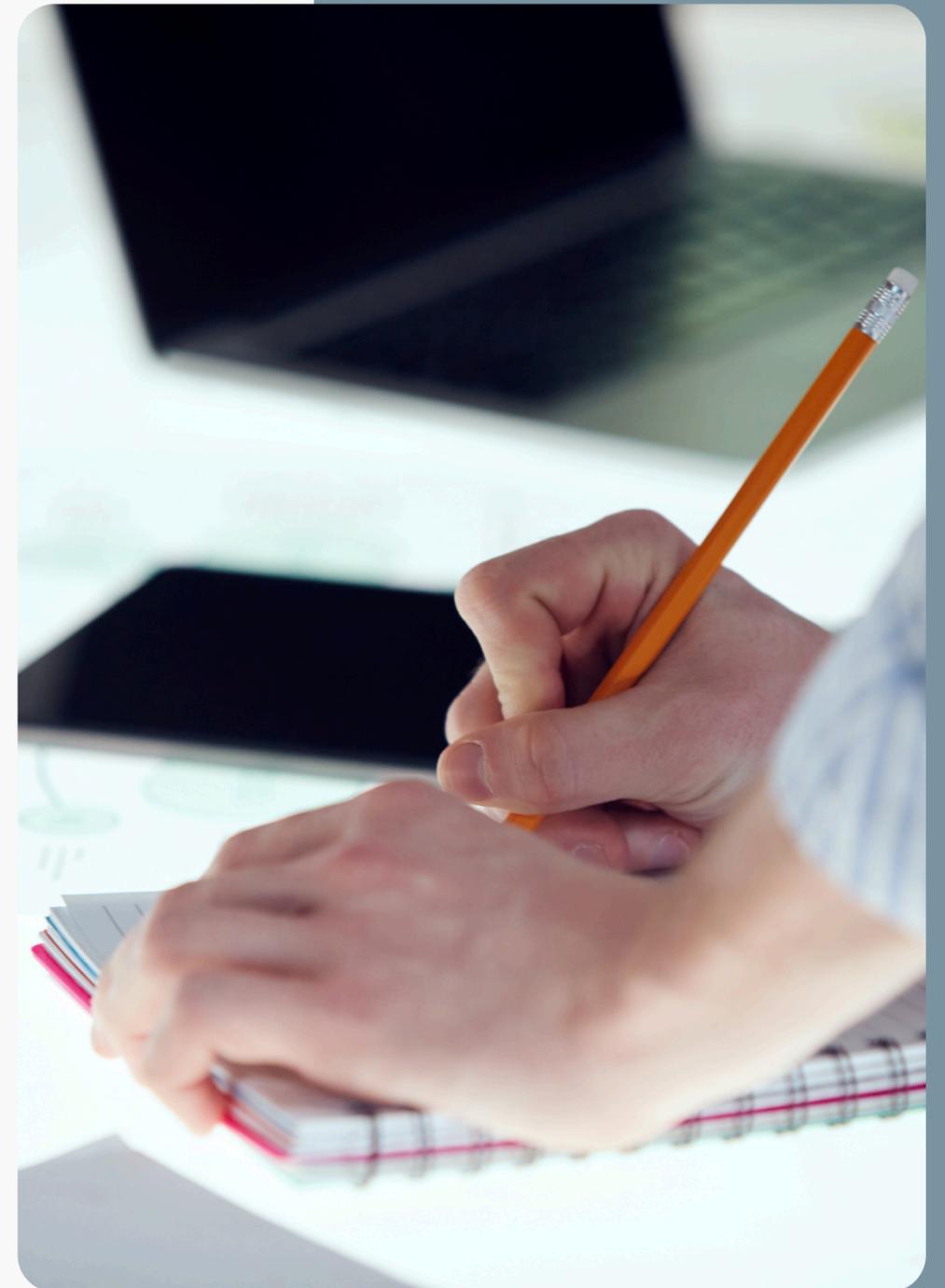
Set Up

- The first time students access the College Applications, they will be prompted to complete a three-part setup process. Follow the steps below to get set up!
 - *Add the required Personal Details*
 - *Indicate Fee Waiver Eligibility*
 - *Complete & Sign FERPA Waiver*
 - *You can complete a brag sheet if needed*



Adding Colleges and tracking apps

- Adding college applications into SchooLinks ensures that all documents required by colleges are requested from your counselor, such as transcripts and counselor recommendations. Additionally, once added to your College Applications, you will be able to organize and manage your own checklist items as well as request teacher recommendation letters for each application.

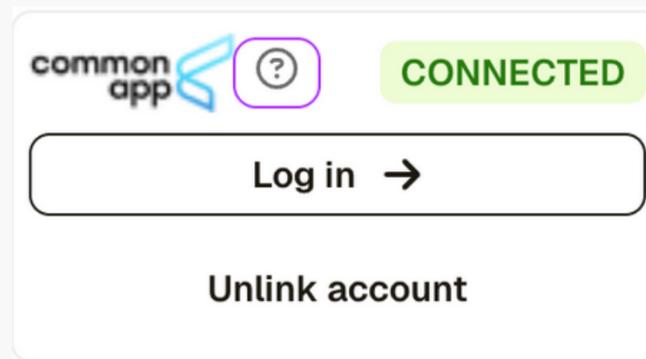


College Applications and SchoolLinks



If you have already created a Common App Account

To link your Common App and SchoolLinks accounts, log in to your SchoolLinks account, navigate to the "Colleges" or "College Applications" section, and click to link your Common App account. Submission status will automatically update.



If applying directly to a school

In the College Section of SchoolLinks, you can find links to each individual schools' application if applying directly to the school. You can also find this on any school's profile page in the School Search.

Students must eventually mark the application as "Submitted" in SchoolLinks when you have finished applying. Students will manually update their admission status to keep track of progress and communicate with counselor.



Organize Yourself

Use your personal email address for everything college!

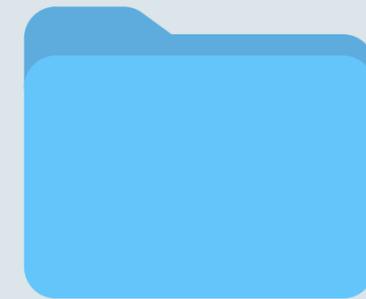
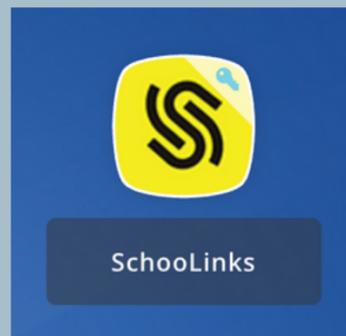
Change emails for the following:

- ACT
- AP Collegeboard

Check and READ your email frequently and carefully

If you don't understand an email, ask your Counselor!

Keep track of application submissions, application status, and your final acceptance in SchooLinks.



Keep all info together - passwords, scholarship apps, college info, deadlines, essays needed. SchooLinks will help you do that!

Sending a Transcript

As long as you enter your colleges in SchoolLinks, your Counselor will be prompted to send your transcript.

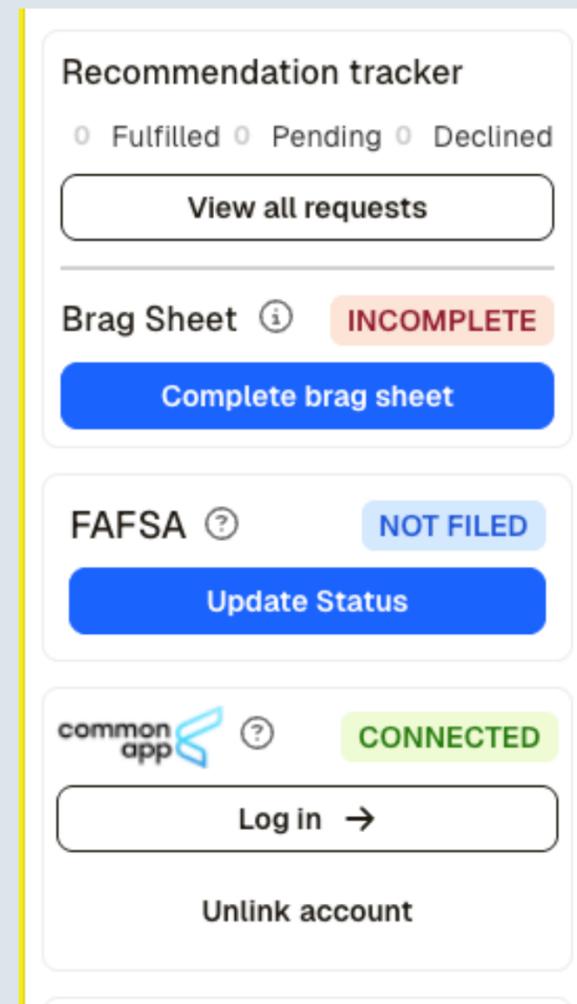
Letters of Recommendation

Once you enter your colleges in the Application Tracker, you will see if your college requires letters of recommendation.

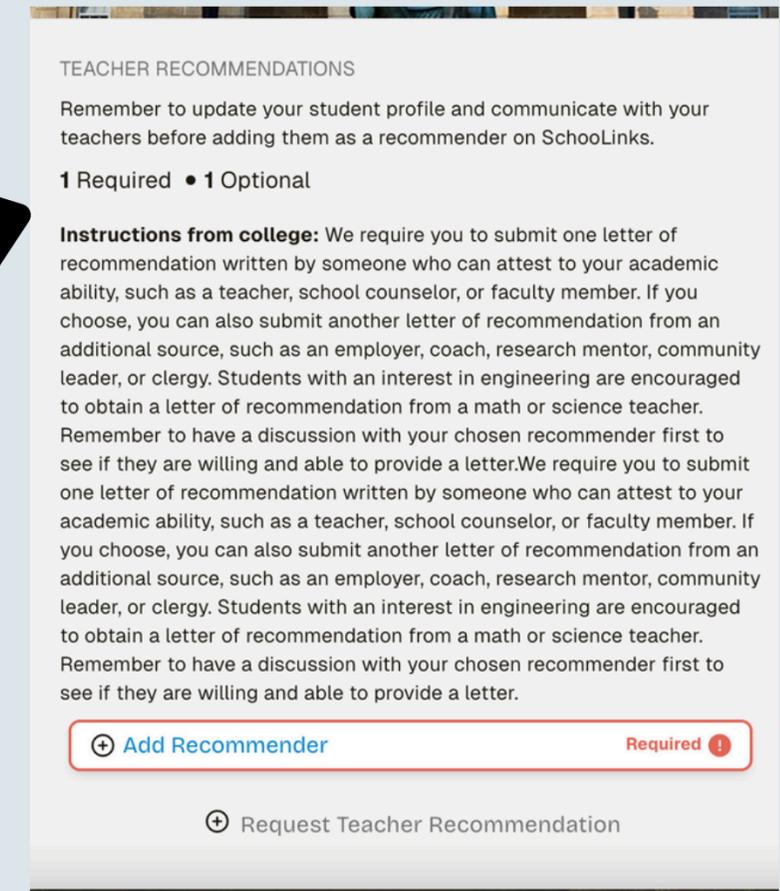
You will be able to invite your teachers directly through SchoolLinks.

If your teacher/other recommender is not listed, you can add them manually by adding their name and email.

When you request a teacher recommendation, they will have access to your Brag sheet answers.



The screenshot shows a 'Recommendation tracker' section with three rows of status indicators and buttons. The first row shows 'Fulfilled', 'Pending', and 'Declined' with radio buttons, and a 'View all requests' button. The second row shows 'Brag Sheet' with an information icon, an 'INCOMPLETE' status tag, and a 'Complete brag sheet' button. The third row shows 'FAFSA' with a question mark icon, a 'NOT FILED' status tag, and an 'Update Status' button. Below these is a 'common app' logo with a question mark icon, a 'CONNECTED' status tag, a 'Log in' button with a right arrow, and an 'Unlink account' button.



The screenshot shows the 'TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS' page. It includes a heading, a paragraph of instructions, and a summary of requirements: '1 Required • 1 Optional'. Below this is a detailed 'Instructions from college' section. At the bottom, there is a red-bordered button labeled '+ Add Recommender' with a 'Required' indicator, and a grey-bordered button labeled '+ Request Teacher Recommendation'.

Minnesota Direct Admissions

- 50+ participating colleges in MN
- You will be offered direct admissions based on your GPA & courses taken
- Your letter will show you where you will be guaranteed admission
- Watch for more information to come

Drop-In Help



September 12

10:15-11:15am

Drop in SchooLinks Help - C201 Lecture Room

September 19

10:15-11:15am

Drop in SchooLinks Help - C201 Lecture Room

October 10

10:30-3pm

Drop in Application Help - Saber Community Room (Apply for a Pie)

October 24

10:30:-3pm

Drop in Application Help - Saber Community Room (Apply for a Pie)

October 31

8:30-1pm (early release)

Drop in Application Help - Saber Community Room (Apply for a Pie)

SchoolLinks Demo

[Link to Launchpad](#)

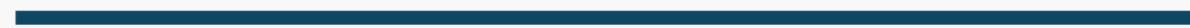
Let's explore Some Examples:

- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
- Winona State University

Attendance



bit.ly/26kickoff





Thank you



