

SHS COLLEGE APPLICATION WORKSHOP

August 2026

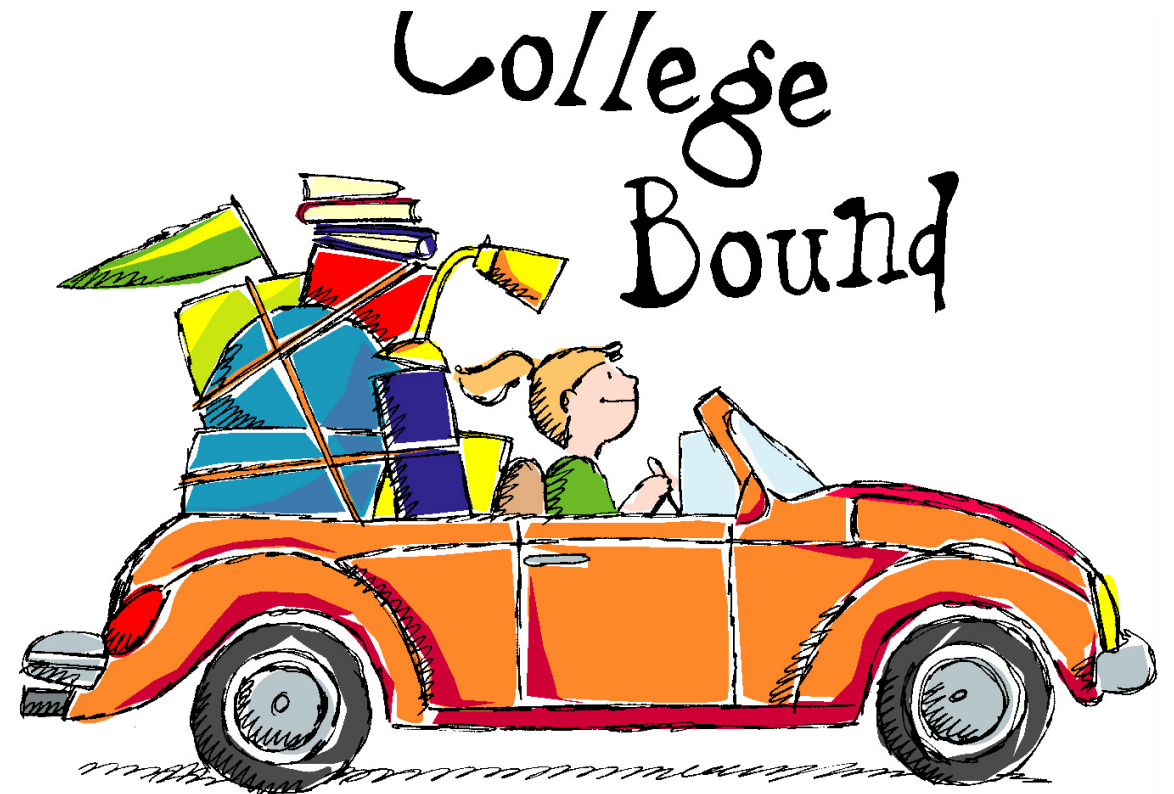
OVERVIEW- TOPICS WE WILL COVER TODAY!

- 1) SchoolLinks essentials
- 2) Types of Applications and Application Timelines
- 3) College Admission Testing updates
- 4) Essay Tips
- 5) Extracurricular list tips
- 6) Common Application essentials
- 7) Requesting Letters of Recommendation

THE COMPLETE APPLICATION

A COMPLETE APPLICATION

1. Application Form
Common App or Other specific application
2. Essays and Activities List and or resume
3. Application Fee or Fee Waiver
4. Official Test Scores (sent by student)
Sent from College Board or ACT
5. Official Transcripts (sent by school)
9th – 11th grade
Some colleges will want mid year grades in Feb of Senior Year
6. Letters of Recommendation (if applicable)
7. Optional materials
8. Optional letter of recommendation (if applicable)



TYPES OF DEADLINES- SOME EXAMPLES

FIXED TIME

University of Washington
Apply between August 15th – November 15th

University of California
Apply between October 1st – November 30th

ROLLING ADMISSIONS

The earlier the better! First come, first served!

Michigan State

Arizona State University

Washington State University

EARLY ACTION

Apply early, non-binding, and get your decision by December (most schools)

Seattle University

Santa Clara University

University of Oregon

RESTRICTIVE EARLY ACTION

Apply early, non-binding, but you **cannot apply to any other** early action or early decision schools

Notre Dame

Stanford University

Yale University

EARLY DECISION

Apply early, **BINDING** – if you go this route, the school must be your first choice and something you can realistically afford!

Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, Duke, Pomona, UPS etc.

COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTING

- SHS will host a **SAT** during the school day in October for Seniors. Date: **Wed October 7th** at 7:30 am
- Students will need to opt in to test and there will be a 60-dollar fee
- Watch for an email from SHS and respond if you are interested in take the SAT
- All 4-year colleges in WA are test optional
- University of Washington is “test blind” in the initial read of your application
- Check on specific college policies.
- It suggested that each student takes the SAT once

ACT

SAT®

 CollegeBoard

HOW DO I ACTUALLY APPLY?

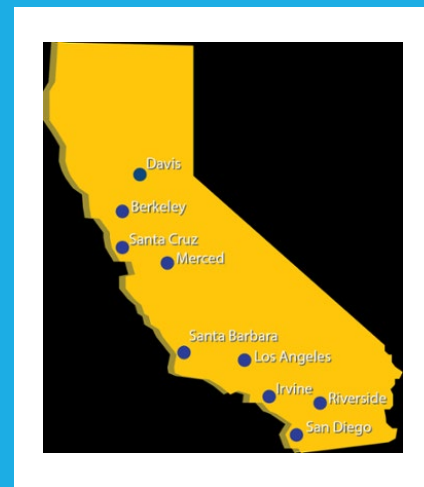
Common Application

- Private Schools
- All Washington State Public Colleges

Community College Application Portal

College-specific application

- UC schools (Fall quarter/semester: October 1–November 30)
- Cal State schools August 1, 2026 - November 30, 2026



THE COMMON APPLICATION

Website Address:

www.commonapp.org

REMEMBER TO SPELL
EVERYTHING CORRECTLY AND USE
CORRECT GRAMMAR

Be mindful of which essays are
required

Activities Section: you may list up to
10 activities

Write down your username/ID
and password in a safe place!

THE COMMON APPLICATION

Essential info
needed for
common
application

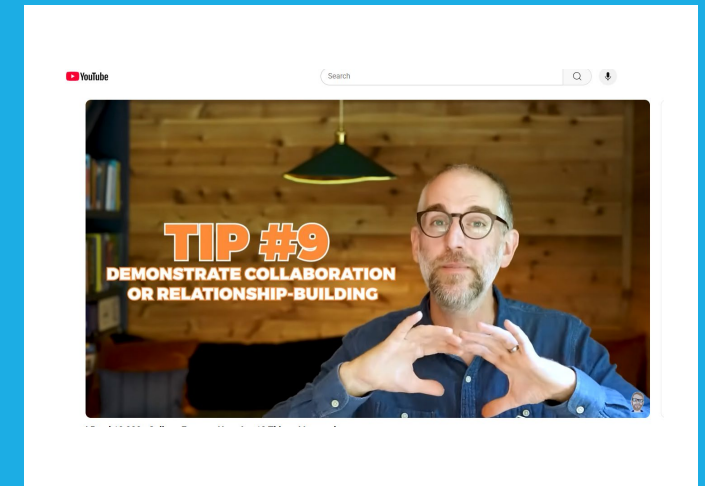
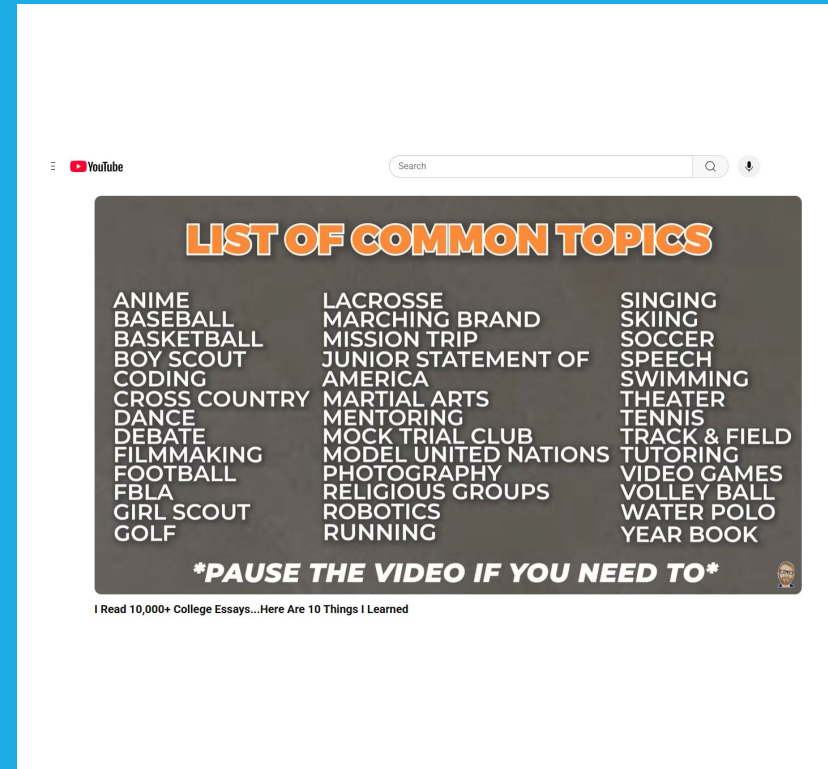
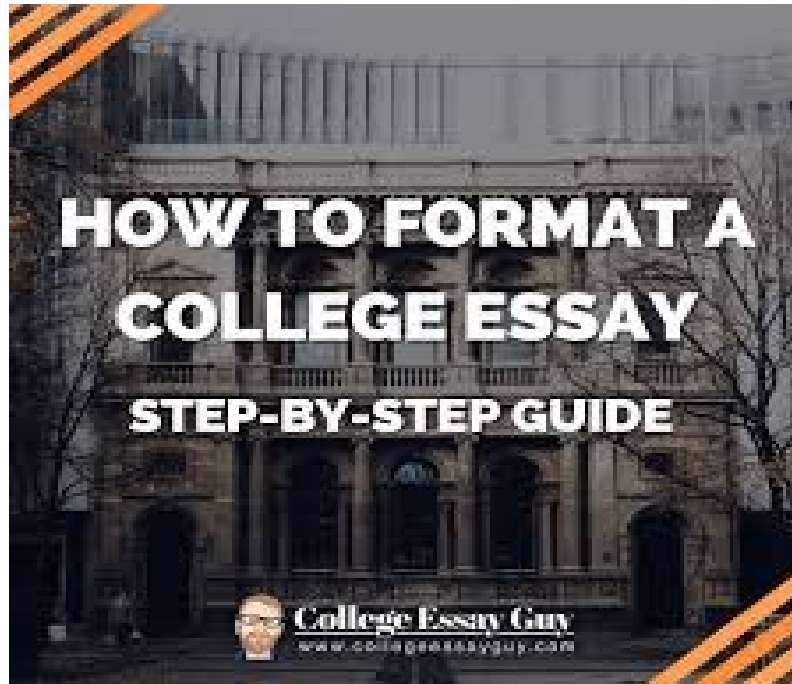
COMMON APP COMPANION 2027



- You will need a copy of your schedule, a transcript (both found in synergy student Vue and parent Vue. Your transcript is found under documents.
- If the school requests a Letter of Recommendation- LOR (not all do), **log into SchoolLinks and the College Application Manager (CAM)** and complete the **Brag Sheet**. Next, complete the **Recommendation Tracker**. Select Teacher and select colleges/colleges where you want a letter sent. Be sure to thank the teacher and share any other info in the additional info tab.
- Counselors will assist students with requesting a LOR from a teacher in September in classroom presentations. In SchoolLinks, counselor documents (including your transcript and counselor recommendation letter) are **automatically requested** the moment you add and save a college application inside your College Application Manager (CAM). You do not need to submit a separate manual request for your counselor's standard materials once the school is listed in your CAM.
- Reminder, the UW campuses, the UC campuses, and the Cal State campuses do not accept LOR.
- YOU MUST GIVE Teachers and Counselors **AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE**. Please submit all requests by October 1st (ideally). We will be as flexible as we can to help you meet deadlines.
- You will want to choose **Early Action** or **Regular Decision** or **Early Decision** (please speak with counselor if ED is your plan)
- Pay attention to deadlines. If the Early Action deadline is Nov. 1, you should start this process ASAP!

**Essential Information to fill out your Common
Application**

TEN THINGS I LEARNED.....ABOUT COLLEGE ESSAYS.. ETHAN SAWYER



CAN YOU ANSWER THIS QUESTION:

“What do I want the admissions officer to understand about me after reading this essay that they couldn’t learn from the rest of my application?”

That question keeps the essay from becoming just a story or a list of accomplishments.

A few follow-ups that help uncover the answer:

What experience has genuinely changed the way I think or see the world?

Why does this experience matter to me—not just what happened, but why?

What does this reveal about my character, values, curiosity, or way of thinking?

What specific moment or detail could make the story uniquely mine?

What do I want the reader to feel or think about me at the end?

Am I the only one who could have written this essay?



EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

You'll be able to list a maximum of 10 activities on the Common Application, and many more on other applications. This can be a job, volunteer work, clubs, sports, hobbies or family responsibilities.



**List your activities in
ORDER OF IMPORTANCE
or RELEVANCE**

COMPLETING THE ACTIVITIES LOG

ACTIVITIES LIST EXAMPLE

Varsity Baseball

*Member 9th-12th grade | Captain 11th-12 grade | All-State Good Sport Team Award 11th-12th grade
15 hours/week*

Leadership responsibilities on and off field included leading warmups, communicating positioning during games, and teaching newer players team's signs and signals. Was a starter for three years and state championship participant for two.

Student Council

*Member 11th-12th grade | Treasurer 12th grade
1.5 hours/week*

Involved in decision-making process for matters such as prom, class performances, and spirit week events. Attended weekly lunch meetings and after-school sessions when needed. As treasurer was responsible for keeping track of class's funds by working closely with school administration and keeping other members updated.

World Language Declamation State Championships (Spanish)

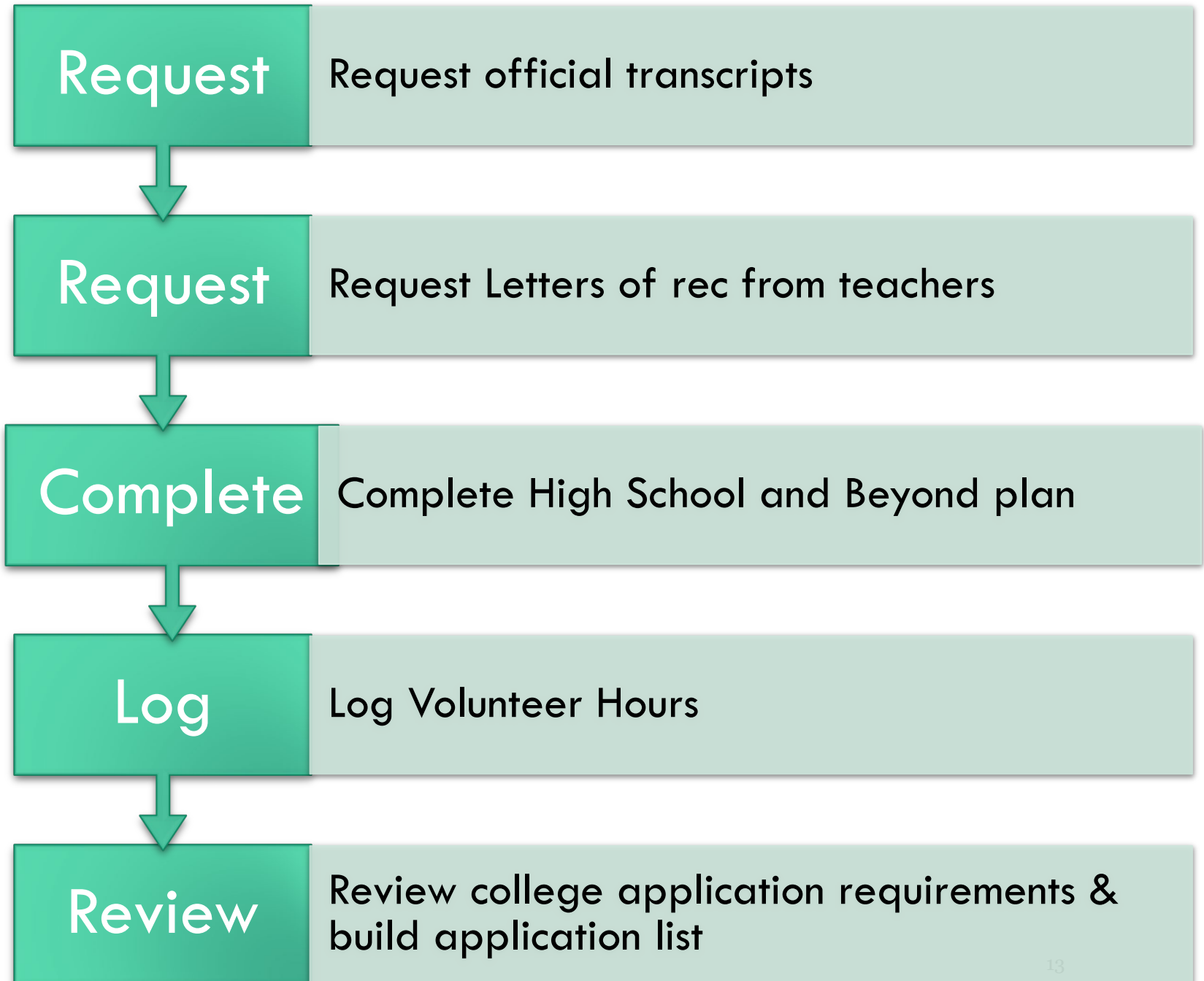
*Impromptu Speaking 3rd place 11th grade | Improvisational Dialogue 3rd place 11th grade
Impromptu Speaking 1st place 12th grade | Improvisational Dialogue 2nd place 12th grade*

Participated for two years at regional and state level championships in different world language speaking challenges in front of a panel of native-speaker judges. Prepared with speaking activities both during class and on own time.

**Remember to use every
word to your
advantage – you don't
need to write in
complete sentences!**

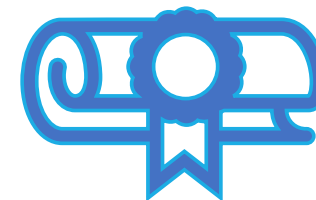
SCHOOLINKS

AN ESSENTIAL TOOL



MATCHING YOUR ACCOUNTS

- This will need to be complete to have your transcripts and/or letters of recommendations sent to any Common App schools.
- To match and link your Common App account with your SchoolLinks account, set up your profile on Common App first by adding a college, entering your high school, and completing the FERPA waiver. Then, go to SchoolLinks under **Colleges** and click **Link Common App Account** to sync your materials
- We strongly suggest that you use commonapp.org for college applications if possible.
- There is no matching needed for non-common app applications.





The Student's Map of SchooLink's College Application Manager

1 Get set up ✂️

Add your email and mailing address, determine your fee waiver eligibility, and complete the SchooLinks FERPA waiver in order to start tracking your college applications.

2 Connect to Common App 🔗

If your school uses Common App, follow the link to log in or create an account. Make sure you consent to share information with SchooLinks and add your high school. Complete the Common App FERPA in the colleges tab once you've added a college.

3 Add your applications (+)

Add applications from your Final List and fill out the details. If it's a Common App application, you'll need to add it to "My Colleges" in Common App, then refresh the page in SchooLinks.

4 Complete your applications 📋

As you complete your applications, be sure to check off the items on your student checklist. You can also check all items at once by clicking "Mark as 'Complete.'"



The Student's Map of SchooLink's College Application Manager

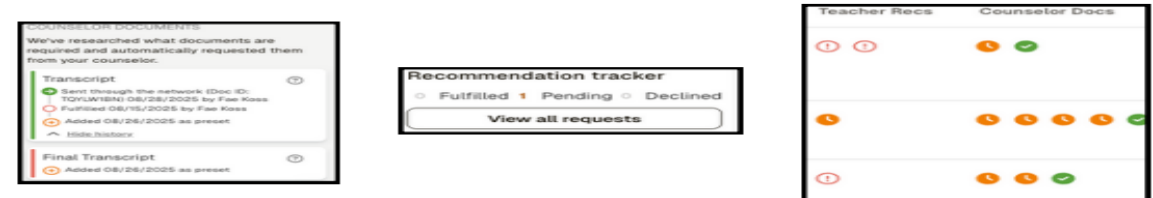
5 Request recommendations

Once you've added an application, SchooLinks will let you know how many teacher recommendations are required. Select your teacher from a list, or add them manually.



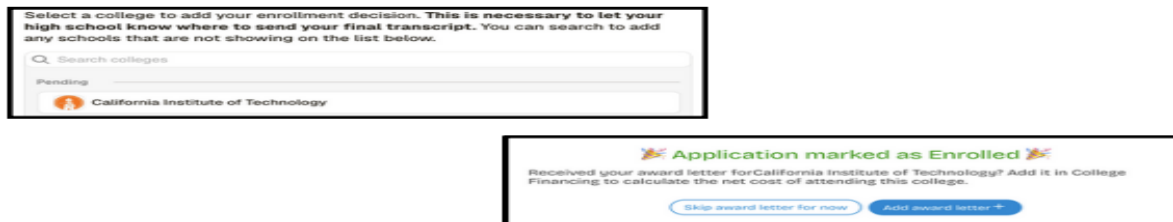
6 Track application materials

Check back in SchooLinks to see the status of all your application materials. With electronic applications, you can even see when the college has viewed your documents!



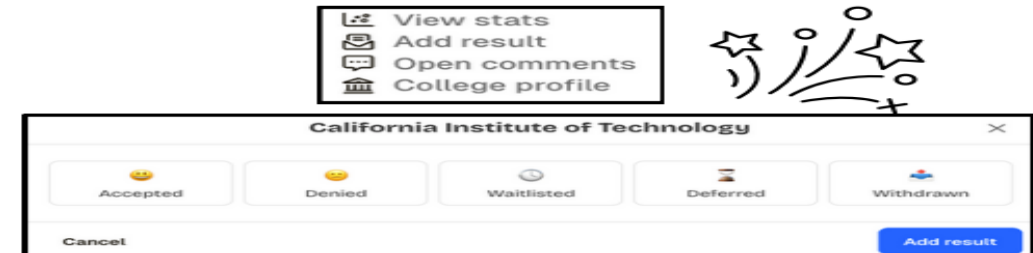
7 Add your results

Once you've made the big decision, add your decision in SchooLinks to let your counselor know and to request your final transcript.



8 Report your enrollment decision

When you hear back from colleges, add your results in SchooLinks to request any final transcripts and requirements.



The Student's Map of SchoolLink's College Application Manager



Application Manager Board View

View recommendation requests

2 Connect to Common App

1 Get set up

3 Add your application

Add award letters to compare tuitions

Click to view more actions

Application Detail View

COLLEGE
College Applications

Robert "Robbie" Green

[Back](#)

Access School Resources → [The University of Texas at Austin](#)
[Admissions](#) | [Application Info](#) | [Financial Aid](#)

Application status: **In Progress** [Comments](#)

Method	Type	Deadline	Destination
School-Specific Online Application	Early Action	Oct 15	In Network

Edit application details

4 Complete your application →

Student checklist [Mark all complete](#)

- Submit Application** ☐ ...
Submit your application forms and any required essays.
- Test Scores** ☐ ...
SAT and ACT official test scores must be submitted by the appropriate deadline to be considered. Submit at least one set of scores directly from the testing agency. (We do not require the SAT Essay or ACT Writing scores). *SAT/ACT scores remain optional for students applying for Spring 2025. SAT/ACT scores are required for students applying to Summer/Fall 2025 and beyond.
- Self-Reported Academic Record (SRAR)** ☐ ...
Applicants create the SRAR using their official high school transcript, listing courses and associated grades that have been completed or will be completed for high school and/or college credit.
- Financial Aid Application** ☐ ...
Complete and submit your Financial Aid Application for this school.

[New Student Requirement](#)

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Remember to update your student profile and communicate with your teachers before adding them as a recommender on SchoolLinks.

2 Optional

Instructions from college: You may submit up to two optional letters of recommendation with your admission application. These letters may be from teachers, mentors, or people who know you well, either within or outside of your high school. The letter should be able to give additional context or information to support your admission that is not already provided in your application or other submitted documents (résumé, transcripts). We do not accept recommendations via email. Submit your recommendations via: -The Common App -MyStatus using the Document Upload System (accessible only by students after application submission) -Parchment, Naviance/Edocs or Scoir -By mail You may submit up to two optional letters of recommendation with your admission application. These letters may be from teachers, mentors, or people who know you well, either within or outside of your high school. The letter should be able to give additional context or information to support your admission that is not already provided in your application or other submitted documents (résumé, transcripts). We do not accept recommendations via email. Submit your recommendations via: -The Common App -MyStatus using the Document Upload System (accessible only by students after application submission) -Parchment, Naviance/Edocs or Scoir -By mail

[Request Teacher Recommendation](#)

6 Track application materials

COUNSELOR DOCUMENTS

We've researched what documents are required and automatically requested them from your counselor.

- Transcript** ☐ ...
Added 08/28/2025 as preset
[Request Counselor Document](#)

5 Request recommendations

Application Manager List View

The screenshot displays the 'Application Manager List View' interface. On the left, a yellow sidebar contains navigation icons for Home, Student, Explore, Plan, Engage, Career, and College. The main header area includes the user profile 'Robert "Robbie" Green' and navigation tabs for School search, Favorites & lists, Admission stats, Final list, College applications (selected), and Enrollment decision. Below the header, there are tabs for 'Board' and 'List', a search bar, and a 'Comments' button with a notification badge. The left sidebar also features sections for 'Final List applications' (7/9 added), 'Recommendation tracker' (1 fulfilled, 1 pending, 0 declined), 'Brag Sheet' (incomplete), 'FAFSA / TASFA' (wont file), 'common app' (not connected), and 'Application setup' (complete). The main content area is a table listing college applications with columns for School, Student Checklist, Teacher Recs, Counselor Docs, Due Date, and Status. Annotations with arrows point to specific features: 'Switch views' points to the Board/List tabs; 'Update your FAFSA status' points to the FAFSA / TASFA section; 'View & leave comments' points to the Comments button; '7 Add your result' points to the status dropdown menu for Johns Hopkins University; and '8 Report your enrollement decision' points to the status dropdown menu for Hendrix College.

Switch views

Update your FAFSA status

View & leave comments

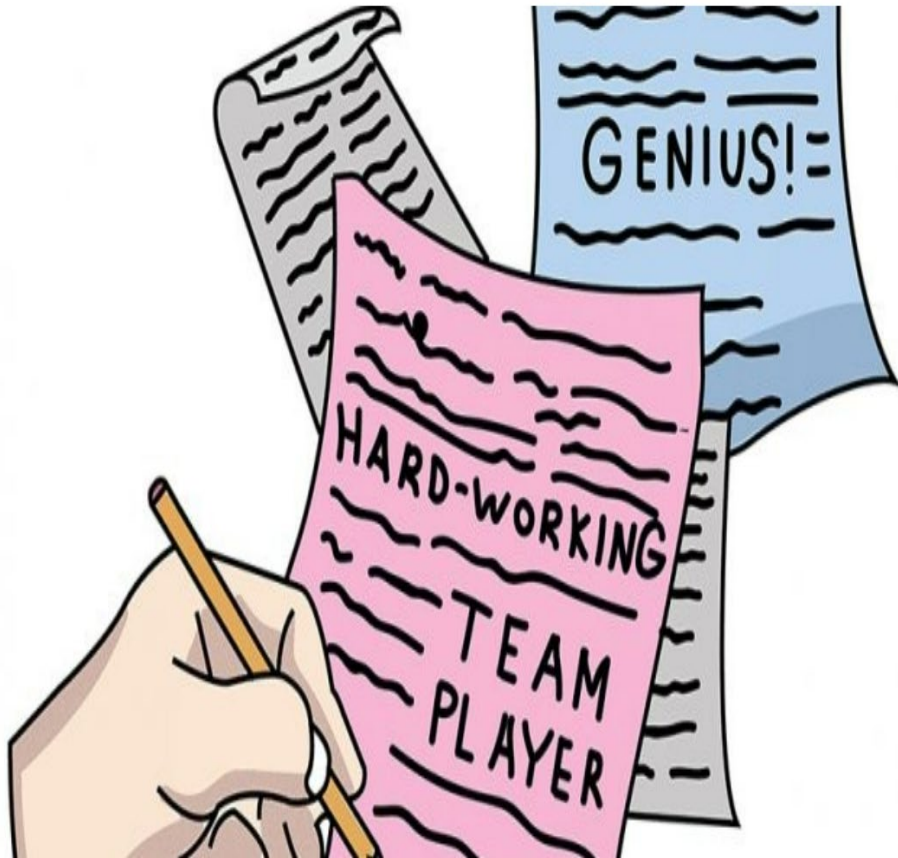
7 Add your result

8 Report your enrollement decision

School	Student Checklist	Teacher Recs	Counselor Docs	Due Date	Status
Johns Hopkins University Reach	✓ ✓ ✓		1 1 1 1	01/02/25	View stats Add enrollment decision Open comments College profile
Luther Rice College & Seminary Likely	✓				Accepted
Rice University Reach	✓				Deferred
University of Arkansas-Fort Smith Target	✓ ✓		1	08/01/26	Waitlisted
Eastern Oregon University Likely	✓		1	07/30/25	Completed & pending
Hendrix College Target	⌚	1 ✓	1	03/01/25	In progress
Western Michigan University Unknown	⌚		1		In progress
Abilene Christian University Target	⌚ ✓		1		Will not complete

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION ETIQUETTE

Ask a teacher that knows you well!



Steps for asking for a letter of recommendation:

- Ask early in person & do not ask over email or teams
- Follow up with an e-mail, use correct spelling and punctuations and BE RESPECTFUL and GRACIOUS
- Complete the information they ask of you –YOU can guide the writers on what you want them to focus on and YOU can help the writers be SPECIFIC
- Complete the Brag Sheet in SchoolLinks
- Don't forget to WAIVE YOUR FERPA RIGHTS in common app!
- Write a thank you note

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

Watch for
financial
aid info
night this
later in
the
school
year!

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Remember to turn in your FAFSA as early as possible.

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

If you're applying to college for **fall 2027**, the **2027–28 FAFSA** is **expected to be available by October 1, 2026**.

What you should do:

- **October 1, 2026:** FAFSA opens
- **Submit as early as possible:** Some state and college aid has earlier priority deadlines, even though the federal deadline is much later.
- **Before October:** Make sure you and your parent(s), if required, have **StudentAid.gov** accounts. Each FAFSA contributor needs their own account.

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

Watch for
financial
aid info
night this
later in
the
school
year!

WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid): For undocumented and select noncitizens

WASFA is the Washington equivalent for students who **cannot or choose not to file the FAFSA**, including undocumented students and certain noncitizens. It can provide access to Washington state aid such as the **Washington College Grant**

- **CSS Profile** (College Board): Only some schools will require <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/> **CSS Profile generally opens October 1, 2026**. College Board says students typically complete it during senior year starting October 1.
- 🏠 **Not every college requires it.** It is used by participating colleges to determine eligibility for **institutional (college-funded) financial aid**, including grants and scholarships.

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) <http://wue.wiche.edu/>

What WUE is

WUE is a **tuition-savings program**, not a financial-aid application. Eligible students from Western states—including **Washington**—can attend participating public colleges in another WICHE state/territory at a reduced tuition rate. Participating schools generally charge **no more than 150% of their in-state tuition**, although some offer an even lower rate.



QUESTIONS

Do you need help with
SchooLinks?

Do you need help with
Common app?

Do you need help with your
Activities List?

Do you need help with your
Essay?