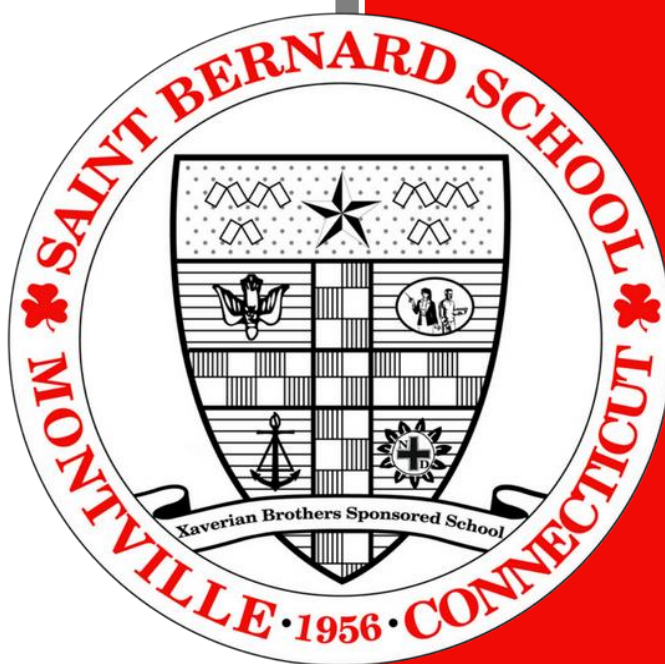


25

POST-SECONDARY PLANNING GUIDE



26

Dear Students & Parents,

Now is the time to begin the college application process. We know you have worked hard to reach your goals and are eager to get started planning for your future beyond high school. Saint Bernard School has been very successful in matriculating students into many colleges over the years, so we are prepared to guide you as you navigate this process. Our primary goal is to help you be successful in finding the college that is the right fit for you.

College is a tremendous investment, in terms of money, time and energy. The planning can be an exciting time and a time of considerable stress. Students and parents are faced with many decisions so it is imperative to keep the lines of communication open between students and parents, and to keep things in perspective. It is important to consider all of the options and make an educated decision on what is the best plan for the student and his/her future.

The process of college admission has become increasingly competitive, mixed with uncertainties, surprises and disappointments. Those who are successful with their outcomes are those who stay realistic through the process. Not every student will attend a “top tier” school, win a full scholarship, or be accepted to every school of their choice. Remember – college is a match to be made, not a prize to be won.

There will be many questions throughout the application process; that’s where we come in. Please do not hesitate to utilize your resources. Additionally, this packet was designed to ease the process with guidelines, tips, and forms that you will need.

The more that you read,
the more things you will know.

The more that you learn,
the more places you will go.

Dr. Seuss

CONTACT INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Don Macrino
HEAD OF SCHOOL

Mr. Ted Kenyon
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

SCHOOL COUNSELING

Mrs. Holly Cyr ’85, LCSW ’85
Director of School Counseling
& Summer Programming

hcyr@saint-bernard.com / Ext: 120
Students with last name starting with:
2024-25

L-Z: Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9 & 12

N-Z: Grade 10 & 11

2025-26

L-Z: Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9 & 10

N-Z: Grade 11 & 12

Ms. Erica Massad ’15, BA
School Counselor

emassad@saint-bernard.com / Ext: 129
Students with last name starting with:
2024-25

A-K: Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9 & 12

A-M: Grades 10 & 11

2025-26

A-K: Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9 & 10

A-M: Grades 10 & 12

Mrs. Deborah Ingoglia
School Counseling Associate
dingoglia@saint-bernard.com / Ext: 128

SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

1593 Norwich New London Turnpike
Uncasville, CT 06382

www.saintbernardschool.org

Phone: 860-848-1271

Main Office Fax: (860) 848-1274

Counseling Office Fax: 860-848-7440

CEEB Code: 070428

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

SBS Graduation Requirements

- All students must carry at least seven (7) credits each year.
- Twenty-eight (28) credits are required for graduation.
- Fifty (50) hours of community service are required for grades 9-12.

Class of 2026

Theology		4 credits
English		4 credits
Mathematics		4 credits
Science	(1 credit Biology and 1 credit Chemistry)	3 credits
Social Studies	(1 credits US History, ½ credit Civics, and 1 ½ credits World History)	3 credits
Physical Education		1 credit
Visual/Performing Arts		1 credit
World Language	(in the same language)	2 credits
Health		½ credit
Electives		5½ credits

Class of 2027 and all subsequent classes are required to take Personal Finance

Theology		4 credits
English		4 credits
Mathematics		4 credits
Science	(1 credit Biology and 1 credit Chemistry)	3 credits
Social Studies	(1 credits US History, ½ credit Civics, and 1 ½ credits World History)	3 credits
Physical Education		1 credit
Visual/Performing Arts		1 credit
World Language	(in the same language)	2 credits
Health		½ credit
Financial Literacy		½ credit
Electives		5 credits

Physical Education Credit Options for All Students

One full credit in Physical Education is required for graduation.
Students have the following opportunities to earn this credit.

1. Taking a Physical Education class.
2. Taking other designated Physical Education classes (*Strength & Conditioning & Nutrition & Exercise. This does not include Health, which is required for graduation.*)
3. Through interscholastic athletics:
 - For each sport season completed in good standing, 0.25 credit may be awarded.
 - The student must be a member of the sports team for the entire season and in good standing to earn the credit.

Note: Saint Bernard Middle school students who complete high school-level courses in mathematics, world languages, or computer science will receive high school credit. However, the course grade will not be factored into their high school GPA.

IMPORTANT FACTORS IN PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Creating a Solid Academic Portfolio

ACADEMIC PREPARATION:

Four Years of

- **ENGLISH** Students should take the most challenging courses they can succeed in.
- **MATHEMATICS** Students who are able to take more advanced mathematics courses should do so to open more options for college study. Calculus is desirable.

Three Years of

- **SCIENCE** This must include Chemistry and Biology.
- **SOCIAL STUDIES** Including 1.5 of World History and 1 US History & .5 Civics.

Two Years of (in a same language)

- **WORLD LANGUAGE** Many colleges require three years for admission

ATHLETICS, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation and/or leadership in these areas is important. Skills and attitudes learned through these activities can play a significant role in determining a student's success in college and in life.

Volunteer service demonstrates interest in helping and working with others.

ADMISSION TESTS

Usually the SAT or ACT is required, although many schools are becoming test-optional. Many test-optional schools will require submission of test scores to be eligible for merit scholarships. The best preparation, in addition to keeping up in course work, is taking the PSAT in the sophomore and junior year. Reading and vocabulary is extremely important in order to do well on these tests. SAT/ACT preparation classes or materials can be helpful. In some cases students should also take two or three SAT subject tests (after having taken the highest level course in that subject area).

EXPOSURE TO THE ARTS

Experience in this area enriches life and can help academic performance.

COMPUTER COMPETENCY

Students must be fluent in the use of computer technology.

A STRONG APPLICATION

This can include recommendations from counselors and teachers, and an essay that is carefully thought out and well-written.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

This can be very helpful with college representatives, admissions officers, and/or department members (visitations, interviews, phone calls, written correspondence). Students should communicate directly with admissions officers rather than relying on family or friends to do so on their behalf.

REMEMBER

It is never too late to gain skills or experience necessary for further education and career success.

There are many types of careers, colleges and other higher education programs, some with unique requirements. Learn about them and keep in touch with your counselor.

Do not be discouraged by what you feel might be low-test scores or by past difficulties. Be persistent in your college and career plans and goals.

Remember that whether or not you are accepted at a particular college has little to do with future success and happiness in a career and in life itself. Apply to several colleges, including one you are confident will accept you.

PREPARATION TIMELINE FOR COLLEGE PLANNING

This is by no means exhaustive list, but can serve as a general guideline for planning.

- ✓ **CHECK your Saint Bernard email regularly!**
The School Counseling Department will forward information to you via email.
- ✓ **Communication with your counselor is key to a smooth application process.**
- ✓ **Request transcripts and letters of recommendations in a timely manner.**
- ✓ **Pay very careful attention to deadlines.**

11th Grade

- **Meet with your school counselor to review your high school program, graduation requirements, and future plans.**
- Explore ways in which classes relate to career opportunities and work situations.
- Plan for taking any appropriate Advanced Placement courses.
- **NCAA:** If you are planning to play a sport or receive an athletic scholarship at a Division I or II college, be sure courses meet *NCAA Eligibility Center* requirements.
- Register with *collegeboard.org* for college planning (PSAT and SAT preparation.)
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT (*Oct. School Day Testing*).
- Look carefully at costs and budgeting for further education.
- Explore financial aid and scholarship opportunities. *Information will be posted in the google classroom.*
- Check to see if applications for certain programs need to be made this year, for example appointments to a military academy.
- Take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Test Battery (ASVAB) to help explore vocational aptitudes and career possibilities. <https://www.officialasvab.com/>
- All Juniors will be registered to take the SAT during school in March.
- Register for and take the SAT and/or the ACT. Juniors usually take these in May.
- Plan visitations and attend college speakers in the School Counseling Department.
- Take college tours, talk to faculty members and students, and get to know the institutions thoroughly.
- Carefully select courses for the senior year.
- Start creating a Student Bio-Resume
- Keep track of your community service hours and submit to campus ministry.
- Plan summer experiences that will develop or expand career skills and opportunities
- **Junior Checklists**
 - [Planning for college – month by month guide](#)
 - [CollegeBoard: Access 11th Grade Planning](#)

12th Grade

- Take courses which are challenging and which will prepare you well for your goals.
- Plan visitations and attend college speakers in the School Counseling Department. Take college tours, talk to faculty members and students, and get to know the institutions thoroughly.
- Complete college or vocational program search utilizing *collegeboard.org*, and all possible resources.
- Utilize the *collegeboard.org* website for college planning (for SAT preparation.)
- Register for and take the SAT and/or the ACT. Seniors usually take the SAT in October at SBS.
- Know the application process via Common Application and other options.
- Have your college essay reviewed by your English teacher, school counselor, and parents.
- Complete college applications.
- **WATCH DEADLINES**, especially for early action or early decision. Many may need to be in during or before November. Some scholarships require early application.
- Apply for scholarships. All scholarship information received will be posted in the google classroom.
- **APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID.**
Complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** (FAFSA) in December, <https://studentaid.gov/> and the **College Board Profile** <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/> earlier if applicable. Complete all special financial aid application forms for individual colleges. **Watch deadlines.**
- **NCAA:** If you are planning to play a sport or receive an athletic scholarship at a Division I or II college, be sure courses meet NCAA Eligibility Center requirements. Be sure all *NCAA Eligibility Center* Student Release Forms are completed and submitted. [How to Register](#)
- Speak with graduates who have attended college or vocational programs, or who have entered careers about their experiences.
- **Senior Checklists**
 - [Collegeboard - timeline](#)
 - [Preparing for college: Senior Checklist](#)
 - [College Admission Planning for Seniors](#)

OPTIONS FOR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

College, Vocational Programs and the Military are just a few of the possibilities.

- **Life after High School**
- **Parent College Prep Guide**
- **Prepare for your Career**

www.ctohe.org/edinfo/pdfs/LifeAfterHighSchool.pdf
www.ctohe.org/edinfo/pdfs/ParentCollegePrep.pdf
<https://bit.ly/3XdTlmb>

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY?

- **Colleges** are often smaller institutions that emphasize undergraduate education in a broad range of academic areas.
- **Universities** are typically larger institutions that offer a variety of both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Many universities are also committed to producing research.

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY

Bachelor's degrees require a wide breadth of general education and liberal arts classes. Each student will have to complete a set of required courses for graduation, not all from the student's chosen major.

TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

Associate degrees typically focus on preparing students for entry-level work, basic skills and knowledge in their field of study.

TRADE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- Trade schools (career or vocational schools) offer affordable training and education in practical fields, qualifying students for skilled, well-paying careers immediately after graduation.
- Academic credits from an accredited trade school may transfer to a two-year or four-year school.
- Students often choose trade school to gain practical skills in a short period of time and for an affordable price. Many learners who choose trade school like working with their hands to create a tangible product or to offer a useful service.

For more information:

- Is Trade School right for YOU? <https://thebestschools.org/degrees/trade-schools/>
- Connecticut's Apprenticeship Program <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/appren/appren.htm>
- Apprenticeship Programs <https://www.ct.edu/pact>
- Adult Ed Programs <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Adult-Ed/providerdirectory.pdf>
- Connecticut Technical Education & Career System <https://www.cttech.org/adult-education/>
- Office of Higher Education <http://www.ctohe.org/heweb/ProgramSearch.asp>
- Private Occupational Schools in CT <http://www.ctohe.org/HEWeb/POSAList.asp>
- Hospital-based Schools <http://www.ctohe.org/HEWeb/HospitalList.asp>
- Manufacturing Pipeline Program <https://tinyurl.com/42j2xxpn>
- Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline <http://www.ewib.org/pipeline>
- Health Occupations & Technology Careers in CT <https://www.healthcareersinct.com/>

GAP YEAR

While attending college right after high school is the usual route for most students, taking a year off from studies to travel, volunteer, study abroad or take time to determine the career you want is another option. This is known as a gap year. (<https://bit.ly/3chGhZz>)

Organizations with programs available to students who are planning an interim or gap-year

- Americorps www.americorps.gov/
- City Year www.cityyear.org/
- Best Colleges: Should You Take a Gap Year? www.bestcolleges.com/blog/what-is-a-gap-year/
- The Council on International Educational Exchange www.ciee.org/

MILITARY

Types of Military Service

<https://myfuture.com/military/types-of-military-service>

The military can provide new educational opportunities to people who may otherwise not be able to afford them, and joining the military can be an extremely rewarding experience. As long as you know all the facts before you sign up and are willing to do what is asked of you, joining the military can open up a broad range of educational and career opportunities.

MILITARY SERVICE BRANCHES

www.todaysmilitary.com/ways-to-serve/service-branches

Branch	Part-time Service		ROTC
	Reserves	National Guard	
Army	X	X	X
Marine Corps	X		X
Navy	X		X
Air Force	X	X	X
Space Force			
Coast Guard	X		

RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) PROGRAMS

<https://www.todaysmilitary.com/education-training/rotc-programs>

These programs provide a mix of academic education on-campus as well as military training. Students receive a ROTC scholarship to help cover the costs of attending a college and earning a bachelor's degree. It is important to remember that ROTC scholarships are in exchange for mandatory active duty service after completing your bachelor's program.

SERVICE ACADEMIES

<https://www.todaysmilitary.com/education-training/military-schools>

For students who want to experience a military environment while getting a first-class education, the five service academies offer a fully-funded tuition that includes books, board and medical and dental care. Requires a congressional letter of recommendation (not required by the Coast Guard Academy)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • Army | U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY |
| • Navy and Marine Corps | U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland |
| • Air Force | U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs |
| • Coast Guard | U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, CT |
| • Merchant Marine | U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, NY |

Academy Nominations for Connecticut

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| • US Senator Murphy | www.murphy.senate.gov/services/academy |
| • US Congressman Jim Hines | himes.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations |
| • US Congressman Joe Courtney | courtney.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations |
| • The White House | www.whitehouse.gov/service-academy-nominations/service-academies-application/ |

SENIOR MILITARY COLLEGES

<https://militarybenefits.info/senior-military-colleges/>

Similar to service academies, senior military colleges (SMCs) offer a combination of higher education and military instruction. They are among the most prestigious and famous education institutions in the world, and they offer financial aid packages for eligible students. Every SMC cadet must participate in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program, but only those cadets who receive an ROTC scholarship are required to enter military service following graduation.

Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets
Norwich University
Virginia Military Institute
The Citadel

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets
University of North Georgia
Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership

MARITIME ACADEMIES

<https://www.maritime.dot.gov/education/maritime-academies/maritime-academies>

An additional option for students is a maritime academy. The United States Merchant Marine is the fleet of civilian-owned merchant ships that carry cargo and passengers on behalf of the United States. In times of war, the Merchant Marine is an auxiliary to the Navy and can be called upon to transport service members and supplies for the Military.

Maritime academies produce shipboard officers for vessels integral to shipping and transportation needs, but a service commitment is not always required.

Massachusetts Maritime Academy
Great Lakes Maritime Academy
Maine Maritime Academy

California State University Maritime Academy
State University of New York Maritime College
Texas A&M Maritime Academy

EMPLOYMENT

Some students may choose to go directly into the work force. If you are not sure exactly what you want to do with your life, taking a job could help you make that decision. Employment will help you gain some experience and some knowledge helping you gain some experience and some knowledge of careers before continuing your education in a specific field of study.

RESOURCES:

- CT Office of Higher Education: Job Lines and Websites Job Hunting Tips
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics: Occupational Outlook Handbook
- Career One Stop: Get My Future

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Think About Your Future: College and Beyond

https://www.fastweb.com/nfs/fastweb/static/PDFs/bulletins/Think_About_Your_Future.pdf

Talk with your parents / counselor / teachers / friends

Ask questions.

- If they were to do it all over again, what would they do differently?
- Why did they choose
 - Their current career?
 - The college / university they attended?
 - Should you do a “job-shadow” to see if that career path is what you expect?, Etc...

How can you know the answer to something that you have never experienced?

You come to school to not only to learn academically but to learn the skills to go on to your next adventure in life – work – college – life experiences.

MAKING YOUR LIST

CollegeBoard Access: [College: How to Get There from Here](#)

As a senior you probably have been researching schools for a while, if you are a junior you may be just starting the process, either way it is important to pick schools that fall into the three following categories.

What is a “safe” school for me?

These are schools where your chances are highly likely or certain for admission.

What is a “target” school for me?

These are realistic schools or those that match your credentials well. You’re GPA and test scores are in line with the averages of those students accepted.

What is a “reach” school for me?

These are schools that are considered a long shot. Your profile may not match exactly that of an accepted student. However, you are encouraged to apply to at least one reach school. You never know what a college may be looking for, beyond the numbers. You may have “it” and your reach school becomes a reality.

We also suggest using the college’s admission profile, which can be found on the admissions section of their website. The statistics will represent GPA and test score averages of those students who were accepted from the entire applicant pool.

NOT SURE WHAT PATH TO TAKE

INTEREST INVENTORIES

Interest inventories can be a great starting point in your search for a career that you will love. Interest inventories look at a person's likes and dislikes, their favorite activities, and their personality. Then they compare those qualities with the qualities of people who are already working in specific careers.

- College Board RoadTrip Nation <https://roadtripnation.com/edu/careerfinder>

NCAA

National Collegiate Athletic Association <https://www.ncaa.org/>

To be successful in college, students need to be prepared for college coursework. In [Division I](#) and [Division II](#), the NCAA sets academic initial-eligibility standards that take into account GPA, standardized test scores, core courses taken in high school and the grades earned in those core courses. [Division III](#) schools hold student-athletes to the same overall standards for the institution in which they’re enrolling.

All student-athletes also must meet the unique acceptance requirements of the college or university they plan to attend (which may exceed NCAA standards).

Helpful Hints

- Visit Student Athlete-Future to learn more about opportunities available at NCAA schools.
- Know the academic standards for [Division I](#) and [Division II](#).
- Find your high school’s list of NCAA-approved core courses
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org during your freshman year if you are interested in playing college sports.
- After four semesters of high school, ask your counselor to upload official transcripts from all high schools you have attended to your NCAA Eligibility Center account.

HIGHER EDGE

<https://higheredge.org/>

For more information, email go@higheredge.org

WHAT & WHY

Higher Edge has a singular and critical purpose: empowering low-income, first-generation students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from college. Ultimately, alumni of Higher Edge will have the skills, mindset and confidence to enter the workforce and serve as role models within the community. And while the organization's main goal continues to be college access and retention; we have adapted a holistic approach to aid in our goal which includes a focus on: 1) Affordability, 2) Emotional Support, 3) Social Growth & Development and 4) Job Market Readiness.

HOW

To meet its mission; Higher Edge operates two sequential programs, The College Access Program (CAP) and the Success Program. CAP guides 12th graders through the college application process. Advising sessions cover every step of the admission process: building a college list; writing a college essay; applying for financial aid and scholarships; submitting applications; and making an informed college choice.

Upon making their final college choice and completing enrollment steps; students transition into the Success Program, which provides guidance and support to ensure students persist and earn a degree. The program's goal is to create self-sufficient, independent young adults who can advocate for themselves and be successful on campus.

WHO

Higher Edge accepts applicants from across the academic spectrum. The most important factor in the selection process is a student's demonstrated desire to attend college. Students can begin applying to Higher Edge in the spring of their junior year. However, in understanding that not everyone's journey to college is identical; Higher Edge utilizes a rolling admission process. The application can be found at <https://higheredge.org/apply/>

Higher Edge primarily assists students who live in the under-resourced communities of New London and Willimantic (although a handful of students each year live in a surrounding city/town). Mirroring the demographics of these two cities, 96% of Higher Edge participants identify as students of color. Additionally, the shift to virtual advising has allowed the organization to expand its reach and Higher Edge now serves students from 6 different high schools in southeastern Connecticut, including Fitch High School, Grasso Tech, New London Multi-Magnet High School, Norwich Tech, Saint Bernard School and Three Rivers Middle College.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN SELECTING A COLLEGE

The most important factor to consider in creating your list is FIT.
How do you know if a college is a good fit for you?

Ask yourself these questions:

Does the college offer a program of study that matches my interests and needs?

If you know your major, it makes sense to target schools that will accommodate your interests and strengths. It is also wise to look for colleges that may have strength in your desired major, but not necessarily colleges that focus only on your major, (what if you change your mind?)

At least 60% of college student change their major, so if you are undecided that is OK. You may want to consider a college that has a wealth of majors and options.

Does the college provide a level of academic rigor that matches my aptitude and preparation?

Evaluate your comfort level. Are you OK with just “getting by”? Do you prefer to play it safe in a less challenging environment? Do you need to work extra hard to get average grades? Do you like to challenge yourself?

SBS has prepared you well for what lies ahead, but you must match the academic environment at the college without getting in over your head. Look for a challenge but do not overwhelm yourself.

Does the college offer a community that feels like home?

Maybe you have already visited a campus that feels very comfortable to you, or maybe that is yet to come. You may have an intuitive reaction to a campus, and just know that you’ve found a good match.

Consider the people that will surround you at college, along with the environmental factors. Do these things match your personality and characteristics? Would you have to leave your comfort zone to fit in?

Does the college value you for what you do well?

- Consider your contact with admissions prior to being accepted – did you feel valued?
- Are your talents recognized with scholarships or other academic opportunities?
- Are your questions answered in a timely manner?
- Does the college feel genuine to you?

In addition to the above considerations, here is a longer list of factors to consider when narrowing down your list:

- Campus size
- Public vs. Private
- Cost
- Location
- Distance from home
- Residential opportunities (dorms, suites, apartments)
- Student body size
- Faculty
- Diversity
- Availability of special programs and diversity of majors
- Quality of programs
- Athletics, clubs, and activities
- Student support services
- Research opportunities



Understanding College Admission Policies

Early Action • Early Decision • Restricted Early Action & Rolling Admission

Before you decide to apply "early" to a college, it's a good idea to understand what that means. Like so many other areas of college admissions, it's not exactly straightforward. **Early Action** (I and II), **Early Decision** (I and II), **Restricted Early Action** and **Rolling Admission** have generally agreed-upon definitions, but some colleges also have individual early policies that they apply independently.

Here are the general definitions:

EARLY ACTION (EA) I AND II

In this non-binding application program, a student usually applies EA I on or before the first of November (sometimes Nov. 15) and receives an admission decision by the middle of December. If accepted, the student is not obligated to commit to the college until the mandatory May 1 "college deadline day." **EA II** is a second chance to apply early at the beginning or middle of January, with a response back from a college sometime four, six, eight weeks out. Early Action colleges usually allow students to apply to other EA schools.

EARLY DECISION (ED) I AND II

In this binding application program, a student applies on or before Nov. 1 (sometimes Nov. 15) and then receives his or her admission decision by the middle of December. If accepted, the student is obligated to attend that college. (*Upon acceptance, a student must withdraw all other applications.*) If he/she does not get admitted to an ED college, the applicant can then apply ED II to another college with a later deadline. Some Early Decision colleges even allow students to apply to other early application programs, as long as they are not binding; but others don't. Check this out on the admission section of colleges' websites.

RESTRICTED EARLY ACTION (REA) (AKA, SINGLE-CHOICE EARLY ACTION)

REA is a non-binding early action admission option in which a student may not apply to any other private schools' early program, except:

- A college outside of the US
- A non-binding rolling admission program
- A public college or university whose admission is not binding.
- An ED II program, if notification of admission occurs after Jan.1

Like EA applicants, a student has until May 1 to decide if she/he wants to attend the college or university. Schools that offer REA programs are Boston College, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, and Yale. Applicants are asked to sign a statement stipulating that they agree to file only one early application.

ROLLING ADMISSION

This is an application program at some schools -- usually larger public universities -- in which applications are accepted, evaluated and decided upon as they are received. Applications are accepted until the college fills all of its spaces. There is no limit to the number of Rolling Admissions schools to which you can apply even if you apply to EA, ED or REA colleges.

Having identified all of the above, I am sorry to report that every year many colleges seem to change what they do about early applications. The best approach to finding out how schools on your college list handle early applications is to go to their individual admissions websites and/or call admissions offices directly. The Common Application website and *US News' Best Colleges 2015* are other good sources.

EARLY ACCEPTANCE RATES

Many students and parents want to know whether applying early will give applicants an edge. Unfortunately, the short answer is that it depends. Applying early will not help you if you are not a competitive applicant. When push comes to shove, though, "hooked" students tend to have a better chance of getting accepted in early plans. What does "hooked" mean? It is an applicant who has a substantial admission edge if they apply early (or for that matter, regular) admission because they are:

- A very desirable, recruited athlete
- An applicant with a distinct, noteworthy talent the college is looking for
- High potential, under-represented and/or disadvantaged minority students
- Students who are children of major donors to the college
- Students who are legacies (children of a parent who is an alumnus)
- Children of parents who are celebrities, wealthy business executives, politicians and the like
- Faculty children

THE ENDPOINT OF APPLYING EARLY

There are three outcomes of applying early: Acceptance, Deferral and Denial.

Every year, college admissions websites provide information about how many students they admit from early admissions versus regular admissions. And every year, *The New York Times* posts early admissions rates for the previous year in a story that predictably appears sometime in March. This information can also be found at www.collegedata.com.

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

Saint Bernard School Code: 070428

Students are responsible for requesting school-related documents for applications, including transcripts and recommendations.

Students are responsible for providing the following information to colleges.

NOTE: This information is not provided on the transcript.

- SAT/ACT scores (forward from Collegeboard.com or ACT.org)
- List of school/sports/community service activities

FERPA

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a law that protects the privacy of education records. High schools must have permission to send transcripts and other school records to a college admission office.

By submitting the *Permissions to Release Records Form* students and parents/guardians grant this permission to SBS. In the college admission process, students are expected to waive their right to access letters of recommendation. This communicates to colleges that the letters are confidential, candid, and truthful. Some recommenders may not be willing to write a letter for students unless they waive their right to access.

SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS USING COMMON AP

<https://www.commonapp.org>

The Common Application is an undergraduate college admission application that applicants may use to apply to any of more than 700 member colleges and universities

For the Common Application

1. Create a Common Application account at: <https://www.commonapp.org>
Save your username, password, and Common App ID number!
2. Complete the FERPA privacy notice for the Common Application.
You must completely fill out the education part of the Common Application before you can sign the FERPA waiver.
3. Check to see if the school(s) you are applying to are Common Application,
4. Make sure your SAT and/or ACT scores are sent to each appropriate college. You may have had this done when you took the SAT or ACT. If you take the test again you may want to hold to see if the scores improve the next time and select which scores are sent, but watch deadlines carefully!

If the college is a Common Application participant, then

Request teacher recommendations (as soon as a teacher agrees to write a recommendation).

1. Complete all portions of the application and submit electronically before the deadline
2. Do not submit envelopes or extra forms – everything is done electronically.
3. Do not forget to “invite” your school counselor and teachers who are writing recommendations.

If the school does not accept electronic documents

Complete all student portions of the application and submit prior to the deadline.

1. Email your counselor to request that transcripts be sent to colleges you are applying to.
2. Make sure all secondary school report forms are turned in well before the deadline.
3. Give teachers who have agreed to write recommendations appropriate information to help them write the recommendation and if needed a stamped, addressed envelope for each school.

Information you need to assist in completing Common App

The following information is needed to complete your college applications!

- Transcript
- GPA
- Senior class schedule
- Entry Date: 08/2022 (if entered as a freshman)
- Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2026
- CEEB code: 070428
- Student Bio-Resume
- SAT/ ACT scores and AP scores- students will need to send official SAT and AP scores through collegeboard.org. ACT scores must be sent to colleges through ACTstudent.org.
- Class size: 66

School Counselor Information

Ms. Erica Massad (A-M)
School Counselor
emassad@saint-bernard.com
860-848-1271 ext. 129

Mrs. Holly Cyr (N-Z)
Director of School Counseling
hcyr@saint-bernard.com
860-848-1271 ext. 120

Please keep your counselor up-to-date regarding college and scholarships application deadlines.

REQUESTING TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts are needed for applying to colleges and scholarships. Employers at times will request a copy of your transcript when applying for a job.

Procedure to request a copy of your transcript

- The Counseling department **MUST** have a signed *Permission to Release Records form* on file, signed by you and a parent/guardian.
- When requesting us to mail a transcript – you must provide us with the full name of the organization and the complete mailing address.
- Requests should be made at least 2 days in advance and not the day it is due.
- If you will be applying to multiple colleges and scholarships – let us know in advance with the quantity of transcripts you will need.

How to Request Transcripts for Students Enrolled In

- Connecticut College
- Three Rivers Community College

If you've taken Connecticut College or Three Rivers courses, the final grades for those courses will be on your high school transcript. If you want the college credits to transfer to the post-secondary institutions you are applying to, you will need to request in writing from Connecticut College or Three Rivers that they forward your transcript to that institution.

NOTE: Request a copy of the transcript so that you have it for your records and future use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- The college application process often requires one or two letters of recommendation from academic teachers.
- Read each college's application instructions carefully to determine recommendation requirements.
- The purpose of the teacher recommendation is to describe their experience with the student in their class and give colleges an idea of how a student is likely to perform academically.
- Colleges are interested in various qualities including a student's work ethic, motivation, creativity, and capacity for growth.
- Teacher recommendations are confidential and not shared with students or parents.

Junior Year or Beginning of Senior Year:

1. Any student planning to apply to a four-year college should ask one or two teachers for a recommendation in spring of junior year. Choose teacher(s) who know you well to write recommendations for you, preferably junior year teachers. Take the time to schedule an appointment and ask the teacher in person.
2. Students should complete for each teacher either the SBS Teacher/Coach Recommendation Form or an updated résumé. The student's college list does not need to be set until senior year; only background information about the student and his/her experience in the class is provided through these forms.

Senior Year:

1. Be sure the FERPA Release Authorization for Common Application is completed
2. Four weeks before your first application deadline, you must connect with the teacher(s) you have asked to write your letter of recommendation and let them of your approaching deadline so that they can have your letter of recommendation ready by then.
3. A written thank you note to your teacher is most appreciated.

COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION

- The college application process often requires a letter of recommendation from your school counselor. Whereas the purpose of the teacher recommendation is to focus on your individual experience in a specific class, the counselor recommendation discusses your personal qualities, character, background, activities, and your broad academic profile.
- Counselor recommendations are confidential and not shared with students or parents.
- In order to write a thorough recommendation, your counselor will need completed Senior Brag Sheet from the student and an updated résumé.
- The purpose of the Student Brag Sheet is to provide detailed information to your counselor that he/she can utilize when writing your college recommendation.
- Students should also be sure that their résumé is updated with co-curricular activities, employment, community service, and summer experiences and provided to their school counselor.

SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Most admitted students submit only what is required of them. Some colleges will accept a supplemental recommendation beyond what it has required. This extra letter should provide different or additional context beyond what is required. A supplemental letter might come from a coach, employer, club advisor, or anyone who might know you as a result of a unique talent or from an outside activity. Students may assign a recommender through the Common Application or the recommender can email or mail a hard copy of their recommendation directly to the colleges. (If being mailed, it is the student's responsibility to provide the recommender with a stamped and addressed envelope.)

APPLYING TO COLLEGE AS A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability must be able to self-advocate by knowing their disability and by being able to describe it and how it impacts their learning to others. At the college level, students are responsible for identifying and requesting appropriate support services. However, a college is not required to follow an IEP or high school 504 plan, and will not provide any accommodation or service that would fundamentally alter the nature of a course. Do not state yourself as, or submit documentation as a candidate with exceptionality when you first apply, since all students must meet minimum criteria for admission. Self-advocacy process should begin after acceptance.

Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan should work with their case manager or school counselor to determine testing and other information that may need to be sent to colleges upon acceptance in order to access possible services such as tutorial support, academic advising, reduced course loads, or a study skills program. If a college has a special support program, the student should be in contact with the director of that program to discuss the types of services he or she has received in high school and may need in college.

Juniors and seniors in high school with documented hearing, learning, visual, or physical disabilities may wish to request special accommodations for college entrance exams, such as additional time or large type. In order to receive services or accommodations at the postsecondary level based on a disability; students must provide proof of that disability. An IEP and/or 504 documentation are helpful but are not sufficient documentation to access disability-based services. At the postsecondary level, students are expected to seek out services and advocate for themselves. Diagnostic testing within three years of entry onto the college must be done by a licensed professional. Typically, the testing documentation must include a comprehensive psychoeducational assessment, a specific diagnosis, and a thorough report. Letters from physicians are not accepted as proof of a disability.

- Campus Explorer: Students with Disabilities
- Vocational Rehabilitation - Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind

COLLEGE VISITATIONS SCHEDULED DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Students should schedule college visitations at times that do not interfere with school attendance.

However, if a tour or interview must be scheduled during school hours, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- Students are required to show verification that they attended the appointment or event scheduled during school time.

ATTENDING COLLEGE PRESENTATIONS AT SCHOOL

Post-secondary schools will schedule visits to St. Bernard during the school year. The dates and times will be posted in google classroom, posted outside of the School Counseling office and announced over the PA system.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES

ACADEMIC:

1. What majors or programs do you offer?
2. What majors are the most popular?
3. What is the average length of your programs?
4. What percentage of your students graduate?
5. Do you have internship programs?
6. Are internships required?
7. Will I have an advisor to help me with scheduling?
8. How difficult is it to get the schedule I need?
9. Is mentoring or tutoring available if I need extra help? Is it free?
10. How large are classes going to be?
11. Are professors available for extra help?
12. Are classes taught by professors or TA's (teaching assistants)?
13. Do the professors have real-world experience in their field?
14. Is there an Honors Program? What are the requirements?

ADMISSIONS:

1. What type of admissions do you offer? What is the application deadline?
(rolling, early action, early decision, regular)
2. Does your school use the common application?
3. What are the requirements for admission?
 - a. Courses
 - b. GPA
 - c. SAT/ACT
 - d. interviews

FINANCIAL AID:

1. What is the tuition, including fees and room and board?
2. What does the average student spend on books per semester?
3. What type of aid is available?
4. How many students receive financial aid?
5. What is the average financial aid package?
6. What is the financial aid deadline? Is it better to get the application in ASAP for a better aid package?
7. Are there scholarships and how can I apply for them?

STUDENT LIFE:

1. What are the dorm rooms like?
 - a. How am I assigned a roommate?
 - b. Can I pick my roommate?
 - c. How many roommates will I have?
2. What athletic / club programs do you offered? How can I get involved?

CAREER SERVICES:

1. Is there a career center to help find jobs after graduation?
2. What companies have recent graduates working for them?
3. What other services does the Career Center Offer?
4. How often are career fairs available? What companies are generally at the career fairs?

HOW TO WRITE A COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAY

*By Margaret Metzger
Brookline High School, Massachusetts*

Many colleges require a short essay as part of the application process. The directions for the essay vary from college to college. Most colleges offer some variation of the topic. "Tell us more about yourself."

Like most students, you might hate this subject and dread writing the essay. You know that it is a crucial piece of writing and that it must be done, but secretly you hope somehow to avoid the task. Like most tasks, the tension created by procrastinating is worse than the work itself—in this case, just sitting down and writing the essay.

You can use the college essay to strengthen your application. In fact, your essay can be the strongest part, presenting you as a thoughtful, sincere, interesting applicant. You can use the college essay to explain mistakes of the past—failed courses, low SAT® scores, or few extracurricular activities. Best of all, you can demonstrate that you know how to write well, an ability all colleges value.

FIND A TOPIC

Colleges genuinely want to know who you are. Although it is difficult to believe, they do not have an "ideal student" in mind. They want a variety of students. They understand that they can't know everything about you by your grade point average and your SAT scores. They want to know what kind of person you are, what aspirations you have, what struggles you have gone through, what is important to you. They ask you to write an essay about yourself because they want more personal information.

Before you write, think about how you may be different from other applicants. What unusual experience would you bring to the college? What interests, activities, travel, struggles, or situations have had a particular impact on you? You are probably thinking, "Nothing is special about me; I'm just an average kid." That's what most students think. Sometimes it helps to ask other people what they think is unique about you.

If you know exactly what you want to write about, you are lucky. Use that topic. Be sure to consider the traditional, but appropriate and effective, topics, such as academic achievements, extracurricular activities, travel and work experiences, and life-changing events.

Also think of more subtle accomplishments. What kind of student are you? In which class did you learn to think, to study? What do you do with your free time? What have you done for the past two summers? What words would you use to describe your personality? Do you belong to any organizations outside high school? What jobs have you held? What have you learned about organizing your time? Who is your most unusual friend? What magazines, newspapers, columnists, or authors do you like to read? What are some of the failures or disappointments in your life? What kind of

plans do you have for the future? Who has been influential in your life? What responsibilities do you have at home? What do you do for other people? What does music (particularly playing or composing) mean to you? How have you changed (besides physically) in the last four years?

BE SPECIFIC

Remember that the admissions board is reading hundreds of applications, and you must make yours memorable. Some students resort to gimmicks: 8-inch-by-10-inch glossy pictures of themselves hang gliding, or a videotape or a cartoon book about themselves. You may have heard stories about an ordinary student getting into an exclusive college by taking a creative or startling approach. But gimmicks are high risk. Maybe the admissions board does not have the time or the equipment to play the videotape of your band. Maybe you will seem egocentric or cute or, more likely, as though you are dodging the difficult task that everyone else has done: writing an essay.

You can make yourself stand out from the crowd and stress your individuality by a less risky method. Your English teachers have been telling you for years to use specifics when you write. Specifics make a piece of writing memorable. This basic principle of good writing applies, as well, to writing the college essay. Be specific. Tell the truth about yourself as specifically as possible. If you claim that you like school, say exactly what you like: "I like biology and got particularly interested in a three-month project I did about algae on the teeth." Always be as specific as possible.

NARROW YOUR TOPIC

You have only one-and-a-half to two pages for this essay. You can't write about everything that has ever happened to you. You need one to three topics for this paper. You must pick a few of the most important aspects of your identity.

If you cover too much, you will be forced to be superficial. Don't say, "I like school. I am a leader. I play basketball. I've traveled to Sri Lanka, Alaska, Iowa, and South Africa. I play the violin. I work every weekend. I believe in responsibility. I want to be famous." Pick one, two, or at the most, three important things about yourself and concentrate on them.

SHOW, DON'T TELL

You need to know and apply the writing principle of "show, don't tell"; Give the readers such convincing evidence that they draw the conclusion you want them to draw. If you provide all the evidence of your fine qualities, you don't have to list them. Besides, the college will be much more likely to consider you sincere if you give examples rather than a list of glorious adjectives about yourself.

For instance, you might be embarrassed to say, "I am extremely responsible." Instead you could say, "Last summer, I was put in charge of 12 ten-year-old girls for a three-day hike." When the college admissions board members read your example, they will come to the conclusion, "Ah, some adult must have felt this applicant could be responsible for a dozen children's health and safety for several days. This sounds like a responsible person." Give your readers the evidence and examples, and they will reach the right conclusions.

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU HAVE DONE

You don't need a long list of flashy experiences. What you have experienced is not as important as what you have done with the experience. Real maturity depends on how you understand what has happened to you and whether you let your experiences change your perceptions.

Colleges want to know how you have reacted to your experiences. For example, many students have failed some test or course. Colleges would like to know what you did with that failure. Did you mope? Blame the teacher? Quit doing homework because you were angry at the failure? Did you see the failure as a warning, an impetus, a challenge?

Even if you write about something exotic, you must say what you did and what you learned. One student went to Israel for two weeks; her only observation was that the Israeli women wore longer skirts than the Americans. Her trivial description revealed her immaturity and poor powers of observation.

"When you are explaining what you learned, do not say, "I learned a lot." Be specific. Tell exactly what you learned. You want to show colleges that you will change and grow through a college education.

FOCUS ON YOURSELF

If you feel self-conscious writing the essay, you may be tempted to dodge the task of writing about yourself and write, instead, about something related to you, such as a group or an organization you belong to. Avoid this approach.

WORK ON THE FIRST SENTENCE

There are two opposing approaches to making a strong opening sentence. The first suggestion is that you spend hours on the first sentence because it sets the tone and direction of the essay. The reasoning is that you need to know where you are going before you begin. The problem with this approach is that students become paralyzed trying to find the perfect beginning.

The second suggestion is that you begin anywhere and write the first sentence last. The reasoning is that you need to get started, and you don't know what you will end up saying until you have finished the essay. You may discover that your essay really begins in the middle of the second or third paragraph, and you can cut out all the preliminaries. Then you can start with a sturdy statement. The problem with this approach is that you might begin an essay without a sense of direction and wander too much.

You may go back and forth between trying to write a perfect beginning and just trying to get started. No matter what you do, when you finish the essay, go back to the beginning and work on the first sentences. Cut out all wordiness. Make it specific. Check the grammar.

FINAL BIT OF ADVICE

Millions of students before you have written college essays. They hated the task, too. But it must get done. Of course, it is better to write it long before the deadline. The real problem for most students is how to get started, what topic to use, and how to avoid procrastination.

The solution is simply to begin.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A STUDENT RESUME

By MyCollegeCalendar

Everyone knows that competition for college admission is incredibly tough. College-bound students should seize every possible opportunity to put themselves ahead of their competition; one way to get noticed by college admission officers and take the lead for available admission slots is to create a professional student résumé.

Students who create a résumé show they are willing to go beyond the required application materials to demonstrate the initiative that college admission officers like to see. Résumés allow students to present themselves in the best possible manner; they can emphasize their strengths, highlight accomplishments, and present information in the order that best shows their college potential and overall personality. On college applications, students are forced to complete information as it is displayed on the application form, while résumés give the freedom to present accomplishments as best suits the student and, as a result, to shine more in the eyes of college admission officers.

Students - there are numerous ways to effectively use your student résumé beyond simply including it with college applications. For example, during campus visits when you meet with college professors, who teach classes in your major, provide a copy of your résumé for their consideration of you as a prospective student entering their department next year. This typically creates a tremendous, “Wow factor”, which usually results in professors becoming advocates for your admission. In addition, scholarship applications are greatly enhanced by including a profession-looking résumé and doing so will increase your odds of winning the award.

In addition, provide a copy of your student résumé to each adult writing recommendations on your behalf this fall. This way they can write outstanding recommendations by using some important details shown on your résumé.

Creating a great student résumé demonstrates your drive and enthusiasm to college representatives and scholarship sponsors. A well-written résumé creates the advantage you may need to gain admission to your college of choice and to win significant scholarships.

Take the time to create a detailed student résumé this summer; it will be worth the effort.

Resource:

<http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/progsupt/jobsrvce/resume.htm>

NOTE: “Student Activity or Biography” outline is a “resume” of your school information and activities. As you enter your senior year, compiling a summary of your school years will become very helpful, especially when filling out scholarship and college application. A Student Activity or Bio-Resume is helpful when seeking letters of recommendation and can be longer than one page.

STUDENTS NAME

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone number

Personal E-Mail Address (Do not list your school email address)

EDUCATION

SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

1593 Norwich New London Turnpike, Uncasville, CT 06382

Counselor's Name 860-848-1271 | Counselors E-Mail Address

Dates attended SBS

If you transferred to SBS from another high school, do not forget to list that schools information

Advanced Placement Courses: (list AP courses taken at SBS)

RECOGNITION / AWARDS

Example:

9, 11, 12th Grade: Student of the Month

10th Grade: Honor Roll

11th Grade: XBSS Leader

12th Grade: National Honor Society

EMPLOYMENT

*If you had a job or not list something in this section. If you held a job list name of employer, address, contact person and phone number, if you have **not** held a job write up a statement as to why – (example – was concentrating on community service, after school activities and academics.*

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Example:

Stage Crew

Teacher/Advisor – Contact # or email

9th: Summer Theater – “The Glass Slipper” – Taking care of setting up “Set” changes, keeping kids organized and behaved backstage, and applying their eye makeup. (15 hours)

11, 12th: Spring Play: Taking care of setting up “Set” changes and curtain calls; make-up.

SBS Chorus

Teacher/Advisor – Contact # or email

9 – 12th: Holiday Dinner: Girls Chorus performed selections of Holiday concert for all dinner

(2 hours)

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Example:

Softball

Coach Name – Contact # or email

10-11th grade: Assisted the coach in welcoming in new players, helping with uniform distribution, equipment management, etc. (20 hours a session)

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Example:

Leo's Club

Contact person – Contact # or email

12th: 5/05 - Montville parade running the spin art table, inflating helium balloons

(Friday – 5 ½ hours and Saturday – 13 hours: Total 18 ½ hours)

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

CollegeBoard Access: Financial Aid Check List
FastWeb: Quick Guide to Financial Aid

<https://tinyurl.com/yd4b6j9u>
<https://bit.ly/3Xl5oyv>

Financial aid opportunities can be based on many factors including financial need (determined by FAFSA: Expected Family Contribution, but subject to many additional and changeable factors), academic performance, specific skill areas or preferred areas of study, parental affiliation with organizations or places of employment, nomination by school staff, or other criteria.

Types of Financial Aid

The main types of student aid include grants and scholarships, loans, and work opportunities provided by colleges. Students may be offered a combination of these by particular colleges. The basic form for all colleges is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Information on completing the FAFSA on-line is available in the School Counseling office, although they cannot be filed before December 1, of the senior year. The main federal programs are Pell Grants based on financial need, Perkins Loans obtained at the college financial aid offices, and Subsidized or Unsubsidized Stafford Loans. All of these require the FAFSA. The FAFSA is available on the Internet at <https://studentaid.gov/>.

The College Board processes the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE, which is required by some colleges, particularly some of the more selective private ones. The PROFILE form lists colleges that require it, and can be completed anytime through the application or on line at the College Board website: www.collegeboard.com. There is a small fee. The College Board also offers an online scholarship search at the same website.

Connecticut offers many types of scholarship and loan programs. For example, Roberta B. Willis Scholarships for up to \$2,000 a year are available for students who meet certain academic and SAT criteria. Applications must be submitted before February of the senior year. Information on all scholarship will be emailed to all eligible students through their Saint Bernard email address.

FAFSA & CSS Profile: Guide to Understanding Financial Aid
Inside the Financial Aid Process: A Guide for Students and Parents

www.scoir.com/blog/fafsa-css-profile-a-straightforward-guide
www.scoir.com/blog/inside-financial-aid-process

Questions To Ask Colleges Regarding Financial Aid

- Are special financial aid forms and supplemental financial aid forms needed?
- Does the college meet 100% of financial need?
- Are home equity or retirement assets taken into account? (If so, this will increase the amount the college thinks you can afford.)
- What is included in the cost of attendance? (Books, transportation, fees?)
- What is the expected student contribution?
- How are outside scholarships treated? Are other grants reduced because of these?
- Are unsubsidized Stafford loans and PLUS loans considered financial aid? (They shouldn't be, since they are meant to help families finance their expected contribution.)

Applying For Scholarships

The Saint Bernard School Counseling Department receives notices on scholarships from many different sources throughout the school year.

All scholarship information is filed in the Counseling Department, uploaded to the senior and junior information google classrooms and posted in the Scholarship Opportunities Newsletter and Database. Students should make sure they check their email regularly. <http://tinyurl.com/SBS-Scholarship-Newsletter> <http://tinyurl.com/SBS-Scholarship-Database>

When applying for scholarships:

- Complete the application, making sure all established criteria are met and all necessary steps are taken. If transcripts are required, a release form for this purpose must be signed by a parent or guardian.
- Bring the completed application and all necessary materials to the School Counseling office **at least a week before the deadline**. **If you submit the application on line, notify your counselor.**

Other Scholarships

Many scholarships are offered locally and through the colleges and universities themselves. Some of these are automatic, as with the University of Connecticut Merit Scholarships and merit scholarships at many other institutions; others require specific and separate applications. It is important to read the college catalogue and application carefully regarding institutional scholarships and grants.

Local and regional agencies, businesses, and civic organizations offer a variety of excellent scholarships. Always check your St. Bernard email, all scholarship will be emailed to qualifying students.

Watching Out for Scholarship Scams

Most publicized scholarships are legitimate. However, there are occasional offers from unfamiliar sources that are deceptive or fraudulent. If you are suspicious of any scholarship offer or information, let your school counselor know. We have in our office detailed information regarding what to watch out for. Some general warning signs are:

- Any scholarship that charges an application fee, even a small one. Legitimate scholarship sponsors do not usually charge students a fee for applying.
- Additional fees charged to apply for or receive an award.
- Guaranteed money.
- Unfamiliar scholarship programs that contact you (rather than responding to your inquiry or application).
- Lack of a clear address or telephone number for further information or clarification.
- Requests for personal information that would normally not be solicited, such as bank account or credit card numbers.
- Project Scholarship Scam ..www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams

Some Considerations

During the planning for financing for college, students and parents should consider the following:

- The overall key to obtaining financial aid is maintaining good school performance.
- Colleges and universities handle outside scholarships in different ways. It is important to know if grants or loans offered by the college will be reduced because of these.
- Unsubsidized Stafford Loans should not be considered financial aid by the college. They are meant to help families finance their expected contribution.
- If Advanced Placement courses are accepted, these can take considerable time off some college programs.
- Colleges that cost more may be able to provide you with more financial aid. This may or may not bring more expensive colleges within range of less costly ones, but it's worth investigating.
- Financial aid packages offered by colleges and universities can be negotiated. It is possible (and common practice) to speak with college financial aid officers about adjusting their offer, especially if they are anxious to have you attend.
- The family's income tax return should be completed as early as possible, since this information is needed for the FAFSA.
- Even families with seemingly little need should apply for financial aid. They may qualify for some help; and special considerations such as several dependents, debts, or high medical expenses may be considered.

Deadline dates

Be aware of the deadline dates for college financial aid and scholarships. That is the date the application and supporting documentation **MUST** be at the organization – NOT the St. Bernard Counseling Dept. Your applications should be mailed at least a week prior to the deadline date.

Resources:

Admissions and Financial Aid Guide Timeline

Facts about Financial Aid

Paying for College

Quick Guide to Financial Aid

Tips for Smart Money Management

College Choice Guide

Evaluating Financial Aid Award Letters Reference Guide

PACT: CT's Pledge for free Community College

New England Tuition Break Schools for CT Residents:

<https://bit.ly/2Mo03Ie>

<http://www.ctohe.org/SFA/sfa.shtml>

<http://www.ctohe.org/News/pdfs/PayingForCollege.pdf>

<https://bit.ly/3rfwEP0>

<https://bit.ly/2YwykaI>

<https://bit.ly/39CsSt4>

<https://bit.ly/3oBBkgI>

<https://www.ct.edu/pact>

<https://nebhe.org/tuitionbreak/find-a-program/connecticut/>

ADMISSION DECISIONS TERMS

Accepted	The student is admitted to the college. Most colleges need a response and deposit by May 1.
Denied	The student has not met the criteria of accepted students.
Deferred	The college determines that more information (including first semester senior year grades) is needed to make a final decision, and the student's application is now part of the regular decision pool.
Waitlisted	The college deems that the student is admissible; however, due to enrollment size, the student cannot be offered admission at that time. It is critical for a student to express his/her interest directly to the institution.

FINANCIAL AID TERMINOLOGY

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/glossary>

<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types>

Cost of Education

College expenses generally including college tuition and fees, room and board, books, supplies and transportation.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

The amount, which parents and the student can reasonably be, expected to pay for college each year.

FAFSA: FREE Application for Federal Student Aid

<https://studentaid.gov/>

The form needed in order to apply for federal student aid, available on paper or electronically (FAFSA Express).

Financial Aid Form

An application for financial aid distributed by colleges requiring information on your family income, assets, expenses, and liabilities.

Financial Need

The difference between cost of education and Expected Family Income.

Grant

A financial award that does not require repayment.

Loans

Money usually obtained from banks or college sources, which must be repaid with interest. Usually you can pay a loan back after your education is complete.

- **Stafford (Subsidized / Unsubsidized) Loans:**

These loans are awarded on the basis of financial need and are regulated by the federal government. A subsidized Stafford Loan is the loan of first choice, since the government pays the interest while students are in school. Students who do not qualify for a subsidized Stafford Loan may take out unsubsidized Stafford Loans. These students are responsible for paying the interest while still in school, but may postpone payment of interest and principal until after graduation. Any unpaid interest is capitalized once repayment begins.

- **Perkins Loan**

A low-interest loan for first-time undergraduates and graduate students which exceptional financial need as determined by the school.

- **PLUS Loan**

Money for parents who want to borrow to help pay for their son or daughter's college education, made available directly through banks.

Parent's Contribution

That part of the Expected Family Contribution, which the parents supply.

Pell Grant

A federal award given to help first-time undergraduates pay for their college education.

Scholarship

Financial aid, which does not require repayment and is usually awarded to a student who shows potential for distinction, usually in academics or athletics.

Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG or FSEOG)

an award to help first-time undergraduates with exceptional financial need, as determined by the school. Priority is given to Pell Grant recipients.

Student Contribution

That part of the expected family contribution, which the student is expected to pay.

Student Financial Aid

Funds awarded to students to help meet the cost of college education. Funds are based on financial need and include grants, scholarships, loans, and employment.

Unmet Need

The difference between the cost of education and the expected family contribution, as well as the combined total of financial aid awards.

Work-Study Program

A program providing jobs for first-time undergraduates and graduate students who need financial aid, which allows a student to earn money to pay for educational expenses.

HELPFUL WEB SITES

PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

The following websites offer FREE PSAT practice tests:

Collegeboard.com:

<https://www.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt/preparation>

Peterson's.com:

www.petersons.com/college-search/about-psat-nmsqt-test.aspx

FREE PRACTICE TESTS

ACT Academy

<https://bit.ly/2UWat3p>

Collegeboard: (*AP / SAT / PSAT / Practice Tests/ Career finder*)

www.collegeboard.com

Khan Academy (Link to your collegeboard account)

<https://bit.ly/2UUUAAdh>

4Tests.com

www.4tests.com/exams/examdetail.asp?eid=6

MajorTests.com

www.majorTests.com

Number2.com

www.number2.com

Peterson's.com

www.petersons.com/college-search/test-prep.aspx

Prepaze.com (digital SAT practice)

<https://www.prepaze.com/digital-sat>

Sparknotes

www.sparknotes.com/testprep/

Test Prep Tool Kit

<https://www.testpreptoolkit.com/>

WORD OF THE DAY

MajorTests.com word lists:

www.majorTests.com/word-lists/

Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day/

Free SAT Vocabulary:

www.freevocabulary.com/

ESSAYS & NOTE TAKING

Note Taking Help

www.notetakinghelp.com

College Application Essays

<https://goo.gl/5kuxcr>

10 Tips for Writing the College Application Essay

<https://goo.gl/AHk7Lf>

VIRTUAL COLLEGE TOURS

CampusReel

<https://www.campusreel.org/>

CampusTours

<https://campustours.com/>

YOUniversity

<https://www.youniversitytv.com/>

YouVisit

<https://www.youvisit.com/collegesearch/>

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

Common App

<https://www.commonapp.org/>

Individual College/University websites

Education Planner

<http://www.educationplanner.org/students/index.shtml>

Admission and Financial Aid Guide Timeline

<https://bit.ly/3Xk06Dn>

Summer Planning Guide

<https://bit.ly/3DVQuYA>

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

CSS PROFILE: College Scholarship Services Profile

www.profileonline.collegeboard.com

(There is a fee associated with filling out this financial profile form – you only need to do the Profile if you college or university requires it.)

FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid (There is no fee to apply for the FAFSA)

www.fafsa.ed.gov/

FSA ID: used to register and file the FAFSA

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/fsaid>

FAFSA Step by Step

<https://bit.ly/3HLAeud>

FERPA: Family Education Rights and Privacy Acts

<http://vimeo.com/73384070>

Common Application Account Matching Tutorial for Students – Video

NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association - "Academics & Athletics"

[http:// www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

FREE SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH SITES

Financial aid information

www.finaid.org/

Financial aid search (FastWEB)

www.fastweb.com

Federal Student Aid for Students

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Financial Aid Finder

www.fincnaiclaidfinder.com

Going Merry Scholarship Search

<https://www.goingmerry.com/>

Scholar Script

www.scholarscript.com/index.php

Student Scholarships

www.studentscholarships.org

USNews: Education

www.usnews.com/education

[SBS Scholarship Opportunities Newsletter](#)



SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

Department of School Counseling

CHECK LIST

- ☐ I have made an appointment with my counselor to review my college choices and the application procedure.
Date: _____ Time: _____
- ☐ I have completed the
☐ Transcript Release
☐ Senior Brag Sheet
and ☐ Teacher /Coach Recommendation forms
- ☐ I have arranged to have SAT, SAT Subject Tests and ACT scores to be directly sent to colleges from the testing agency.
I know I have to log onto these sites individually to do so. (www.collegeboard.com or www.actstudent.org)
- ☐ I have requested letters of recommendation from teachers in person and gave teachers my Teacher Recommendation Form and have specified the date needed.
- ☐ I have written my required essays and have had them reviewed by a teacher.
- If needed, I have finished creating a Common Application account.
- ☐ I have recorded a list of my password and screen names. <https://apply.commonapp.org/Login>
User ID: _____
Password: _____
- ☐ I will email my counselor the list of school that I am apply for, so that transcripts can be electronically on the Common Application, and uploaded my essay and all other necessary documents. I have the signed the FERPA authorization.
- ☐ If I am applying to schools that are not on the Common Application, I will email the complete mailing address to my counselor so that my transcript will be mailed in a timely manner.
- ☐ I have paid my application fee (s) or submitted the fee waiver form.
- ☐ I have completed all the Common Application supplemental forms for colleges that require them.
- ☐ I have given my teachers a friendly reminder to upload my written letter of recommendation and Teacher Common Application Evaluation Form for all Common Applications.
- ☐ I have notified my counselor that I have completed the application steps above.
- ☐ I have completed the FAFSA (<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>) for financial aid, and if needed the CSS PROFILE (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>)
- ☐ I have gotten scholarship applications and check my Saint Bernard email frequently for updates.

If you have finished all your applications:

Check with teachers who agreed to write letters of recommendation on your behalf to confirm they have been submitted. A hand-written thank you note is a good idea.

Make sure your standardized test scores have been sent from the appropriate testing agency to the colleges requiring scores. *Your school counselor cannot do this for you.*

If you submitted applications electronically, confirm that the application, supplement(s), and payment were all sent.

Check with your counselor to make sure that transcripts and secondary school reports have been submitted.

If you applied early to a school requiring a CSS PROFILE for financial aid consideration, verify that your parents/guardians have completed and sent all required information.

<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

Regularly review email and telephone messages. You may get requests for interviews or for follow-up information to which you should promptly respond.

If you have been provided with a special log-in to check the status of your application, do so frequently. This is the best way to know if all elements of your application have been received.

Consider updating colleges on important information like outstanding senior year grades or any new memberships, awards, and accomplishments occurring after you submitted your application.

For federal financial aid, get your FSA ID on the FAFSA website, if you haven't already. You won't be able to submit the FAFSA until after October 1st, of your senior year, but it's good to have a head start on the process.

(NOTE: for class of 2025 FAFSA opened in Dec. 2025 due to upgrade to filing process.)

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

Follow-up with the admissions office or see your counselor if there is a concern about the status of your application or if something seems amiss.

Stay focused on your school work. Colleges can withdraw acceptances based on declining grades, and improved grades may help if you are "waitlisted" and could qualify you for additional financial support.

SAT vs ACT: Which Test is Right for You?

<https://www.princetonreview.com/college/sat-act>

Many students and parents begin the college prep process by comparing the ACT and SAT tests. The **SAT** and **ACT** generally cover the same topics. Both ACT and SAT scores are used for college admissions decisions and awarding merit-based scholarships. Most colleges do not prefer one test over the other. Neither the SAT or ACT is harder than the other. Different students tend to do better on one test over the other.

Compare the ACT and SAT tests: ACT includes a Science section SAT is a computer-based test.

	SAT	ACT
	https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat	https://www.act.org/
Why Take It	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
Test Structure	Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Math	English Math Reading Science Reasoning Essay (Optional)
Length	2 hours, 14 minutes	2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	2 modules	4 reading passages
Science	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)
Math	Arithmetic Algebra I & II Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis	Arithmetic Algebra I & II Geometry, Trigonometry, Probability & Statistics
Calculator Policy	You can use a calculator on all math questions.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
Essays	None	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
How It's Scored	https://tinyurl.com/SAT-Score-Explained Scored on a scale of 400–1600	https://tinyurl.com/ACT-Scores Scored on a scale of 1–36
COST	\$68.00 + Sales Tax	Paper: \$53.50 On-Line: \$53.25 On-Line with Writing \$68.00
Resources:	https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat/practice-preparation	https://bit.ly/3j5u5ks

ACT vs SAT

Understanding the Difference. [/www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/scores/act-vs-sat.html](https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/scores/act-vs-sat.html)
 Which Test is right for YOU? <https://www.princetonreview.com/college/sat-act>
 Which Test Should I take? <https://blog.collegeboard.org/sat-vs-act-which-test-should-i-take>
 Digital SAT vs. Paper ACT: Which test is your test


<https://collegeboard.org>

2025-26 Test Dates	Registration Deadline	Late Registration
March 8, 2025	Feb. 21	Feb. 25
March 19, 2025 (Not Cost to Juniors)	SAT Testing at SBS for Juniors. Counselors will register all SBS Juniors for the SAT/no essay.	
May 3, 2025	April 18	April 22
June 7, 2025	May 22	May 27
Aug. 23, 2025	Aug. 8	Aug. 12
Sept. 13, 2025	Aug. 29	Sept. 2
Oct. 4, 2025	Sept. 19	Sept. 23
Oct. 15, 2025 (Not Cost to Students)	SBS SCHOOL DAY TESTING: PSAT / PSAT/NMSQT & SAT Counselors will register All SBS students' in grades 8-12. • Grades 8-9 will be taking the PSAT 8/9 • Grades 10-11 will be taking the PSAT/NMSQT and • Grade 12 the SAT/no essay For JUNIORS: By taking the PSAT/NMSQT as a junior, students may meet the requirements to enter the National Merit® Scholarship Program, an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. Learn More: https://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/start.aspx?gid=2&pgid=61	
Nov. 8, 2025	Oct. 24	Oct. 28
Dec. 6, 2025	Nov. 21	Nov. 25
March 14, 2026	Feb. 27	March 3
March 18, 2026 (Not Cost to Juniors)	SAT Testing at SBS for Juniors. Counselors will register all SBS Juniors for the SAT/no essay.	
May 2, 2026	April 17, 2026	April 22
June 6, 2026	May 22, 2026	May 26
 http://www.act.org		

2025-26 Test Dates	Registration Deadline	Late Registration
Feb. 28, 2025	March 16	March 28
June 14, 2025	May 9	May 26
July 12, 2025	June 6	June 20
Sept. 6, 2025	August 1	Aug. 19
Oct. 18, 2025	Sept. 12	Sept. 30
Dec. 13, 2025	Nov. 7	Nov. 24
Feb. 14, 2026	Jan. 7	Jan. 21
April 11, 2026	March 6	March 24
June 13, 2026	May 8	May 27
July 11, 2026	June 5	June 24, 2026

 Resource: <https://www.nsr-inc.com/resources/act-and-sat-testing-dates/>

STUDENT FORMS

All forms in this section are available in the School Counseling office and on the School Counseling Resource Board in SAINTS*Connect*.



SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Mrs. Suzanne Haulotte
Campus Minister
860-848-1271, ext. 148
shaulotte@saint-bernard.com

COMMUNITY SERVICE FORM

<https://saintbernardschool.org/community-service>

Student Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

1. To receive credit for community service, the student is responsible for filling out this form **completely** and **returning** it to the Campus Minister.
2. To maintain timely and complete records, students are strongly encouraged to submit Community Service Forms promptly after completing the service.
3. If the student has questions regarding the acceptability of the service, it is suggested that he/she see Mrs. Haulotte for pre-approval before beginning any service.

Sponsoring agency or organization, or individual if no agency or organization is involved. _____

SERVICE SUPERVISOR INFORMATION

Name: _____ **Telephone:** _____

Organization: _____

Position: _____ **Email:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Date(s) and times of service: _____

Description of activities performed: _____

How did your efforts help or benefit others?

PLEASE EVALUATE YOUR EXPERIENCE.

What insights did you gain from this experience?

SUPERVISOR EVALUATION

_____ has satisfactorily completed _____ hours of community service.
Student Name

Would you like students to continue to serve you in this organization?

_____ Yes

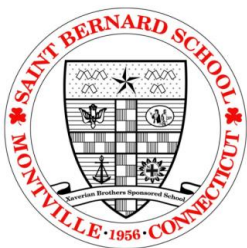
_____ No (If no, please explain.)

Please comment on the individual student's performance on this service:

Agency or Organization: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor's Acknowledgment (please initial):



SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

Department of School Counseling

Mrs. Holly Cyr'85, LCSW, Director (L-Z)

Ms. Erica Massad'15, MS, Counselor (A-K)

Senior Brag Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Post High School Plans

- a. Four year college _____
- b. Two year college/community college _____
- c. Vocational school _____
- d. Armed services _____
- e. Other _____

2. College major(s) you are considering:

3. Colleges that I am considering applying to:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

4. List 3 adjectives to describe yourself:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

5. What are your strengths? What area(s) have you improved in during your high school years?

6. What are any goals for improvement/areas of weakness that you have?

7. How would your teachers describe you? (Think of work ethic, personality, etc.)

8. What “life experiences” have you had that set you apart from others (if any)?

-
- 9. Who/what has had the greatest influence in your life and why?**
- 10. Is there anything on your transcript that needs an explanation which you would like me to touch upon in my letter of recommendation? (grades, courses taken, etc.)**
- 11. What three things would you like me to highlight for you in my letter of recommendation? For example, challenges or hardships you faced and overcame, special talents, unusual experiences, etc.**
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- 12. How would your parents describe you?**

13. SBS Honor Societies

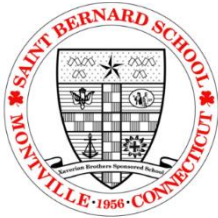
Please list your honor societies, years involved, and any leadership positions held.
(Example: National Honor Society, Grade 11 and 12, Secretary senior year.)

14. SBS Student Ambassador:

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please write something meaningful about this experience.

15. Any school activities you have participated in? (Clubs, athletics, etc.)**16. List all community service you have participated in. Including how long, which school years?**



SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

Department of School Counseling

1593 Norwich New London Turnpike, Uncasville, CT 06382

Phone: 860-848-1271 / Fax: 860-848-7440

Teacher/Coach

RECOMMENDATION REQUEST FORM

(To be completed by the student for the teacher/coach)

Teacher/Coach:

Date submitted to teacher/coach: _____ Date student needs recommendation by: _____

Sports(s) teams I participated in
with this coach: _____

Course(s) taken with this teacher:

Course: _____	Final Grade: _____
Course: _____	Final Grade: _____
Course: _____	Final Grade: _____
Course: _____	Final Grade: _____

Student Name: _____

Student's email contact: _____

Counselor: _____

Mrs. Cyr | hcyr@saint-bernard.com
Students with last name starting with: L-Z

Ms. Massad | jemassad@saint-bernard.com
Students with last name starting with: A-K

(Please send a copy of the recommendation letter to the Counseling Office to be held in my file.)

How I need my letter of recommendation submitted:

☐

Electronic

☐

Copy to Counselor

☐

Mail

Students are encouraged to staple a resume to this request form.

Students may also use the questions below as a more comprehensive guide for the letter of recommendation.

1. Intended college major, area of study or undecided:

2. What are your academic/career goals?

3 Activities/sports in high school.

4. Volunteer/community service. Include your role/participation in each.

5. Work experience, interests, hobbies

6. List four words that best describe you.

7. Specific skills, characteristics, attributes or experiences that you might like mentioned in this letter.

8. Are there any unusual or special personal/family circumstances you would like mentioned in this letter?

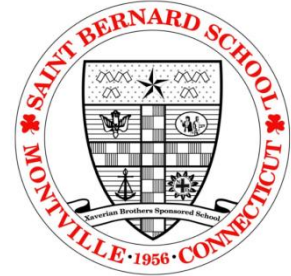
(Use additional space if necessary.)

Counselor Use Only

Teacher received from student: **Date:** _____ Counselor received from student: **Date:** _____

SAINT BERNARD SCHOOL

Department of School Counseling
1593 Norwich New London Turnpike
Uncasville, CT 06382
Phone: 860-848-1271
Fax: 860-848-7440



PERMISSION TO RELEASE RECORDS

Written permission is hereby granted for Saint Bernard School to send transcripts for the student named below to all requested post-high school institutions and scholarships.

Please Print Clearly:

Name of Student

Year of Graduation

Print Name of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Administration:

Received on: _____