

COLLEGE FAQs

When should I start? (freshman)- exploring is it ever too early?

The summer before your senior year is the best time to start your applications. Most students do the majority of their application work in the fall of their senior year.

How do I begin?

Create a folder for each college you might be applying to. Make a list of items you will need to include in this application. Add a checklist for what you will need and when it will be due.

How many schools should I apply to?

We suggest applying to 6 schools- Schools that might be a reach for you, schools that are realistic, and schools that you feel will likely admit you. They should be colleges you would be happy to attend.

Should I apply early?

It depends. You may want to keep your options open. If you are sure about which college you want to attend, [early decision or early action](#) might be the best choice for you. If you're not sure, keep in mind that some early application plans require you to commit early.

How do I visit?

Visit campuses while you are vacation or schedule a tour. Take virtual tours such as eCampusTours or Your Campus360. Open houses are often offered spring and fall and give a deeper understanding of the college. It is important to reserve ahead if needed.

Do I send additional information?

It's best if you can express everything about your qualifications and qualities in the materials requested. Colleges spend a great deal of time creating their applications to make sure they get all the information they need about each applicant. If you feel it's absolutely necessary to send additional information, talk to your counselor about it before you send anything.

Remember that some programs might require portfolios or videos of performances. Check with the college to find out the best way to submit these.

Is it OK to use the same material on different applications?

Yes - there is no need to write a brand-new essay or personal statement for each application. Instead, devote your time to producing a great version of basic application parts.

Should I apply to colleges if my admission-test scores or grades are below their ranges?

Yes. The admission scores and grades that colleges show on their websites are averages or ranges — not cutoffs. Colleges consider other factors to get a more complete picture of you. For example, they look at the types of classes you take, your activities, recommendation letters, your essay and your overall **character**.

Should I even bother applying to colleges I don't think I can afford?

Absolutely. Remember that after financial aid packages are determined, most students will pay far less than the "sticker price" listed on the college website. You don't know if you can afford a college until after you apply and find out how much aid that college will offer you (if you're accepted). Fill out the FAFSA as early as possible after Oct. 1 to qualify for the most aid.

Even if the aid package the college offers is not enough, you have options. Many colleges are willing to work with students they have chosen for admission to ensure that those students can afford to attend.

How do I find financial aid and scholarship money?

Students should fill out the FAFSA (Federal Student Aid) form to apply for financial aid for college, career school or graduate school. This is a free form and can be filled out after Oct 1 of your senior year.

Colleges and universities also have their own financial forms which you may apply to in addition to the FAFSA. Please be careful to check all due dates. Each year our high school holds a parent workshop to help fill out these forms. Check the Guidance website for the date.

How do I use Naviance?

Naviance is our Student Information System which records your high school information you would use towards your post secondary plans. It records test scores, GPAs, colleges you might be interested in, and your resume. Make sure you speak with your Guidance counselor if you do not know your password and are unsure how to access the site.

What are the most important components of my application for colleges?

The most important component of a student's transcript considered in admission is the academic rigor of the courses taken and the actual grades earned. GPA and SAT /ACT scores are also considered. Some colleges recalculate a GPA according to their own formula. Essays, letters of recommendations were ranked lower in importance. Level of electives (Honors/CP/A) outside of core classes is generally not considered in the admissions process.

What is KHAN academy?

Khan Academy offers practice exercises, instructional videos, and a personalized learning dashboard that empower learners to study at their own pace in and outside of the classroom. This is a free service which WHRHS strongly suggests each student become part of. Student use of Khan Academy correlates with score gains on standardized achievement tests. Students who prepare using Official SAT and PSAT practice see substantial improvement in their scores. Students can sign up by going directly to Khan Academy or through College Board. There are practice tests for SATs and PSATS, helpful hints and immediate scoring.

Do I need to take an SAT or ACT?

We suggest you take each test to see where you might score better and you are more comfortable taking. Your Guidance counselor can help you plan out a timeline for testing.

When are the tests offered?

Please check the Guidance website for all test dates.

What is a community college?

Community colleges are state supported and provide the first two years of a four-year undergraduate degree.

Do colleges see both unweighted and weighted GPA?

Yes. Colleges see both GPAs which are shown on transcript.

Do colleges use the WHRHS GPA?

The majority of colleges recalculate the GPA focusing on core courses. There is no strong preference for weighted vs. unweighted GPA.

Do colleges recognize levels in elective courses?

Levels of electives (AP/Honors/A/CP) outside of core areas are not generally considered in admissions.

Do colleges visit our high school?

The majority of college reps visit our school between September and early December. College visits are held during lunch period and after school. All students are invited to attend. You do not need a pass. Visits are posted on the Guidance website along with the room number where they will be meeting.

How can I find out about scholarships?

Guidance posts many scholarships on the Guidance website. You should check this often.