

The Application Process Overview 2026-2027:
Student Responsibilities Sammamish HS

1) Research

- Select 4-8 colleges - consider cost, selectivity, size, geographical location, majors etc.
- Run the Net Price Calculator with your parents to understand the costs of each school on your list. Pick school that are affordable for your family's situation.
<https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>
- Add all these colleges to the final college list in SchooLinks and keep the list updated as you add schools.
- You can also complete the "School Search" in SchooLinks to narrow down your choices.
- College representatives visit SHS to talk with interested students. Dates, times, and locations are posted and announced in the Daily Bulletin. Registration is not required. Check SchooLinks for more info too.
- Attend a college fair to learn more about specific colleges:
 - In person, National College Fair: October 16-17th at the Seattle Convention Center
 - Register for free at: <https://www.nacacattend.org/fairs>
- Schedule a one-on-one appointment with our College and Career Counselor at lopezk@bsd405.org or [Book a meeting with me!](#) if you still have questions about finding a college that is a good fit for you.

2) Application

- Consult Sammamish HS Counseling and College/Career Website for Resources
- Many 4-year colleges in WA and around the nation use Common App. Make a Common Application account <https://www.commonapp.org/> to make the application process easier and smoother by only having one application to complete for all your schools.
- 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.
- Check college websites for information on admissions, academic programs, and scholarships/financial aid information, and application deadlines! Every school is different, and the deadlines will change.
- Using these deadlines, construct a timeline for taking SAT/ACT tests, completing essays, ordering transcripts, and finalizing your application.
- Does the private college or university require an interview as part of the application process? If so, contact the Admission Office of the school and schedule the interview.
- Are you applying for **Early Action or Early Decision**? If so, those deadlines come up fast and are typically in early November.

3) College Essay/Supplemental Forms

- Not all colleges require a personal statement.
- Use online resources! One we suggest is the College Essay guy and his free resources.
- For some 4-year college applications, you will be asked to complete a personal statement, essay, or a series of short answers. Look through these questions and draft your answers.
- Check essay/supplemental requirements for each school and proofread essay before sending.

4) Counselor's Letter of Recommendation

- Meet with your counselor during the Senior Blitz appointment in September/October. Discuss the counselor's letter of rec and if it is needed.
- Complete all required components for a counselor letter of rec three weeks prior to your first application deadline – **Add colleges to SchooLinks and complete SchooLinks Brag Sheet**

- Turn in FERPA waiver form to Ms. Gemmell in the counseling center and indicate that you will waive your rights on your www.commonapp.org account.
- Stay connected with your counselor if you add more schools to your college application list.

5) Teacher Recommendations

- Ask two teachers for a recommendation letter (check the recommendation requirements for each school to make sure you do not need more than two). Do not ask for more than two teacher letters if not necessary.
- Send electronic requests through SchoolLinks. Provide ample time. Ideally students will make all requests by October 1st.
- Send a Thank You note for all letters of recommendation sent on your behalf. This is good etiquette and thoughtful.

6) Standardized Test Scores (SAT/ACT/)

- SHS will offer a SAT school day test in October. Watch your email to RSVP!
- Check testing requirements for your desired colleges. If needed, sign up online for college entrance exam testing or retesting. SAT dates can be found at www.collegeboard.com. The online registration for the ACT test can be found at www.act.org.
- Once you have applied to a school, you must request scores be sent directly from collegeboard.com or actstudent.org (there is a fee for each school requested).
- Almost every school will accept either the SAT or ACT if they require exams, so you can choose which test to send depending on your scores for each test. All 4-year colleges in WA are TEST optional for the Class of 2026.
- Check to see if the schools you are applying to are Test optional or Test Blind. UW Seattle is test blind in initial read of applications. **See info:**
<https://admit.washington.edu/apply/freshman/how-to-apply/test-scores/>

7) FAFSA/CSS/WASFA

- Apply for the **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at You must have a social security number to apply. The application will open in October this year.
- If you do not have a social security number, you may be eligible for the **WASFA**
<https://readysetgrad.wa.gov/wasfa>
- Fill out the CSS Profile if your college requires it. Check application requirements of individual institutions.

8) Transcripts

- Request Transcripts in SchoolLinks and turn in FERPA waiver to the counseling center.
- Allow at least ten school days' notice for any transcript to be processed and sent out.
- Are you a student athlete planning to play sports in college? Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse so we can send transcripts: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

9) Senior Grades

- Make sure to 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 make sure to try your best.

10) College Decision: Once you are accepted to a school, go on SchoolLinks and update status! Let your counselor know your final decision and “set attending” college in SchoolLinks. The SHS Counseling Center will send your final transcript at the end of the school year.

