

Tappan Zee High School
9/9/26

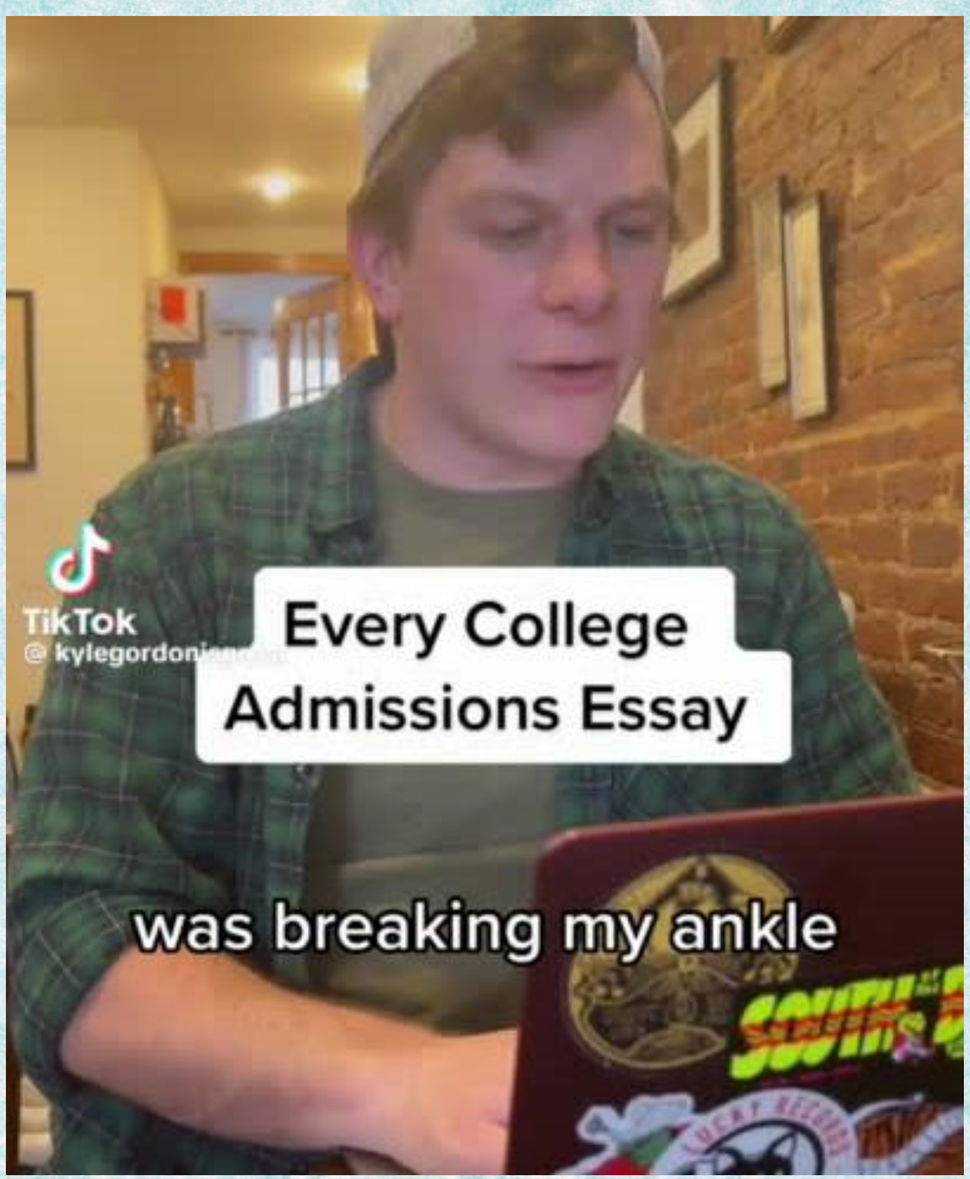
More than 1,000 colleges accept the Common App, including the SUNYs!

<u>Sections of the Common App:</u>
Profile
Family
Education
Testing
Activities and Experiences
Writing
Courses & Grades

Some **schools will require supplemental essays**

If a school does not use the Common App, their online application can be accessed through their individual website. CUNY schools are not on the Common Application.

The elusive essay…



Two Sample Supplemental Essays

University of Chicago:

Known for: The most famously weird prompts in college admissions — rewritten by students and alumni every year

- Invent your own mixed metaphor (e.g., combining "burn that bridge" with "the world is your oyster") and explain how it could work.
- Take inspiration from how the James Webb Space Telescope used origami techniques to fold its sunshield, then apply an artistic practice's principles to solve a problem of your choosing.
- The "Choose Your Own Adventure" option: pick a UChicago prompt from a past year, or write your own question entirely

Boston University:

This is a more basic prompt used by many colleges

What about being a student at BU most excites you? How do you hope to contribute to our campus community? (300 word maximum)

The Self-Reported Transcript and Academic Record System (STARS) & online portals

- Some schools require applicants to complete the Self-reported Transcript and Academic Record System (STARS) which requires students to submit a complete list of courses and grades from high school, **in addition to** the transcript sent by the high school. You can find that list here.
- Students will be prompted to complete the STARS in a variety of ways: directly on Common App, by reading application instructions on the school's website, via email, or after registering for the college's online portal.
- Students must remember to check their email regularly for notifications.

Some colleges that require the STARS:

Clemson, Florida State, NYU, Penn State, Rutgers, University of Delaware, University of Rhode Island, University of Tennessee, University of Florida, Virginia Tech

Individual College Applicant Portals

- After a student applies to college, they are likely to receive a confirmation email and instructions for accessing a portal.
- This portal allows students to monitor their application (and sometimes financial aid) status, track the receipt of documents, and view the admissions decision.
- Opening these portals demonstrates a student's active engagement in the application process.





1) College Research Tool:

Scattergrams (next slide)
Virtual Tours
Application Requirements
Fast Facts (majors, degrees, etc.)

2) Supporting Document Management System:

School Profile
Transcript
Letters of Rec (counselor and teacher(s)
Mid-Year and Final Reports

3) Account Matching with Common App:

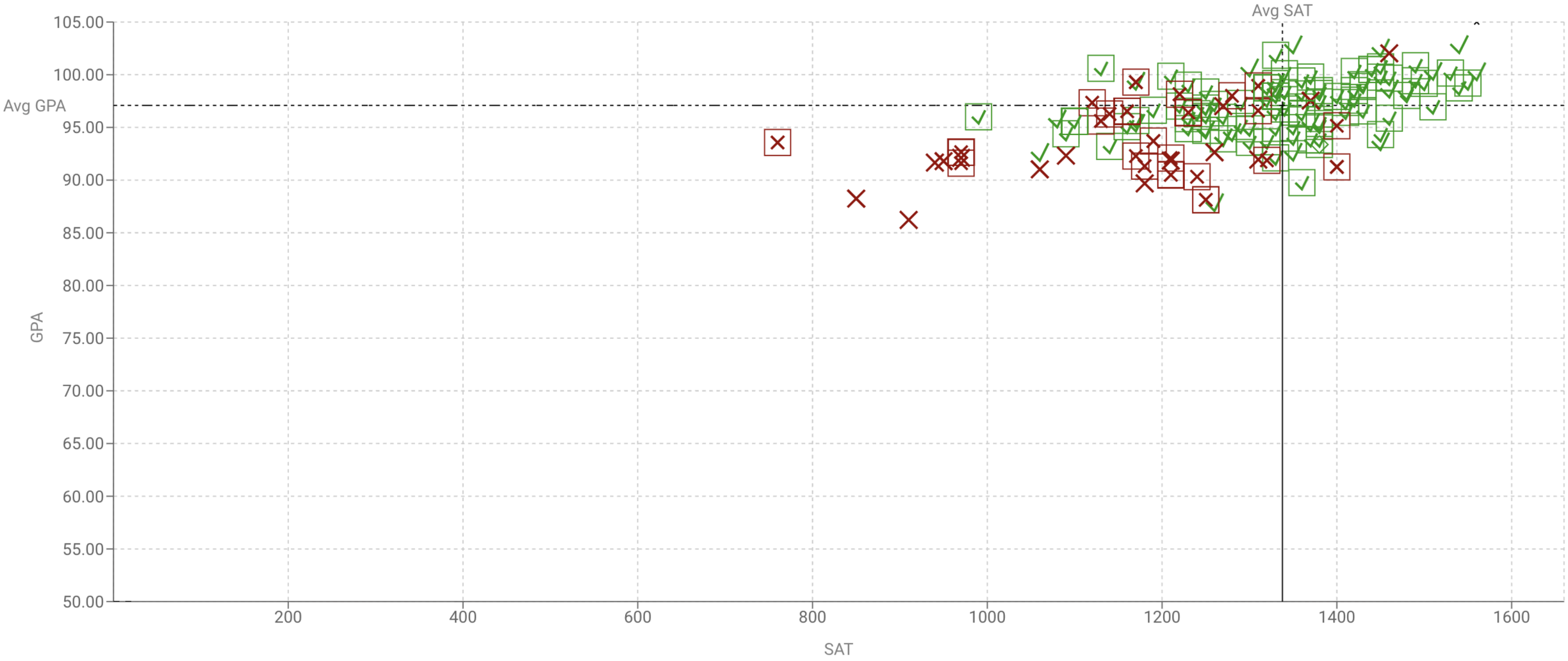
FERPA / Waive Right to View Recommendations

University of Maryland-College Park

Favorite

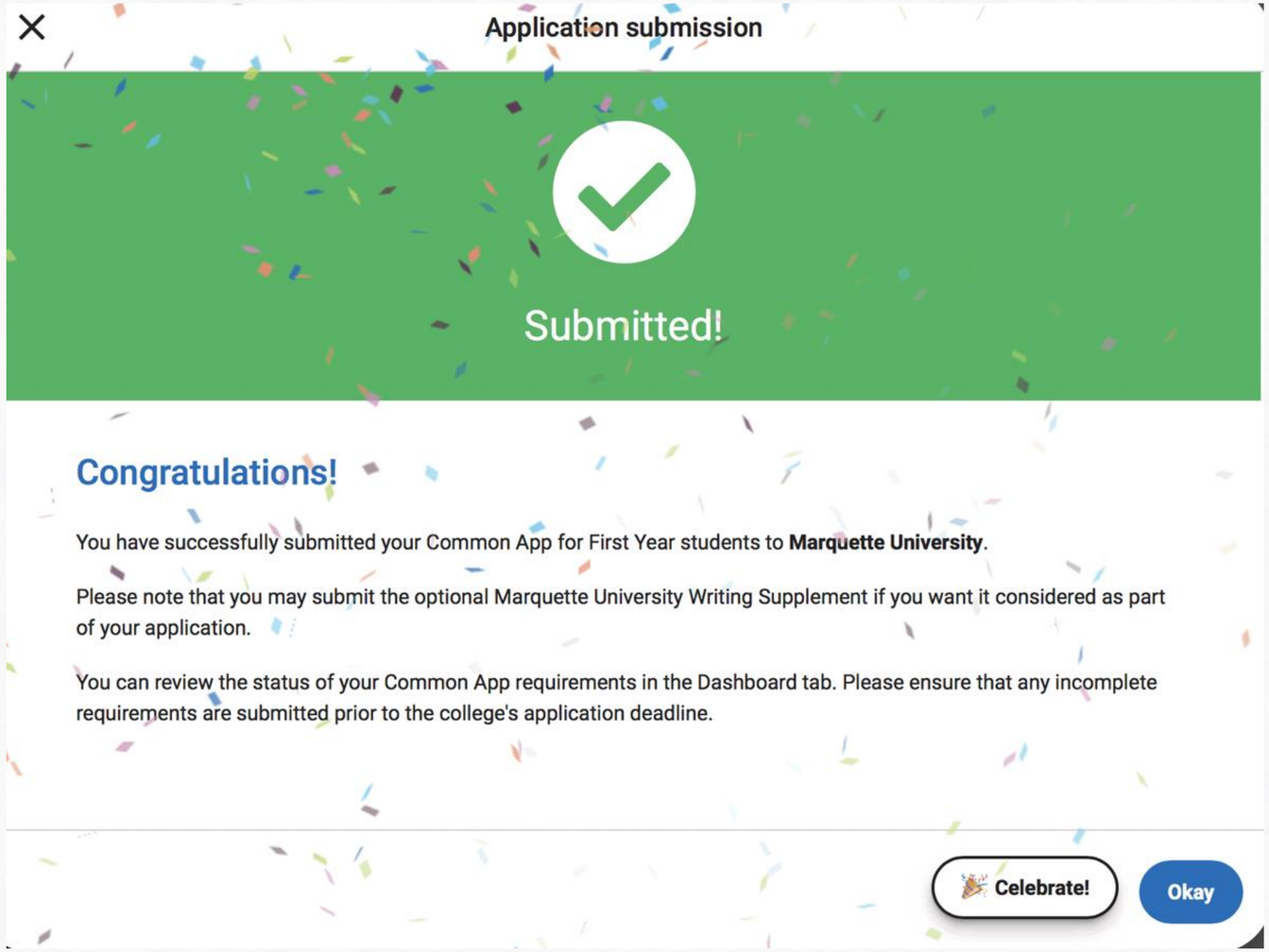
Overview | Cost | Events and visits | **Admissions** | Majors | Student life | Contact

Comparing Weighted GPA **with** SAT (1600) **and** Applied test optional



Application Types and General Timeline:

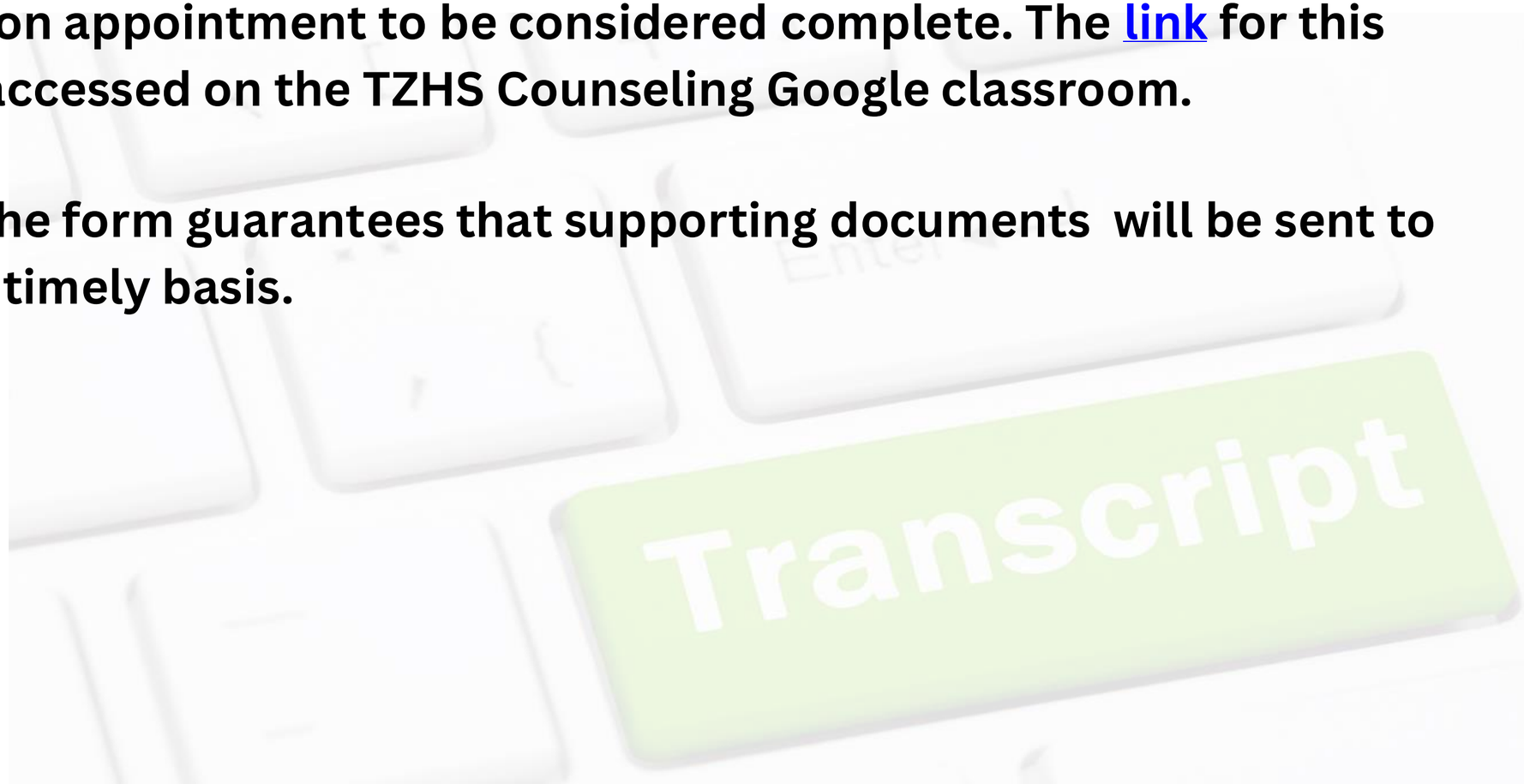
- Early Decision / Early Decision II
- Early Action
- Early Action Restrictive
- Rolling
- Regular Decision
- Scholarship / Priority Deadline



Supporting Documents

- **A Transcript / Supporting Document Request Form must be completed at least 3 weeks prior to a student's first deadline. The form must be followed by an in-person appointment to be considered complete. The link for this form can be accessed on the TZHS Counseling Google classroom.**

- **Completing the form guarantees that supporting documents will be sent to colleges on a timely basis.**





Teacher Letters of Recommendation

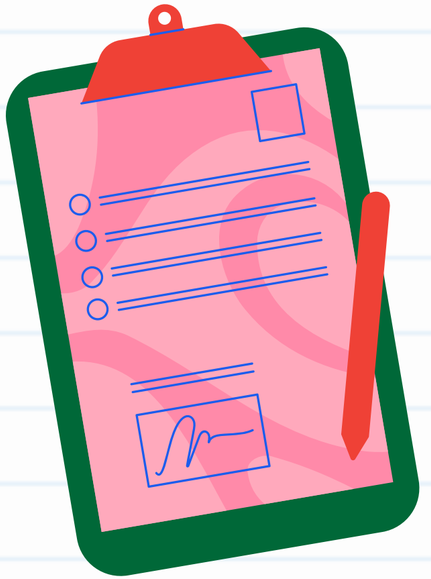
- **Colleges typically require one or two teacher letters of recommendation, though some colleges do not require any.**
- **Requirements are listed on the college website as well as Common App.**
- **Students must get a verbal/written agreement from a teacher before formally requesting a letter on Naviance. We visited English classes to walk students through this process. A quick thank you note goes a long way.**
- **Letters of recommendation are sent to all colleges via Naviance.**

****** Students do not need to wait for letters of recommendation to submit their applications.**

Counselor Letter of Recommendation

Materials Needed:

Counselor Rec. Info Sheet (found in Naviance under circular icon with initials –> *Surveys from your School*)



Parent Brag Sheet (nice to have)

- Found in Naviance under *Surveys*.

This is an opportunity to provide helpful information for your child's Counselor (fun stories, etc.)

- Please fill out and submit the form within three weeks of your senior's first application deadline to ensure the information provided is used.

Resume



- Naviance has a resume builder feature that all students have access to
- Many colleges allow students to upload a resume directly to their application
- Counselors will refer to the resume to write a more informative letter of recommendation
- Allows for easy data entry when students complete the Activity and Experiences section on their application

- Only a small number of colleges require or recommend an interview
- College interviews can be informative or evaluative and may be conducted by admissions staff, alumni, or current students. Interviews may be conducted on or off campus
- Check the college's website for information on their interview policies



Standardized Tests:

- **Many schools have brought back their testing requirements, though roughly 2,000 four-year institutions remain test-optional for the 2026-2027 cycle, with an additional 85 schools operating as completely test – free! Colleges accept either test.**
- **Check individual school sites, Common App, as well as Fair Test for the most up to date information.**
- **Scores can be self-reported directly on the applications (be careful with this if you plan to apply test optional to some schools). Some colleges will take a super score, some will take the best sitting.**
- **Reminder - test scores are not on the transcript. Students will be required to send official scores to the attending college.**

Student Responsibility:

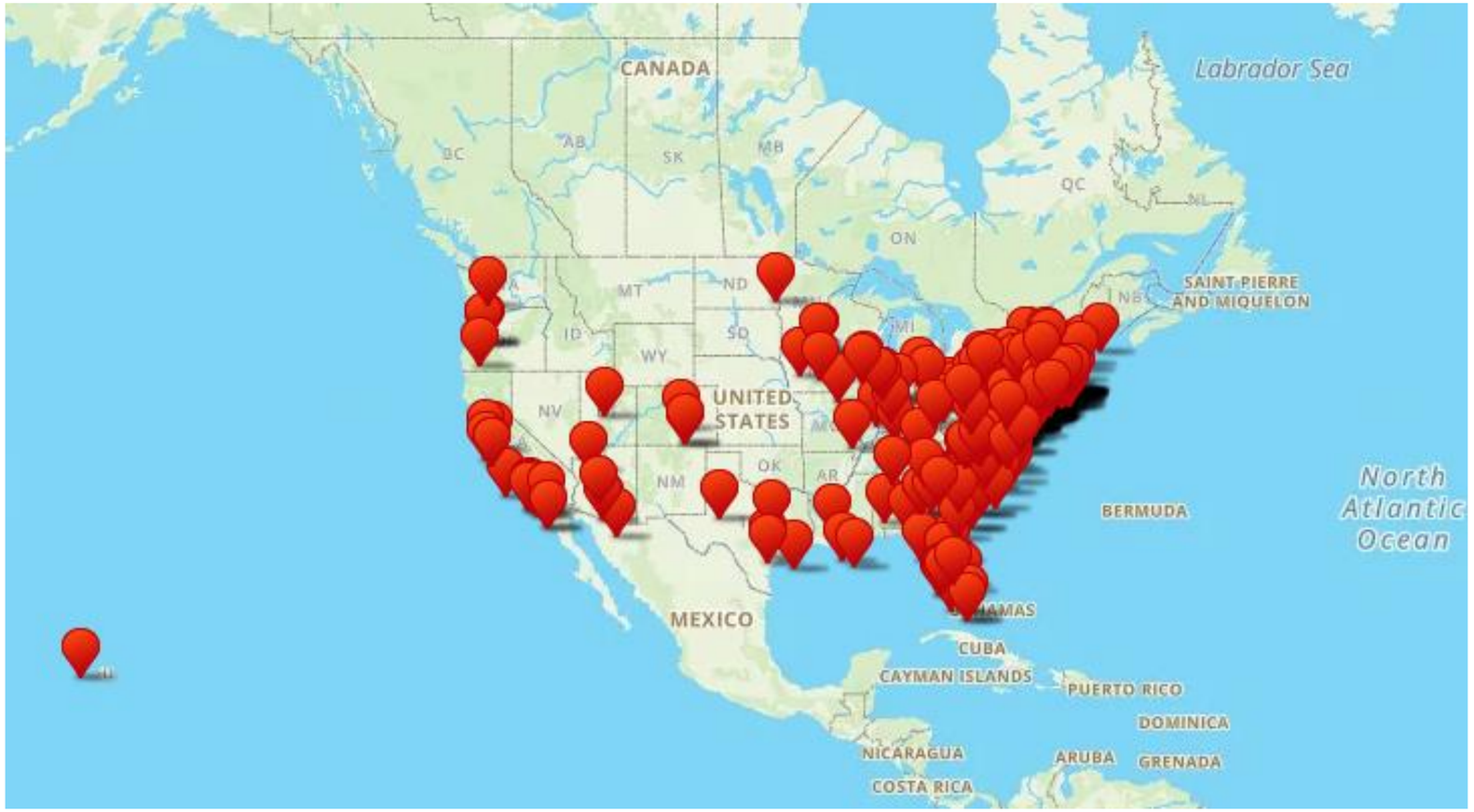
- The Completed Application
- STARS (if applicable)
- Standardized Test Scores (if they are required to be officially sent)
- Items such as music demos or art portfolios when appropriate
- Application Fee



Counselor Responsibility:

- School Profile
- Transcript
- Letters of Recommendation
- Mid-Year Grades / Final Transcript

Where are our grads?



The class of 2026: Our Graduates are attending 101 different colleges

The class of 2026: 52% attending Public Institutions; 48% attending Private Institutions

54% In State and 46% Out of State

The class of 2026: 84% (182 students) applied EA or Rolling; 14% (31 students) applied ED or ED2

Financial Aid & Scholarships

Financial Aid Night:

September 17th at 6:30 p.m. Please Come!

- Explains the process of applying for aid to help meet the cost of your child's college education

Scholarships:

- The Excelsior Scholarship = Students of families who earn less than $125,000 this year are eligible for free tuition at CUNY and SUNY schools (students are still responsible for the cost of room and board).
- More information available at www.hesc.ny.gov
- Search individual college websites
- Priority deadlines for colleges may include scholarship opportunities!

Local Scholarships:

Updating in January 2027 .

Check the TZHS Counseling page

Some Additional Site for Scholarships:

- www.scholarships.com
- https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarships
- www.fastweb.com
- www.cappex.com
- www.raise.me


When you just sat through
a college application
presentation and you have
980 questions