



Smithtown Central School District

26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787

Guidance Department

PLANNING FOR..... APPLYING TO..... College



JUNIOR/SENIOR GUIDE

Smithtown High School East
Smithtown High School West

* This document is available on the Smithtown Central School District Website under Guidance - College Application Information

JUNIOR YEAR

Junior Year

August

- Review the [college admission testing information](#) on the Guidance page of the district website.
- Have a parent/guardian complete the [College Board/ACT Accommodations Request Form](#) if you require accommodations. School officials can not apply for accommodations without a request from the parent/guardian. You can review your approved accommodation on your child's College Board / ACT account. Accommodations are not guaranteed. Approval is at the discretion of the College Board and ACT.

October

- Build your resume on SchoolLinks
- Take the PSAT
- Attend Mini College Day

November

Attend Financial Aid Night

December

- Start scheduling college visits and tours for during school break
- Wilson Tech Student Orientation

January

- Use Method Test Prep (paid for by the district) located on your Castle Learning account to prep for the SAT/ACT College entrance exams.
- Consider enrolling in SAT/ACT preparation programs for upcoming exams or purchase books/programs for preparation at home
- Complete college search programs on SchoolLinks and compile list of prospective schools
- Review PSAT results and access self-assessment tools on College Board website
- Check dates registration for SAT, ACT and register for upcoming exams
- Select a strong senior year program
- Individual junior conferences begin

February

- Check dates registration for SAT, ACT and register for upcoming exams

March

- Attend Mini College Day
- Plan activities for summer months such as volunteering, summer job, summer college programs
- Begin researching scholarship opportunities
- Attend Annual Smithtown College Fair (March or April)

April

- Check registration deadline for SAT, ACT
- Read and research information on colleges
- Take time to visit colleges during Spring break
- **Choose the right teachers to request a letter of recommendations for you. Be considerate and give them time to prepare. Once selected, add them as recommenders in SchoolLinks.**

May

- AP Exams
- Continue to research and visit colleges
- Check registration deadline for SAT & ACT
- **In SchoolLinks, submit a Recommendation letter brag sheet. You must also have a resume in SchoolLinks .**

June

- Regents Exams

Points to Remember

- Continue with meaningful activities: volunteer work, summer educational programs, part-time employment, research programs and internships
- Attend college fairs and plan college visits
- Obtain college applications, begin drafting college essays and create an activity resume over the summer

- NCAA Clearinghouse release forms can be submitted to the Counseling Center at the end of 11th grade year.
- Compile a list of potential schools that include safety, target and possible reach schools.
- Enter college information on Schoolinks
- Refer to College Testing Calendar (guidance website) for College Testing
- Invites to National Honor Society (3.75 GPA) are mailed to eligible students. Check the website for further information.
[2025-2026 - honor society opportunities](#)

PLANNING FOR COLLEGE

Being admitted to the college of your choice will depend upon a combination of several factors. Some of these factors are:

- your entire high school record (grade point average, final grades)
- the strength of coursework on your high school transcript. Senior year courses and grades count!
- your resume of extracurricular activities – clubs, sports, work experience, community service, leadership opportunities, honors and awards, etc.
- your scores on standardized tests: SAT Reasoning exam, ACT exam
- the specific high school curriculum required for the major, or the college of your choice
- the recommendation of your high school counselor and teachers
- an admissions interview with a college representative, if required
- your college essay(s)
- the amount of money you have or will be able to access to finance the tuition
- the amount of planning and research you have done in selecting the appropriate college(s) for you.
- special talents and abilities (i.e. musical instrument, athletics, theater)

Successful planning is a complex task; it does take time and effort. If you work diligently at this task, you will find that this will greatly enhance your chances of being happy and successful in the college you ultimately choose to attend.

Make use of the resources available to you. You should know what is going on, ask questions, check websites, listen to daily announcements, visit colleges, speak with admissions representatives and speak to your school counselor.

Build a resume on Schoolinks

- ❖ Building a resume on Schoolinks must be completed for your counselor to write a letter of recommendation.
- ❖ Access your Schoolinks account through Classlink
- ❖ Select the items that apply to you on your profile and complete them one at a time using instructions on the next page.

How to Use the Resume Builder

[student guide]

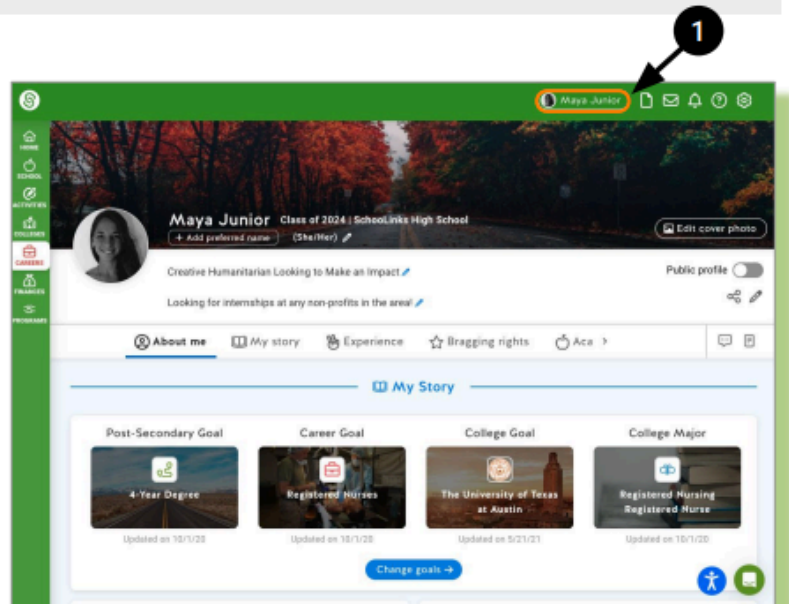


In this guide, you will learn how to use your SchoolLinks profile to build a resume.

- 1 To access your profile, click on your name button in the top navigation bar

The following sections of your profile will be included in your resume:

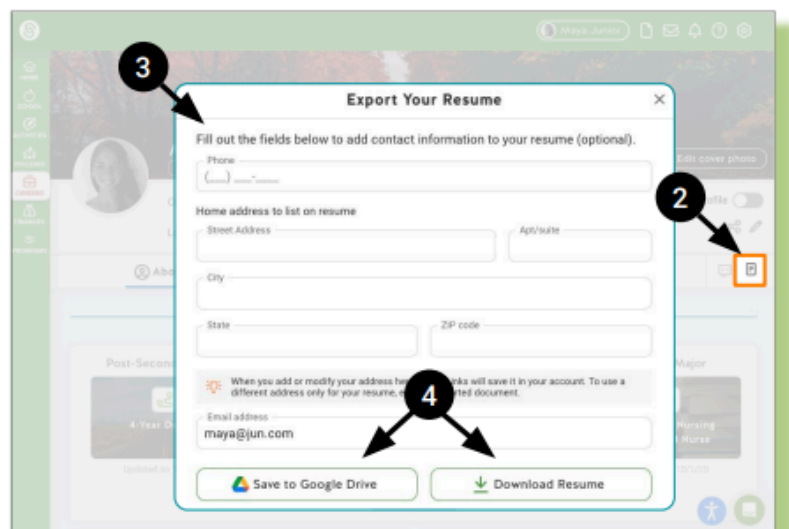
- My story (Interests & Hobbies)
- Experience
- Bragging Rights
- Academics



- 2 When ready to export to a resume format, click on the resume icon at the top right corner

- 3 Provide your contact details for this information to be added to your resume

- 4 Export resume to Google Drive or download as an editable .doc file



Sample Resume

Maya Junior

111 One Street, City, State 55555
232-323-4234 | maya@jun.com

EDUCATION

SchoolLinks High School - (2015 - 2018)

GPA: 3.67 / 4.0

Class Rank: 11 out of 1231

EXPERIENCE

SchoolLinks - UIX Design Intern (06/01/2017 - Present)

- Work directly with the development team to bring designs to life
- Collaborate with a small team of passionate, multi-faceted designers
- Conduct user research online and with focus groups
- Shadow the Head of Product Design

Habitat for Humanity - Community Organizer (03/01/2016 - 05/01/2018)

- I had a wonderful time organizing community efforts to raise money for Habitat for Humanity!

Austin Animal Shelter - Volunteer (06/01/2018 - Present)

- Washing and feeding animals
- Organizing merchandise

Austin Food Bank - Intern (05/01/2019 - Present)

- Sorted food

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & LEADERSHIP

SchoolLinks High School Varsity Basketball Team - Captain (12th grade - 12th grade)

- Run weekly meetings for team with coaches and players, develop training schedules.

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS

NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing - (05/17/2017)

- The NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing (AiC) honors women in grades 9 through 12 who are active and interested in computing and technology, and encourages them to pursue their passions. Award for AiC recipients are chosen for their demonstrated inte

School Student Athlete Award - (11/18/2018)

- I won this award for being a great student athlete at my school.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Interests: Piano, Chess, Mountain Climbing, Tennis, Teaching, Community Service, Missionary Work

Certifications: CPR Certification, NIMS ITM Electronic Control Sy, web development

Languages: English, Spanish

Skills: Bilingual, Coding, Communication, Creative Thinking

TIPS FOR VISITING A COLLEGE

Plan your visit ahead of time. Try to visit colleges when they are in session. Weekday visits are best, but weekend and summer visits are beneficial. Remember, don't base your decision on one visit or solely on what your tour guide presents.

Make an appointment for a visit by calling or registering on-line.

Take your parents with you. Compare notes with them after your visit. Complete school information sheet (see pg. 8). But remember – you have to feel that the school is a good match for you.

Determine how far the campus is from town. Does this matter to you?

If possible, sit in on a class related to your major and evaluate student reactions to the class. Notice the size of the class. What is the attitude of students? Is the class taught by a full-time professor or a teaching assistant?

Laboratory facilities – Is the Lab large enough? Does it have modern equipment? Are there research facilities?

Try to tour the department of your major. If available, speak to professors.

Dorms – How is dorm location in relation to classes? What is the room size? How are roommates selected? Do they offer apartment dorms or two to a room? Would you like to spend four years here? Are there places for snacks, coffee and laundry facilities? Is housing guaranteed for four years?

Dining - Plan to eat on campus during your visit to sample the selections. Discuss available food plans.

Social Life - How do students spend weekends? What does the college newspaper seem to emphasize - sports, cultural events or politics? Check the school website for events on campus.

Fraternity & Sorority Life - How important is this on campus? What percentage of students belong? What other clubs or associations are of interest?

Sports – Division I or II? Inter-collegiate or intramural? What are you looking for? What place do sports have in the life of the college? How are the facilities?

Library – How available is the library for student use? What are the library hours?

What is the retention rate? – How many students return after freshman year? (a 75% return rate is the national average)

How many students commute to the campus? Is it mainly a commuter campus or do most students live on campus?

Career Center – visit campus job placement office. Do they assist with internships? Ask what percentage of students are employed after graduation and how many students graduate in four years.

Are interviews mandatory, recommended or available? Is the interview evaluative or informational?

Keep notes. Notes will help you compare the colleges that you visit. Be sure to include names of people with whom you spoke to at the college.

Send or email thank you notes to people who provided you with their time. Do it as soon as you get home.

Discuss the visit with your parents and your counselor. Review notes and impressions.

Take a lot of photos. Multiple college visits can result in confusing and contradictory memories.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN VISITING A COLLEGE

What should I ask about admissions?

- What information is evaluated for admissions? What is most important/least important?
- Do I need to take a college entrance exam before admission? Which one?
- What if I don't have a strong high school average? Are there alternative admissions procedures?
- Is credit given for advanced placement courses?
- When should I apply?
- What additional information is required?
- Should I make a visit to the campus? When?
- Who makes the decision about my application?
- Are interviews offered?
- When will I know if I've been accepted?
- What do I do if I'm not accepted?

- What services are available for students with disabilities?
- How often do students get the courses they want?

What should I do about costs and financial aid?

- What will it cost?
- What types of financial aid are available to me?
- Differences between: student loans, grants, and scholarships?
- What financial aid application forms are required?
- What is meant by financial need?
- How is need determined?
- Is there a deadline for filing financial aid applications?
- Are there part-time jobs available in the community?
- When must my bill be paid?
- Are merit scholarships available? What is the criteria?

What should I know about Placement?

- Placement or career development is a key concern of students. Don't overlook the services that are provided to help you transition into the working world.
- What percentage of students graduate in four years? Are pre-med and pre-law graduates readily accepted into graduate school?
- What percentage of graduates go on to graduate school?
- What should I ask about admissions?
- What information is evaluated for admissions? What is most important/least important?
- Do I need to take a college entrance exam before admission? Which one?
- Will there be on campus interviews with employers?
- How do I know who is hiring in my field?
- Will I be prepared for the job interview?
- What percentage of four year graduates obtain jobs?

What should I ask about day-to-day living?

- After gathering basic information about admissions, financial assistance and academic offerings, the following questions will help you discover the unique personality of each college:
- Can I live on-campus?
- Is four year housing guaranteed?
- What off-campus housing is available?
- What are the dorms like?
- Can I choose a specific dorm/roommate?
- Are there regulated hours in the dorms?
- What kinds of meal plans are available?
- Are there stores or a shopping center nearby?
- Do students generally study in the dorms or in the library?
- Is the campus accessible for disabled students?
- What health services are offered?

What should I ask about academic life?

- Do I have to choose a major right away?
- Are interdisciplinary majors available?
- Can I design my own program?
- What kind of academic advice is available?
- What are the campus academic facilities (library, labs, etc.)?
- Can I participate in a cooperative study/work program in my field?
- Are there evening classes?
- Is remedial help available?
- What opportunities are available for study abroad?
- Is special assistance available for handicapped students?
- Is an honors program available? What is the application process?

What's happening on campus?

- What campus organizations are available for me to participate in?
- What types of social activities are available on campus?
- What cultural activities are available on campus/the surrounding community?
- What athletic facilities are available on campus?
- What sports programs (intercollegiate/intramural) are available? For men? For women?
- How active is the student government?
- Are students represented on college committees?

School Information Sheet

School Name:

Contact Name(s): Phone #:

Date:

Location:

Enrollment:

Avg.:

Type:

ACT/SAT/GPA:

Popular Majors:

Admissions:

Financials:

Social Life/Housing:

Athletics:

Other: (Circle)

Academics:

Target

Reach

Safe

Financial:

Target

Reach

Safe

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

COST/FINANCIAL AID

- What are the fees for tuition/room & board? Are there other fees?
- Is tuition more expensive for out -of -state vs. in-state students?
- Are enrollment deposits refundable?
- When do the bills have to be paid?
- What are the part-time job prospects on campus or the surrounding areas?
- What will your personal expenses be?
- What will be the cost of traveling home?
- What percentage of students receive aid or scholarships?
- What is the typical financial aid package for a freshman?
- What are the financial aid procedures and deadlines?
- Does the school require the FAFSA and/or CSS Profile?
- Does the school offer merit/athletic scholarships? If so, what is the criteria for keeping the scholarship?
- What has been the annual increase in costs over the last 3 years?

SIZE

- What is the undergraduate/graduate enrollment?
- How big is the campus?
- How many students commute to school vs. live on campus? What about off-campus housing?
- How big was your high school?
- Do you like being in a place where everybody knows you or do you like the anonymity of a crowd?
- What is the average class size?
- What about the student-to-faculty ratio?
- How do you learn best and how will the school/class size impact this?
- Do you prefer a larger school with the possibility of a better library, recreation or research facilities?
- Can you handle large lecture classes with hundreds of students?
- How many TA's instruct classes?
- How accessible are the professors?
- Are the courses you want difficult to get into

SETTING/LOCATION

- Are you more comfortable with an urban, suburban, small town or rural setting? What type of setting do you come from?
- How far away from home do you want to be?
- How often do you plan on coming home to visit?
- Are you more interested in living at home or commuting to school?
- Do you need to have access to a lot of activities on the weekends?
- How important are cultural events to you?
- Are there sororities/fraternities on campus?
- Where do the majority of students come from?
- What is the surrounding community like?
- Is the college private, public or church affiliated?
- Which scene will you be part of – ski, beach, woods, lakes, city, or college town?
- Is diversity on campus important to you?
- What is the male-to-female ratio?
- Are you comfortable with co-ed dorms/floors?
- Is the college safe? What are their statistics? Do they have call boxes, campus escorts, ID checks?

MAJOR/DEGREE

- Does the school offer the major/majors that interest you?
- Does the department have a strong reputation (professors/facilities/curriculum) for that area of study?
- If you are undecided at this time (as many students are) are you choosing a school that will give you plenty of options?
- Can you design your own major? What options are there to double major or minor?
- Is the curriculum liberal arts based or more focused? Which style do you prefer?
- Are there separate requirements for the major you are interested in?
- If you do not meet those requirements as a freshman, can you apply at a later date? What percentage of students do this and are successful?
- What flexibility is there in the curriculum to take exploratory classes?
- What special/unique programs are offered?
- Does your degree require an internship/student teaching?
- How easy is it to switch majors?

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- What high school courses are required?
- What scores/GPA is acceptable?
- What about testing requirements? Does the school accept the SAT or ACT?
- What is the application filing date?
- Do they accept the Common Application?
- Is there a separate application/filing date for the Honors Program?
- What percentage of applicants are accepted?
- Do they offer Early Action/Early Decision? What is the specific policy for each program?
- Can admissions denials be appealed?
- Do activities/extracurricular involvement, community service, essay or letters of recommendation play a part in admissions?
- Are in-state applicants given preference in the admissions process?
- Is there a cap on the number of out of state applicants admitted?

ACADEMICS/STUDENT SERVICES

- What percentage of students return for sophomore year?
- What percentage of students graduate in 4 years? 5 years?
- What is the procedure for orientation, registration, scheduling?
- How is a faculty advisor assigned? How often do you meet?
- What type of career planning is offered? What about for students who are undecided?
- What is the job placement rate?
- What types of services are provided by the school at no cost (tutoring, career and personal counseling, reading/study skills workshops, job placement, health center)?
- Is the prestige/reputation of the school very important to you? Remember reputation is relative – what are you looking for?
- What clubs/activities are available? Which are the most popular?
- What about athletics? What are you interested in as far as collegiate sports?
- What study abroad programs exist?
- Can you take courses at other colleges/universities for the same tuition?
- How is credit awarded for college courses/AP exams?

Although there are numerous factors involved in the process of selecting a school that is right for you, the decision process can actually be fun! View it as an opportunity to explore the world of colleges and to envision the next phase of your life in another place. Above all, trust your instincts and “gut” feeling. The most important factor is whether or not a place feels right to you. Remember your impressions while you are visiting the campus. Similarly, if it feels wrong, but looks good on paper or to another person, it probably is not the place for you!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When should I begin visiting colleges?

It's never too early to start visiting colleges and universities. Visiting campuses in your early high school years will help you figure out what kind of environment you prefer (big or small campus, located in a city or a rural environment, etc.). Stop at campuses that are on route when taking family vacations or make plans to visit friends/relatives who are college students or who live near campuses. As a general rule, you should begin making visits to specific colleges of interest during your junior year of high school. After acceptance, it is a good idea to schedule an overnight visit at several schools if you are undecided about which school to attend.

What will the transition to college be like?

College will be a greater academic challenge than high school. Even though you will take fewer courses during a semester in college, those courses will require more independent work than high school courses. Students who take four or more classes at a time in college are usually referred to as "full-time students" because the workload and time commitment is much like a full-time job.

What if I don't know what to major in when I get to college?

You won't be alone. Most students enter college undecided about a major or change their minds at some point after starting. Many colleges offer many different classes—and give you time to explore the possibilities. Most colleges don't require students to choose a **specific** major area of study until their third year.

Does it hurt my chances of receiving financial aid if we have money saved for my education?

In most cases, students whose parents have saved for college are still able to receive financial aid, but end up with less loan indebtedness. This benefits the family, because it's much cheaper to save than to borrow. A student who can avoid borrowing will start his or her life as a college graduate without the burden of student loan payments.

What role do extracurricular activities play in the college admission process?

Colleges and universities are looking for well-rounded students. Extracurricular activities such as student government, school clubs, sports, yearbook, a part-time job, or volunteer activities are experiences most colleges value. Remember, however, that colleges will consider academic achievement above all others.

What are my chances of graduating from college in four years?

The average time to graduate is more than four years. Why? Some students change their major several times and need to take more course work than students who concentrate on one area. Students also often take advantage of special programs such as cooperative education, internships, or overseas study; which are valuable experiences but can delay graduation. Many students work to help pay for college and may not take a full load of classes each term. There are many students, however, who do graduate in four years. It just depends upon the choices you make.

What is more important: taking harder courses or maintaining a higher GPA?

It is important that you challenge yourself while in high school by taking difficult coursework. This will prepare you for the demands of the college classroom. Most colleges and universities will look at both your course selections and your grades during the admission process. Of course, you should make sure that you are choosing courses that are academically appropriate.

Do colleges and universities have programs and services in place to help students with special needs?

Colleges and universities can differ in the programs and services offered to students with special needs. Some of these programs may require an additional fee for the service. It's essential to contact the Office of Support Services to discuss and assess individual need.

How to Search Schools in Schoolinks

We are pleased to offer Schoolinks the innovative and exciting new tool to help you with your career and college search. School Search is a tool students can use to explore colleges and universities. Equipped with a variety of filter and sort options, students will be able to better organize their search to find the exact type of schools they are looking for.

The steps below will provide an overview of how to search for schools, the filter and sort options available to them, and the actions that can be taken from a School Tile..

- 1) Click **Colleges** in the side navigation bar, then select **School Search**.
- 2) Use **Filters** to narrow down your search
 - a) **School Type:** Filter by 4-year, 2-year, and Non-degree schools; Private, Public, and For-profit schools; and other inclusive opportunities and support services
 - b) **Campus:** Filter by campus details including Location (city/urban area, town/suburban area, country/rural area), School Size (small, medium large), and US Region (Southwest, Midwest, Southeast, etc.)
 - c) **Admissions:** Filter schools based on GPA, ACT/SAT Scores, and My Chances (Likely, Target, Reach)
 - d) **Acceptance:** Filter by acceptance rate using the slider.
 - e) **Sports:** Filter by men's and women's, division, non-NCAA, club, and intramural sports.
 - f) **Degree Type:** Filter for schools that offer a Bachelor Degree, Associate Degree, or Certificate Programs.
 - g) **Other:** Filter to include Schools with a VR tours (Virtual Reality), or Schools with counselor comments
- 3) Use the **Sort** options to determine the order in which you want schools presented in your narrowed-down list.
 - a) **Graduation Rate:** Sort results by the percentage of undergrads who graduate
 - b) **Acceptance Rate:** Sort results by the percentage of applicants who are accepted
 - c) **Undergrad Tuition:** Sort results by average undergrad tuition
 - d) **Expected Family Contribution:** Sort results by your family's income to see how much you could expect to pay on average
 - e) **Distance From You:** Sort results by your location
 - f) **US News Ranking:** Sort results by the ranking given to schools by US News
- 4) Use the Search Bar to search for a school or program directly or to add/change the state filter.
- 5) Use the View Options to change the layout between list view, map view, or split view (list and map combined.)
- 6) School Tile Options
 - a) Once your filter and sort options have been applied, you can then begin to explore the school tiles found within the list or split view. There are four actions that can be taken from a School Tile:
 - View Counselor Comments
 - View Scattergram Data
 - Favorite a School
 - Access School Profile

The Student's Guide to SchoolLinks' College Application Manager



Scan for updates!

Get set up

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

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 back on SchoolLinks.

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.'"

Add your results

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

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 SchoolLinks and add your high school. Complete the Common App FERPA in the colleges tab once you've added a college.

Request recommendations

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

Track application materials

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

Make your enrollment decision

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

RESOURCES WEBSITES

Standardized Testing:

Method Test Prep

ACT

College Board/SAT/PSAT/AP

Fair Test – SAT/ACT optional schools

Logon to Castle learning account (district paid test prep)

www.act.org

www.collegeboard.org

www.fairtest.org

Application Homepages:

Common Application

SUNY Colleges

County Community College

NYS Colleges & Universities

CUNY Colleges

Coalition

www.commonapp.org

www.suny.edu Suffolk

www.sunysuffolk.edu

www.nycolleges.org

www.cuny.edu

<https://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>

For College Research:

Schoolinks

Career Exploration Assessment &

College Resource

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

(FAFSA) form

NCAA

Log on through Classlink

www.nycareerzone.com

studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa

www.ncaa.org

OBJECTIVE GUIDEBOOKS Most college guidebooks are objective. They are unbiased and give readers basic information about colleges. They provide admissions criteria, cost and available programs.

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges

Peterson's Guide to Four Year Colleges

College Board's College Handbook

SUBJECTIVE GUIDEBOOKS These books generally give a few pages of narrative about each college. They are subjective because they take certain positions about profiled colleges.

Rugg's Recommendations on Colleges

The Fiske Guide to Colleges

The Insider's Guide to Colleges

SPECIALIZED GUIDEBOOKS These books cover a specific topic that may be of importance to you.

- ❖ Peterson's Guide to Financial Aid The Scholarship Book
- ❖ Sports Scholarships and College Athletic Programs
- ❖ The College Board Book of Majors
- ❖ Peterson's Guide to Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorders
- ❖ College Guide for Students with Learning Disabilities - Laurel Publications
- ❖ Up Your Score - The Underground Guide to the SAT - College Board Scholarship Handbook Looking Beyond the Ivy League: Finding the College That's Right for You
- ❖ College Admissions Trade Secrets: A Top Private College Counselor Reveals the Secrets, Lies and Tricks for the College Admissions Process-Andrew Allen (author)
- ❖ Creative Colleges: A Guide for Student Actors, Artists, Dancers, Musicians and Writers- Elaina Loveland (author)
- ❖ Cracking the ACT – Princeton Review

COMPUTING G.P.A.

Grade Point Average

Alpha grades are assigned quality points which are used to compute the grade point average. Grades earned in Advanced Placement & PLTW courses are weighted with an additional 1.0 quality point. A student must sit for the AP Exam and pass the course to receive a weighted grade.

A+	97 and above	4.4
A	93 to 96	4.0
A-	90 to 92	3.6
B+	87 to 89	3.3
B	83 to 86	3.0
B-	80 to 82	2.6
C+	77 to 79	2.3
C	73 to 76	2.0
C-	70 to 72	1.6
D+	67 to 69	1.3
D	65 to 66	1.0
F	64 or below	0.0

Course	Final grade	Grade points	x	Course credit	=	Quality Points
English 9R	A	4.0	x	1.0	=	4.0
AP European History	B-	3.6 (2.6+1)	x	1.0	=	3.6
Algebra 1	C-	1.6	x	1.0	=	1.6
Chemistry	B	3.0	x	1.0	=	3.0
Intro. to Business Occ.	A+	4.4	x	0.5	=	2.2
	F	0	x	0.5	=	0.0
Chefs Choice 1						
Physical Education	A	4	x	0.5	=	2.0
TOTAL CREDITS				5.5		
Total Quality Pts						16.4

A "P" grade and its credit value are not averaged into the final GPA. Here is a shortened example of how your GPA is determined: **Quality Points divided by Credits = GPA** 16.40 divided by 5.50 = 2.98 GPA

Smithtown High Schools East and West do not rank students. A Smithtown High School East and Smithtown High School West profile will assist colleges in accurately assessing each student's candidacy for admission.

NCAA

For information regarding NCAA eligibility,
please use the link link below to access the:

GUIDE FOR THE COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENT-ATHLETE

[http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Student
Resources/CBSA.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/StudentResources/CBSA.pdf)

Initial-Eligibility Standards

If you want to compete in NCAA sports, you need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org. Plan to register before your freshman year of high school. For more information on registration, visit on.ncaa.com/RegChecklist.

Academic Requirements

Division I and II schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:

Division I

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

2. Complete your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in eight academic semesters or four consecutive academic years from the start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
3. Complete 10 of your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math or science, before the start of your seventh semester. Once you begin your seventh semester, any course needed to meet the 10/7 requirement cannot be replaced or repeated.
4. Earn a minimum 2.3 **core-course GPA**.
5. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

Division II

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

2. Earn a minimum 2.2 **core-course GPA**.
3. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

Division III

While **Division III** schools set their own admissions and academic requirements, **international student-athletes** (first-year enrollees and transfers) who are enrolling at a Division III school after Aug. 1, 2023, must be certified as an amateur by the Eligibility Center. Contact the Division III school you plan to attend for more information about its academic requirements.



GRADE
9
REGISTER

- » If you haven't yet, [register](https://eligibilitycenter.org) for a free Profile Page account at eligibilitycenter.org for information on NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.
- » Use NCAA Research's [interactive map](#) to help locate NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- » Find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses at eligibilitycenter.org/courselist to ensure you're taking the right courses, and earn the best grades possible!

GRADE
10
PLAN

- » If you're being actively recruited by an NCAA school and have a Profile Page account, [transition](#) it to the required [certification account](#).
- » Monitor the [task list](#) in your NCAA Eligibility Center account for next steps.
- » At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attend to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.
- » If you fall behind academically, ask your high school counselor for help finding [approved courses](#) you can take.

GRADE
11
STUDY

- » Ensure your [sports participation](#) information is correct in your Eligibility Center account.
- » Check with your high school counselor to make sure you're on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved [core courses](#) and graduate on time with your class.
- » Share your [NCAA ID](#) with NCAA schools recruiting you so each school can place you on its [institutional request list](#).
- » At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attend to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.

GRADE
12
GRADUATE

- » [Request your final amateurism certification](#) beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your Eligibility Center account at eligibilitycenter.org.
- » Apply and be accepted to the NCAA school you plan to attend.
- » Complete your final NCAA-approved [core courses](#) as you prepare for graduation.
- » After you graduate, ask your high school counselor to upload your final [official transcript](#) with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

How to plan your high school courses to meet the 16 core-course requirement:

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

9th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social Science
and/or other

4 CORE COURSES

10th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social Science
and/or other

4 CORE COURSES

11th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social Science
and/or other

4 CORE COURSES

12th GRADE

(1) English
(1) Math
(1) Science
(1) Social Science
and/or other

4 CORE COURSES



CONTACT THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

U.S. and Canada (except Quebec):
877-262-1492 (toll free), Monday-Friday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time



[@ncaaec](#) [@ncaaec](#) [@ncaaec](#) [@playcollegesports](#)



ELIGIBILITY CENTER

NCAA is a trademark of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. September 21

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE

Accreditation

Formal approval by a regional accrediting board that a college, university or program of study has met the standards of the accrediting agency.

ACT

An assessment exam that measures academic achievement in four content areas: English, reading, mathematics and science reasoning. Most colleges will accept either ACT or SAT test scores for admissions and/or placement. The writing section is optional on the ACT but it is required by most colleges (see page 17).

Advanced Placement

A college may grant advanced course placement and/or credit for AP exam scores according to their individual policy in this rigorous course of study.

Associate Degree

A degree awarded after two years of study and the completion of approximately 60 to 64 credits.

Baccalaureate Degree

Often called a “Bachelor’s Degree” or undergraduate degree, it is awarded after four years of study and the completion of approximately 120 to 130 credits.

Certificate Program

A one-year program of study usually related to skill development for employment

Common Application

A standardized application form used by a group of participating colleges. Some private colleges and state university systems may use this format. New York’s SUNY system also uses a SUNY Application.

Cooperative Education

A combination of college studies and employment experience typically completed in five years.

Cooperative Program

A program jointly sponsored by two schools, usually with one institution offering specialized courses not available at the other.

Core Curriculum

A group of fundamental courses required of all candidates for a particular certificate or diploma.

Cumulative Grade Point Average

It is a grade point average computed by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of course credits (see page 15).

Deans List

Students with superior academic performance may be recognized with this honor, usually compiled each semester.

Deferred Tuition

A payment plan wherein the college allows you to spread out your payments over the entire year.

Early Action

An application process that allows you to apply early in the senior year, and be advised of your acceptance status at an early date. However, you are not obligated to attend a college that offers you admission. Check individual colleges for their specific early action policy.

Early Decision

Students with a preference for a particular school may wish to apply to the college early in the senior year. Early Decision applicants may not apply Early Decision to other schools. They are obligated to accept “Early Decision” offers of admission if college meets financial need. Once accepted, student should withdraw applications from other schools.

End of Year Grades

Don’t relax and let your grades slip. Colleges request your grades and course selection for all four years of high school; this includes senior year.

Graduate Program

College studies after completion of the Baccalaureate degree.

Greek System

Refers to the fraternities and sororities at a college.

Honors Program

A program for superior college students that may receive special dormitory facilities, special courses, smaller classes, seminars and/or concentrated studies.

Internship

Supervised work experience generally related to your major. An internship may be paid or voluntary and school credit may be awarded.

Junior Colleges

A private two year college.

Liberal Arts and Career Combination

A program in which a student completes two or three years of study in a liberal arts field, followed by two or three years of professional/technical study (for example, engineering or forestry.) The student is awarded the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degree. These are often referred to as 2+3 or 3+2 programs.

Liberal Arts Courses

Courses within the broad areas of literature, philosophy, history, foreign languages, social sciences, and natural sciences that are intended to provide general knowledge.

Major

A concentration or sequence of related courses in a subject area.

Matriculation

Designates the enrollment status of a student who has met the criteria established by a college for acceptance as a degree candidate.

Mid-Year Grades

Colleges request your grades to evaluate your senior year performance through mid-year.

Non-Matriculated Student

A student taking college courses but not formally enrolled in a degree program.

Rank

Smithtown High Schools East and West do not rank students. A Smithtown High School East and Smithtown High School West profile will assist colleges in accurately assessing each student's candidacy for admission.

“Reach School”

The admissions criteria are “most competitive” or supersede your present academic and standardized scores.

Rolling Admissions

Applications are evaluated and processed by the colleges as they are received. You will be notified of your status as a candidate when your evaluation is completed, instead of waiting until a certain date on which all applicants are notified. It is advisable to apply early to these colleges.

ROTC-Reserve Officer Training Corps

A competitive program that provides compensation, in return for military service as an officer after graduation. In addition, ROTC students must take military science courses and summer training.

“Safe School”

You meet all of the admissions criteria for possible acceptance.

SAT

A test which measures critical reading, writing and mathematical reasoning abilities.

SAT Subject Tests

No longer offered

TA-Teaching Assistant

A graduate student who assists a professor in teaching a course.

“Target School”

You meet a majority of the admissions criteria needed for acceptance.

Undergraduate Program

The first level of college studies after high school is complete.

Wait List

Students are placed on a wait list if they are not initially accepted or rejected by a school, but who may be accepted at a later date if space becomes available.

3-2 Program

A program that combines three years of undergraduate study with two years of professional study. Successful students earn a bachelor's degree and a professional degree in five years of concentrated study. There are other numerical combinations, such as six or seven year medical school programs. This information is available in college catalogs or admission offices.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SENIOR YEAR



**KEEP
CALM
AND
APPLY TO
COLLEGE**

SENIOR YEAR CALENDAR

August

- Common Application opens on August 1st. We strongly encourage you to start working on the application in August.
- Begin working on admissions essays over the summer.

September

- Complete your FERPA waiver on SchoolLinks and enter your college list –designate if you are applying via the Common Application for each school.
Be aware of the college testing calendar and registration dates for SAT & ACT exams.
- Begin to complete college applications – be conscientious of deadline dates.
- SUNY, CUNY and Suffolk County Community College applications are available on-line.
- Schedule college visits and interviews.
- Attend the College Admissions Process Night presentation hosted by the Guidance Department
- Fill out the Brag Sheet survey on SchoolLinks, if you haven't done so already.
- Make sure the resume you built on SchoolLinks is up to date.
- Submit ROTC and Military Academy applications ASAP.
- File NCAA Eligibility Center form if you are a prospective Division I or Division II athlete (available at www.eligibilitycenter.org).
- You should have already chosen the teachers that you want to write your recommendations. If you have not yet done so, choose teachers ASAP, pick up forms in the Counseling Center and enter the teachers names on Schoollinks.
- Plan to work hard this year and take challenging courses– senior grades count!!
- Know that your counselor is available for a conference.
- Check SchoolLinks for scholarship information.
- Scholarship searches can also be found through an internet search.
- Counseling Center begins processing college applications

October

- Pay attention to the college testing calendar (SAT, ACT).
- Finish writing admissions essays; have them proofread by parent or teacher.
- Be conscientious of college application deadlines (especially Early Decision/Action).
- Submit Early Decision and Early Action transcript processing forms to the Counseling Center.
- Register for CSS Profile (if required, at www.collegeboard.org).
- Submit transcript processing form to Counseling Center 15 school days prior to deadline.
- Mini College Day – speak to college representatives.

November

- Attend College Financial Aid Night.
- Be aware of the college testing calendar (SAT, ACT).
- For schools with rolling admissions, it is better to apply early rather than later.
- Send completed applications to colleges.
- Arrange for campus visits.
- File FAFSA and other required financial aid forms in early December.

December

- December 1– deadline for college applications to be submitted to the Counseling center in order to be processed by winter break.
- Check SchoolLinks for scholarship information.
- Check with colleges for Financial Aid deadlines and school specific forms.

January

- Check to see if your schools requires a mid-year report - notify your counselor
- Don't give in to "senioritis" - your college admission is contingent upon your final grades.
- Check SchoolLinks for Scholarship information
- Check with schools to see if your application file is complete.

February/March

- Ensure that your financial aid applications are completed and submitted.
- Visit college campus prior to making your final choice – schedule an overnight visit.
- Check SchoolLinks for scholarship information.

April

- Congratulations! You're almost finished. By now you should have most of your decision letters.
 - If you have been wait listed, contact the admissions office to show interest and send any additional supporting documents.
- Send in tuition and housing deposit in April. May 1st is the National Reply Date.

****Notify the Counseling Center using the graduation survey in Schoolinks of your college acceptances, waitlisted schools, denials and scholarship offerings****

May

- Finalize college choice and inform your counselor. May 1st is the National Reply Date.
- Begin completing the registration form for college. Are you going to live on or off campus?

June

- If you have not already done so, notify the Counseling Center in regard to the school you will attend. Please fill out the senior survey in SchoolLinks.
- If your school does not accept electronic submissions, please bring in an addressed, stamped envelope so your final transcript can be mailed to the college you will attend.
- Graduation!

APPLICATION ORGANIZER

School				
College Applications				
Application deadline				
Essays completed				
Application form completed				
Application submitted				
Submit counselor portion at least 15 school days prior to your application deadline				
Letters of Recommendation				
Gave recommendation to (name of teacher)				
Teacher submitted form or mailed				
Sent thank-you note				
Gave recommendation form to...				
Teacher submitted form or mailed				
Sent thank-you note				
Gave recommendation form to...				
Teacher submitted form or mailed				
Sent thank-you note				
High School Transcripts				
Gave transcript request form to counselor				
Transcript submitted				
Gave mid-year school report request to counselor				
Report submitted				
Test Scores				
Requested that score reports be sent to colleges:				
SAT Reasoning exam				
ACT				
AP exams				
Financial Aid Applications				
Financial aid application deadline				
FAFSA form submitted				
Completed CSS PROFILE registration process				
CSS PROFILE submitted				
College financial aid application submitted				

COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

Comparative Criteria	College #1	College #2	College #3	College #4
Application Deadline				
Required Tests				
Test Scores				
H.S. GPA				
Interview Required				
Tuition Per Year				
Room/Board				
Size				
Public/Private				
2yr/4yr				
Distance				
Location (State)				
Housing				
Community: Rural, Urban or Suburban				
Special Programs & Extracurricular Activities				

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION

Think of your application as a statement of your intention to attend the school. It's your opportunity to provide the admissions office with relevant information about yourself.

Application forms may vary from simple one or two page forms to elaborate documents with sections for personal essays and resumes. Without exception, your applications must be neat, accurate and complete.

The Application

Complete the online application and print a preview to review for accuracy. When you are satisfied that your practice application is error free and offers clear responses to the questions, onto the original application and submit on-line or mail.

Error free, grammatically correct applications are highly recommended

Most applications require a fee that you pay when the application is filed. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, it may be possible to have the application fee waived. Your counselor may be able to help you with this situation.

Read the application instructions twice before you answer any questions and be sure to follow the instructions. Use the space that is allocated for a response. If the space is small, then you are expected to reply as clearly and precisely as you can within that space. If a full page is provided for an essay, use the entire page, but be conscious of possible word limits. If the instructions invite you to submit more information on an additional page, you may do so. Have a friend, family member or a teacher review your information before the final application is submitted.

Recommendations are frequently requested and they are an important part of your application. The college will most likely allow for an online submission of the recommendation. Teachers, employers and professionals are typically used for these recommendations. Most schools will request two recommendations in addition to a school counselor recommendation. Unless you have an unusual circumstance or an exceptionally unique recommendation, you should send the number of recommendations that are requested.

Be selective with who you ask to write a recommendation. The writer should be articulate and able to positively describe the qualities you want to convey to the college. They should know you well (see page 35).

This also means you must provide the writer with sufficient time to prepare a well-written recommendation. Do not expect a positive response when you ask someone to write a recommendation with only two days before your deadline. If you are asked whether you "Waive Your Right" to see your letter of recommendation (this means that you will not see it before hand), be sure to do so. It will give your recommendation more weight and is considered more authentic.

Consult with your counselor if you have any questions

Supply additional information with your application if the college invites you to do so. This might be a portfolio, an article from a newspaper, a video of you performing a special talent or some other display of special talents that may impress the admissions committee.

Be cautious about submitting more than is requested. Four recommendations are not twice as good as the requisite of two. You should avoid appearing as if you are “trying too hard.” Keep a log of your applications and the date you sent materials to each school. Make copies of everything you submit to the counseling center or mail directly to the college, so that you can replace lost material promptly if necessary.

Apply earlier rather than later and watch application deadlines

THE ADMISSIONS ESSAY

Imagine an admissions counselor reviewing the applications of two seemingly equally qualified applicants. Their grades, curriculum and GPA's are similar. They both have glowing recommendations and strong activity resumes. When numbers aren't enough to make a decision, a well-written essay can help determine who is accepted and who isn't. Outstanding essays can also shed a favorable light on students with average credentials in other areas of their applications.

College admissions counselors believe that the ability to write and communicate effectively is of paramount importance. It is the cornerstone of academic success. For this reason, "the essay" is scrutinized and read and then re-read. It helps colleges judge a candidate's character, values and personality. They want to hear the student in his or her own voice. Content and substance are crucial. The essay is more of a thinking sample than a writing sample.

Begin to review college applications over the summer in order to familiarize yourself with the essay topics. Give some thought to your essay topic and draft an outline over the summer. Many college applications ask for one or more essays. The essay may be a challenge but it is an opportunity for you to present a view of yourself that is not revealed in any other part of the application. It is an aspect of the process totally under your control. It is possibly the most important part of your application to the most competitive schools; it is strongly recommended that you devote much effort and time to this endeavor.

The Dartmouth Admissions Office provided the following information regarding their views on the importance of essays:

"First, we use the essays to help us judge an applicant's personal characteristics. In many cases, the personal essays provide us with a window to view/judge a candidate's character and personality. The student's discussion of ideas and values, goals and aspirations, special experiences or interests all help to put other application materials in a context. We want to hear from the student in his or her own voice. Content and substance are crucial. In a very real sense, the essay is more a thinking sample than a writing sample. Therefore, it really is the case that there are no "right" answers to the questions that we pose. We are simply attempting to give our applicants the opportunity to tell us about themselves and why they may be different from many of our other applicants."

Plan your essay, write a draft, edit, revise, and rewrite your essay. Plan to revise and rewrite your essay three to six times if you hope to achieve an outstanding result that will cause the admissions committee to take note of your candidacy.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Strive for quality, not quantity.
2. Answer the question - be specific.
3. Be original, be proactive or be imaginative.
4. Be yourself and be honest – reflect on what you want admissions personnel to know about you.
5. Use clear, vivid prose - check your style and content.
6. Give your draft to someone to review and have your essay reviewed by an English teacher.
7. Revise, edit, and revise. Seek help.
8. Let the essay give insight to who you are, your strength, talents, values and goals as well as the experiences in your life that have affected you.
9. Remember - most schools do not provide interviews so the college essay is the one chance for the admissions counselor to hear your “voice”.
10. If an essay is optional, take the opportunity to write one.
11. Give yourself time to write a great essay – do not rush this aspect of the application process.
12. Don’t try to cover too many topics in your essay – focus on one aspect of yourself.
13. Consider a mundane topic and expand upon it. Sometimes the simplest things in life make the best essays.
14. Share your opinion but avoid anything too risky or controversial – try to appeal to a broad audience.
15. Tell a good story. Show, through your examples, who you are.
16. Don’t reiterate what is reflected in your application.
17. Be genuine and do not try to impress.
18. The essay questions on the supplemental applications are just as important – give them time and attention
19. Stay away from current events. Stick to your own experience.
20. Avoid writing about other people. You are the one applying to college.
21. Don’t try to be funny if you are not.
22. EDIT – use spell check and proofread carefully. Have a teacher check over the essay as well but don’t let another person over edit and take away the substance.
23. Use a strong opener – catch their attention right away.

SAMPLE ESSAY QUESTIONS

- “Share with us what you believe other students at our college would learn from you both inside and outside the classroom.”
- “Suppose you had the opportunity to spend a day with anyone, with whom would it be and how would you spend your time?”
- “Discuss an experience that has had a significant personal impact on you”
- “Topic of your choice”
- “Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken or ethical dilemma you have faced.”
- “What is the greatest challenge you have had to face and how did you respond to it?”
- “Choose a quote that you feel best represents the way you live your life and explain why.”

COLLEGE INTERVIEW

Many selective colleges require or strongly recommend an interview. Interviews may be conducted by local alumni or on campus with an admissions counselor. Schools that don't require an interview may grant one at your request. You can use this opportunity to provide the school with additional information about yourself that will enhance your candidacy.

Reduce your anxiety about an interview by thinking it is a conversation which will provide you with information about the school, and as an opportunity to provide the school with information about yourself.

Prepare for an interview by reading the college brochures and looking at the website - reviewing those things which are of special interest to you. Organize and be prepared to present information about yourself that will make you a more attractive applicant.

First impressions count, so greet your interviewer with a firm handshake and make eye contact. Speak clearly, be positive, smile, and try to appear relaxed. Bring a copy of your transcript and test scores.

Interviewers may ask the following questions during the interview:

1. Why do you wish to attend this college?
2. What have you read lately that has made an impact on you?
3. What experiences of your life have led to the biggest change in you?
4. What have been your major contributions to your school and to your community?
5. What course have you enjoyed most in high school and why?
6. What special accomplishments and recognition have you had outside the classroom? (This is not a time to be shy!)
7. How has your part-time job influenced you?
8. What current events do you find of greatest interest and why?

In almost all interviews you will be given the chance to ask questions. Use this opportunity to gain information that is NOT in the college literature. A sampling of students' questions is listed below:

1. Will the school give me freedom to explore the course offerings before I select a major?
2. What chance will I have to try out for a varsity team even though I was not recruited?
3. What are the major social and political issues on campus?
4. If I don't join a sorority or fraternity, will I fit into the social life?
5. What are the opportunities for part-time jobs off campus?
6. What GPA will I need in order to get into graduate school?
7. Do introductory classes tend to be considerably larger than elective classes?
8. What's the average size of a freshmen class?
9. Do Teaching Assistants teach many of the freshmen classes?
10. I am still undecided about my major. How much time will I have to make a decision?
11. Am I permitted to take graduate level courses?
12. During high school I took _____course(s) for college credit from _____college. Can I receive transfer credit?
13. Do students tend to leave or stay on campus on weekends?
14. What types of academic support services are available?
15. Does the average student graduate in four years?

Thank You Letter

Send a thank you note, letter or email to the person who arranged your campus visit and/or interview. It will create a positive image for you. You can use it to confirm your interest in the school and add any other positive points you would like to restate.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS:

Refer back to the College Application Manager Document Page 16

1. **Complete the FERPA agreement on the Common Application website.** Go into your **Schoolinks** account match the Common Application After the consent form is completed, your child's counselor will be able to process their transcripts and other school materials electronically. Please be certain that the student's username and password are being utilized when accessing this information, not, the parents login.

[Please note: this waiver asks if you waive your right to see recommendations. Although the decision is your own, some believe recommendations hold more weight when you waive your right of access.]

As previously indicated, SchoolLinks permits the school to send documentation electronically. Once you enter your colleges, SchoolLinks will show you which colleges accept transcripts and letters electronically. Please make sure you specify which colleges you will be applying to via the Common Application. There are still a few colleges that require hard copies of school documents that need to be mailed. In those cases, you will be required to bring in a large envelope, addressed to the college, with (4) stamps.

2. **Teacher recommendations:** Ask two teachers, *in person*, to write your letter of recommendation if you have not done so already. Make sure that you check with your teacher to see if he/she is willing to send the letters electronically (through SchoolLinks). If so, you can enter their information into **Schoolinks**, which will then email your request to them. If a teacher prefers to send their recommendation through the mail, you will need to provide him/her with an envelope for each of your colleges. The envelope should be addressed to the college admission office, with one stamp. Use the Teacher Recommendation Questionnaire (page 39) to assist your teacher with his/her recommendation. Copies are available in the Counseling Center.
3. **Counselor recommendation:** Complete the *Student Brag Sheet* in SchoolLinks . This must be completed in order for your counselor to write your letter of recommendation. (Page 45)
4. **Release your SAT/ACT scores to the colleges officially.** Due to the fact that colleges require an official score report, Smithtown HSE and HSW do not send SAT/ACT and/or AP scores. You will need to request these from the SAT or ACT Test Center and it takes up to 4-6 weeks for testing agencies to process the scores.

SAT—www.collegeboard.org or 1-866-756-7346

ACT – www.actstudent.org or 1-319-337-1313

AP scores – call 1-888-225-5427 or 1-609-771-7300

5. **“Transcript Processing Form” / Deadlines:** You are responsible for meeting your college application deadlines. The Counseling Center and teachers require time to process your applications and write recommendations. Due to the large number of requests, we require **(15) school days** to process. **Please complete a “Transcript Processing Form”** (forms available in the Counseling Center). This serves as a confirmation for your request and needs to be handed in 15 school days prior to your first college deadline.

CEEB Code:
Smithtown East 335001
Smithtown West 335221

Smithtown Central School District
Transcript Processing Form

Please allow fifteen (15) school days for processing

Completed forms should be turned in to the Counseling Center.

Student Name: _____
Student Email: _____

Counselor:

Date Submitted _____

[illegible]

* Admission Type: ED = Early Decision; EA = Early Action; PRI = Priority; REG = Regular; ROLL = Rolling
* Application Type: Common App, College Specific App, SUNY APP, CUNY APP (ADD CUNY #ID), Coalition

Remember to ask 2 teachers for letters of recommendation

By signing below, you authorize Smithtown Central School District to release your academic records including any scores, health records, mid-year/final transcripts and additional data (if any) to applicable colleges. Please note, when you add at least one Common App school to the transcript processing form, Common App will automatically deliver documents to additional applicable colleges as you submit your applications through Common App. Students are still required to list all schools that they are applying to. Letters of recommendation are confidential and not for review by students or parents. Should your 12th grade schedule change, for any reason, it is your responsibility to notify each institution of the change.

Did you complete the Common Application FERPA waiver on your Common Application? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do any of the colleges you are applying to require a Counselor letter of recommendation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please see below:

Did you complete the Student Profile (Surveys from Your School) and Resume located in SchoolLinks? (click on your initials to access)

☐ Yes ☐ No

*A letter will not be written unless both have been completed and saved in SchoolLinks.

Student's Signature

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Smithtown High School does not send SAT/ACT and AP Scores
It takes 4-6 Weeks for testing Agencies to Process, Don't wait!
SAT/SAT Subject Tests – www.collegeboard.org or 1-866-756-7346
ACT – www.actstudent.org or (319)337-1313
AP Scores call 1-888-225-5427 or (609)771-7300

TEACHER RECOMMENDATION QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR TEACHERS ONLY (Ask the teacher if they would like this form from you or something else)

Dear Student:

Please fill out the information below for each teacher you are requesting a letter from.
Your responses will be different for each class and teacher.

Student Name_____

Teacher Name_____

Names of course(s) completed with this teacher_____

(Circle one) Is this letter of recommendation for a college application or an employment application? If you are applying to college, what is your intended major?_____

If you are applying for a job, what position are you applying for?_____

What was your favorite or most meaningful assignment or project you completed for this teacher?

What personal contributions did you make to this class? How did your presence make a difference in this class?

What was your biggest challenge in this class and how did you address it?

Was there any contact with this teacher outside of the class? (For example, sports, clubs, community service, fine arts performances, etc.)

How will your experience in this class help you in the future?

What are 2 or 3 words that capture you as a person outside of this class?

Is there any additional information about you in this class that you would like a teacher to highlight in a letter?

The Brag Sheet for Counselor Letters of Recommendation

This is required for a counselor letter of recommendation and should be completed soon after your Junior Conference .

- 1. Log into your Schoollinks account through Classlink**
- 2. The Brag Sheet can be found in the Dashboard To Do List**
- 3. Expand the Recommendation Letter Brag Sheet and select "Go To Feature"**
- 4. It can also be accessed directly from the College Application Dashboard by selecting "Colleges" on the left side of the screen, then selecting "College Applications" from the top, then selecting "complete brag sheet" under the Recommendation Tracker.**
- 5. Complete the form and click submit.**

How to Complete Recommendation Letter Brag Sheet [student guide]

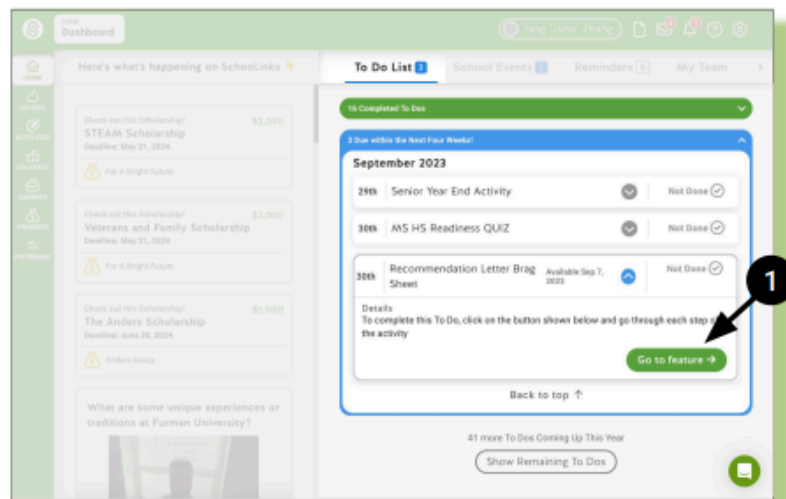


This step-by-step guide will show students the two locations they can access and complete the recommendation letter brag sheet.

The Brag Sheet can be found in the Dashboard To Do List

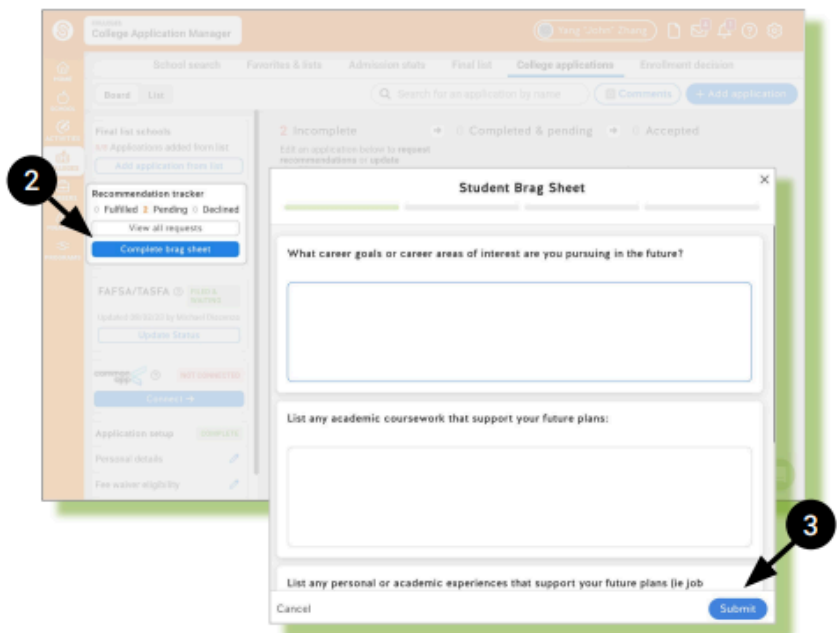
- 1 Locate and expand the Recommendation Letter Brag Sheet task and select **Go to Feature**

This will redirect you to the college application manager where you can complete and submit your brag sheet.



The Brag Sheet can also be accessed directly from the College Applications Dashboard

- 1 Select **College Applications** from the Colleges Module in the side navigation panel
- 2 Click **Complete brag sheet** under the Recommendation tracker section
- 2 Complete the form and click **Submit**



PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Financial Need Colleges define financial need as the difference between what the family can afford to pay toward college and what the college charges for tuition, room, and board per year. Colleges that offer students a financial aid package that covers 100% of that difference “meet full need”. Many private colleges that have high “price tags” also have large endowments and financial aid budgets, and have a long history of meeting students’ financial need, but even many well-endowed schools now leave a “gap” between the financial need and their aid package.

Qualified Students How do students qualify for financial aid? The student’s parents must complete a needs analysis form in order for the student to be considered for need-based financial aid. Many colleges require only the FAFSA, though some ask for the CSS PROFILE or for their own form. Students and parents often assume that they won’t qualify for financial aid, and so they don’t complete the forms, but that may be a costly and erroneous assumption.

Financial Aid Process The process of applying for college financial aid has changed somewhat in recent years but the basic procedure remains much the same. It’s very important to understand that the financial aid timeline parallels the admission process, and that parents need to be completing financial aid forms when their students are completing college applications. Many colleges require only the FAFSA, which can be accessed at www.fafsa.gov.

The colleges that require the CSS PROFILE are listed on the College Board website and you can find this information on individual college websites as well. The FAFSA may be filed any time after October 1 of the year prior to the year that the student plans to enter college, and the form asks questions based on prior year’s income figures. The CSS PROFILE registration packet may be completed in the early fall, but will require later completion of its financial aid application, customized for each college that uses the CSS PROFILE.

What is the purpose of the FAFSA or Profile? The needs analysis forms, whether FAFSA or CSS PROFILE, are designed to show college financial aid administrators how much your family can reasonably be expected to contribute toward your student’s college expenses. The forms ask detailed questions about your financial resources and obligations. Based on the information you provide, documented by verification of your tax returns, your family income and financial net worth are determined, and a federally-mandated formula is used to figure your expected family contribution. The FAFSA is recommended for most students entering college and qualifies students for:

Federal Pell Grants
Federal Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants
Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans
Federal Perkins Loans
Federal Work-Study
Title VII and Public Health Act Programs
Institutional and Private Grants/Scholarships

To complete the FAFSA:

Go to www.fafsa.gov and create an account.

Use your previous year's taxes to answer the questions. The FAFSA will answer questions such as marital status, student dependency status, parents and student finances. All of this information will help the FAFSA calculate your EFC or Expected Family Contribution.

Expected Family Contribution This figure will be a specific dollar amount, not a percentage of costs, and should be the same, regardless of college. Different colleges may calculate home equity, minimum student contribution, and other figures that affect the family contribution in different ways, but the expected family contribution should be in the same range, regardless of the college. Remember that total college costs minus family contribution will equal the financial need for each college, and that financial need for each college will vary, depending on the cost of the college. There are two different methodologies used by colleges to determine a family's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The Federal Methodology (FM) is determined by Congress. It is a formula that determines your eligibility for Federal funds based on income earned during the "base year" and assets reported at time of filing the financial aid forms. Most of the more expensive and more competitive colleges use some form of an Institutional Methodology (IM) to determine how they will distribute their own monies. It expands on the Federal formula by looking at home equity, extraordinary medical expenses, secondary school tuition, and depreciation on rental property.

Family Contribution Example If your expected family contribution is \$4000, you will be expected to pay that amount regardless of the "sticker price" of the college. If your student is considering a college that costs \$4000 or less, you won't qualify for financial aid from that college, for your expected family contribution will cover that college's costs. If your student is considering a college that costs \$14,000, you may receive a financial aid package that totals \$10,000 in grants, loans, and work-study.

If you can't make the expected family contribution, parents can borrow money on a parent PLUS loan to supplement or replace some of the family contribution, or to fill the "gap" left between their financial need and the aid package at some colleges. Families who can afford the expected family contribution but who choose not to spend that money toward their student's college expenses will find little sympathy from college financial aid offices. The financial aid process determines ability, not willingness to pay college costs.

With the above explanation in mind therefore, your family may have an EFC of \$4000 from your STATE U. but an EFC of \$12,000 for a more expensive PRIVATE college. If your student applies to a college where total costs are under \$4000 the only aid received would be an unsubsidized Stafford Loan. On the other hand, a private college costing \$30,000 may offer an aid package of \$18,000 comprising \$4825 of student loans and work-study (self-help) and \$13,175 of college grant and scholarship (gift) aid. As far as the private college is concerned, that package would represent 100% of the need met! Keep in mind too, that how much your student is awarded in gift aid depends immensely on the academic desirability of the student.

Important to File The number one error in the financial aid process is failing to complete the FAFSA or CSS PROFILE, the needs analysis forms required to consider a student for financial aid. Even if you make what you consider to be comfortable income and you're convinced that you won't qualify for need-based financial aid, there are several reasons to complete the forms.

“Comfortable income” is a relative term, and the experience of your neighbor or colleague who didn't qualify last year may not be valid for your situation. Students who don't qualify for financial aid at one college may very well qualify at another college that costs more. Even if you don't qualify, the figures you provide on the FAFSA or CSS PROFILE can be used to apply for loans, need-based or not, through the college, local banks, the state or the federal government.

Always file for financial aid by completing the FAFSA and CSS PROFILE by the college deadline as soon as possible after October 1st of the student's senior year. Even if you do not qualify for “need based” aid because your income is too high, it may open up other opportunities, and circumstances may change in subsequent years. The more competitive colleges that have the money will not likely give you any in later years when another child enters college, if you did not apply for financial aid in your child's freshman year. Unfair but true. If your family's financial situation has changed, it may affect your financial eligibility. If there are significant changes, you should contact the college financial aid office directly.

The CSS Profile is required by some schools in addition to the FAFSA. The CSS Profile is a service provided through the College Board to help determine financial need. This service is often used to provide private institutional aid and grants. You can find the profile at [CSS Profile](#) There is a fee to file the CSS Profile.

TAP is the New York State Tuition Assistance Program. TAP is grant money given to families who qualify based upon a specific income basis. Students must fill out a TAP application and will be notified if they receive any aid. Information on TAP can be found at www.hesc.ny.gov.

ADMISSION TIPS

- Be true to yourself – establish values that are of importance to you early in the process.
- Submit applications for both admissions and financial assistance by the stated deadlines. Keep copies because items get lost in the mail.
- Present the admissions committee with a well-written essay, which clearly shows what personal qualities you will contribute to the class.
- For students applying to the most competitive colleges, do not “over-apply” and risk not presenting thorough and compelling applications to the ones you really care about.
- Include descriptions of unique experiences and involvements as part of your essay.
- Be well prepared for your audition or portfolio review.
- To receive the application immediately, go to the college’s website. Make a carefully planned and scheduled campus visit when the college is in session.
- Research schools, visit if possible, talk with current students, sit in on a class and speak to faculty.
- Senior year performance has become increasingly important to admission committees, as this reflects your most recent effort. Do well senior year!
- Understand what you are looking for in a college before looking at what colleges want from you.
- Do not be shy on your applications and your essay. Tell them what makes you special. Talk about your accomplishments.
- Your college research process should result in submitting approximately 8-10 applications – include safety, target and reach schools.
- Be cautious about rushing into binding Early Decision plans. Students should apply Early Decision only if the financial cost is affordable.
- Make sure you know the “real costs” before you make a decision to attend or not attend a college. Get a financial aid package from all the schools in which you have an interest.
- Concentrate on “fit” rather than simply searching for the best deal. If you get a great deal at a place that’s a bad fit, what have you really accomplished?
- Choose an appropriate email address for correspondence with colleges.
- Colleges may search Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, etc. Make sure privacy settings are set appropriately and remember that pictures can last a lifetime!

Notes:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.