

*Career & College Newsletter
for Seniors: Edition for those
applying to 4 year colleges*

• August 2026 •

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Register to attend College App Day on August 18!

REGISTER BY 8/11

ACT: September 19



REGISTER BY AUG. 14: SEATS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO FOREST LAKE

Forest Lake Community Education will also host the October and December national ACT test dates!

Why would you want to consider taking an ACT or SAT now?

- *Enhance your college application.*
- *It may be a requirement, particularly for some out of state schools.*
- *Access greater scholarship amounts.*



The Common App is now Open!

Over 1100 colleges...One application.

COMMON APP

Nearly all college applications opened August 1.

Decide if the Common App is the application you want to use. It may be easier (if available) to use each individual school's application. Also, not all schools are on the Common App.

SEARCH FOR SCHOOLS ON THE COMMON APP

Additional application portals:

MINNESOTA STATE SYSTEM

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

Step 1: Be sure you are reading the freshman admissions page carefully for each college to which you plan to apply.

Step 2: Create your Common App and/or other application accounts.



Your Official High School Transcript

All transcript requests must be made through Parchment.

TRANSCRIPT REQUEST

*Your official high school transcript, including your senior year courses, will not be available until **August 17**. You should not request a transcript before that date.*

Some schools, like UMN Twin Cities, will not accept a transcript. You must hand enter all of your transcribed courses, credit, and grades.

A note about your senior year courses: This is not the time to take it easy. Colleges want to see you challenging yourself during your senior year.



The College Essay

The college essay is your chance to help the admissions selection committee learn something about you that cannot be found anywhere else on your application.

Whether or not you have an essay to write and how many is completely dependent upon your colleges' requirements. Check each college's admissions webpage for more information.

Tips:

- *Answer the question.*
- *Be authentic... Allow your personality, humor, passion to shine through.*
- *Focus on your impact over your action.*
- *Try to be more persuasive than descriptive.*

- *Avoid revisiting your activities list.*
- *Proofread carefully and have others read your essay.*

Example from Admission Science:

- **Level 1 (Descriptive):** *"I tutored middle school students in algebra every week."*
→ *So what?*
- **Level 2 (Common):** *"It taught me patience and how to communicate complex ideas clearly."*
→ *So what? (This is generic. Any tutor could write this.)*
- **Level 3 (Persuasive):** *"I realized that most students aren't 'bad at math'. They're paralyzed by the fear of being wrong. I learned how to reframe failure as a core part of the learning process."*

See the difference?

*Level 1 is a fact. Level 2 is a sentiment. **Level 3 shows growth.***

Does your essay get and hold the reader's attention. Application readers will only spend 3-4 minutes on your essay and/or short answers.



Letter of Recommendation

Only ask for a letter if it is either an application requirement or if it is needed to enhance your application. You CAN submit a letter even if it is not an application requirement or optional component.

Who to Ask:

- *The teacher who saw you grow.*
- *The teacher who knows you well.*
- *The teacher who taught a challenging class related to your intended major.*
- *Yes, it must be a teacher.*

How to Ask:

- *In person and via email.*
- *Provide a complete resume.*

- *Provide specific examples of interactions or when you demonstrated a valuable employability skill or trait.*

When to Ask:

- *You can ask now.*
- *You must provide **at least 2 weeks of notice.***
- *Letters for highly selective institutions?... provide 4-6 weeks notice.*

College App Deadlines

November 1:
Early Action Deadline and some Early Decision

January 1:
Regular Decision Deadline

Open:
Rolling Admissions

Congratulations! You are on your way to meeting your goals!

All MN private colleges have free apps all year. Many public colleges have free apps in Oct. You can complete your app and just wait to submit in Oct.

free!

Resources

FREE APPS

COLLEGE PLANNING

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Credits:

Created with images by Pcess609 - "Scroll of certificate ,books,pen on wooden table with copy space" • deagreez
- "Photo of minded smart high school girl sit table prepare exam report think thoughts look copyspace pen
touch forehead wear green sweater isolated over bright shine color background" • neirfy - "Workspace with
orange vintage typewriter on blue wooden table background" • nali - "free label in colored background"

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