



# ABCs of College Admissions

Your quick guide for  
post-secondary planning

# Applying to Colleges/Universities...

- Is a complicated process that takes:
  - Planning
  - Patience
  - Deadlines
  - Working with many different people

**Student directed**

# Agenda

- What colleges are looking for
- Application types
- SAT/ACT
- Choosing schools
- Senior Packet
- Career Center



# What colleges are looking for

1. Leadership
2. A willingness to take risks
3. Initiative
4. A sense of social responsibility
5. A commitment to service
6. Special talents and abilities

*(Collegeboard, 2016)*

# What your application should show

- Interesting extracurricular activities
- Challenging summer jobs and activities
- Excellent college essays
- Honest and detailed letters of recommendation
- Challenging classes attempted

# How to Apply?

There is no one specific way to apply to colleges/universities; many schools use different application types

- Common Application
- Coalition Application
- Institutional Applications

# Common Application

[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

- More than 700 colleges and universities to apply to
- One centered place to complete applications
- Schools can upload information
- Recommenders can input their recommendations on to the website

THE COMMON  
APPLICATION

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# Coalition Application

[www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org)

- Applications are more holistic
- Students can create accounts starting in the 9th grade
  - “Lockers” where students building their portfolios
- Less universities
- Recommenders can upload their recommendations on to the website



# Institutional Applications

- These vary based on the institution of application
  - Be sure to:
    - Look at all requirements necessary for each university/college
    - GPA
    - SAT/ACT Scores
    - Resume
    - Cost of application (waivers if applicable)
    - Letters of recommendation
    - Personal Statements and essays
    - Portfolios (if applicable)

# Registering for the SATs/ACTs

- A breakdown of how students perform with standardized testing
  - Some universities are moving away from this practice and don't require these
- Register for the SATs through [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- Register for ACTs through [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)
- Costs may vary based on exam
  - SAT \$46 (with essay \$60)
  - ACT \$46 (with essay \$62.50)

# SAT vs ACT

## SAT

- Tests in areas of critical reading and math
- More sections with shorter time periods
- Sections alternate between subjects
- More emphasis on vocabulary
- Math covers algebra, geometry, and algebra 2
- Score given in sections and as a composite

## ACT

- Less sections but longer time periods
- Includes a science section in addition to math, and reading
- Less vocabulary emphasis
- Math covers up through trigonometry
- Score given in sections and as a composite



# Choosing your schools

- Some factors to consider:
  - GPA
  - Course history
  - SAT/ACT scores
  - Intended major
  - Location
  - Size of school/classes
  - 4 year graduation rate and 1<sup>st</sup> year retention rate
  - Financial aid package (average package, % need met)
  - Post college graduation placement (jobs, grad school admissions)

# Ranking

When building a list of schools for your child to apply to consider:

- **Reach school:** Dream school
- **Target school:** The potential perfect fit
- **Safety school:** Students qualifications exceed the average



# Senior Packet

Student To-Do: **\*Senior Packets are due: 15 days prior to apply applications being due\***

1. Self-Assessment Form
2. Teacher Feedback Form
3. Transcript Request Form

Parent To-Do:

1. Parent Consent for Transcript Release
2. Parent Information Form

# Transcript Package

Each transcript package will include:

- Official transcript
- Edison High School Profile and Fairfax County Public School Profile
- Secondary School Report from Counselor
- Mid-year grades will be sent in February - no additional requests are needed
- Final senior grades will be sent in June based on senior survey answers - no additional requests are needed

# Searching for options

## Family Connections

- Comprehensive K-12 college and career readiness platform
- Enables self-discovery
- Career exploration
- Academic planning
- College preparation



## BigFuture

- Free tool through collegeboard.org to build knowledge on colleges and universities
- Enables university breakdowns
- Covers college requirements
- Information on college preparation
- Career exploration





# Career Center

- Provides students with a location to learn more about colleges
- Help finding different career paths, programs, and connections
- Scholarships and resources
- College Representative visits
- College/University field trips
- On-site admissions
- Connection to recruiters and other educational options

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# Questions?

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