

SENIOR SEMINAR FOR FAMILIES



AGENDA

- **WHERE TO APPLY**
- **HOW TO APPLY**
- **TYPES OF ADMISSIONS**
- **APPLICATION TIMELINE**
- **SUPPORTING MATERIALS TO SUBMIT**
 - Transcripts/STARS
 - Test scores
 - Recommendations
 - Portfolio/Audition
- **OTHER TASKS TO COMPLETE**
 - Add your colleges to CA and Naviance
 - Waive your FERPA
 - Match your Common App and Naviance
 - Schedule your senior meeting
 - Attend college visits at UHS
 - Complete financial aid forms
 - Miscellaneous
- **Supporting students**
 - Dos and Don'ts

WHERE TO APPLY

NOT TOO BIG/SMALL

- 6-15 schools
- Manage the workload and expense

BALANCED

- 2-4 secures
- 2-7 targets
- 2-4 reaches



IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO GO THERE, DO NOT APPLY!

DO NOT SKIP THE MIDDLE!!

HOW TO APPLY

COMMON APPLICATION

- One application sent to multiple colleges
- Accepted by over 1,000 colleges
- Can use for up to 20 schools
- <https://www.commonapp.org/>

COLLEGE SPECIFIC APPLICATION

- Apply directly on a college's website

COALITION APPLICATION

- One application sent to multiple colleges
- Accepted by over 150 colleges
- Recommended for colleges in excess of 1st 20 colleges accepted by common app (fyi... applying to more than 20 colleges is NOT recommended)
- <https://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>

TYPES OF ADMISSIONS

EARLY DECISION

BINDING

Advantage:

- Earlier notification
- Often more favorable review

Note:

Only appropriate if 100% certain you want to attend

EARLY ACTION

NON-BINDING

Advantage:

- Earlier notification

Note:

Be aware of Restricted Early Action (REA) plans.

REGULAR DECISION

NON-BINDING

Advantage:

- Opportunity to improve grades and submit 1st semester report
- More time to complete applications

ROLLING DECISION

NON-BINDING

Advantage:

- Decisions arrive in 4-8 week; applications are reviewed in the order received

Note:

Apply early; target Oct. 15 - Nov.1

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Late Summer/ Early Fall	Rolling admission begins
August 1	Common App Opens
October 1	FAFSA submission begins
Mid-October to Mid-November	Early Action 1/Early Decision Deadlines
December - January	Early Action 1/Early Decision Notifications

December - February	Regular Decision/Early Decision 2 Deadlines
February - March	Early Decision 2 Notifications
March - April	Regular Decision Notifications
May 1	National Decision Day

BESIDES THE APPLICATION, WHAT ELSE MIGHT MY STUDENT NEED TO SUBMIT?

- **OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT, SELF-REPORTED GRADES, STARS**
- **TEST SCORES**
- **TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **PORTFOLIO/AUDITION, IF APPLICABLE**

TRANSCRIPTS

1. REVIEW TRANSCRIPTS FOR ACCURACY

- a. Transcripts were emailed to students the 1st week of school
- b. If there are inaccuracies, see your counselor

2. SUBMIT THE TRANSCRIPT AND RECOMMENDATION RELEASE FORM

- a. Go to your Naviance page and click on "Read More" in the bottom right corner of the "Welcome to Naviance" box
- b. A window will pop up and you will see links to Transcript & Recommendation Release Form
- c. Click on your counselors name
- d. Complete the form and submit

3. SUBMIT A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH COLLEGE TO WHICH YOU APPLY

4. FORMS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF A COLLEGE'S DEADLINE

SELF-REPORTED TRANSCRIPT AND ACADEMIC RECORD (STARS)

WHAT IS THE STARS?

- STARS is a system where students input their academic information, including courses, grades, and test scores, directly into a platform used by participating colleges. Some colleges require students to submit the STARS form.
- <https://srar.selfreportedtranscript.com/Login.aspx>

HOW DO I KNOW IF I NEED TO COMPLETE THE STARS?

- <https://srarsupport.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/4408738060315-Which-Colleges-Universities-Accept-The-SSAR-SRAR>

TEST SCORES

- **STUDENTS SEND SAT, ACT, and AP SCORES**
- **SEND SCORES ABOUT 1 MONTH PRIOR TO APPLICATION DEADLINES**
 - Directions to send SAT scores can be found here: <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/scores/send-scores-to-colleges/sending-sat-scores>
 - Directions to send ACT scores can be found here: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/scores/sending-your-scores.html>
 - Directions to send AP scores can be found here: <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/sending-scores>
- **SCORE CHOICE OPTION**
 - You can choose which scores to send
- **IF YOU APPLY TEST OPTIONAL, DO NOT SEND SCORES**

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Letters of recommendation should **NOT** be requested without a previous in-person discussion with your teacher and submission of the "Teacher Request For Recommendation Form." These steps should have been completed Spring of junior year.
- Go to Naviance - **DO NOT make teacher requests in Common App**
- Go to the Colleges Tab
- Select "Letters of Recommendation" under the "Colleges I Am Applying To Tab"
- Select "Add Requests" and choose a teacher from the drop down menu
- Select the first option, "General Request"
- In the notes box, students should specify their first college deadline

REMIND YOUR STUDENT TO SEND THIER TEACHERS THANK YOU NOTES FOR WRITING THIER LETTERS!

COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- **COMPLETE THE COUNSELOR REQUEST FOR RECOMMENDATION FORM**
 - Counselors will **NOT** write letters until this form is completed
 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/17b08HEu6SDT8FR8BygNpT08-lgb7cTjh/view>
- **PARENTS COMPLETE THE PARENT INFORMATION FORM**
 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HGFA4TQ6AK_ITa9jF0QI-4E9mSyeO3Uk/edit?tab=t.0

**A WELL WRITTEN PARENT INFORMATION FORM CAN REALLY
HELP BRING A COUNSELOR'S LETTER TO LIFE!**

WHAT OTHER TASKS DO STUDENTS NEED TO COMPLETE?

- **ADD THEIR COLLEGES TO COMMON APP AND NAVIANCE**
- **WAIVE THEIR FERPA RIGHTS**
- **MATCH THEIR COMMON APP AND NAVIANCE**
- **SCHEDULE THEIR SENIOR MEETING**
- **ATTEND COLLEGE VISITS AT UHS**
- **COMPLETE FINANCIAL AID FORMS**
- **MISCELLANEOUS**

COMPLETE FINANCIAL AID FORMS

FAFSA (FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID)

- Form that must be completed in order to apply for financial aid at college or graduate school
- Provides aid in the form of grants, loans, and/or work-study
- Opens for submission **October 1**
- Apply early; many schools have priority deadlines
- <https://studentaid.gov/>
- New this year! PA requires all students to complete the FAFSA or complete an official opt out form for graduation.
- [PA FAFSA Requirement Opt-Out Form](#)

PA STATE GRANT FORM

- Form for PA residents seeking financial aid through the PA state grant program, administered by the Pennsylvania Higher education Agency (PHEAA)
- Provides need-based grants
- Can not be submitted until the FAFSA has been filed
- <https://www.pheaa.org/grants/state-grant-program>

CSS PROFILE

- On-line financial aid application used by many private colleges and scholarship programs to award non-federal aid
- Asks for more financial info than FAFSA
- Administered by The College Board
- **Deadlines vary** by school; it is important to check each college's financial aid website
- <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

OTHER TASKS & TIPS

- **All students** - Check email regularly for messages from colleges about creating accounts, accessing portals, and next steps.
- **All Students** - Stay organized. Create a spreadsheet or folders to keep track of dates, deadlines, college specific details, application materials, portal and password information.
- **All Students** - Admissions officers **can and do** look at social-networking profiles, so make sure you're not putting anything out there that you wouldn't want them to see. **Also be careful about replying to emails and texts you receive from colleges. Do not send anything inappropriate back to a college!
- **Athletes** - If you are interested in playing D1 or D2 sports, you must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center, [NCAA Eligibility Center](#)

WHAT SHOULDN'T I DO?

- **Don't write the application or essays** - Admissions officers can spot essays written by adults. It undermines the student's authenticity and can lead to ethical issues or even application rejection.
- **Don't call or e-mail colleges** - Colleges want to hear from your students. They want to admit students who self-advocate.
- **Don't apply pressure based on prestige** - Focusing on top ranked schools creates anxiety.
- **Don't micromanage the process** - Frequent reminders and constant check-ins can lead to burnout and resentment. Instead, agree on a weekly check-in to stay involved while giving your student the space to take ownership of the process.
- **Don't avoid financial conversations** - Avoid hiding or sugarcoating financial limitations. Be transparent early on about what your family can realistically afford, so students can apply to schools with accurate financial expectations. Spring should be a time for celebrating not for unwelcome surprises.
- **Do not miss financial aid and scholarship deadlines.**
- **Don't compare your student to other students** - Comparing students creates pressure and anxiety and diminishes students' individual achievements. Every student's journey is unique and their own.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- **Be a supportive cheerleader** - Offer encouragement and emotional support without adding pressure. Celebrate small wins, like finishing an essay draft or submitting an application.
- **Help with Organization** - Assist in creating a timeline or checklist of deadlines. Help manage logistics - like scheduling campus visits or making sure test scores are sent. [Sample spreadsheet link](#)
- **Talk honestly about finances** - Have an open, realistic conversation about the family's financial situation. Help your student understand what's affordable and explore financial aid and scholarship options together.
- **Review, don't rewrite** - Offer to proofread essays for grammar or clarity, but let the ideas, tone, and voice stay 100% the student's. Feedback is helpful; control is not.
- **Be a thought partner** - Ask open-ended questions to help your student reflect on what kind of environment, major, or campus culture fits them best.
- **Stay informed and involved** - Attend information sessions or financial aid events, and stay aware of important deadlines. Being involved shows care - as long as the student stays in the driver's seat.
- **Encourage Independence and Confidence** - Empower your student to take responsibility for their applications, emails, and decisions. This builds skills they'll need in college and beyond.

Q & A