



**Family Partnership Charter School Sponsors**  
**'Steps to Your Future'**  
*with Mari Jo Parks, M.Ed., Career & College Coach*



Dear Students and Parents,

I hope you are having a good week. By now you are starting new classes and counting down the days until the end of the school year. Did you know there are only 15 weeks left of the school year??? If you are a **Senior** perhaps you are thinking about applying to colleges. Yes, many of your classmates have already done that but you are right on time. One way to speed up your process is to use the **Common App**. Learn how to use the Common App by going to [commonapp.org](http://commonapp.org).

The Common Application is a single online college application form used by over 900 colleges and universities. The advantage is that you fill out the same general information once and then identify the school you would like to share it with. The information you will share includes your address, GPA, extracurricular information, copy of your high school transcript, test scores, activities, work, family responsibilities, parent/legal guardian information, academic honors - achievements and a letter of recommendation.

There is an essay requirement. You may choose from seven different prompts for the essay. Contact me for a list of the essays or go to the website. The essay is between 250 and 650 words.

The one area that becomes a bit more complicated for homeschool students is the Counselor section. It would be good to talk with your sponsor teacher to see how your school handles this section. The counselor shares information about your standing in the class and also submits your transcript.

The Common App dashboard also helps you track necessary application documents (like your letters of recommendation) and important deadlines.

Two advantages to the Common App are that you can select the colleges you would like to apply to and all your information is shared with that college. The second advantage is that your information is saved and you can add schools.

The major disadvantage to students is the temptation to apply to more schools than is necessary. Do remember most college charges an application fee, so applying to more schools can get costly. It is recommended to apply to 5 to 10 schools.

If you are a Freshman, Sophomore or Junior you can go to the Common App website and explore the various colleges at <https://www.commonapp.org/explore/>. This site gives a brief overview of the colleges, the degree programs offered and a link to the school.

Senior To Do List for the Week:

1. Be sure to go to your e-mail and check on any colleges you have applied to. If you applied before January 1<sup>st</sup> you might be hearing back from the school.
2. Check on the status of your financial aid.
3. Collect your letters of recommendation, preferably 3 for scholarships applications.
4. Go over your transcript.

#### Uncertain about What to Do after High School

If you are still uncertain about what you want to do after you graduate, start writing down things you like to do. Think about jobs around these things. If you like music you could be in a band (pay is low unless you are a star), but other jobs include music producer, recording engineer, artist manager, music teacher, music therapist, composer, repair musical instruments, DJ, work at a radio or TV station. There are amazing opportunities out there just waiting for you!

Please feel free to contact me with questions and ideas for future 'Steps to Your Future'. Just e-mail me at [future.inc1@gmail.com](mailto:future.inc1@gmail.com). Next week scholarship information.

To Your Future, *Mari Jo*