The Application Process Overview: Student Tasks

1) Research

- Select 4-8 colleges – consider: majors, cost, selectivity, size, geographical location, etc. SchooLinks is a helpful tool. You can favorite a school with the heart icon.

2) College Application List

- Your Final List is the list of schools you plan to apply to. Click the College icon, select Final List, and keep the list updated as you add schools where you will submit applications.
- This is the list your counselor & teachers will use to submit your transcripts, feedback forms, and letters of rec to the colleges to which you are applying.
- **Guaranteed Admission Program** – Qualifying BSD seniors will receive guaranteed admission to 5 Washington colleges & universities (excluding UW). Ensure your contact information can be released to Washington State higher education institutions (ParentVUE).

3) Application

- Consult **College Application Overview** and **College Planning Resources** found on the College Applications page of the Counseling website.
- Make a Common Application account *if needed* https://www.commonapp.org/.
- Check application deadlines! Every college is different, and deadlines will change.
- Create a **professional email** address only used for college applications, scholarships, etc. Do not use your school email as that will not be accessible after you graduate.
- Consider using an application organizer to keep track of application deadlines. Example: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13-4tqWTDmurVOWfy87SLB-l9ip6E9Xl96hdOEGhazfc/edit#gid=0

4) College Essay/Supplemental Forms

- Check essay/supplemental requirements for each school and proofread essay before sending.
- **Start on the essay during the summer before 12th grade.**

5) Counselor Letter of Recommendation (LOR)

- Meet with your counselor during Senior Blitz appointment (between Sep-Nov). Ask for a Counselor LOR, *only if needed,* for private universities!
- If Counselor LOR is needed, fill out a copy of **Counselor LOR Packet for Private Universities**, (available on the Counseling Website). The entire packet must be completed and returned to your counselor ***three (3) weeks*** prior to the first college deadline.
- Stay connected with your counselor if you add more schools to your college application list.

6) FERPA Waiver

- Turn in a signed FERPA waiver form to the counseling center secretary and indicate that you will waive your rights on your www.commonapp.org account. We must have the FERPA on file if you want us to send transcripts to any university.

7) Teacher Recommendations

- *If needed*, ask 1-2 teachers for a recommendation letter (check recommendation requirements for each college to make sure you know how many letters you will need). Most public universities do not need letters of recommendation. You may ask your teachers for a LOR in the spring of junior year or the fall of senior year.
- Send electronic request for LOR through SchooLinks. Give teachers at least *3 weeks* to write their letter. Ideally students will make all requests by October 1st.
- If your college does not accept electronic documents through SchooLinks (this is rare), provide teachers with stamped, addressed envelopes, for each college to which you are applying.
- **Send a *thank you* note** for all letters of recommendation sent on your behalf. Showing your gratitude is appreciated.

8) Standardized Test Scores (ACT/SAT)

- Check college websites to see if the schools you are applying to are Test Optional or Test Blind. UW Seattle is test optional on their initial read of applications.
- If you apply to a college that requires the ACT or SAT, you must request scores be sent directly from collegeboard.com or actstudent.org to the university (there is a fee for each school requested).
- Almost every university will accept either the SAT or ACT. So, you can choose which test to send, depending on your scores for each test.

9) FAFSA/CSS/WASFA – Financial Aid & Scholarships

- Visit www.fafsa.gov after October 1st to apply for Federal Financial Aid; many scholarships ask for FAFSA to be filled out, so it is best to fill it out, even if you do not think you will qualify.
- Fill out the CSS Profile if your college requires it. Check application requirements of individual institutions (sometimes required by private colleges).
- Unique immigration status or undocumented? You may be eligible for the WASFA – check it out and apply after October 1st: https://readysetgrad.wa.gov/wasfa.
- Each university has their own financial aid process. Be sure to visit their websites to follow their unique instructions.
- Search for scholarships: Institution websites and utilize resources found here in the financial aid & scholarships section: https://newporthigh.bsd405.org/counseling/applying-to-college

10) Official Transcripts

- Request Transcripts in SchooLinks (be sure to turn in FERPA waiver to the counseling center).
- Allow at least ten school days' notice for any transcript to be processed and sent out.
- All students have access to an UNOFFICIAL transcript in StudentVUE.

11) Senior Grades

- Continue to do well in your senior year classes.

- Many colleges will review first semester and final senior grades, and acceptance decisions can be rescinded, so hang in there and maintain a strong senior year.

12) College Decision

- Once you are accepted to a college, update your status in SchooLinks! Let your counselor know your final decision and set your attending college in SchooLinks.
- We will send your final transcript at the end of the school year. Good Luck!