

Steps to Apply to a 4-year College or University



September-October : Early Deadline College Planning

- ☐ Create a list of 6-8 colleges or universities that you want to apply to. Most Early Action/Priority/Early Decision deadlines to apply are **November 1st**.
- ☐ To apply, you will likely either use the [Common App](#) or apply directly through the school's website.
 - If you apply through the Common App, you will need to “match” your Common App to your Naviance account to be able to send transcripts. Click [here](#) for a tutorial on how to match.
 - Click on *Colleges* tab on Naviance Dashboard > *Colleges I’m Applying to* > Select *Match Accounts*
 - If you apply directly through the school's website, you will need to request your transcript to be sent via Naviance. Please email your counselor.
- ☐ Request letters of recommendation through [Naviance](#) (*access through the Clever app*)
 - It is important to note that not all schools require or accept letters of recommendation. If a school requires a letter(s) of recommendation, you must have a conversation with your teacher(s) prior to requesting the letter via Naviance.
 - Click on *Colleges* tab > *Letters of Recommendation* > Select *Staff member* > Select *schools* to send the letters to > Select *Submit Request*.
- ☐ Send ACT scores directly from the testing agency, if specifically requested by the college. This is done through your MyACT account on the [ACT](#) website.
 - If you would like to retake the ACT, you can register for those exams through your MyACT account as well. Please let your counselor know if you retake the ACT to get your updated scores added to your transcript.

October-November: Financial Aid/Scholarships

- ☐ Create a [Federal Student Aid ID](#) to prepare to complete the FAFSA.
 - Each student and one parent/ guardian must create a separate Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID).
 - Review this video on [How to Create an Account and Username \(FSA ID\)](#)
- ☐ Fill out the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) starting **October 1st**.
 - **Completion of the FAFSA is a graduation requirement in the state of Illinois for all students.**
 - Review these steps on [How to Complete the FAFSA](#).
- ☐ Explore scholarship opportunities, particularly at the schools to which you have been accepted. Look at the [EPCHS scholarship bulletin](#) that is sent out to all Seniors each month.

November-January: Continue College Applications

- ☐ Visit/tour schools and consider attending open houses and/or admitted student events.
- ☐ If you did not apply to a school by the Early Action/Priority Deadline, most schools will have a Regular Decision Deadline through the months of January-April. Colleges with “Rolling Admissions” may accept students beyond this timeframe if there are remaining spots in their freshman class.
- ☐ Use [Naviance](#) to update your admission decisions (Accepted/Declined/Waitlisted)

- ☐ Monitor email for admission decisions and requests for additional information from college/universities
- ☐ Closely consider financial aid offers. Contact the financial aid offices if you have questions or concerns.

January-March: Scholarships! Scholarships! Scholarships!

- ☐ Consider signing up for free, reputable scholarship search websites like: fastweb.com, unigo.com, niche.com, and/or scholarships.com. You should never pay to apply for a scholarship.
- ☐ Continue checking the EPCHS [scholarship bulletin](#) for new opportunities.
- ☐ Talk to parents/guardians/family members to see if their employer offers scholarship opportunities to children/family members.
- ☐ Listen to School Announcements. We will advertise new scholarship opportunities as they are received.

March-May: Decision time! Choose School, Review Financial Aid & Commit

- ☐ Review financial aid award letters and consider which school is most affordable. Talk with your family about financing any remainder balances.
- ☐ Before committing to a college, consider taking an overnight visit, to help validate your comfortability within the campus environment. These can be arranged through the college's Admissions Office.
- ☐ Once you have decided where you will be enrolling, send enrollment deposit to the school you have chosen. Do NOT put down deposits at more than one school.
- ☐ If you plan to live on campus, you will need to send a housing deposit and any necessary housing forms as well.
 - YOU HAVE UNTIL **MAY 1ST** TO SUBMIT HOUSING AND ENROLLMENT DEPOSITS TO THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY OF YOUR CHOICE. AFTER MAY 1ST, THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT YOUR DEPOSIT OR HOUSING MAY BE FULL.
- ☐ Submit whatever forms may be required to accept your financial aid offer.
- ☐ Indicate in [Naviance](#) where you have decided to attend, as well as the Senior Checkout Form sent by Mrs. Mayo. *This is important so that the correct school receives your final transcript!*
- ☐ Please respond to the Senior Decision Day email from the Counseling Department so we can recognize and celebrate your post-high school choice here at EPCHS!!!

May-August: Transition to College

- ☐ Register for, and take any necessary placement exams
 - ☐ If you are required to take pre-college qualifying coursework in Math or English, explore opportunities to take those classes over the Summer, possibly at Moraine Valley Community College
- ☐ Register for New Student Orientation. You most likely will register for your classes during orientation.
- ☐ Submit any necessary medical/insurance forms
- ☐ Acknowledge move-in/new student transition dates, as well as first day of classes
- ☐ Explore any opportunities over the summer to find on-campus jobs, particularly if you have received work study as part of your financial aid package
 - The Career Services Department should have listings