common app 2025 - 2026

MEGAN SMITH

PROFILE

Personal Information

Name	Megan Smith
Birthdate	09/08/2008
Address	100 Main Street Claremont, CA 91711, USA
Gender Identity	Female
Pronouns	She/Her
Sex	Female

Citizenship

Citizenship Status	US Citizen or US National
Birthplace	Claremont, CA, USA

Language

English	First Language, Speak, Read, Write, Spoken at home

FAMILY

Household

Parents	Married
Home	Both Parents

Parent 1

Name	Mother – Susan Sandoval, address: same as my home address
Occupation	Computer programmer or analyst, Self-Employed
Education	Graduated from college/university Bachelors (1990), Fairbrook University

Parent 2

Name	Father – Samuel Smith, address: same as my home address
Occupation	Business executive (management, administrator), Employed, Best Buy
Education	Some college/university No Degree, University of California

MEGAN SMITH

EDUCATION

School **Claremont South High School**
150 Center St., Claremont CA, USA
Public

Senior Year Courses

AP Literature – Full Year
Calculus – Full Year
Advanced Orchestra – Full Year
AP German Language – Full Year
AP Biology – Full Year
AP Environmental Science – Full Year

Testing

ACT 8/14/2025
Composite: 29
English: 28
Math: 27
Reading: 30
Science: 29

SAT 12/04/2025
EBRW: 670
Math: 660

AP Exams
World History 05/2024: 4
US History 05/2025: 4
English Language & Composition 05/2025: 5
German Language & Culture 05/2026:

Honors and Awards

California Music Teachers Award, State/Regional, Grade 9

Future Plans

Prospective Major(s) Psychology
Career Interests Clinical Psychologist

MEGAN SMITH

ACTIVITIES

Athletics: JV/Varsity
9, 10, 11, 12
10 hr/wk 20 wk/yr, Continue

Varsity Cross-Country Captain
My best friend and I lead the most talented, courageous, and fun women in my school. They're worth getting shin splints for.

Research
11, 12
15 hr/wk 12 wk/yr

Research Assistant, Cal Poly Pomona Astronomy Department
Assisted virtually in a research project that measures crater depth on the planet Mars.

Cultural
10, 11, 12
3 hr/wk, 36 wk/yr, Continue

Multiracial Affinity Group Leader
Surrounding myself with other people exploring their identity has been invaluable in helping me feel more secure in my own.

Theater/Drama
11, 12
1 hr/wk 36 wk/yr, Continue

Improv Comedy Club Co-Creator, Yes And You're Muted
Started an improv comedy club after my school switched to remote learning. I figured we could all use a laugh.

Social Justice
10, 11, 12
1 hr/wk, 20 wk/yr, Continue

Amnesty International Member and Vice President (grade 12)
Organized and attended letter-writing campaigns, helped design club t-shirt. Focus on human trafficking.

Cultural
10, 11, 12
1 hr/wk, 45 wk/yr, Continue

Latin Dance Club Participant
Attend regular meetings and learn new dance styles. Dance our hearts out and eat good food together.

Music: Instrumental
12
12 hr/wk, 2 wk/yr, Continue

Oboist, School Orchestra
One of two oboists. I'm always second chair, almost never a soloist, and I'm okay with that.

Religious
9, 10, 11, 12
12 hr/wk, 52 wk/yr, Continue

New Hope Claremont Youth Leader
Lead Bible study, preform in worship music group, teach Sunday school, organized no-pressure prom.

Music: Instrumental
10, 11, 12
2 hr/wk, 36wk/yr, Continue

Oboist, Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestra
This group made me fall in love with classical music in a way I never anticipated.

Music: Instrumental
10, 11, 12
1 hr/wk, 48 wk/yr

Private Oboe lessons
I'm not sure the financial investment has made much of a difference, but I adore my teacher and appreciate the chance to practise more regularly.

MEGAN SMITH

WRITING

Personal Essay

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

"What are you?" I can't believe that I asked that question because that was the question that I hated people asking me.

I often find myself at the intersection of multiple worlds, never fully belonging to just one. My early years were spent navigating the world through the lens of my white family where I attended predominantly white schools and lived in a mostly white neighborhood. In these spaces, I didn't stand out too much or think about race. I now realize that this was a privilege afforded to me because of my lighter skin. When people assumed I was white, I didn't correct them. I let the world see me in a way that made my life feel easier.

Over time, however, I learned that life isn't actually easier when you are not your full authentic self. I have a Black mother and a white father, and this has shaped who I am by forcing me to confront the complexities of identity head on.

As I grew older, I slowly started realizing that, while sometimes I was treated as just another white person in certain settings, I was never fully embraced by the white community. Even though most people often did not explicitly acknowledge it, I knew that there was something different about me. My curly hair, the food I ate, and my mother's presence were all visible markers of my Blackness. Still, for the most part, I experienced a sense of privilege because of my lighter skin, even if I did not fully understand what that meant.

It wasn't until I entered high school that I started unpacking the layers of my racial identity. I remember having a conversation with one of my closest friends, who has darker skin than me and parents who are both Black. She shared with me that she was judged before she even opened her mouth, strangers would cross the street when they saw her walking, and people would follow her in stores, assuming she was going to steal. Hearing about my friend's experiences forced me to confront the reality of the privilege I had been afforded—privilege that I had never asked for, but was given simply because of how I looked.

This realization sparked in me a deep desire to use my position to amplify the voices of those who are often silenced. I may not have all the answers but I know that in acknowledging my privilege, I am beginning to understand the responsibility that comes with it.

I *love* discussing this topic in the Multiracial Affinity group at school. It has been such a powerful place to build community and also push myself to see and understand more deeply. It is moving to share my experiences while also encouraging my classmates to think more critically about the privileges they may have, and how they show up in the world. Through the work I have done with this club, I have prompted others to have more nuanced conversations about race, and that is something I am very proud of.

It has been a challenge to figure out my place in the world and what kind of difference I want to be able to make. Ultimately, I have come to realize that my identity is not a simple binary–there is no easy answer to "what are you". And it is in navigating this complexity that I hope to contribute to a world where I can fully belong.

MEGAN SMITH

ADDITIONAL WRITING

Additional Information

I was diagnosed with dysgraphia when I was in middle school. My father recommended that I provide a definition of dysgraphia. I offer this from the website, https://dyslexiaida.org/understanding-dysgraphia/:

"What is dysgraphia?

Dysgraphia is a Greek word. The base word *graph* refers both to the hand's function in writing and to the letters formed by the hand. The prefix *dys* indicates that there is impairment. *Graph* refers to producing letter forms by hand. The suffix *ia* refers to having a condition. Thus, dysgraphia is the condition of impaired letter writing by hand, that is, disabled handwriting. Impaired handwriting can interfere with learning to spell words in writing and speed of writing text. Children with dysgraphia may have only impaired handwriting, only impaired spelling (without reading problems), or both impaired handwriting and impaired spelling."

TRANSCRIPT

CLAREMONT SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

150 Center Street

Claremont, CA 91711

Transcript for MEGAN SMITH DOB 09/08/2008

Grade 9	**Fall**	**Spring**	**Final**	**Grade 10**	**Fall**	**Spring**	**Final**
Honors English 9	B+	A	A	Honors English 10	B+	A-	A-
Honors History 9	B+	A	A	AP World History	A-	A-	A-
Honors German 9	A-	A	A	Honors German 10	A	A	A
Honors Biology	B+	A	A	Honors Chemistry	A-	A-	A-
Algebra 2	A	A	A	Trigonometry	A-	A-	A-
Anatomy	A-	NA	A-	Physical Science	B+	NA	B+
Physiology	NA	B+	B+	Astronomy	NA	A	A
Orchestra	A	A	A	Orchestra	A	A	A
Physical Education	P	P	P	Physical Education	P	P	P

Grade 11	**Fall**	**Spring**	**Final**	**Grade 12**	**Fall**	**Spring**	**Final**
AP English & Composition	A	B+	A-	AP English Literature	A-		
AP US History	B+	A	A	AP German	A		
Honors German 11	A	A	A	AP Environmental Sci	A-		
Honors Physics	B+	A	A-	Calculus	B		
Precalculus	A	A	A	Advanced Orchestra	A		
Advanced Orchestra	A	A	A				

Weighted Cumulative GPA: 4.40

Secondary School Report (SSR)

Student **Megan Smith DOB 09/08/2008**

School Claremont South High School
150 Center Street
Claremont, CA 91711

School Type Public

School Type Public, Suburban

Counselor Details

Name, e-mail, phone Cate Thacher, Counselor, cthacher@claremontsouth.edu, 213.233.2111

Written Evaluation

Relationship to applicant School Counselor
How long have you known this applicant? 1 year

Rank, GPA, and strength of curriculum for Megan Smith

Rank: 85th Percentile

GPA: 4.40

Unweighted ☐ Weighted ■

Curriculum Rigor ☐ Most Demanding
■ Very Demanding
☐ Demanding

Please rate the applicant – Megan Smith – in the following areas:

No Basis		Below Average	Average	Good (above average)	Very Good (well above average)	Excellent (top 10%)	Outstanding (top 5%)	Top Few (top 1%)
	Academic Achievement				X			
	Extracurricular Accomplishments						X	
	Personal qualities and character						X	
	OVERALL					X		

Secondary School Report

Letter of Recommendation

Counselor Letter for Megan Smith

Megan is a resourceful and diligent student who has impressed me in several ways. At the start of every school year, she has made it a point to stop into the guidance offices to wish me a good year and to catch me up on what she's been doing. Her teachers report that Megan consistently reaches out to them to check her understanding, clarify expectations or request feedback. Often, she has another student who may not seek out support on their own with her, and she makes sure the student follows her lead. Megan is a person who cares about justice in all of her communities. A dedicated member of Claremont South's Amnesty International chapter since 9th grade she has taken on the role of Vice President this year as a senior to further combat systemic global oppression. Identity matters to Megan. She brings her own lived experiences to others while welcoming different perspectives as the leader of the Multiracial Affinity Group here at school. Megan is known by all to be a generous and open-minded person who makes the world a better place.

Megan is a mature learner who embraces academic challenges as opportunities for personal growth. At Claremont South she has taken great advantage of the honors and AP courses we offer. Her curriculum, while not the most demanding she could undertake, speaks to her clear preference for challenge and her ability to meet those challenges head on. Teachers speak of her dedicated intention to master material, and her keen awareness of other learners and their needs. This last quality is captured in the report of her Algebra II Teacher who writes about the sly ways Megan will slow down the pace of a class—usually by asking a question or proposing another way to solve a problem—long enough to subtly call attention to the students who are struggling with the material. Doing so, of course, solidifies Megan's conceptual foundation and reinforces the habits of mind, particularly the detailed note taking and the questions, both clarifying and generative, that she so willingly cultivates.

As co-captain of the cross-country team, Megan offers inspired leadership. By her own account, she is far from the fastest runner on the team, a fact which doesn't disqualify her from leading the pack in other ways. Her co-captain (and best friend) happens to be the state champion. According to the coach, together they have nurtured and supported the team, instituting a range of related activities from pasta nights to dance improv comedy club and even invited me to practice with them—I declined the invitation, but I did cheer them on when they offered Claremont South a 15-minute show at an assembly.

I am very pleased to recommend Megan to you. Her maturity and self-direction make me confident that she will thrive in a college setting.

Sincerely,
Cate Thacher
Counselor
Claremont South High School

Teacher Letter of Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION FOR: **Megan Smith**

I write to offer an enthusiastic recommendation for the application of Megan Smith. Megan is just the kind of student any school would be proud to endorse. She understands herself as a learner; she applies herself diligently to any task, attuned to the salience of a point and curious to know more; and she always works on behalf of others. Megan is not afraid of what she doesn't know, a characteristic I wish for all my students.

Because of her excellent work ethic and her openness to trying new study habits, Megan showed exemplary improvement over the course of our year together in AP Language and Composition. Megan became a much stronger student through careful attention to her writing process and her textual annotations. She patiently and proactively chipped away at rhetorical analysis, and along the way, she methodically addressed learning challenges that arose as a result of her dysgraphia, experimenting with various strategies to improve the speed and effectiveness of her active reading. Her on-demand writing grew sharper and more incisive with each month. Megan is an excellent self-advocate. She knows how to get her needs met, and more than once, she quite transparently spoke on behalf of other students as well. On a few occasions, I noted heightened stress in Megan. When I asked her once whether she was feeling over-extended, she responded with characteristic frankness, "Yes at the moment I'm feeling like I've taken on too much, but I have felt that before, and I know I'll feel it again. This, too, shall pass." And then she thanked me for my concern.

Megan performs well in group endeavors. One assignment stands out as especially illustrative of how effective a leader she can be. The assignment involved canvassing members of the school community (peers, faculty, administrators, support staff, and parents) to assess how people are feeling about a single, relevant issue of the day. The final product is meant to be a compendium of position pieces that argue several points of view. Any decision- maker could then use this compendium to consider multiple perspectives and recommend a particular course of action. This was a complex project requiring coordination, research, timeliness and effective communication. Megan's group included a student who was new to the school and community as well as a student who has been struggling with low motivation since the beginning of the year. During one particularly frustrating work session, I observed Megan take charge of their process, eliciting an accountability plan for the unmotivated student and making arrangements to accompany the new student on her initial interviews. The group ultimately produced an excellent product.

Having observed Megan throughout the course, I can endorse her application with full confidence and great enthusiasm. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you need more information than I've provided here.

Sincerely,

Lisa Marquez
English Teacher
Claremont South High School

Claremont South High School Profile

150 Center Street
Claremont, CA 91711

General Information

Grades: 9-12	Type of School: Public	Enrollment: 2,060
Length of Semester: 20 Weeks	Class Periods: 43 Minutes	Periods per Day: 8
Teaching Faculty: 124	Teacher to Student Ratio: 1:17	

Community

Located 15 miles west of Los Angeles, Claremont Township forms a suburban school district whose residents primarily engage in professional and business occupations.

Curriculum

Students must earn 24 credits to meet graduation requirements. An individual program is developed for each student and courses are offered at varying levels of difficulty. 91% of Claremont South students enrolled in at least one Honors level course and 55% of Claremont South students enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement course. Students can start enrolling in AP as early as freshman year.

Instructional Levels

Students are grouped by instructional levels in all academic departments: English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and World Languages. Students are heterogeneously grouped in other departments.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

>4.0: 20%	4.69-4.20: 35%	4.19-3.70: 19%
3.69-3.20: 14%	3.19-2.69: 6%	<2.68: 6%

College Board Advanced Placement

822 Claremont South students completed 1,670 AP tests. 61.6% of students took at least one AP test during high school and scored a 3 or better.

Recognition	Students	Mean Score
National AP Scholars	31	4.75
AP Scholars with Distinction AP	99	4.46
Scholar with Honor	19	4.07
AP Scholar	27	3.46

Advanced Placement Courses – 27 courses

English Language & Composition~English Literature~French Language~German Language~Italian Language~Latin~Spanish Language~US Government & Politics~Comparative Government & Politics~US History~European History~World History~Psychology~Economics Micro and Macro~Biology~Chemistry~Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism~Environmental Science~Statistics~Calculus AB~Calculus BC~Computer Science A~Art History~Studio Art: Drawing~Studio Art: 2D Design

National Merit Recognition

~44 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists ~39 National Merit Commended Students ~1 National Hispanic Scholar

Highlights for the Last Graduation Class

- Attending 4 year college: 94%; Attending 2 year college: 4%
- Claremont South High School ranked among the best high schools nationally in numerous commercial publications, including US News & World Report, Newsweek, and The Washington Post
- Student recipient of the prestigious United States Presidential Scholar Award
- Claremont South High School's student literary magazine, The Folio, and student yearbook, The Pioneer, both received a Gold rating from the California School Press Association
- Sixteen students recognized by the California Music Educators Association as All-Region Band, Orchestra, or Choir
- Eight California state championship titles in Boys Lacrosse, Boys Soccer, Baseball, and Girls Tennis

College Destinations

Over the past four years, graduates of Claremont South have matriculated to the colleges and universities listed below.

Albright College, American University, Arizona state university, Auburn University, Babson College, Bates College, Bloomsburg University, Boston College, Boston University, Brigham Young University, Bryn Mawr College, Bucknell University, Cabrini College, Carnegie Mellon University, Catholic University of America, Chapman University, Cheyney University, Clemson University, Colgate University, College of Charleston, College of the Holy Cross, College of William & Mary, Colorado State University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Davidson College, Denison University, Dickinson College, Drexel University, Duke University, Duquesne University, Elon University, Emory University, Florida A&M University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida State University, Fordham University, Franklin & Marshall College, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Gettysburg College, Goucher College, Hamilton College, Harcum College, Harvard College, High Point University, Hofstra university, James Madison University, Johns Hopkins University, Lafayette College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, McGill University, New York University, Northeastern University, Pitzer College, Pomona College, Purdue University, Reed College, Rice University, Skidmore College, Spelman College, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Swarthmore College, Syracuse University, Texas A&M University, Towson University, Tufts University, Tulane University, United States Naval Academy, University of British Columbia, University of California at Berkeley, University of California at Davis, University of California at Los Angeles, University of California at Santa Barbara, University of California at Santa Cruz, University of California at San Diego, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of Miami, University of Michigan, University of Nebraska, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Notre Dame, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, University of Rochester, University of South Carolina, University of St. Andrews, University of Vermont, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin, Ursinus College, Vanderbilt University, Villanova University, Wake Forest University, Washington University in St. Louis, Wesleyan University, Whitman College, Whittier College, Williams College, Yale University