



Applying to College

Class of 2027



Class of 2026

78% Attended a 4-Year College

8% Attended a 2-Year College

6% Sought Employment

3% Other Post-secondary

1% Enlisted in the Military

This presentation is geared toward the application process, BUT we know there are many of you who might not apply to college - that's ok! Counselors want to help you plan for after high school...whatever that is.



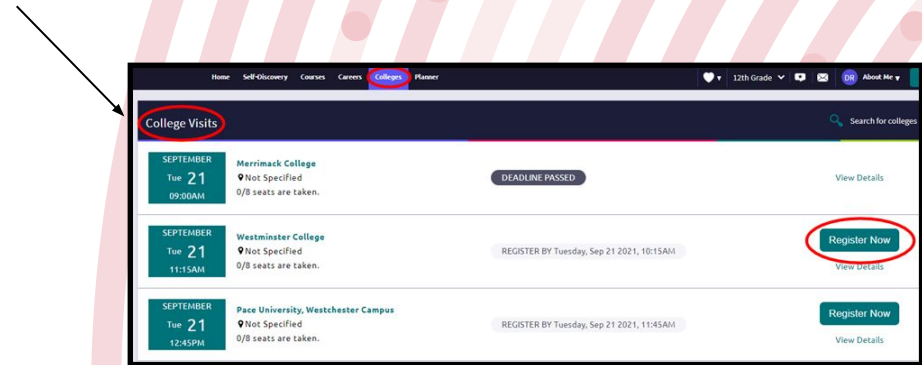
Overview

- Important Dates
- College Search
- College Visits
- Standardized Testing
- Timeline
- Application Triangle of Doom
- Common Application/Naviance
- Letters of Recommendation
- Financial Aid/Scholarships



Important Dates

- Make an appointment with your counselor. Stop by, Google Form, or Schoology message Mrs. Michelle Cole.
- Transcripts - Uploaded to Naviance by 10/1 (possibly sooner)
- Financial Aid Night - Monday, 9/28 in the HS Aud
- SAT@CHS - 11/7, Register by 10/23
- WNY Colleges in LMC - Tuesday, 10/20
- Schoology Announcements
- Admissions Reps in the Counseling Office! Register in Naviance





Big Decisions

- The process can be stressful.
- Don't let it overwhelm you; consistent, small steps will get you to the finish line.
- Set up a weekly/biweekly* meeting with your parents. Jam all the college talk into that timeframe so it's not constantly overwhelming all of you.

*That means every other week. :)



Search

- Do you have a list? If not then it's time to make one.
- Use online sites like Naviance, College Board and College Scorecard.
- Gather as much info about schools as you can.
- Meet with Admissions Reps in the Guidance Office.
- Talk to people around you about their college search - friends, relatives, teachers.
- Look at the school's course catalog, but know that most of you will change majors.
- Have an open and honest conversation with your parents about their expectations?



Visit

- Easily the best way to learn about a school.
- Sign up for an appointment in advance through the college's website.
- Try to attend an Open House if possible; professors are generally there.
- Use the admissions office and tours, but don't be afraid to get off the beaten path.
- Take notes on our impressions of the school on the ride home; things tend to blend together after a few visits, so good notes will help keep everything straight.
- Virtual visits have improved a LOT, but it's still best to visit in-person if possible.



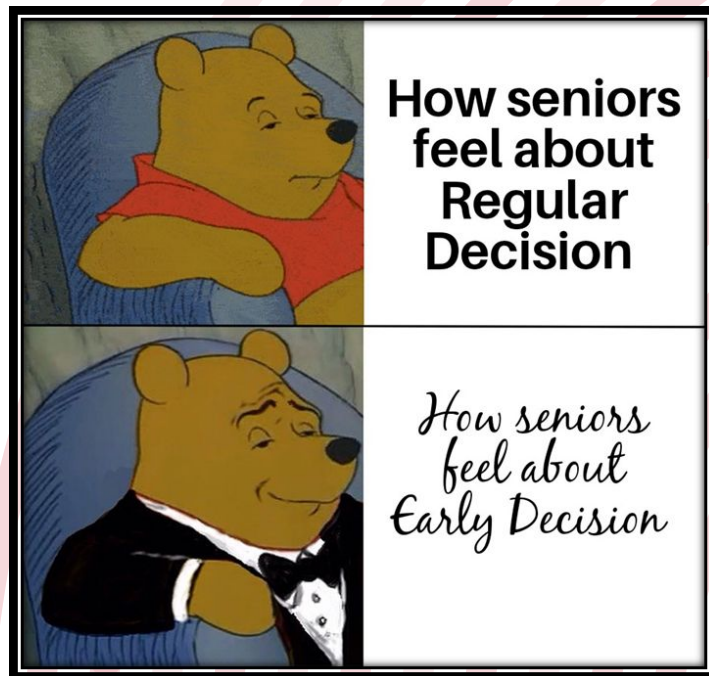
Standardized Tests

- Check the school's testing policies on their website, but almost ALL schools are test-optional. Submitting a score *could* help you.
- Find out the % of students who submitted a score from last year. Do they require tests for merit aid?
- Scores must be sent directly from the testing institution (ACT or College Board).
- Almost all colleges will superscore.



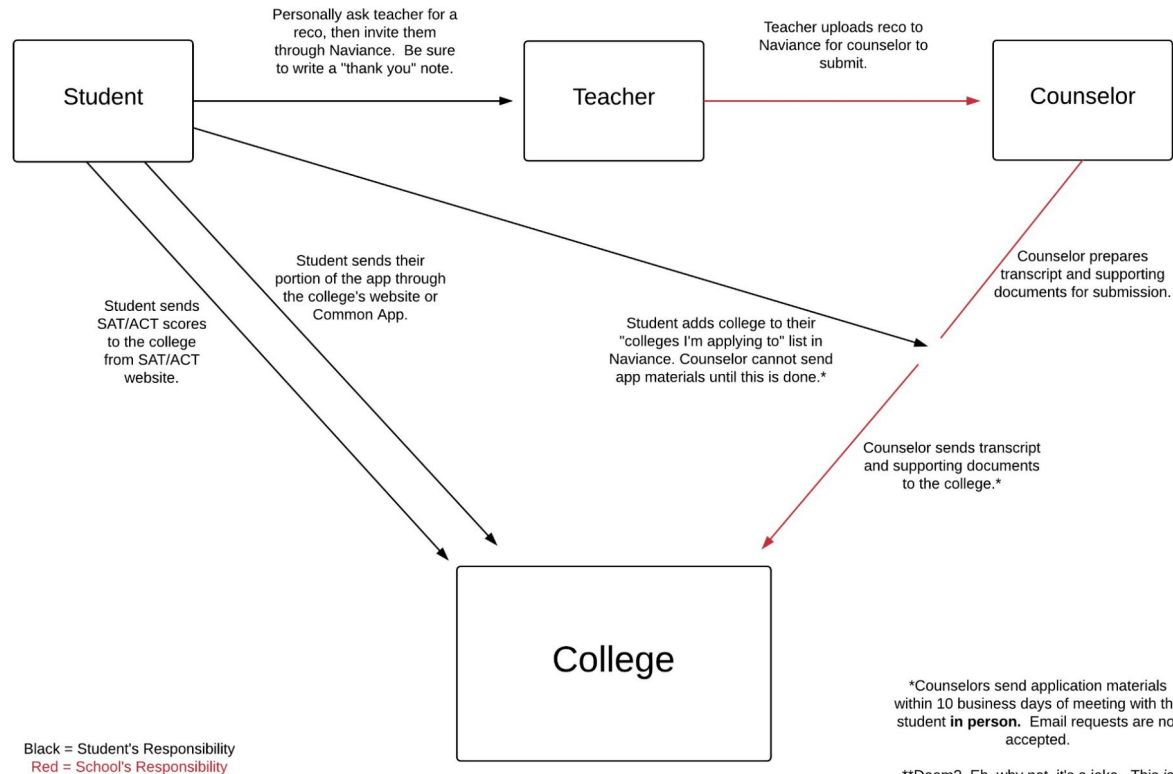
Timeline

- Try to apply by Thanksgiving.
- Generally no bonus points for early appliers.
- Be sure to have at least one school you can: get into, afford, want to go to.
- EA accelerates the process - no real downside.
- ED is a binding commitment, but can increase your chances of admission.
- Be *certain* about your ED school.





College Application Triangle...of **DOOM**^{**}





Ways to Apply

- There are several ways to apply - Common App, SUNY app, Institutional app. Don't default to the Common App, it might be more efficient to do multiple apps than the CA.
- Common App resources are on the Guidance website.
- Start by filling out the demographic info. That will help break the ice and ease you into the application.
- FERPA Release
- Do NOT use the SUNY app for ECC or NCCC (unless it's during free application weeks).



Naviance

- Naviance is the way counselors submit the school's portion of your application (transcript, recs, forms, etc.) to colleges.
- You must "match" in Naviance if you're using the Common App. CA requires you to complete the FERPA release and add at least one school *before* it allows you to match.
- Add schools to "colleges I'm applying to." CA will auto-populate the list for you once you match.
- Invite teachers to submit letters
- Do NOT request your transcript - we need to meet with you in-person before we can send it.



You must complete the FERPA waiver in Common App before you can “match” in Naviance.

The screenshot shows the Common App interface. On the left, the 'My Colleges' section is visible, with 'Recommendations and FERPA' highlighted. On the right, an overlay window titled 'Release authorization' is displayed, showing instructions for the FERPA waiver process.

My Colleges

- Overview
- Baldwin Wallace University
 - College information
- APPLICATION
 - General
 - Academics
 - Activities
 - Contacts
 - Family
 - Writing
 - Recommendations and FERPA**
 - Review and Submit - Common App
- Brown University
- Canisius University
- Cornell University
- Duquesne University
- Gannon University
- New York University
- Niagara University
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- SUNY College at Brockport

Release authorization

Instructions

The next screen will ask you two important questions about your release of and access to your educational records under FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Since FERPA is a complex law, we want to provide some key information before you respond. We encourage you to learn about FERPA by [reading our FAQ](#). We also suggest discussing FERPA with your counselor, parent, guardian, or other school official to be better informed about your rights.

- 1. How does FERPA relate to your college application?**
 - FERPA regulates educational institutions' obligation to protect the privacy of student education records. This can include your application to the college where you enroll. FERPA also gives you the right to review and inspect your education records. The confidential letters of recommendation issued by your high school or their staff may be part of those records.
- 2. In a moment, you'll be asked if you want to waive the right to review these confidential letters of recommendation. What should you know about this waiver?**
 - Waiving your right lets colleges know that you do not intend to read your recommendations, which helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful.
 - Some recommenders may decline to write a letter for you if you do not waive your rights. Check with your counselor or teachers to see if any of them follow such a policy.
- 3. Still unsure how to respond?**
 - That's OK. Many students are. Before you move on, take a moment to discuss your decision with your counselor, another school official, or your parent/legal guardian. For more information about FERPA, visit the [Help Center](#).

☒ I have read and understood the FERPA Release

Continue

Required: 0 Optional: 2



NAVIANCE BY POWERSCHOOL

Home Self-Discovery Courses Careers **Colleges** Planner

12th Grade About Me CLOSE DEMO

Colleges I'm applying to

It looks like you are not currently able to apply to Common App schools. Match your Common App account to Naviance Student account to get started.

Search for colleges

Match Accounts

Manage Transcripts Compare Me

+ extended profile available

+ REQUEST TRANSCRIPTS REMOVE

College that I'm attending:

N/A

Update

Letters of recommendation

Some colleges require letters of recommendation to be submitted with your application. Please visit the letters of recommendation section, accessible from the main colleges page, for more information

Connect your Common App

First year student? Great! Enter your email and password below to sign in, or [create an account](#) to get started.

* Indicates required fields.

Email *

Password *

[Forgot password?](#)

Sign in

Need help?
[Visit the Applicant Solutions Center.](#)

Hi, Nicholas!

By checking the box below you will enable Naviance to access certain information from your Common App account that is necessary for integration and processing.

If you authorize this connection, you will be granting permission to Naviance to:

- See the status of your applications and recommendations
- View additional Common App data in order to support submitting recommendations on your behalf

☒ I agree *

Cancel **Connect**



✓ **Confirmation**
Successfully matched!

Add any non-Common App Schools with the "+" button.

Close

Colleges I'm applying to

Search for colleges

✓ **Your Common App account has been matched.**

Your FERPA status is waived. You're ready to apply to colleges using Common App.

All the schools in your Common App list populate below.

No need to "Request Transcripts" - we need to meet with you individually before sending. These requests are NOT monitored.

Manage Transcripts

Compare Me



+ REQUEST TRANSCRIPTS REMOVE

+ = extended profile available

College	Type	Deadline	Transcripts	Office materials	Submission Type	Application
☐ ★ Brown University	RD	Regular Decision January 5	no request	Pending	CA	Unknown ▼ EDIT MORE
☐ ★ Canisius College	RD	Regular Decision July 27	no request	Pending	CA	Unknown ▼ EDIT MORE
☐ Duquesne University	RD	Regular Decision January 15	no request	Pending	CA	Unknown ▼ EDIT MORE
☐ ★ Gannon University	ROLL	Rolling July 28	no request	Pending	CA	Unknown ▼ EDIT MORE



Letters of Recommendation

- Most schools only require one or two (if any). Find out how many you need *before* asking.
- Ask teachers whose class you performed well in AND you established a good relationship with.
- Ask in-person, *then* invite through Naviance.
- Write a “thank you” note - it’s common courtesy. Keep in mind that every letter takes at *least* an hour to write.
- Some schools require a counselor letter



Requesting a Letter in Naviance

Naviance

Home Self-Discovery Courses Careers **Colleges** Planner About me

Letters of recommendation

Ask for recommendation letters from teachers, your counselor, or people outside your school—like employers, coaches, or community leaders who know you well. These letters can help colleges learn more about your strengths and experiences. Use this page to request and manage your recommendations.

Manage recommendation requests

Request recommendation

Recommendation for	Summary	Type	Application deadline	Requested date	Recommender	Status
No recommendation requests yet. Click Request recommendation to get started.						

Recommendation tips

- Request recommendations at least 3 to 4 weeks before your application deadline.
- Share information about your achievements and goals in the **Additional details** section.
- Track all requests from this dashboard, including the status of the email sent to the recommender.
- Send a thank you note to the recommender.

Request letter of recommendation

Letter type required

Teacher

Recommender name required

Lathan, Teacher

Select the teacher from the drop down.

Request type required

☒ **Open** **Choose "Open"**

The teacher can send the letter to any college you add to your list now or in the future.

☐ **Specific**

The teacher can only send the letter to the colleges you select. You can choose all colleges on your list or select individual ones. Recommended for better tracking and control.

Additional details

B U I A A Size

Include details about your accomplishments, goals, and qualities you'd like the recommender to highlight.

In addition to listing some general info about yourself, this is a good opportunity to thank the teacher for writing on your behalf and to tell them why you wanted them to write for you, what it was about them or their class that you enjoyed...



Counseling Office Procedures

- Meet in-person to send materials at least 10 business days before the application is due. We will not act on an application until we meet with you. It's ok to email us a question, but not a request to send materials.
- Find out if your school requires a counselor recommendation. If so, we'll likely need you to fill out a form - each counselor approaches it a little differently. Find out what yours needs.
- Counselors send everything from the school - transcript, teacher letters, secondary school report.
- We keep good records of what was sent and when. It's possible you might get an automated email while things are crossing in cyberspace. DON'T FREAK OUT. Come see us and we'll help figure it out.



Sherpas

- Think of us as guides on this process - we've climbed this mountain* before and know where some of the tricky spots are.
- *You* still need to climb the mountain*, no one can do it for you.



*Important note: climbing a legit mountain is *significantly* harder than applying to college, so don't get too freaked out, we're in it for the metaphor.

Extras

- A limited number of colleges require applicants to manually input their transcript through the STARS website. This takes place outside of the Common App/SUNY App. Students should use the unofficial transcript posted in Naviance for this info.
- After applying, most colleges will require you to create a portal account with them. You'll be able to check the status of your application and the application decision in this portal.



Financial Aid & Scholarships

- FAFSA is available on 10/1. It's important to file as early as possible. Use the **2027-2028** FAFSA.
- Financial Aid Night is Monday, 9/28 in the HS Aud.
- Some private schools require the CSS Profile.
- Use net price calculators to get an early snapshot of what the school might cost.
- The bulk of scholarship \$ awarded is from individual colleges.
- Websites like Fastweb and [Scholarships.com](https://www.scholarships.com) are scholarship databases that can match you with possible scholarships.
- We post a number of local scholarships on our website each month.
- In February, students can apply for ~40 scholarships given to CHS seniors through one application.



Essay

The essay is a critical piece of the application. It's the only thing you really have control over at this point. Get feedback from others, but make sure YOUR "voice" is loud and clear. Have a strong introduction. Try to use vivid imagery. SHOW don't TELL. Make sure it's grammatically flawless, but it doesn't need to be super formal, again, your voice should come through. Don't reiterate your resume. Try to answer the question throughout the essay, that will help keep you on track. Avoid gimmicks. Less is more. Read the essay out loud; that will help you eliminate filler and unnecessary words.



Keep in mind with the essay....



Anna Ivey @AnnaIvey · 10h

When you asked 10 people for feedback
on your Personal Essay





Good Luck!!!

...and meet with your counselor soon. :)