HOW TO SUBMIT COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

Please **read carefully** through this sheet. For each application you plan to submit, you should also pay close attention to the specific instructions provided by the college.

Register for the Common Application
Go to http://www.commonapp.org/.

Think of the Common App website as the way to access the application forms for the various colleges on your list. You will want to complete the Common App for any colleges that accept it, but be aware that some schools do not accept Common App.

- Set up a user name and password.
- Set up an application for each of the schools on your list in the *My Colleges* tab. To add schools to the *My Colleges* tab search for and add schools using the *College Search* tab.
- Verify each college's early and regular application deadlines. Note that some institutions have a deadline for supplemental materials (such as an arts or athletic supplement) that is **earlier** than the deadline for the full application.
- Read through other Common App instructions carefully to get an idea of how the online process works. There are helpful sections about each element of the application.
- If relevant: Research application procedures for colleges not accepting the Common App. Many colleges accept and use the Common App, but many others do not. If you're applying to a school that does not accept the Common App, spend some time on the college's website to be sure you understand the process. Talk with your counselor if you're not sure what to do.

Complete the Common Application or other online or paper applications
This is the heart of the process and will take some time.

- Complete the general information.
- Write the required essays. Plan out the topic and content for each, write rough drafts, and leave yourself plenty of time to edit and proofread them. You will want to write several drafts of each essay, and should consider showing them to two adults to get some feedback. Be careful, however, that your voice comes through. This essay should be written from your teenage perspective, and too much editing by adults can take away the authenticity of your writing. Good grammar and careful proofreading are important, but make sure your thoughts and viewpoint still come through. Use the

essays to write honestly about yourself: your personality traits, people or things that are important to you, the experiences that have shaped who you are.

- Attach a resume if you feel it provides additional information that is relevant to your application.
- Be sure to attach or send separately any art, music or other supplements as specified by the college.
- Carefully proof-read your full application.
- Make sure to submit your applications prior to all deadlines. Do **not** wait until the last minute to hit "send." Don't let your application miss the deadline because of a power outage, a computer freeze, or some other catastrophe. These deadlines are important, and there's no reason to cut it close.
- Once you submit applications, colleges will e-mail you to confirm receipt of your application. They will include directions on how to log in to a student portal where you can check your application status. Save your username and passwords for each college portal. You will want to check your portal to make sure all of your application materials (application, recommendation letters, transcripts…) have been received. It is students' responsibility to make sure all of their materials are received.

Submit your transcript
- Review your transcript to make sure it is accurate. If there are any errors, notify your counselor.
- E-mail your counselor with the list of schools where you want your transcript sent. Counselors require **48-hours notice** to submit transcripts. As you add new schools to your list, make sure you notify your counselors so they know to send your transcript.

Submit your test scores
Submit SAT, ACT, SAT Subject test scores, and/or AP Exam scores to each college on your list. It is the student's responsibility to send their test scores to college. Counselors **do not** send test scores.

To send SAT scores:
- Go to https://www.collegeboard.org/ and login to your account using your username and password. Click on the "SAT" link and then on the "Send Score Reports to Colleges" link. If you used a fee waiver to pay for the SAT exam, there is no fee to send your scores. You may send them to an unlimited number of colleges.
- Subject Test scores and AP Exam scores are also sent through https://www.collegeboard.org/. Only a small number of schools require Subject Test scores. No schools require AP Exam scores. Unless required, only submit strong scores that will enhance your application. If unsure whether to send or not, see your counselor.

To send ACT scores:
- Go to http://www.act.org/. Click on "Sign In," and then click on "US ACT Testing and Scores." Enter your User Id and Password to sign in. Then click on "Send Your Scores"

and follow the links provided. If you used a fee waiver to sit for the ACT exam, you may send scores to up to 20 colleges for free.

Special considerations
You may need to follow special instructions if applying for programs in art, music, or theater, which might require an audition or a portfolio. If you plan to play sports in college, you may need to visit the NCAA Eligibility Center website. Talk to your counselor if you have questions.

Letters of recommendation
Many colleges require two letters of recommendation from academic teachers, but will accept an extra, third letter from a non-academic source (a coach, employer, or other adult who knows you well). We recommend you ask junior year teachers who taught you in core subject areas (Math, Science, English and Social Studies).
- Meet with two teachers and ask them if they will write a letter for you. Discuss how they plan to submit your letters, either electronically or by hard copy through the mail.
- Make sure teachers are aware of the deadline for each school on your list.
- If teachers wish to submit electronically, students will need to provide their teachers' names and e-mail addresess when they complete their applications. Teachers will then receive an electronic link to upload their letters.
- If teachers are sending letters by mail, students must provide them with the address for the admissions office of every school they are applying to and want letters sent.

Application fees
Be aware that many colleges charge application fees, usually ranging from $35 to $100. See your counselor for a fee waiver.

Financial Aid
Like test score submissions, financial aid is an element of the college application that is handled separately. The best place to start when applying for financial aid is the Financial Aid website for each college you're interested in. Together with your parent/guardian, you will fill out a form called the "FAFSA" and other forms such as "PROFILE" and/or specific college and state aid forms. Talk to your counselor if you need assistance, review the STEM website for Financial Aid information, and watch for the school district's evening presentation on financial aid.

A Final Comment
Each year, there are some glitches in this process – students, counselors and admissions officers are all human, and mistakes will happen. But counselors and admissions officers are used to sorting through problems. Your obligation as the student is to submit **your** materials, **complete and on time,** and then verify that your entire application (including test scores, recommendation letters and transcripts) has been received. If you have any questions, stop in to see your counselor. We're here to help!