



Ward Melville High School's

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Guide To Post Secondary Planning



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2013-2014

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DEPARTMENT MESSAGE

How does one start and complete the task of applying to and selecting a college? As we look to find answers to this college-related question, the Ward Melville School Counseling Department Staff has compiled the following handbook for juniors, seniors and their parents. Written with the intent of minimizing the pressure associated with the college application process, this “How To” manual strives to guide students and families through an exciting educational milestone.

While embarking on the college selection process, it is important to remember that the college counseling program at Ward Melville is an extension of our educational program. We strongly believe that students should carry the responsibility for as much of the process as possible because it is the student who is the candidate. Collecting information, soliciting recommendations, and organizing components of the application are all good learning experiences for college-bound students.

The School Counseling Office is an office that:

- Helps create a college list for each student
- Hosts admissions representatives from more than 80 colleges and universities
- Provides pertinent information regarding application responsibilities
- Holds individual meetings with students from the second semester of their junior year through their senior year
- Offers support and advocacy
- Presents a college informational evening in junior year
- Supports all post-secondary planning such as military options, employment and technical training schools

Counselors remain alert to the issues and trends facing our students, provide clarity about the pressures of the post-secondary planning and the college process, and support each student in his or her college search. We are confident that all students will come through the process feeling that they have succeeded and have a range of options. We feel most fortunate to work with you and your student during this very exciting period.

Ward Melville Guidance Department
Linda Bergson- Coordinating Chairperson

Erin Anziano
John Diehl
Allison Dinkel
Steve Levenson
James Sheridan

Keri LoGiudice
Christine Mirabella
Walter Olsen
Jennifer Sheppard

COLLEGE SEARCH

Resources for Your Search

College Representatives

Ward Melville hosts more than 80 college representatives throughout the fall. Interested seniors are encouraged to attend these informational meetings. A list of visiting colleges can be found on Naviance and on the bulletin board outside the counseling office. You will need to register on Naviance and get a permission slip from the School Counseling Office to attend. You may miss a class only with prior teacher approval.

College Visits

One way to find out if a college is right for you is to visit. You are encouraged to visit as many colleges as possible. You should contact each school in advance of your visit. Many campuses have campus tours and information sessions for prospective students. E-mailing Ward Melville alums at the various colleges may also be helpful. You may be excused from classes for a total of five visits per school year if you bring valid proof from the college/university to the attendance office.

Web sites

www.collegeboard.com	This is the home page of The College Board, which contains a college search engine, PSAT, SAT subject test and AP test information as well as financial aid and test prep information
www.commonapp.org	This is the Common Application website where students may apply to over 500 colleges and universities using this application.
www.collegenet.com	Database of colleges, scholarships, and other resources
www.collegeview.com	Pictures and multimedia presentations from more than 3,300 college campuses
www.suny.edu	State University of New York campus information
www.fastweb.com	College information from a student's perspective including computerized application and financial aid information
www.campustours.com	Virtual campus tours
www.collegeprowler.com	Books about individual schools written by students
www.actstudent.org	This is the home page for ACT registration and report sending.

Naviance Family Connection

<http://connection.naviance.com/universityprep>

Parents and students are assigned their own personal password-protected account in their freshman or sophomore year. After the initial visit to Naviance, you can personalize your password. Naviance gives you the ability to see individualized displays of academic information and test scores. You can send and receive e-mails from the school counselor, as well as get automatic e-mail reminders twenty four hours ahead of time for colleges visiting Ward Melville. You can search colleges and begin to create a list of schools you would like to explore more in depth. Naviance also has an extensive test preparation function for the SAT/ACT offering simulated full length tests.

My Profile

Lists personal information, address, phone, e-mail, parent information, test scores, etc. Check for accuracy.

My Checklist

Allows you the opportunity to select areas of interest and list your talents and accomplishments.

My College

My College can help you start developing a list of prospective colleges. This list can be modified at any time as the student adds and subtracts schools he or she is interested in applying to.

College Search

Here you can conduct extensive searches. Start broadly by limiting preferences to a few important factors (e.g., size, location, and selectivity, major or sporting interest). Later you can specify major, sport, choral group, and study abroad. The more criteria you add, the fewer the matches.

College Look Up

Furnishes a basic profile of the college, including a link to its homepage on the Web. Enter the entire name of the college and then double click the blue hyper-link which appears on the next screen. (If you type "Whit" for example, you'll get a list showing Whittier, Whitman and Whitworth, among others).

College Compare

Here you pick two or more colleges and Naviance produces a table of data based on recent Ward Melville applicants to the college you selected.

Analysis

A great feature of the Naviance program can be found in the actual college site. If you click on the Analysis tab, you will get a scatter gram that will give you a visual representation of the Ward Melville college results including SAT and GPA data. Under the Analysis tab are two very helpful additional links: Statistics, and Overlaps.

COLLEGE VISIT

Five college visits may be made any time during the junior or senior year and are considered exemptions to the attendance for credit policy. Early summer is a popular time for students to visit. Call the admissions office well in advance of the date you wish to visit.

The benefits of visiting colleges:

A campus visit is your opportunity to get a first-hand view of a college. A college website can only show you so much. To really get a feel for the school, you need to walk around the campus, sit in a class, eat a meal in the cafeteria, visit the dorms and see students.

Get Answers to your questions

A visit also gives you a chance to talk to students, faculty, and financial aid and admissions representatives. You can get answers to questions such as:

1. What are the average class sizes and the student/faculty ratio?
2. Are most classes taught by professors or by teaching assistants?
3. How would you rate the food?
4. Is the campus fairly diverse?
5. What's the social scene like?
6. What kinds of activities are planned on campus?
7. Is there ample space in the dorms or does there seem to be a housing crunch?
8. How many students are commuters/residents?
9. Do I feel at home here?
10. Is this what I pictured college to be?

Get Valuable Information

Pick up any official school material that you see, such as brochures and financial aid forms. Don't forget to get business cards, so that you'll have a contact person for questions on admissions or financial aid.

Student-produced material will give you a sense of what campus life is really like. Look around for newspapers and students activity calendars. Check out bulletin boards to see what internships are posted, and generally what the day-to-day energy of the place is.

Is This the Right College For You?

Ultimately, it's your decision. Listen to your gut. Do you feel comfortable walking around campus? Do you click with the students and faculty? Spending time on campus allows you to determine if a school is the right match.

Preparing for Your Visit

Plan ahead

Learn everything you can about a school. Review web sites, and catalogs for information. It is important to know some information about a college before you arrive on campus.

Call the admissions office to schedule your visit. Most schools allow you to do this online. Let them know you would like to schedule a campus tour, meet with an admissions counselor, visit a class and plan an overnight stay in the dorms, if your schedule permits. If you're interested in a club or sport, ask about attending a practice or rehearsal.

When is the best time to visit?

There is no right time to schedule a campus visit. Monday through Thursday visits are ideal since campuses are in full swing. You should check with the admissions office for a school calendar of holidays and closures so you don't arrive when the campus is deserted. You'll only get a true feel for the campus if you're there on a day when classes are in session and students are on campus.

Take photos and keep notes

You will be amazed by how much information you'll collect when you visit a college campus. You think you'll remember everything about your visit, but you'll be surprised how colleges start to merge after you've seen a few.

Before you go, think about what IS important to you

Make a list of what college characteristics are most important to you so you know what to evaluate. Do you feel overwhelmed in a large lecture hall? Check out the class size. Do you have your heart set on joining a sorority or fraternity? See what the Greek system is like on campus. Is there a particular major that you would like to pursue? Talk to current students or professors in that department.

What to wear?

Dress the part. Make sure you look presentable, especially if you plan to meet with an admissions counselor or professor.

The College Visit

What to do

Look around at a variety of dorms. Walk through the library. Observe the students. Are they doing what you'd be doing? Look at flyers and notices to get an idea of the activities on campus. The more you do and ask to do while on your campus visit, the more accurate an impression of the school you'll get.

Questions, Questions, Questions...

Think about the general and specific information you want to know about each school you visit. Try to ask the same questions at each campus and write down the answers. Then, when you get home you will have a good basis for comparison.

For the Admissions Counselor:

1. What are the admissions requirements? Is the Common Application accepted? Is there a supplement?

2. Does the school offer Early Action (EA) or Early Decision (ED) options to students? Do I need to declare a major on my application?
3. What unique programs does the school offer?
4. Do you have an honors program?
5. Are internships available? On Campus? In the community?
6. What off-campus opportunities are available?
7. Based on my academic information, do I fit within the range of your profiled students?

For the Financial Aid Counselor:

1. What is the total cost of attendance, including tuition, room and board, books, supplies, incidentals, parking?
2. When is tuition due? Is there a payment plan?
3. What types of financial aid do you offer? What percentage of aid is in the form of loans? Grants? Scholarships?
4. Is financial aid need-based, merit-based or both?
5. What is the average financial aid award?
6. When do you notify families about their financial aid award?

For the Tour Guide:

It is always good to talk to students, but the only student you may have an opportunity to talk to is the tour guide. By and large, tour guides are wonderful advocates for the college. But remember, they're not chosen because they have complaints about the school. So expect their prepared remarks to be positive. They will answer your questions honestly, but you can assume that they will also put a positive spin on their answers. Always keep your eyes and ears open and engage other students in conversation whenever possible. You may have a natural tendency to like or dislike a college based on your feeling about your guide. Try to restrain this inclination, especially when you're not impressed by your guide. He or she may not be your type of person, but that doesn't mean you won't find other folks on campus who are like you. So look around. Ask questions:

1. How does the class size feel to you?
2. What is the best thing about being a student here? The worst?
3. How do you like the food?
4. Are the dorms noisy or quiet during the week? What about the weekends?
5. Do students stay on campus for the weekends or does the campus empty out?
6. What is the social life like?
7. Can you describe the dorm rooms? The bathrooms? Security?
8. What are the sports teams like? Are there intramural teams?
9. What is the school spirit like?
10. Do you need a car to get around? A bike?
11. What is the procedure for selecting a roommate?
12. Are incoming students guaranteed housing?
13. How are faculty advisors assigned? What is their role?
14. How do you select classes? Are you guaranteed to get the classes you want or need for graduation?
15. Are classes taught by full-time professors or graduate assistants?
16. What do you like best about your experience and education here?
17. What other colleges did you apply to, and why did you choose this school?
18. If you had to do it all over again, would you still apply and attend this school?

After Your Visit

Write a thank-you note or email to the admissions counselor you met. This makes a valuable impression. Also be sure to officially log your visit with the admissions office. This is another way of demonstrating interest, necessary for applicants to do. After you finish your visit write down your feelings about the school – the first words that come to mind when you return to your car after you finished your visit. These words can translate to a summary of your experiences and help you reflect upon your visit.

SOPHOMORE CHECKLIST

- ___ 1. Register on Naviance/ Family Connection. There are directions on the district website.
- ___ 2. Consult with your guidance counselor regarding the possibility of taking the PSAT in October.
- ___ 3. Decide on your extracurricular activities, keeping in mind what most interests you and what you want to learn more about or explore.
- ___ 4. If you are interested in college athletics, keep in mind that the courses that you take must be on the NCAA Approved list for Ward Melville High School. See NCAA Eligibility Center for details.
- ___ 5. All sophomores will meet with their guidance counselor during January to discuss course selection and scheduling for their junior year.
- ___ 6. Stay on track with your courses, challenging yourself when you can and getting the best grades you possibly can. Keep reading and work on your writing skills.
- ___ 7. Explore career options by researching your areas of strength on the Career Interest Inventory taken in April of sophomore year through the Naviance program.
- ___ 8. Become a volunteer if this is of interest to you. This is one way to explore your interests and possible careers.
- ___ 9. Visit colleges near you while they are in session if at all possible.
- ___ 10. Consider taking advantage of the free SAT and ACT prep classes available through Naviance.
- ___ 11. Begin planning for summer. Think about getting experience in an area that interests you. Create a summer reading list. Ask teachers, mentors and older students for recommendations.

JUNIOR CHECKLIST

- ___ 1. Register on the Naviance/ Family Connection website. If you have not registered please see your guidance counselor.
- ___ 2. Meet with you guidance counselor during the spring semester for a college conference.
- ___ 3. Determine criteria for colleges.
- ___ 4. Participate in college admission testing programs: PSAT, SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests (if applicable), ACT, AP exams.
- ___ 5. Attend college representative meetings during lunch, study halls, or after school.
- ___ 6. Visit colleges during school vacations if at all possible
- ___ 7. Following your college conference, ask one or two teachers for a letter of recommendation. Give your teacher a completed Teacher Letter of Recommendation Information Form. Forms are available in the Guidance office.
- ___ 8. Take the SAT and the ACT with Writing at least once during the second semester of Junior year.
- ___ 9. Update your activity resume throughout the year.
- ___ 10. Focus on doing the best you can in each course.

Some Planning Dates 2013-14 School Year

September – June	Begin college research
October 18	PSAT
December 7	SAT (Speak to counselor for timeline information)
December 14	ACT (Speak to counselor for timeline information)
December 18	Financial Aid Night (optional)
December 19	Alumni Day/ACT/SAT Prep Workshop
January 23	College Planning Night speaker
January 25	SAT
March – June	Continue to research colleges
March 8	SAT
April 12	ACT
April	Register for AP exams
May 3	SAT
May 5-16	AP Testing
June 14	ACT

SENIOR CHECKLIST

- ___ 1. Be sure to update your college list on Naviance/ Family Connection. If you have not registered please see your guidance counselor.
- ___ 2. Send official scores for SAT and/or ACT to colleges.
www.collegeboard.com
www.act.org
- ___ 3. Attend meeting with college representatives in the Guidance office. Make sure that your classroom teacher signs the college visitation pass before you come. You should also visit colleges and attend college fairs or local college information sessions.
- ___ 4. Update activities resume. Keep counselor informed of all updates.
- ___ 5. College essays: Do not procrastinate. Speak to your English teacher for help editing and revising your essay.
- ___ 6. Applications: Begin with schools that have rolling admissions. Keep deadlines in mind, especially Early Decision and Early Action.
- ___ 7. Speak to your teachers about your letters of recommendations. Give your teacher a Teacher Letter of Recommendation Request Form each time you add new schools to your original list. Forms are available in the Guidance office.
- ___ 8. Submit a new Transcript Request Form to guidance each time you add a new school to Naviance. You must update your list of schools on your Naviance account each time you apply to additional schools. All forms should be submitted at least 15 school days before the college application due date.
- ___ 9. Find out which financial aid forms and/or scholarship form are required by each college and complete them in a timely fashion. Some schools require the FAFSA as well as the CSS profile.
- ___ 10. Keep your grades strong. Avoid senioritis!
- ___ 11. Check Naviance for new information and scholarship opportunities on a regular basis.
- ___ 12. Meet with your counselor if you have any questions or concerns. You are not alone!

We encourage all students to take the SAT and the ACT with writing at least once during the second semester of their junior year.

Senior Year

Responsibilities and Overall Objectives for the Senior Year

- Narrow your choices
- Meet with school counselor throughout the year
- Complete your applications on time
- Attend college representative meetings at school
- Keep a record of all communication with colleges, teachers and testing services
- Present yourself in the most positive fashion to the colleges of your choice
- Complete required forms by the end of September: senior autobiography, school report, parent statement, activity resume, two teacher evaluations
- Complete financial aid forms by February

Most universities and colleges make their applications available on their Web sites; the Common Application is available on the Internet. We encourage all students to complete their college applications online.

Plan to attend college representative visits held at Ward Melville or in the local community. Remember that the representatives who come to the Northeast are the ones most likely to read your application first and to be your advocate on their admission committee. Therefore, it is to your advantage to get to know these representatives as well as possible. A list of visiting colleges can be found in Naviance, as well as on the bulletin board outside of the Counseling Office. If you plan to visit colleges during the fall, try to make your visits coincide with days when Ward Melville is not in session.

Avoid senioritis. Colleges always predicate acceptance upon satisfactory completion of the senior year. Students are urged to consult with their counselor about any substantial changes in senior year courses or grades. If a student's academic situation changes at any time during the senior year, colleges will see it on the mid-year transcript that is sent to every college to which a student has applied. **Colleges also reserve the right to reverse an admission decision if your final transcript shows any negative trends.**

Communications with Colleges

Parents are encouraged to support students but to refrain from contacting admissions offices except under unusual circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to communicate directly with admission offices to make their own tour and interview appointments, to request information, and to check on the status of their files.

It is incumbent upon each student to complete his or her senior year with the same (or better) commitment to their studies and responsibilities as in past years. Each student's academic transcript will be reported to colleges at the following times during the senior year:

- First Quarter for EA/ED candidates by student request only
- Mid-year
- Third quarter for senior on wait list by student request only
- End of senior year

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION

Here are some practical suggestions to assist you in the college application process. The counseling office is available to provide you with advice and answers to questions to make this a positive experience. You can contact us at any time.

- Register early for SATs and ACTs.
- Fill out your test applications for SATs and ACTs the same way every time. For example, inserting a middle initial in the second application for a test can confuse the computers and make it difficult to recover your scores.
- Make copies of everything you send colleges, financial aid offices, ETS (the testing arm of the College Board), and ACT.
- Read and act on school announcements about college visits, deadlines, and meetings
- Be visible in the counseling office. The better we get to know you, the better the counselor can represent you to the college.
- Make appointments for college interviews and tours early. This is especially true if you are visiting in the Northeast. A two to three-month lead time is not unusual.
- Missing school for college visits and interviews is not advised, but sometimes cannot be avoided. Be sure that you complete all assignments and meet all school deadlines despite any interruptions caused by the college admission process. You are allowed 5 college visits in the attendance for credit policy with documentation from the campus.
- Call or e-mail admissions offices in February (or by December 1 for ED/EA/EASC) to make sure your college files are complete.
- Remember, there are several colleges at which you will be very happy. Try to narrow your list to six to eight colleges. Be sure that you would enjoy attending each and every one of the schools on your list.

Application Options

Early Action

A process whereby a student can submit an application by November 1 (or other designated date) and receive a decision by mid-December. The Early Action student, if accepted, is not bound to enroll. Students are not required to notify the college of their enrollment decision until May 1. They can also apply to other colleges Early Action or Early Decision as well.

Early Action Single Choice

This is an early application process used by a few Ivy League universities, where students typically apply by mid-November and are notified by mid-December. Students are not required to notify the college of their enrollment decision until May 1. Under the Early Action single choice policy, students are **not** allowed to apply to other colleges under Early Decision or Early Acton programs. They can, however, apply to other colleges through regular decision programs. Read the fine print on the college application for specific rules regarding this option. There may be exceptions to this rule.

Early Decision

This is a process that carries a **binding** commitment to enroll, if accepted, to the college. Students, parents and the guidance counselor must sign that, if admitted, the student will attend the college/university regardless of the financial aid award. Colleges will share Early Decision lists, so all other applications must be withdrawn. Typically, students not admitted under Early Decision are reconsidered with the regular decision candidates. In some cases, students are denied admission in the Early Decision round. Students and parents are usually not informed of financial aid prior to admission. A small number of colleges have a second round of this process called Early Decision 2. This deadline is usually around January 15 with notification one month later.

Regular Decision

This is the most common application process in this country. Students usually apply to colleges between January 1 and January 15, are notified of the decision by April 1, and then must let the college know whether they will matriculate by May 1.

Early Entrance

Acceptance and matriculation of a student either before completion of all high school course work or before completion of four years of high school.

Candidates Reply Date

May 1 is the date all colleges require an admitted student to commit to attending their school. This commitment usually requires an enrollment deposit. Students can only commit to one school.

Deferral

Students who have applied under an EA or ED admissions plan are moved to the college's regular decision applicant pool or deferred. Deferred students are no longer bound by any contract limiting their applications to one school and can now apply to other colleges.

Applying to International Schools

Over the past ten years, the United Kingdom and Europe have become popular destinations for college-bound Americans. You will probably find that most colleges require a high school diploma, a minimum of 600 on each of the Critical Reading and Math sections of the SAT, and 2 or 3 SAT subject tests with a minimum of 600 on each.

Oxford, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics are not very realistic choices for American students, as their programs are not chronologically in synchrony with ours. Better choices are the Scottish colleges. The University of St. Andrews has the longest history of recruiting Americans and has by far the highest proportion in its undergraduate population. The Universities of Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Stirling are other prominent names.

On the continent, the primary option is the network of American-style institutions such as the American Universities in Paris and Rome. There is a newer one in Bremen, Germany, with ties to Rice University in the U.S. and several places in Switzerland. Webster University in St. Louis has a number of campuses abroad. Most of these institutions are small, with about 1,000 students.

Web sites

www.studyuk.hobsons.com	General Information
www.britishcouncil.org/usa-education-undergraduate-degree.htm	Specific application requirements for colleges in the UK
http://www.ucas.com/	The British national common application Web site
www.studyintheuk.org	Links to colleges in the UK as well as application tips
http://educationguardian.co.uk/universityguide	University rankings in the UK

Teacher Recommendation

By following these helpful hints, you ensure that you get the strongest recommendation possible for the college to which you have applied:

- Ask two teachers for a recommendation. You should select teachers from two different disciplines, (i.e., one from English and one from Math). Ask in the spring of your junior year if they would be interested in writing a recommendation for you.
- Always ask the teacher in person, and then via e-mail on Naviance, to write your recommendation.
- In the fall of senior year, provide the teacher with the Teacher Letter of Recommendation Request Form, filled out completely. Be sure to fill out each column informing the teacher of whether the school is a Common Application school, a Non-Common Application school, On-Site, or a school that does not accept electronic submissions. In that case, you will need to supply each teacher with a stamped envelope addressed to the Undergraduate Office of Admissions to that school. You should try to give your teacher all the envelopes and necessary forms at the same time.
- It is helpful to teachers if you provide them examples of and reasons why you liked their class. The guidance office has a form that will help you with this.
- If you are participating in the On-Site Admissions program for a particular school, the teacher will send just that letter in an envelope to the Guidance Office. You should provide the teacher with an envelope addressed to Ward Melville High School Guidance Office for that school.

At the end of the college process, write a thank-you note to all the teachers who wrote recommendations for you.

Sample Letter to Teacher Agreeing to Write Letter of Recommendation

October 15, 2014

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you so much for taking the time to write a letter of recommendation for me. I have listed below the type of application (Common Application, etc) and the deadline date the recommendation for each school. I have included stamped and addressed envelopes for the schools that don't accept electronic submissions.

<u>College</u>	<u>Type of Application</u>	<u>Postmarked Date</u>
Boston University	Common Application	January 1
Emory University	Common Application	January 15
George Washing University	Common Application	January 10
Hofstra University	Common Application	December 1
Northeastern University	Common Application	January 15
Northwestern University	Common Application	January 1
Skidmore College	Common Application	January 15
University of Arizona*	None required	January 1
University of Maryland	Specific to School	December 1
University of Massachusetts	Common Application	January 15
University of Virginia	U.S. mail option	January 2
Vanderbilt University	Common Application	January 3
Washington University	Common Application	January 15
Wheaton University	Common Application	January 15

*Since University of Arizona is such a large school, it does not have a specific recommendation form.

**For the Common Application, the teacher recommendation form is online. I will fill out the required information and the link will be e-mailed to you. Thanks again!

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

THE COLLEGE ESSAY

Know Yourself, Be Yourself

Most applications will require an essay. Many colleges try to work their essay questions in such a manner as to elicit personal and genuine responses from you that are largely autobiographical. Your main task is to write an essay that will emphasize your unique qualities. Original thinking and expression may be two of these qualities. Give your essay a good title and be sure you include your name, Social Security number or applicant ID number on all pages of your essay.

You might discuss your character, values, things you are enthusiastic about, as well as any special talent or quality you possess. Creating a theme for your essay such as risk-taking, intellectual independence, or love of the outdoors often brings up interesting examples of your life to support your chosen theme. Specific incidents to illustrate general observations are considered essential.

Be as honest and introspective as possible. Take this opportunity to tell the admissions officer things about yourself that cannot be learned from any other part of the application you submit. If there are any inconsistencies in your academic, athletic or creative record, you can use this space to explain them.

Your Soliloquy: Writing Your College Essay

Practical Considerations

- Write more than one draft.
- Check for misspellings and have it proof read (do not rely on spell check).
- Limit it to one or two pages. Remember, concise is nice.
- Make sure you put your name and Social Security number or application ID# on it.
- Check if you can use the same essay for different colleges and universities.
- Remember to answer the question asked.

Topics

- Avoid over-used, trendy, or hot topics.
- Write about what you know...Be yourself. Trust yourself!
- Keep the topic simple – choose one point, idea or situation.
- Make sure it reflects who you are *and* what you know.
- Write about what you have learned, what you have observed, and how you have changed.
- Highlight an accomplishment of which you are proud.

Writing Tips

- *Have fun!*
- Consider your audience (bleary-eyed admission counselors).
- Avoid slang and jargon.
- Have a good opening line.
- Ask for advice, but write it yourself.
- Give yourself time – start it over the summer.
- Be clear and to the point.
- Your choice of topic does not matter nearly as much as your approach.
- Avoid politics, privilege, sex and religion.
- Write from the heart.
- Don't try to tackle too much in the essay. Stick to one experience, event or activity. You'll be surprised at how much you can reveal.
- Revise and edit, edit and revise; grammar and mechanics do matter.
- Never miss a deadline.
- If you write an essay on the Common Application, be sure not to mention an individual school's name.

The Bottom Line

Your admissions decision may not hinge on a good or bad essay, but it can help. There are very few places in the application where your voice is heard directly – this is one of them. Make your voice shine!

Actual Questions from Colleges and Universities

1. Describe an event in your life that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
2. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, or risk that you have taken and its impact on you.

3. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you.
4. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you and describe that influence.
5. Describe a character in fiction, an historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you and explain that influence.
6. Select your own topic and develop it in depth with specific evidence.

Essay Examples

The following essay examples, presented in their original forms, impressed admission directors and deans. The topics, styles, and examples used vary, but the ability to learn more about the student behind the words does not.

Essay Sample #1

When I'm working the express lane at Shoprite, it really irritates me when someone brings more than ten items to my register. Normally, I approach the situation pragmatically; if the customer has five screaming kids, I let it go. If the customer is over seventy, I let it go.

And then there is the rare occasion when I get the incorrigible, stubborn, angry customer who will give anything to get his 42 items across the barren lands of registers 1, 2, 3 and 4, the coveted express lanes. One busy morning in mid-August, an older yet physically able man arrived at my register, and proceeded to unload his thirty-two items on the conveyor belt, completely ignoring the "TEN ITEMS OR LESS" sign hanging directly in front of his face.

I switched to my authoritative, time to take care of business mode. "Sir," I proclaimed as I pointed to the sign above, "ten items or less". He stopped unloading his cart and glared at me.

"Sir," I asserted with a more appealing tone, "ten items or less." He looked around in desperation, and then he spoke to me.

"What the hell is this – the *whites only* lane?"

As one of the only Caucasian cashiers at Shoprite, I didn't really want anybody yelling that I was a segregationist, because quite frankly, that is how rumors start. I was rather proud of my witty response.

"No sir, this would be the 'express' lane."

Advantage Simpson. I was just waiting for him to surrender and go to a regular register. But no. This guy was flat out stubborn. He opted to stay with the segregationist strategy.

"What the hell is this Mississippi 1957?" he inquired.

Touche'. For the umpteenth consecutive time, idealism was squashed by the heavy food of compromise. It was not worth losing a customer and annoying the other customers in line by wasting my time arguing. Besides, I felt bad for the old man. For some reason, I felt guilty. I took his order, gave him his change, and told him to have a good day. He nodded politely and left.

When all was finished, the next woman in line gave me the international sign for "that guy was crazy" and told me that I should have thrown him out of the store. If I was 100% idealistic, I would have.

None of us is totally idealistic. None of us live in an ideal world. If I didn't, I wouldn't study SAT's. I wouldn't do any math or science homework. My friends and I would sit around and talk European history. We would joke about Catherine the Great. I could be a low-level beat writer covering the Knicks for the New York Post and still afford a BMW convertible. I could play a tri gig at the Village Vanguard without being a piano prodigy. I would go to high school, and I would do 100% of my work for my own intellectual pleasure and one-third of it wouldn't be to appease my parents and college admissions people. There would be no more multiple choice questions on history exams, just analytical and creative essays. I would have a Jacuzzi in the center of my bedroom. There would be bubbles.

I see the man from Shoprite from time to time around town. He doesn't compromise. He doesn't pick his battles. He fights them all.

I'm not an old man with no patience for compromise. I'm seventeen. I conform to the extent I must.

And I move on. And I learn. And I advance. And I allow the compromises to build my character. I'll save the idealism for later.

Essay Sample #2

This year my Wednesday schedule never changes, but it has changed me.

8:11 AM

As I walk towards the York Avenue entrance of the Memorial Sloan and Kettering Cancer Center, I catch a glimpse of myself wearing my white lab-coat in the reflection of the glass windows. I still marvel at the fact that I am even here, interning in a renowned hospital and sharing space with doctors who are at the forefront of oncology. As I walk the halls, strangers smile and not at me with a sense of respect and recognition; I never thought that I would be at the receiving end of this kind of attention.

4:12 PM

Walking towards the subway, I think about how today's experiences at the cancer center have paralleled my own trials at another hospital four years ago. I felt the effects and recognized the impact from a personal perspective when my father lost his own battle with lymphoma. Throughout the months that he lived in the hospital, my family formed close bonds with those involved in his care – the people who made extra efforts to ease our grief and anguish. Thinking back on those nights when the nurses would search endlessly for that extra blanket or soothe me with a reassuring hug, I realize that my role has been reversed. Now it is my time to provide that strength and compassion for someone else.

5:47 PM

Although my father will never share the tangible signs of my progress on the way to becoming a doctor, like the day I wear my first stethoscope, I firmly believe that he is directly responsible for my passionate, dedicated, and determined character. Week after week, he is a part of every stepping-stone laid before me, and as I reflect about the events of the day, I think that he would be proud of the footprint I have made this time. "When I am through, maybe we will meet again further down the river and share what we both discovered; and revel in the view."

Essay Sample #3

Nerds. They all wear pocket protectors and grease their hair back, right? Nerds go straight home after school to do all of their homework, and then stay in at night to watch every episode of Star Trek they can get their greasy little hands on. Nerds don't socialize with anyone but their own kind, much like the Untouchables of Hindu society. Isn't that the way things are? Well, I'm here to argue that they aren't. I believe it is my duty to testify that pocket protectors are obsolete, the Sci-Fi channel no longer piques the interest of people in the 14-21 demo, and that nerds are seen with some of the prettiest girls in school. That's right, you know exactly what I'm going to say. I am a nerd of the next generation.

The other day one of the guys on the soccer team was making fun of my head size (too big to wear most hats comfortably) and I took it meekly, like a nerd is supposed to do. He then called me a nerd (though said he was only kidding later on) and started laughing. I simply said, "It's true." And it is true. I have played collectible card games; there have been many nights when I've stayed home to catch TV shows any "normal" teenager would never think of watching. Dungeons and Dragons...oh yeah, I'm all over it.

But wait folks...there's more. This is not the tale of a bitter nerd who suffered through high school and can't wait to begin anew at the college of his dreams, hoping everything will be different. I've enjoyed practically every minute of my high school career.

How is this possible you ask? Where is he going with this story? You may even be thinking that there are some obvious incongruities in this long-winded description of my life. Well, in the words of Ed McMahon, "You are correct sir!" (or madam). You are looking at the words of a nerd with more friends than most people in the "popular" clique at our school. These are also the words of a nerd on the very same soccer team as his "tormentor" (which allows for certain opportunities for retribution). You are reading the words of a nerd with...*gasp* a girlfriend. How can this be? I've told you, I am a nerd of the next generation (and no, my girlfriend was not met on the Internet, is not made of plastic, and is not more than 2 years younger than I am... more like one and a half).

It is very rare these days for me to be called by that crude description of my character. I don't walk in a crooked manner. I wear no horn-rimmed glasses held together with tape, or high water pants with suspenders. My social status may have reached the point at which nobody even knows I'm a nerd. Maybe I should buy a pocket protector...

Supplements

Many colleges and universities require a supplement in addition to the Common Application. Supplements usually contain additional, institution-specific questions and, in many cases, additional essay questions. Most institutions that require supplements have them available for download on their Web site or directly from www.commonapp.org.

All supplements vary, but the following items are likely to appear on a supplement:

- Biographical information
- Areas of academic, extracurricular, and/or athletic interest
- Contact with and continued interest in the school through visits, and interviews
- Legacy or other connections to the institution
- Additional essay questions, the most common of which is “Why College X?”
- Request for a graded paper or assignment with teacher comments
- Invitation to submit supporting materials in the arts or documentation of other special talents
- Early Decision (ED) or Early Action (EA) Intent
- Financial Aid Supplement
- Disciplinary inquiry
- Parent or Peer Recommendation
- Residency Form
- Honor Code Commitment

When completing a college’s supplement, please take the time to answer every question. Supplements provide a wonderful opportunity for you to showcase both your individuality and creativity.

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW

Interviewing

Preparing

- Request material on the college.
- Call in advance for an appointment.
- Ask if the interview is informative or evaluative.
- Tour before you interview, if possible.
- Plan your clothes (dress comfortably but appropriate to the occasion).

Greeting

- Always have a firm handshake and a smile.
- Introduce your parents and siblings if they are with you.

The Interview

- Speak with confidence, maintain good posture, and look the interviewer in the eye.

- Be prepared to speak about yourself.
- Have questions ready for the interviewer.
- Use correct grammar and avoid: “like”, “you know” and “um.

After the Interview

- Write a short note or e-mail to your interviewer thanking him or her.
- Include in the note a reference to something specific from the interview and ask any additional questions.

Self-Reflection

To further prepare for a personal interview, we suggest you consider the following questions ahead of time. Not all of these questions may be asked, but thinking about them will help you feel more confident and comfortable during an interview.

- What are your best academic and personal qualities?
- What do you want in a college and why?
- What area in your life would you like to improve and why?
- What was your proudest moment?
- Do you like to read? What is your favorite book?
- If I gave you a ticket to anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- What three people, living or dead, would you like to invite to dinner?
- What courses are you in, and what is your favorite subject?
- Describe your ideal college.
- What do you find meaningful in your life?
- Tell me about the strengths and weaknesses of your high school.
- What might you be doing ten years from now?
- If you found \$100, how would you use it?
- What do you plan to study in college?
- What is your extracurricular passion?

STANDARDIZED TESTING

College admission testing is an important part of the college admissions process. At Ward Melville, students are encouraged to take both the SAT reasoning test and the ACT (with Writing) in order to have the option of presenting one or both sets of scores for admission. Many colleges will examine these scores in conjunction with their calculations of a student’s cumulative high school grade-point average to help determine admission. The most competitive colleges require or highly recommend the SAT subject tests in specific subject areas.

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)

The Preliminary SAT is a standardized test that offers practice for the SAT. It also gives you a chance to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Corporation’s scholarship programs. The test measures verbal reasoning skills, critical reading skills, mathematical problem-solving skills, and writing skills. It is designed to be taken during the junior year.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

The College Entrance Examination Board offers the SAT reasoning test as a measurement of the verbal, mathematical, and writing abilities a student has acquired throughout his or her education. Combined scores for the SAT reasoning test range from 600-2400 or 200-800 for each of three divisions. Most Ward Melville students take the SAT for the first time in the Spring of their junior year. Please note that the March SAT is the only test date that allows students to request an actual copy of their test for an additional fee. This is a good strategy for students to assess their areas of strength and weakness. The SAT may be taken as many times as it is offered, although many colleges recommend limiting the number to three. It is important to note that SAT score reports are cumulative; colleges see every test you take unless you use the Score Choice option. However, most colleges extrapolate your highest scores during the application process if you do not choose the Score Choice option.

The SAT at a Glance

Critical Reading

- Reading comprehension; sentence completion; critical reading; no analogies
- Multiple choice: 70 minutes – consists of one 20 minute section and two 25 minute sections.
- Scored on a 200-800 scale

Math

- Includes Algebra II
- Multiple choice with student-produced grid-ins; no quantitative comparisons
- Seventy minutes, one twenty and two twenty-five minute sections
- Scored on a 200-800 scale

Writing

- Measuring grammar, usage, and word choice
- One twenty-five minute essay
- One thirty-five minute multiple choice section
- Scored on a 200-800 scale

Penalties

- -1/3 pt. for questions with four-answer choices
- -1/4 pt. for questions with five-answer choices

The SAT Subject Tests

One-hour, primarily multiple-choice tests that measure knowledge of particular subjects and the ability to apply that knowledge. Mostly highly competitive colleges require two or three subject tests, in addition to the writing portion of the SAT or the ACT with essay. It is to the student's advantage to take an SAT subject test in as many areas of strength as possible. Students who are taking a one-year course (i.e., biology, chemistry and physics) should take the test immediately following completion of the course. Students thinking of attending an engineering program should take Math II and a science test. These one-hour tests are offered in the following areas:

- Biology E or M
- Chemistry
- Languages (Reading and Listening): Chinese, French, German, Korean, Japanese, Spanish
- Languages (Reading Only): French, German, Italian, Latin, Modern Hebrew, Spanish
- Literature
- Math I (Arithmetic, Algebra I, II and Geometry with use of calculator)
- Math II (primarily Algebra II, Geometry, Pre-Calc and Trig with use of calculator)

- Physics
- U.S. History
- World History

Fee: See current SAT Program Registration Bulletin for fee schedule.

Registration forms for the SAT may be obtained from the Guidance Office or online at www.collegeboard.com. Fee waivers are possible with advanced notice.

2013-2014 SAT Registration Dates (see school calendar for test offerings at WMHS)

Test Date	Type	Registration Date	Late Registration Date
October 5, 2013	SAT I, SAT II	September 6, 2013	September 20, 2013
November 2, 2013	SAT I, SAT II	October 3, 2013	October 18, 2013
December 7, 2013	SAT I, SAT II	November 8, 2013	November 22, 2013
January 25, 2014	SAT I, SAT II	December 27, 2013	January 10, 2014
March 8, 2014	SAT I only	February 7, 2014	February 21, 2014
May 3, 2014	SAT I, SAT II	April 4, 2014	April 18, 2014
June 7, 2014	SAT I, SAT II	May 9, 2014	May 23, 2014

CEEB SCHOOL CODE: 331740

The American College Test (ACT)

The Act is a test of educational development that measures how much the student has already learned. The test focuses on four subject areas: English, math, reading skills, and natural sciences. Scores range from 1-36. The composite score is the average of the four subject areas. A writing test is offered as an option, and we advise students to take the writing test. A combined English writing score will represent two-thirds weight for the multiple-choice section and one-third weight for the writing. Students are encouraged to take the ACT in the spring of their junior year or the fall of their Senior year. It is important to note that ACT score reports are cumulative; colleges see every test you take, unless you utilize the Score Choice option. However, most colleges document your highest scores only during the application process.

The ACT at a Glance

- English: seventy-five questions to answer in forty-five minutes.
- Math: sixty questions to answer in sixty minutes (calculator permitted)
- Reading: forty questions to answer in thirty-five minutes
- Science: forty questions to answer in thirty-five minutes
- Essay: thirty minutes; scoring is two thirds of English, one third of Writing test results, 1-36 scale

No penalties for wrong answers! Answer all questions!

Fee: See current ACT Program Registration Bulletin for fee schedule.

Registration forms for the ACT may be obtained from the Guidance Office or on line at www.actstudent.org.

2012-2013 ACT Registration Dates (check school calendar for WMHS testing dates)

Test Date	Registration Date	Late Registration Date
September 21, 2013	August 23, 2013	September 6, 2013
October 26, 2013	September 27, 2013	October 11, 2013

December 14, 2013	November 8, 2013	November 25, 2013
* February 8, 2014	January 10, 2014	January 24, 2014
April 12, 2014	March 7, 2014	March 21, 2014
June 14, 2014	May 9, 2014	May 23, 2014

CEEB SCHOOL CODE: 331740

*** No test centers are scheduled in New York for the February test date.**

The Advanced Placement Tests (AP)

Administered by the College Entrance Examination Board in conjunction with the Council on College-Level Services, the AP exams give highly motivated students the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement while still in high school. If students achieve the requisite scores, they may obtain advanced placement or credit from most colleges and universities of their choice. University decisions on credit are frequently made department by department. Students may take any number of AP exams as long as dates and times do not conflict. Tests are offered in the following areas:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Art: History | Government & Politics: Comparative |
| Art: Studio (by portfolio examination): 2-D Design/3-D Design/Drawing | Government & Politics: United States |
| Biology | Human Geography |
| Calculus AB | Italian Language |
| Calculus BC | Japanese Language |
| Chemistry | Latin Literature |
| Classics (Virgil, Lyric) | Latin: Virgil |
| Computer Science A (C++Language) | Math (Calculus AB & BC) |
| Computer Science AB (C++Language) | Music: Theory |
| Economics: Macro | Physics B |
| Economics: Micro | Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism; Mechanics |
| English Language & Composition | Psychology |
| English Literature & Composition | Spanish Language |
| Environmental Science | Spanish Literature |
| European History | Statistics |
| French Language | United States History |
| French Literature | World History |
| German Language | |

Fee: \$89 per exam, which includes proctoring costs: There is a \$20 cancellation fee for each ordered test not taken.

Registration for the exam is done electronically.

2014 AP Test Dates

Test Dates	Registration Date
May 5 - May 16	April 2014
SCHOOL CODE: 331740	

An Important Note About Standardized Testing

Please take standardized testing in stride. Choices of classes and grades are far more important in the college application process. Always remember there are alternatives to the testing requirements for colleges. Students who are concerned about testing results should explore those colleges that do not require standardized testing. There are actually more than 700 colleges and universities in the United States that do not require tests. Other colleges will rely on portfolios of students' work, auditions and interviews instead of tests. Please visit www.fairtest.org to learn more about testing-optional colleges and universities.

Remember that when you are thirty, no one cares what your SAT scores were. Do your best, but keep these scores in perspective. Most importantly a student's humanity or future contributions to society are not measured by his or her test scores.

ATHLETICS

NCAA Requirement for Division I and Division II

The NCAA establishes the rules on eligibility, recruiting and financial aid for athletes. The NCAA Eligibility Center processes eligibility forms that can be obtained online at <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>. Student athletes should take the SAT/ACT and start the certification process in their junior year.

Getting Started

If you wish to participate in NCAA Division I or II athletics, you need to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. You need to qualify academically and you need to be cleared as an amateur student-athlete.

What Do I Need To Do?

- Grade 9

1. Verify the online core-course listing to make sure you are on track with NCAA approved courses.
- Grade 10
 1. Verify the online core-course listing to make sure you are on track with NCAA approved courses.
 - Grade 11
 1. Register with the Eligibility Center.
 2. Make sure you are still on track to meet core course requirements. Verify that you have the correct number of core courses and that the core courses are on your high school's 48-H with the Eligibility Center.
 3. After your Junior year, submit a transcript request form to your high school guidance counselor so that they can send a copy of your transcript to the Eligibility Center. If you have attended any other high schools, make sure a transcript is sent to the Eligibility Center from each high school.
 4. When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the Eligibility Center (the code is "9999").
 - Grade 12
 1. When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the Eligibility Center (the code is "9999") if you have not done this already.
 2. Complete amateurism questionnaire and sign the final authorization signature online on or after April 1 if you are expecting to enroll in college in the fall semester. (If you are expecting to enroll for spring semester, sign the final authorization signature on or after October 1 of the year prior to enrollment.)
 3. Have your high school guidance counselor send a final transcript with proof of graduation to the Eligibility Center.

The steps you need to follow to be eligible for NCAA sports are:

- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>
- Carefully review all course and GPA requirements to ensure collegiate athletic eligibility. <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>
- Complete the Release of Records form.
- Ask the guidance secretary to send a copy of your transcript.
- Mail or electronically send the processing fee, transcript, and Release of Records form.
- Graduate from high school.
- Send SAT or ACT scores directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center by using the code number 9999 when you register to take the tests.
- Minimum cumulative grade point averages vary for Division I depending upon the SAT/ACT scores. An index can be found online at https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common

You will be notified of certification after the NCAA Eligibility Center has received all of your documents. Since paperwork with this organization is frequently delayed, call 1-877-262-1492 if you have any questions.

Important Division I Recruiting Guidelines

- **Contacts:** One in spring of Junior and/or after July 1 of junior year (*depending on sport*).
- **Evaluations:** five, six or seven times in senior year.
- **Telephone Calls:** One per week/month early in junior year (*depending on sport*).
- **Official Visits:** Up to five 48-hour official (*paid or unpaid*) visits. One per college. Athlete must have transcript and test scores on file at the college.

Recruiting Terms

Adapted from *The Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete* by NCAA

Contact

A contact occurs any time a coach has any face-to-face contact with you or your parents off the college's campus and says more than hello. A contact also occurs if a coach has any contact with you or your parents at your high school or any location where you are competing or practicing.

Contact Period

During this time, a college coach may have in-person contact with you and/or your parents on or off the college's campus. The coach may also watch you play or visit your high school. You and your parents may visit a college campus and the coach may write and telephone you during this period.

Dead Period

The college coach may not have any in-person contact with you or your parents at any time in the dead period. The coach may write and telephone you or your parents during this time.

Evaluation

An evaluation is an activity by a coach to evaluate your academic or athletic ability. This would include visiting your high school or watching you practice or compete.

Evaluation Period

The college coach may watch you play or visit your high school, but cannot have any in-person conversations with you or your parents off the college's campus. You and your parents can visit a college campus during this period. A coach may write and telephone you or your parents during this time.

Official Visit

Any visit to a college campus by you and your parents paid for by the college. The college may pay the following expenses: your transportation to and from the college; room and meals (three per day) while you are visiting the college; and reasonable entertainment expenses, including three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest. Before a college may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high-school transcript (Division I only) and SAT, ACT or PLAN score.

Prospective Student-Athlete

You become a "prospective student-athlete" when you start ninth-grade classes; before your ninth-grade year, a college cannot give you, your relatives or your friends any financial aid or other benefits that the college does not provide to students generally.

Quiet Period

The college coach may not have any in-person contact with you or your parents off the college's campus. The coach may not watch you play or visit your high school during this period. You and your parents may visit a college campus during this time. A coach may write or telephone you or your parents during this time.

Recruited

A student who is recruited by a college is someone who has been called by a coach more than once, someone who has been contacted by a coach off campus, or someone who has taken an official visit to a college.

Recruiting

Recruiting is when a college coach calls a student, sends written materials, watches the student practice or play, or makes in-person contact. Coaches must follow certain NCAA recruiting rules.

Unofficial Visit

Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you or your parents. The only compensation you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like and may make those visits at any time. The only time you cannot talk with a coach during an unofficial visit is during a dead period.

Recruiting Myths and How Best to Improve Your Chance of Getting Recruited, Especially at the Division III Level

By Laura Hungerford, Connecticut College Women's Basketball Coach, of the New England Small College Athletic Conference

1. **MYTH:** If you are good enough coaches will find you.

Reality: There are too many players and too few coaches for every player to get exposure, plus many coaches have strict recruiting budgets, limited staff, and other responsibilities, making it sometimes impossible to see many players in person. Their season is also much more rigorous and takes place the same time yours does, leaving little free time. Unless you are a blue chip athlete and make a top 100 list or All American, most college coaches will never hear about you. There are few coaches that have the ability to fly around the country to recruit players and have an endless coaching staff that they can send out to scout. Division III coaches rarely have the financial means to scout athletes outside the local region. High school athletes take a passive approach to recruiting thinking that because they happen to be talented in their sport, college coaches will come knocking on their door. Most college coaches are not able to sort through millions of high school athletes. Like a job search, YOU must target the right schools and market yourselves in the right way. In other words, it is up to you! Despite what most people believe, it's the job of the student-athlete to recruit the coach, not the other way around. Most athletes who land scholarships are those who initiate contact with several coaches, market themselves through written materials and highlight videos, and keep those coaches updated on their progress throughout the year. Being proactive is the way to get noticed.

2. **MYTH:** I have plenty of time; I'll wait to see what happens.

Reality: While you wait for something to happen, those athletes who want to succeed are making it happen. They use all the resources available to give themselves the competitive edge. If you're a Junior and have not heard from any schools, you are not being recruited. There are lots of coaches around the country that need talented recruits. Start developing a top ten list of schools you would like to attend and contact the coach, explain that you feel you are a qualified athlete who could benefit their program, and ask what you need to do to be considered for admission at their school, and sports program in question.

3. **MYTH:** Division III schools are weaker athletically.

Reality: In some cases yes, but in many cases no. Many Division III programs have very talented athletic programs; this is often because players are there to get an education first and play athletics second. But they are still talented and dedicated athletes who wanted to continue their athletic careers in college, but wanted to do it on their own terms. If you think you can just stroll onto a DIII program, you are in for a surprise.

4. **MYTH:** All colleges offer athletic scholarships.
Reality: Only Division I & II colleges can “offer” athletic scholarships. DIII programs cannot offer athletes athletic scholarship money. Full scholarships are very rare and most scholarship money is divided between many players. The NCAA mandates how many scholarships a school can offer for each particular sport. It is up to the school whether or not they want to and can offer the number of scholarships allotted to them.
5. **MYTH:** I shouldn’t go to a Division III school if I need scholarship money.
Reality: Many Division III schools offer attractive financial aid programs and you should not overlook any school, even if it does not offer athletic scholarships. Most financial aid is awarded on the basis of financial need. The schools you attend or are applying to determine aid, and it is based on the information you provide on the FAFSA form. The cost of attendance minus your expected family contribution will give you your financial need award.
6. **MYTH:** If you receive a letter from a coach, you are being recruited.
Reality: Coaches send out thousands of letters to players they may or may not have heard of or seen play, thus there are probably 500 kids tearing open the same letter you got. That does not cheapen the fact that you received a letter. Receiving a letter is only the first step in a series of steps that lead to being recruited. Let’s be honest, if you are a high school athlete hoping to play college sports, getting a letter from a college coach is downright exhilarating. While getting a letter is exciting, it is meaningless unless you respond back to the coach who sent it. Coaches who don’t hear back from athletes that they send letters to, will not follow up with interest and offers. Responding to letters is the key to getting serious attention from that same coach later in your high school career.
7. **MYTH:** Recruiting companies give me a better shot at being recruited.
Reality: While recruiting companies have been around a long time, there has been a surge in the number of companies promoting athletes, especially online companies who claim that by putting your Profile online coaches will find you. Many college coaches are weary of information from third party companies, especially ones that took money from parents to promote their children. There are simply too many of them and coaches would not be hard pressed to spend 2 hours sifting through 1000 student-athlete Profiles that tell the coach little about you as a person and as an athlete. While there are rare cases where a student athlete got recruited online by these companies, the research and feedback received on most of these services is poor.
8. **MYTH:** College coaches will help me get into the school if I am on the “bubble” academically.
Reality: While some college coaches will be able to ‘nudge’ the administration (and I use the term “nudge” very carefully), most coaches will not and cannot help you get in. There are thousands of students who may want to attend a school who may be more talented than you and they have every right to attend even if you don’t play a sport. A coach does not want to put you into a position where you may fail academically. College coaches will submit a list of names to the admissions department, but you need to be very close academically to what the school seeks out in any student and you need to be committed to the coach.
9. **MYTH:** College coaches only recruit top players.
Reality: College coaches recruit anyone they think can play on their program and recruit anyone who shows an interest in their program. Just because you are not the star of your team does not mean you cannot play in college.
10. **MYTH:** College coaches can contact me anytime they want.
Reality: There are strict rules as to when coaches can send you literature and how often they can contact you; these rules vary for every division. A DIII college coach can only call you after July 1 of your junior year in high school. This does not mean that you as an athlete cannot initiate the communication to a coach; this deals with outbound communication from a coach. You can call a coach whenever you want. The key here is that you are the one initiating contact and not the coach. If you want to call a coach or visit the campus and set up a meeting with the coach, you may do so as often as you wish. Thus you can make as many campus visits as you would like when considering a college, but you have to be the one initiating the visit. A prospective athlete can only have one “official” visit (visits the school pays for) in DIII NESCAC.
11. **MYTH:** High school coaches are qualified to determine if I am college athletic material.
Reality: While many coaches are qualified, many are not and many never played a sport in college. The bottom line: there are many factors that determine if you can play in college and your high school coach may have no idea if you are capable. You must take a realistic view of your talents and adequately match those talents to the right level in a college.

Programs at different levels differ greatly from one to another. Factors may include size, talent level, academic background, major, and personal desires. You must take a realistic view of where you fit in as you begin to search for the right college. College is about getting an education and if you get hurt, cut or quit playing you want to be at a college that you love and where you can get a good education for your future career.

12. MYTH: Playing college athletics will not be much different than high school, aside from the skill level.

Reality: Playing college athletics is an unbelievable commitment in time and in dedication and will be nowhere close to your high school experience. In college, especially at DI & DII, you will be required to focus on your sport year-round. At all levels, you will be required to lift and be involved in a conditioning program. You also may be practicing at 6 a.m. or late depending upon facility availability. DIII may or may not be as strenuous and may vary according to the school and coaches involved. Many DIII athletes have the opportunity to play more than one sport and are encouraged to do so if they so desire.

13. MYTH: College coaches will be honest with me and I meet them.

Reality: Many will, but in some cases this is big business and coaches cannot afford to have few options available. So even though they may tell you you are the #1 point guard, there may be three or four other point guards that have been recruited already or they are trying to recruit. Sometimes a college coach is unsure if you will be accepted to their school, or even choose that school if admitted. Early decision options are a way to really know a recruit is truly committed, but it does not guarantee acceptance. Understand that recruiting is imperfect.

14. MYTH: I shouldn't go to a school where I can't start in my first year.

Reality: Why not? If you go to a school where you can start, changes are it is not a strong program, or they do not face tough competition. Go to a program where you have time to grow athletically and get better over time. You will be facing more experienced players in college and it will take you time to get your skill level up to theirs.

15. MYTH: Graduating from High School and getting good grades is enough to make me eligible to play college athletics.

Reality: You must have minimum GPA, SAT/ACT or SAT II scores and must complete a certain number of core courses such as Math, English, History, Science, and Foreign Language. If you have good grades and good test scores you have a broader range of schools to choose from. If you are interested in DI & DII school you need to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse but this is not required at DIII. **It is the student's responsibility to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and to check that his/her core course requirements are met.** Approved courses are available on line at <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/> and the Three Village web site.

Useful Resources

Books

Abramson, Hillary. *The Princeton Review Student Athlete's Guide to Colleges*. Princeton, NJ

Wire, Rick. *The Student-Athlete and College Recruiting: How to Prepare for College Athletics and the Recruiting Process*. Flagler Beach, FL: Athletic Guide Publishing

Scott, Robert L. *Athletic Recruiting and College Scholarship Guide: How to Market Your Student Athlete*

Selleck, George. *Student Athlete's Recruiting Handbook: Suiting Up For Success*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishing

Mazzoni, Wayne Aldo. *The Athletic Recruiting and Scholarship Guide*. 2nd ed. Bridgeport, CT: Mazz Marketing,
Killpatrick, Frances and Killpatrick, James. *The willing Edge: The Student-Athlete's Guide to College Sports*. 7th ed. Alexandria, VA; Octameron Press

NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student/Athlete. Cincinnati, OH: Collegiate Directories

Web sites

www.ncaa.org	National Collegiate Athletic Association
www.ncaa.org/legislation_and_governance/eligibility_and_conduct/recruiting.html	NCAA Recruiting Web site
https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/	NCAA Eligibility Center
www.naia.cstv.com	National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

Students with Disabilities

Learning Differences

Colleges and universities have substantially improved their services for, and evaluation of, students with learning differences. The college search for a student with a learning disability should follow the same path as all prospective college students however; there are a few special considerations. First, a Learning Disabled student needs to ask additional questions. Second, Learning Disabled students who need extended time testing for college entrance examinations have additional paperwork to complete.

Questions to Ask Colleges if You Have a Learning Difference

- What kind of support services does the school have for students with learning disabilities?
- Does the school have requirements (i.e., language, math) that may be difficult for a Learning Disabled student to fulfill?
- Is there an active program on campus for students with Learning Disabilities? Special facilities?
- Are students encouraged or advised to submit a recent educational testing evaluation as part of the admissions process? If so, how is it used?
- Is peer tutoring available? Writing or math labs? A student skills center?

Learning Disabled Students and Standardized Testing

How do I receive testing accommodations such as extended time or use of a computer for standardized testing?

Students with a diagnosed learning or health disability may be eligible to take the SAT and ACT with extended time or with other accommodations. Current documentation (within the last three years) will be required in the form of a current IEP, 504 Accommodation Plan, and/or verification of a diagnosis which demonstrates the need for accommodations. Students who believe they may qualify for extended time should meet with his or her Resource Room teacher by Spring of Sophomore year or Fall of Junior year to complete the necessary paperwork which will be in addition to the regular registration materials.

To be eligible, the student must:

- Have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations
- Have current documentation on file (within three years)
- Complete an eligibility form for SAT/ACT

The Professional Evaluation from a qualified professional must:

- State the specific disability as diagnosed
- Provide complete educational, developmental, medical history
- Describe tests/techniques used to arrive at diagnosis
- Establish professional credentials of evaluator
- Describe specific accommodations being requested

Useful Resources

Books

Hollowell, Edward. *Learning Outside The Lines: Two Ivy League Students With Learning Disabilities and ADHD Give You The Tools For Success*. New York: Fireside Press

Kravets, Marybeth and Was, Amy. *The K and W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities of ADD*. The Princeton Review

Mooney, Jonathan and Cole, David. *Learning Outside the Lines*. New York: Simon & Schuster

Nadeau, Kathleen. *Survival Guide for College Students with ADD or LD*. Washington, DC: Magination Pres

Peterson's Colleges for Students with LD or ADD. Princeton, NJ: Thompson-Peterson

Peterson's Colleges with Programs for LD or ADHD Students. 5th ed. Princeton, NJ: Thompson

Quinn, Patricia, ed. *ADD and the College Student; A guide for HS and College Students*. Washington, DC: Imagination Press

School Search Guide to Colleges w/Programs or Services for LD Students.

Web sites

www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/ssd/ssd_eliginbilit	Useful information about the kids of documentation needed to consider an application for testing accommodations
www.act.org/aap/disab	Testing accommodations for ACT
www.ldonline.org	LD online
www.ldam.org	Learning disabilities worldwide
www.ld.org	National Center for Learning Disabilities

Artistic Students

(Adapted from Jennifer Gross's *Tips for the Art Focused Student*, National Association for College Admissions Counseling)

If you are interested in pursuing the visual, musical or performing arts in college, your college application process might involve some additional pieces. Specifically, if you are applying to an art or music school, you will need to furnish a portfolio of your work. There is no standard protocol used at each institution. Therefore, students are advised to check each college's website for specific directions.

Even if you are not intending to major in the arts, but you have demonstrated talent in this area, sending in slides, your art work or a CD with your music is warranted. This adds depth to your application and is considered limited polite additional information.

Prospective arts majors have two degree options: a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with a major in the arts and a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) for artists/performers or bachelor of music (BM) for musicians. The BA degree

is the typical liberal arts degree – students who major in English, History, and other humanities majors also earn BA degrees. The BFA or BM degree is more focused and intense.

Which degree you choose depends on your college and career goals. If you have a high degree of commitment to your art and desire an intense, often competitive college experience, a BFA or BM might be right for you. If you would rather study a variety of subjects along with your arts major, a BA may be the way to go.

Visual and performing arts students have several types of colleges to consider. Conservatories and arts schools offer an immersion-type experience for students earning BM or BFA degrees. All of the students you meet at this type of school will be artists and the atmosphere is often highly competitive.

Some larger universities offer BFA/BM degrees as well as BA degrees in the arts. You may find somewhat self-contained music or arts schools within the larger university. In this atmosphere, you could pursue the more specialized degree while still keeping the door open to taking a few liberal arts courses, which would be unavailable at specialized music or arts schools. In addition, a university-based arts program might give you the option of pursuing a double degree, such as a BM in music and a BA in history. A double degree would require more than four years, however.

The Application Process

In addition to completing a typical college application, students in the Visual or Performing Arts should prepare a portfolio or audition. Each arts program has different requirements, so you should contact the schools as early as possible to obtain their portfolio or audition requirements. Although your portfolio or audition is an important part of the application, arts programs do consider your academic records and test scores.

Books

Creative College. Loveland, Elaina, Los Altos, CA: Supercollege, LLC.

College Guide for Visual Art. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson's

College Guide for the Performing Arts. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson's

FINANCIAL AID

For many students and their families, cost can be the most determining factor in selecting a college. This section should be used as a general reference as you navigate the financial aid process. Because each college or university has its own specific requirements, you are advised to read all applicable material, and carefully

follow the procedures. *It is imperative that you pay close attention to the details and deadlines of each school.*

Application Procedures

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Every financial aid applicant must complete this form to apply for U.S. government grants and loans, federal work-study, many state grants, and, for some schools, institutional financial aid.

1. The form is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov (usually available in November).
2. As soon as possible *after January 1* (and before February 15, if possible), fill out the form using actual data from the previous year's federal tax forms. List up to six schools to receive your data. If you are applying to more than six schools, list first any schools that require *only* the FAFSA (and not the Profile), then add schools with the earliest deadlines. Your remaining schools may be added as a correction to the Student Aid Report (see #4 below).
3. Complete and file the form at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
4. Approximately four weeks later, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) which lists all of the information you entered on the FAFSA, as well as your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The schools listed on your FAFSA will receive your information electronically. Check the SAR carefully for errors. If you find any, correct them and return Part 2 of the form. Be sure to keep a copy!

College Scholarships Service Financial Aid Profile (CSS Profile)

This form is used to apply for institutional aid and should be completed only for schools that require it.

1. Register for the Profile online at www.collegeboard.com.
2. At least two weeks before your earliest deadline, complete the customized application online. Pay fee by credit card when you register. *Note: You may use estimated income/expense/asset data; Do not wait* to submit the form until you have exact figures.
3. The schools on your list will receive your information electronically in about one week. You will receive a CSS Acknowledgment that shows the information entered on your application, as well as the schools to which your data has been sent. Use the Data Confirmation section of the Acknowledgment if you need to make corrections/changes to your data. *Send the new information directly to the schools.*
4. After you register and receive your Profile packet, you may still add other schools by going to the Profile online website. In addition, you should contact each of those schools to find out if they require any information not included in your customized application.

Forms

State Forms

Most states award their grants solely on the basis of the information included on the FAFSA, although some states require additional form(s). State aid agency telephone numbers are online at www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/agencies or call 800 433-3244.

Institutional Forms

Some schools require you to complete their own forms in addition to or instead of the Profile. Institutional forms will vary considerably, with some covering only basic biographical information and others asking for detailed financial information.

Tax Forms

Many schools require federal tax forms for students and parents and W-2 forms. Be sure to send copies of any of these documents directly to the schools that require them; *do not* include them with the FAFSA or the Profile.

Divorced/Separated Parents

Many colleges and universities will also require information from the noncustodial parent with the expectation that he or she will contribute to college expenses to the extent of ability. Most of these colleges use the College Board's Divorced/Separated Parents' Statement, which is available from the schools' financial aid offices and may be included in your Profile packet.

Business and Farm Owners

Parents who own a business or a farm, or who are otherwise self-employed, may be required to complete a Business/Farm Supplement in addition to the Profile. The form is available from the financial aid offices of the colleges that require the form and may be included in your Profile packet.

International Applicants

Financial assistance programs for international students are highly competitive with academic credentials and geographic diversity as primary considerations in the process. At most schools, to receive consideration for institutional aid, international students must complete the International Financial Aid Application and Declaration of Finances as soon as possible after January 1. This form is generally mailed to all international applicants as part of the admissions packet, and it should be returned directly to the college admissions office. Some schools follow a different process for awarding aid to international students, so be sure to pay close attention to the requirement and procedures at each of the schools to which you are applying.

Early Action/Decision Candidates

It is critical that you communicate directly with the financial aid office of your ED/EA college. In most cases, you will be required to complete the Profile in November, and you may also need to complete other institutional forms. The college will give you an estimate of your financial aid package at the time of acceptance. Your aid award will not become official until after you have filed a FAFSA.

Questions

If you are unsure about any aspect of the financial aid application process, be sure to seek help immediately. Contact the financial aid offices of the colleges to which you are applying. Financial aid officers know their schools particular policies and procedures better than anyone else and are in the best position to answer your questions. Don't be shy!

Determining Eligibility for Need-Based Financial Aid

Need-based financial aid exists in an effort to provide access to higher education for qualified students regardless of their financial circumstances. Need-based financial aid is used to make up the difference between what a family can pay and the total cost of education. In determining what a family can afford, need-analysis systems work under the principle that students and their parents bear the primary responsibility for financing education costs to the full extent they are able; families are expected to make sacrifices in order to pay for college. Need-analysis formulas evaluate families' financial situations in an effort to establish

horizontal equity – families with similar financial situations should contribute similar amounts of money to educational expenses – and *vertical equity* – families with differing situations should contribute differing amounts.

There are two primary systems used to determine a student’s eligibility for need-based financial aid. Utilizing the FAFSA, the federal methodology determines eligibility for all federal grants and loans, most state aid, and some institutional aid. Other colleges and universities use some version of the institutional methodology to award their financial aid funds.

The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is made up of the parent contribution and the student contribution. The parent contribution considers such factors as:

Parental income: The single most important factor in determining aid eligibility for most families, it includes all taxable and non-taxable income.

Minus

Nondiscretionary expenses which include such items as taxes, medical expenses, basic living expenses, and an employment expense allowance for single-parent households and dual-income households.

The parent contribution also considers:

Available parental assets: real estate equity (excluding the primary residence); savings and other net worth investments but not retirement funds except for education IRAs; a portion of business profits.

Minus

Asset protection allowance which protects a portion of your assets for retirement (this increases as parents get closer to retirement age).

Once the total parent contribution is determined, it is divided among all dependent children who are enrolled in similarly priced colleges.

The student contribution considers a portion of a student’s income and assets.

To determine the student’s financial eligibility, the Expected Family Contribution is subtracted from the total cost of education (tuition, room and board, and, in most cases books, supplies, transportation, and living expenses) to determine the student’s financial eligibility. The calculated financial eligibility and, therefore, the financial aid package, will vary at colleges with varying costs. It may also vary due to colleges’ differing calculations of the EFC. (Although the federal methodology uses well-defined formulas, there is some room for college financial aid administrators to exercise “professional judgment” and alter the calculations in response to unusual family circumstances).

The institutional methodology, used by many colleges and universities to award their financial aid funds, varies from the federal methodology in several key aspects:

1. The institutional calculation takes into consideration a family’s equity in their primary residence while the federal calculation does not. In other words, a family with home equity has a greater ability to afford the cost of a private education over time.

2. When the applicant's parents are divorced or have never been married, the federal methodology requires financial information form, and bases its calculations on only the custodial parent and his or her current spouse (the student's stepparent). In most cases the institutional methodology requires information from the noncustodial parent as well, and, in some cases, his or her spouse.
3. Because retirement funds are not included in the calculation of assets, the institutional methodology does not use the Asset Protection Allowance for retirement used in the federal methodology.
4. The institutional methodology has added two new incentives for families to save for college: the Annual Education Savings Allowance and the Cumulative Education Savings Allowance, enabling parents to protect income and assets to be used for current and future education expenses.
5. To reduce the contributions expected from middle income families, the institutional methodology uses modified income assessment rates.

Award Packages

Once the admissions office has decided to admit a student and the financial aid office has determined that the student qualifies for financial aid, the financial aid office will put together a financial aid package, a combination of several different types of financial assistance.

- **Grants:** Federal, state, and institutional (college/university) grants are financial aid awards that do not have to be repaid.
- **Loans:** Often interest-free during enrollment, student loans must be repaid, with interest, over a predetermined loan life following graduation. For more information on loans, see the Federal Programs section below.
- **Work Study:** The vast majority of financial aid recipients will be expected to hold part-time (usually around ten hours per week) campus or community jobs in areas such as the library, academic departments, food services, administrative offices, etc. There is a federally subsidized work-study program as well as college-sponsored programs.

Note: Many financial aid packages combine loans and work-study under the heading "Self-Help" and some schools allow students some discretion to determine the ratio of loan to work.

In comparing financial aid awards from different schools, it is important to look not only at the total family contribution, but also to compare the types of aid offered; the ratio of grants to self-help (loans and work) may vary significantly.

Schools that cannot meet the full financial need of every admitted applicant may employ one or more of the following practices:

1. Gapping: the practice of meeting less than applicants' full need.
2. Financial aid waiting list: some admitted applicants are not offered aid unless and until more funds become available later in the process.
3. Admit-Deny: the practice of offering admission to students, but denying them financial aid despite their eligibility.
4. Deny-Deny: the practice of denying admission to applicants who qualify for aid, but whose eligibility the school is unable to meet.

Federal Programs

Pell Grant

A grant that provides up to \$5,500 based on student's need.

Supplemental Educational Opportunities Grant (SEOG)

A grant for students with the highest levels of eligibility, SEOG provides up to \$4,000 per year. To qualify, the student must also be a Pell Grant recipient.

Stafford Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans

Available to every full-time undergraduate, these programs allow first-year students to borrow a maximum of \$3,500, up to \$4,500 during the second year, and up to \$5,500 each subsequent year. The maximum total borrowing for all undergraduate study is \$23,000. Repayment of the Federal Stafford Loan begins six months after the completion of schooling. Subsidized Stafford Loans are need-based loans on which the federal government pays the interest while the student is enrolled in college, for six months after graduation, and during any deferment periods. Unsubsidized Stafford Loans are available to students who do not demonstrate financial eligibility and to those who qualify for only a portion of the maximum subsidized loan. Without the government subsidy, the student is responsible for the interest on each loan while in school. Typically, the student will pay *interest only* while in school, deferring the principal repayment until after graduation. It is possible, however, to defer the interest and add it to the principal as it accumulates.

Perkins Loan

A need-based federal student loan designated for the students with the highest levels of demonstrated financial eligibility, the Perkins Loan Program provides up to \$4,000 per year at a 5 percent interest rate. The student must have applied for a Pell Grant to be eligible.

Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

Credit-worthy parents of dependent undergraduate students may borrow through the PLUS Loan Program to help finance educational costs. The maximum loan per year is limited to the cost of education minus other aid that the student has received. Repayment begins within sixty days of the loan funds being advanced, and the maximum repayment period is ten years.

Note: The figures for grant and loan amounts and interest rates are subject to change depending on program funding.

Other Information

State Grants

Many states offer grants to residents who demonstrate a specific level of financial eligibility. Often, these grants are available only if the student attends an in-state college. In some states there are different programs for students attending public colleges, private colleges, in-state schools, and out-of-state schools. Eligibility for and application to state grant programs is usually made through the FAFSA.

Merit Scholarships

College-sponsored merit scholarships are awarded to students based on academic achievement (in general or in a specific discipline); geographic, ethnic, or racial diversity; a particular talent (artistic, athletic, etc); extracurricular involvement (community service, for example), scholarship examinations, etc. They are not based on demonstrated financial need, although in some cases financial need is a consideration. Schools differ widely in the number and size of scholarships offered.

Merit scholarships are also available from a wide variety of non-school groups or organizations (for example, churches, corporations, and foundations). Information on many such scholarships is available in the Guidance office and on-line through Naviance. You are also encouraged to explore other scholarship opportunities via the Internet, the public library, etc.

For recipients of need-based financial aid, merit scholarships will be incorporated into the aid package. Each institution will adjust aid packages according to its own policies, but schools are unable to use the scholarship to reduce the federal EFC. Most schools will take one or more of the following approaches:

- If the need-based financial aid package does not meet the full eligibility of the student, the scholarship can be used to fill the “gap”.
- The scholarship may replace self-help (loans and work-study) funds.
- The scholarship may be used to reduce the institutional grant.

If you receive notification of an outside scholarship after you have received your financial aid award, you must inform the financial aid office of your scholarship. The school will then prepare a revised financial aid award that takes into account the additional scholarship funds.

A note about private scholarship search services: Many promise to locate scholarships for which you are eligible for a fee, sometimes a very large fee. In most cases, the same information can be gathered for free from colleges, the Internet, and the local public library.

Additional Financing Options

Many colleges offer individual payment plans allowing monthly payments of the annual fees. There are also a variety of loans available to assist in the financing of educational expenses. Individual financial aid offices are the best source of information about these programs. Many families who have equity in their homes find that a home equity loan offers the most favorable terms because of the tax advantages. Be assertive in exploring all possible financing options with your financial aid administrator.

Taxpayer Relief Act

Education tax credits and interest deductions are available for some students. Families are advised to consult with a tax professional to determine whether they can benefit. Information is also available on the Department of Education Website. www.ed.gov.

Appeals Process

The recent changes to federal guidelines regarding financial aid, the antitrust litigation barring most communication among financial aid offices at different schools, and tight financial aid budgets have produced larger variations in schools’ determinations of financial eligibility and in their ability to meet that need. As a result, students may receive very different and packages from different schools.

If the school you would prefer to attend offers less money or a less attractive package (more in loans, less in grants) than another does, bring the discrepancy to the attention of the financial aid office at your preferred school. If the school has an appeals process, follow the steps carefully. Otherwise, call the financial aid office and ask for an explanation. Even if your offers are similar, if the packages aren’t large enough to enable you to attend a school, further investigation is worth the effort. Some schools will not negotiate their financial aid offers, but many will increase their awards when the change is warranted and the school has additional funds available. In many cases, a family’s financial situation cannot be adequately explained on the forms. A significant change in the family’s financial situation (the loss of a job, an illness) will cause an increase in a family’s eligibility. In either case, many schools will take the new or clarified information into account and increase the award. Some schools set aside funds that they expect to offer during the appeals process to families whose situations have changed or have been

clarified. Please remember that most financial aid officers are more amenable to working with families who treat them with respect.

Renewal of Aid

Most colleges guarantee four years of financial aid to all students who initially enroll with financial aid, *as long as they file the required application forms and continue to demonstrate financial need*. Some schools may alter the package as the student gets older (for example, reducing grant aid and increasing self-help), and some schools have academic and discipline-related standards attached to their financial aid awards. If a student’s GPA falls below a certain level, for example, his or her financial aid would be reduced or eliminated. Make sure that you understand a college’s policies on renewal of aid *before* accepting an initial award.

Resources

Federal Student Financial Aid Information Center 800.433.3243 www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov	General information about the Federal Student Financial Assistance Programs, assistance in completing the FAFSA, and federal student aid publications and forms.
College Answer Hotline 888.272.5543 www.collegeanswer.com	Sallie Mae’s resource for advice about financial Aid and private student loans.
The College Board Web site www.collegeboard.com	Database of scholarship sources, PROFILE registration and application, calculators, worksheets, etc.
Department of Education Student Guide for Financial Aid www.studentaid.ed.gov	Federal student financial aid information
FAFSA on the web www.fafsa.ed.gov	FAFSA forms to download or complete online
Fastweb www.fastweb.com	A scholarship database and information about loans and summer jobs
The Financial Aid Information Page www.finaid.org	Information on scholarships, financial aid calculators, loan calculators, glossary of terms, and links to other financial aid Web sites.
The Student Loan Marketing Association www.salliemae.com	Information on scholarships, grants, and student loans. Access calculators to determine EFC, forecast college costs, and compute loan payments.
www.gmsp.org	Gates Millennium Scholars Fund

Important Financial Aid Terms

Demonstrated Eligibility

The difference between the total cost of attending a college or university (including tuition, room and board, and other expenses) and the family’s calculated contribution (Estimated Family Contribution).

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

The amount the federal government expects a student and his/her family to pay toward college costs.

Financial Aid

Money that is given, lent, or paid to you so you can pay for college.

FAFSA

Free Application for Federal Student Aid, used to apply for U.S. government grants and loans, federal work-study, many state grants, and institution financial aid. This form must be completed.

Federal Methodology

This is the need-analysis system used by the U.S. government to determine an applicant's eligibility for federal financial aid. It is also used by some states and schools.

Gapping

Gapping is the practice of meeting less than a student's full aid eligibility.

Institutional Methodology

This is the need-analysis system used by many colleges and universities to determine an applicant's eligibility for institutional financial aid.

Merit-Based Aid

Scholarships, grants, or other aid awarded based on academic strength, artistic ability, leadership, or other special talent.

Need-Based Aid

Financial aid that is awarded based on demonstrated financial need.

Need-Blind

This is an admissions policy that does not use financial need as a factor in selecting applicants.

Admission Need-Conscious

This is an admissions policy that takes into account students' financial need before making admissions decisions. Note: A school may be need-blind for one group of applicants and need-conscious for another group.

Preferential Packaging

The practice of awarding more desirable (e.g., higher grants, lower loans) financial aid packages to highly favored students.

Profile

The application required by many schools to apply for institutional aid. Complete this form only if the school to which you are applying requires it.

SAR

The Student Aid Report, generated when the FAFSA is processed, includes all of the data entered on the FAFSA and indicates the amount of the EPC.

Work-Study

A federally subsidized or college program in which students hold part-time campus jobs in areas such as the library, academic departments, food services, administrative offices, etc., as part of their financial aid packages.

RESUMES

Resumes

A few colleges may require a resume as part of the formal application process. Regardless of whether a college requires a resume or not, composing one is a good idea. As a student completes his or her college applications, a resume serves as a guide when filling out the extracurricular sections. When interviewing with an alumnus or on campus, submitting a resume is strongly recommended. Furthermore, athletes are encouraged to submit a resume to coaches. Here are three resumes that impressed admissions committees.

Name
Address
Phone # Home Cell
E-Mail

Academic Background

Ward Melville High School

GPA 88.2

SAT V-760/M-720/W-690

ACT Eng-33/Read-34/Mat-33/Sci-28/Eng-Writing 33/Composite-32

AP Calc AB-5

AP Art Studio Drawing-4

Awards

National Merit Scholarship Commended Student

Member of National Honor Society

Member of French National Honor Society

Student of the Month for Rotary International

Girl Scout Silver Award

Art

Art Cub-Co-President during Senior Year

1st Place 2-D Festive of the arts-6/09

1st Place 2-D Ward Melville High School Art Show-4/09

Extra Curricular Activities

High School Varsity Dance Team – 3 years

Drama Club and Actress in High School Plays

Women’s Forum Club

Gay-Straight Alliance

SHARP Program

Rent, the musical

Employment/Volunteer

Grocery Store Courtesy Clerk/Bakery Attendant-May ’09-Present

Assistant High School Curator Art Festival-2 Years

Dance Instructor – Winter ‘09

Name
Address
Phone # Home Cell
E-Mail

Education

- Ward Melville High School, East Setauket, NY September 2008 – present
 Anticipated Graduation, June 2012

Community Service/Volunerring

- D.A.R.E. Stony Brook Police Department, Volunteer, Grade 9 and 10
- Greta's Basketball Fund Raiser, Coordinator, Grade 9 and 10
 Liaison between the Town of Stony Brook and Ward Melville High School for donations, entertainment and
 publicity.
- "Kids on the Block," Summer Camp, Stony Brook, NY, Counselor/Founder, Summer 2008-2011

Employment/Summer Activities

- Three Village Soccer Academy, Asst Manager/Coach, Summer 2008 and 2009
- POPPYFIELDS, Commack, NY, A children's furnishings boutique – sales, inventory, customer
 support, Grades 9 – present
- Soccer Referee, Township of Brookhaven, Grades 9, 10
- Babysitting, Grades 9 -12

Soccer Information

- Ward Melville High School Varsity Soccer Team, Defense, Grades 9 - 12
 Captain, Grade 12
 State Champions, Grade 9
 Suffolk County Champions, Grade 9
 Long Island Conference Champions, Grade 9
 All State Soccer Recognition, Grade 10
 3rd Team All County, Grade 10
- Three Village Club Team, Grade 9 and 10
- Three Village Girls Soccer Finalist, Grade 10
- Three Village Soccer Club, Grades 11 and 12

Additional Sports Activities

- Ward Melville High School, Varsity Winter track, Grade 9
- Ward Melville High School, Freshman Lacrosse Captain, Grade 9
 JV Lacrosse Captain, Grade 10
 Varsity Lacrosse, Grades 11 and 12

Wait-List

Some students will receive wait-list letters. If a student decides to remain on the wait-list, the letter should be answered promptly. The college assumes that, if a student remains on the wait-list, he or she will attend if offered admission later in May or June. It is imperative that a student mail a deposit to a college where he or she has been accepted by May 1. If a college uses its wait-list, this typically occurs after May 1.

The Waiting Game: What if I'm Wait-Listed?

(Adapted from Jennifer Gross's *The Waiting Game; What if I'm Wait-Listed?*, National Association for College Admissions Counseling)

It's finally arrived—the envelope from your first-choice college. Nervously, you open it. It's not a denial! But it's not an acceptance, either. You've been wait-listed. What do you do now?

Colleges use waiting lists as insurance. Applicants who are qualified for a college but don't make the "cut" may be wait-listed. If enough accepted students enroll for freshman year, the college won't accept anyone from the wait list. If the college ends up with open spaces in the freshman class, it may accept students from its wait list.

Unfortunately, colleges often can't predict whether they will go to the wait list or how many students from the list they will need. And you may not receive a final acceptance or denial until as late as July.

Wait-List Trends

Many colleges and universities use wait lists. The most "selective" colleges (those that admit fewer than half of their applicants) use wait lists at a much higher rate than those that admit more than half of their applicants. The number of colleges filling seats from their wait lists has remained steady over the past few years, but the number of students placed on wait lists has increased. On average, 10 percent of students who apply to institutions that have a wait list are placed on the list.

Because the wait list is so unpredictable, it's not wise to count on moving from the wait list to acceptance. If you're wait-listed at your first choice, your first task is to look at the colleges that did accept you. Carefully compare your options and decide on a second-choice college. If you haven't heard anything from the wait-list college by the May 1 deposit deadline, make a deposit at your second-choice college to insure your spot in its freshman class.

Getting the Scoop

Different colleges use wait-lists differently. To assess your chances of acceptance from the wait-list, call the admissions office. Ask what your position is on the list (if the list is ranked). Another important piece of information is the percentage of students that have been accepted from the wait-list in recent years. If a college hardly ever uses its wait-list, or accepted only a few wait-listed applicants last year, the trend is unlikely to change this year. But you can ask if the admissions officer knows yet if the college will go to the wait-list this year.

The goal in gathering this information is to determine your chances of eventually being accepted. At this point, if you'd be just as happy going to your second-choice college, you may want to forget about the wait-list and focus on preparing for college.

Improving Your Chances

If the college that wait-listed you is still your heart's desire, there are some ways to improve your chances of being accepted. If your wait-list school is clearly your first choice, let them know that. Colleges like a sure thing. If they end up using the wait-list, they'd rather offer acceptance to the students who are most likely to enroll.

If you have had any significant, positive changes since their application was submitted, send a letter and include any documentation that demonstrates these changes. Some students may send additional recommendations, but they don't carry as much weight as stellar senior grades or a prize-winning performance in the regional Spring Forensics Competition.

Although it's important to strengthen your application if you can, bugging the admission office won't win you any points. One call or e-mail says you're interested. Ten says you're a pest.

The best strategy, then, is to work with your counselor to:

- Choose and make a deposit at a good second choice
- Get as much information from the wait-list college as you can
- Let the admissions office know that the college is your first choice
- Strengthen your application, if possible
- Persevere

Then, sit back, cross your fingers, and, wait.

Glossary

Admissions

Admissions Index

This is a system of ranking applicants for automatic admission to a university. SAT/ACT scores are often the only factors in an index. This practice for admitting students is not common; it is used primarily by large public universities.

Block Program

A curriculum based on one course at a time for periods of three to seven weeks each

College Board

The "umbrella" organization that produces high school, college, and graduate assessment tests, proposes educational policy, and works on curriculum reform. For more information, visit www.collegeboard.com.

Common Application

Over 450 colleges and universities participate in the Common Application program whereby a student fills out one application and can use it for more than one college. The Common Application is available online at www.commonapp.org

CO-OP Program

A study and work system that allows students to gain practical experience related to their course work.

Educational Testing Service

The Educational Testing Service is responsible for the creation and administration for the SAT Reasoning test, SAT Subject Tests, TOEFL, and APs.

Equal Opportunity (EOP) Service

Established to assist students who qualify for entrance under minority, immigrant, or economically disadvantaged status. Many universities have special offices to handle these candidates.

Liberal Arts

These are college studies comprising of the arts, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies and humanities, as distinguished from applied studies in such specialized areas as pharmacy, engineering, agriculture, home economics, etc.

NCAA

The National Collegiate Athletic Association's is the agency that processes and evaluates academic qualifications forms for all Division I and II athletes. For more information, visit www.ncaa.org.

Semester System

Colleges organize the school year into two periods of approximately eighteen weeks each. A regular academic year includes the fall and spring semesters.

SSD

Services for Students with Disabilities is a branch of the College Board that oversees extended time and special accommodations for students with learning differences or physical disabilities.

3/2 Programs

This is an opportunity for students who wish to combine a professional program with a liberal arts education. Students attend a liberal arts college for three years and a professional program, such as engineering or architecture, for two.

Financial Aid

College Board Profile (CSS)

An additional financial aid form required by some highly selective colleges. Such items as home equity and business assets are considered on this form.

Testing

ACT

The American College Testing Service creates the ACT, PLAN, EXPLORE, and graduate school tests. It also produces curriculum and career assessment tools as well as proposals for educational reform for middle school through high school. The ACT test is an alternative college admission test that is given equal weight with the SAT admission test. For more information, visit www.act.org.

AP Testing

The Advanced Placement program gives students the opportunity to pursue college credit while in high school. Tests are given in specific subject areas. They are three hours in length and generally are comprised of multiple choice, word problems and essay questions.

CEEB

The College Entrance Examination Board oversees the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The CEEB Code number is most frequently asked for on college applications. Ward Melville's CEEB Code is 331740.

ETS

The Educational Testing Service is responsible for the creation and administration of the SAT Reasoning tests, SAT Subject tests, TOEFL, and AP's.

PSAT/NMQT

The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Qualifying Test is a practice test administered during October of the junior year, in preparation for the SAT Reasoning tests. Corporations, foundations, and colleges also use it for awarding scholarships. PSAT scores are reported in three categories: critical reading, math, and writing. PSAT scores are not typically used by colleges as admissions criteria.

SAT

The SAT Reasoning test is a three-hour and forty-five minute multiple-choice test that measures critical thinking skills. It is a required test for admissions to many colleges, and is usually taken in the spring of the junior year and then again in the fall of the senior year. There are three sections: critical reading, math and writing. Scores are reported from 200-800 points in each section.

SAT Subject Tests

One-hour, primarily multiple-choice tests that measure knowledge of particular subjects and ability to apply that knowledge.

Standardized Test Scores

Colleges require that scores be sent directly from the College Board or ACT. Sending official scores is each student's responsibility.

TOEFL

Testing program for immigrants and foreign students whose primary language at home is not English. This test often helps with admission and is used to place students in appropriate English classes. TOEFL may be given on computer or in a pencil and paper format depending upon the local testing agency's facilities.

www.ets.org/toefl

Websites

Accessing the internet for up-to-date, detailed information about a specific college or university will benefit you in your college search. We have listed some of the best websites below.

College Information

www.petersons.com	College search and database
www.princetonreview.com	The Princeton Review
www.act.org	Home page for the ACT
www.cappex.com	College Admissions site
www.kaplan.com	SAT test prep site
www.collegeboard.com	The home page of The College Board, SAT and SAT subject test registration
www.collegeconfidential.com	Professional counselors give college information; Parent and student blogs
https://connection.naviance.com/family-connection/auth/login/?hsid=wardmelville	Useful college information and test preparation

Financial Aid

www.collegeanswer.com	A scholarship service
www.blackexcel.org	A scholarship service for African Americans
www.ftc.gov	Federal Trade Commission information about scholarship scams
www.fastweb.com	A database of more than 180,000 scholarship, grants, fellowships and loans
https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/prf/index.jsp	The CSS Profile is the form many private colleges and universities require, in addition to the FAFSA, for those applying for financial aid.
www.finaid.org	Student Guide to Financial Aid
FAFSA on the web www.fafsa.ed.gov	FAFSA forms to download or complete online
Federal Student Financial Aid Information Center 800-433-3243 www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov	General information about the Federal Student Financial Assistance Programs, assistance in completing the FAFSA, and federal student aid publications and forms

Suggested Reading List

Antonoff, Steven R and Friedemann, Marie. *College Match: A Blueprint for Choosing the Best School for You*. Alexandria, VA: Octameron Associates

Barkin, Carol. *When your Kid Goes to College; A Parent's Survival Guide*. New York: Harper Collins

Bok, Derek, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Bromwell, Perry and Gensler, Howard. *The Student Athlete's Handbook: The Complete Guide for Success*. New York: Wiley Press

Boyer, Paul. *College Rankings Exposed: The Art of Getting a Quality Education in the 21st Century*
Lawrenceville, NJ: Thompson Peterson's

Coburn, Karen Levin and Treiger, Madge Lawrence. *Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years*, 4th ed. Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler

Fiske, Edward. *The Fiske Guide to Colleges*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks

Goldman, Daniel. *The Price of Admission: How America's Ruling Class Buys Its Way Into Elite Colleges and Who Gets Left Outside The Gates*. New York: Crown Publishers

Howard, Kim. *Out & About Campus: Personal Accounts by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender College Students*. Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Press

- Johnson, Helen E. and Schelhas-Miller, Christine. *Don't Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years*. New York: St. Martin's Press
- Jones, Connie. *She's Leaving Home Letting Go As Daughter Goes To College*. New York: Fireside Press
- Kastner, Laura and Wyatt, Jennifer. *The Launching Years: Strategies for Parenting from Senior Year to College Life*. New York: Three Rivers Press
- Light, Richard. *Making the Most of College: Students Speak, Their Minds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Mathews, Jay. *Harvard Schmarvard: Getting Beyond the Ivy League to the College that is best for you*. New York: Prima Publishing
- Mayher, Bill. *The College Admissions Mystique*. New York: Noonday Press
- Pope, Loren. *Looking Beyond the Ivy League: Finding the College that's Right for You*. New York: Penguin Books
- Pope, Loren. *Colleges That Change Lives*. New York: Penguin Books
- Robins, Alexandria. *The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids*. New York: Hyperion
- Savage, Marjorie. *You're On Your Own (But I'm Here if You Need Me: Mentoring Your Child During the College Years)*. New York: Fireside Press
- Steinberg, Jacques. *The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admission Process of a Premier College*. New York: Viking Penguin
- Strauss, William. *Millennial's Go To College: Strategies for a New Generation on Campus*. AACRAP, 1999. Barker, Theresa and Thompson, Michael. *The Pressured Child: Help Your Child Find Success in School and Life*. New York: Random House Publishing Group
- Van Steenhouse, Andre. *Empty Nest. Full Heart: The Journey from Home to College*. New York: Simple Life Press
- Weinstein, Miriam. *Making a Difference College Guide*. Fairfax, VA: Sage Works Press
- Wolfe, Tom. *I am Charlotte Simmons: A Novel*. New York: Macmillan Press

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS DIRECTIONS

Important information:

Teacher Letters of Recommendation

- Please be sure to invite your teachers to write their letter of recommendation in person and through Naviance/Family Connection only and NOT through the Common Application.
- If you add additional schools to the Common Application after the original list has been matched to Naviance/Family connection, you must manually add them in Naviance by clicking on ‘request transcripts’ on the ‘College I’m Applying To’ screen.
- Every time you add new schools to your Common Application or your Naviance list, you need to email your teachers again and give your teachers another Teacher Letter of Recommendation Request Form. This form can be downloaded from Naviance or the district Guidance page. It is also available in the Guidance Office. No teacher letters of recommendation will be sent without personally giving the teacher the form.
- There is a 15 school day processing period from the day of receipt of the Teacher Letter of Recommendation Form by the teacher and the submission of your letter of recommendation.

Guidance Materials and Directions

Beginning this year, the Guidance Department will be sending all supporting documents for your college applications electronically. Please refer to the list below for specific directions regarding this process. Follow the steps delineated below which authorizes the Guidance office to send your high school transcript, school profile, school report and counselor letter to the colleges to which you are applying:

1. Create a Common Application account at commonapp.org
2. Complete the Education section under the Common Application Tab.
3. Add at least one school under the My Colleges Tab. This will allow you to access the FERPA section.
4. Sign the FERPA agreement by clicking on “Assign Recommenders” under the My Colleges Tab. Once these steps are complete, sign in to your Naviance/Family Connection account.
5. Under the Colleges Tab, click on “Colleges I’m Applying To”
6. Enter your e-mail address into the box under “Common App e-mail Address”
7. Click the Match button. This will link your Common App schools to your Naviance account.
8. Add all of your Non- Common App schools at this time by clicking on the “request transcript” link
9. If you add additional schools to your Common Application, you must manually add them to your Naviance list by clicking on the “request transcript” link (same method as #8)

A video tutorial detailing this process can be found on your Naviance/Family Connection home page on the left – “Common App Matching” as well as at the bottom of the page. Once you have followed these steps, all of the schools that you have entered into Common App will appear on your “Colleges I’m Applying To” list. Once this is complete you are ready to submit, in paper form, your guidance materials.

10. Turn in your Autobiography, Activity Resume, Parent Statement (optional), and Transcript Request Form to Guidance.

Please note that your Counselor’s 15-day processing window will begin ONLY when you have completed all of the steps above. Naviance/Family Connection online transcript requests cannot replace submitting the paper transcript request form to the Guidance office.

For Office Use Only

Date Received:

- Autobiography
- Activity resume
- Parent Statement

Name: _____
Last, First

Counselor: _____

Student Cell #: _____

Student email address: _____

Home Telephone #: _____

Processing Deadlines and Procedures:

The guidance office will electronically submit an official high school transcript, WMHS profile, counselor letter of recommendation (if applicable), and a school report to each school listed below upon receipt of this request form *provided that* required materials have been turned in. **There is a processing period of 15 school days from the day of receipt of this form and submission of all required guidance materials.** (Ex: Form received by November 1st will be mailed on or before November 25th). **Students are responsible for requesting teacher letters of recommendation. Teachers who agree to write a letter of recommendation will submit their recommendations to the requested schools through Naviance Family Connection ONLY.**

Student Responsibilities:

- It is the student’s responsibility to send SAT or ACT scores directly from the testing center to the college(s) to which they have applied.
- Please make sure that the list of school(s) listed below are on your “Colleges I’m Applying To” list in Naviance/Family Connection.

**THIS FORM IS REQUIRED TO RELEASE INFORMATION TO THE SCHOOLS LISTED BELOW
GUIDANCE MATERIALS WILL BE SENT ONLY TO THE SCHOOLS ON THIS FORM**

College	City, State	Check <input type="checkbox"/>					
		Common App school	Non-Common App school	Early Decision	Early Action	Regular Decision	On- Site Admissions

It is the policy of Ward Melville High School to keep all letters of recommendation confidential including the secondary school report. I waive my right to read all letters of recommendation submitted under this cover.

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Name: _____
Counselor: _____

Date: _____
E-mail: _____

Autobiography

What do you consider to be your greatest academic strength? Describe a time when you demonstrated this strength.

Of all the courses you have taken in high school, which have you enjoyed the most? Why?

What are your hobbies or special interests?

What do you plan to study or major in college and why?

How do you respond to difficulty, setbacks, or disappointments? Describe any significant obstacles or hardships which you have had to overcome.

If colleges could know five things about you, what would they be?

Please share any unique family situations that would help us to better understand your background.

What do you consider to be your most important values?

Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability? Why or why not?

Describe a life experience that has been a highlight in your years at Ward Melville High School. (For example: a paper you wrote, project, travels, service learning, etc.)

What books have had an impact on you and how?

What is your favorite quote and why? (Sources can be from person, song, poem, etc.)

Who or what is your source of inspiration and why?

Where do you see yourself in ten years? Don't be afraid to dream big.

Is there information related to you or your high school record, or other pertinent information (family, for example), of which your counselor should be aware as he/she writes your recommendation? (Do not assume that your counselor knows this information.)

Name _____

Activity Resume

Extracurricular Activities	9	10	11	12	Wks/Yr	Hrs/Wk	Description of Activity Positions Held Honors Won

Community Service/ Leadership	9	10	11	12	Wks/Yr	Hrs/Wk	Description of Activity Positions Held Honors Won

Employment	9	10	11	12	Wks/Yr	Hrs/Wk	Description of Activity Positions Held Honors Won

Honors/Awards	9	10	11	12	Wks/Yr	Hrs/Wk	Description of Activity Positions Held Honors Won

In the space below, please feel free to add any additional information that does not fall into the categories above.

Name of Student: _____

Date: _____

Parent Questionnaire

1. What do you believe your child's greatest achievements have been throughout the last few years?
2. In what areas do you believe your child has shown the most development and growth since entering high school?
3. Describe your child's most significant and valuable personality traits.
4. List five adjectives you would use to accurately describe your child.
5. Describe your child's attitude toward school and learning. What subjects have they enjoyed the most/least throughout their education?
6. Describe an activity to which your child has been committed. What do you think he/she has gained from this experience?
7. If applicable, please discuss a challenge your child has faced and successfully overcome.
8. Please describe any unusual circumstances or adversity that has had an affect on your child's education and/or life outside of school.
9. What would you most like a college admissions officer to know about your child? If admitted, what can your child contribute to the college community?

Student Checklist for Teacher Recommendations

SPRING- GRADE 11

- ✓ **Think of a teacher who knows you well and can attest to the quality of your work.**
It does not have to be from a teacher in a class that you earned all A's.
- ✓ **Approach two teachers *in person*.** Before the end of eleventh grade, ask them politely if they would be willing to write a recommendation for you. Provide them with the Teacher Recommendation Student Information Form and any other materials that they request from you

FALL- GRADE 12

- ✓ **Speak with each teacher *in person* to discuss their preferred method of sending your letter to every college to which you are applying.** Some teachers may prefer to submit your letters via U.S. Mail, and others may prefer to submit them electronically if the college provides that option.
**The method of submission will vary from teacher to teacher so it is crucial that you communicate with your teachers to ensure that your letters get to each college.*
- ✓ **Provide each teacher with the Ward Melville Teacher Evaluation Form as soon as possible.** Teachers submitting letters exclusively electronically may not need this form.
- ✓ **Electronic Submission** – Each school is unique. Carefully follow the instructions provided on each school's website.
- ✓ **U.S. Mail submission-** If your teacher(s) are submitting your letter through U.S. Mail, provide them with stamped, business size envelopes addressed to the office of undergraduate admissions of each college to which you are applying. Include your name on the envelopes and put Ward Melville High School as the return address.
- ✓ **On-site applications-** If you are participating in Ward Melville High School's On-Site College Admissions Program, have your teachers send a hard copy of your letter to the guidance office.
- ✓ **Send each teacher a hand written thank you note.**

Teacher Letter of Recommendation Information Form

In a folder, please include your resume, school transcript and a Teacher Evaluation Form. In the Fall, you will need to revisit the teacher to review your college choices, deadlines and letter of recommendation submittal options. (i.e. electronically or via U.S. mail)

Having a teacher write a college recommendation is an honor and a time consuming process. It is done at the teacher's discretion and on the teacher's own time. Therefore, do not expect a recommendation to be written if you have not given the teacher enough time to reflect on your attitude, effort, interaction with peers, and grade in the class.

Teacher's Name: _____ Date Submitted to Teacher: _____
Student's Name: _____ Phone #: _____
Date Recommendation Due: _____ Early Action or Early Decision Date: _____
Title of class(es) you have or had the teacher for: _____

For the following questions please type up the answers on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to this form.

1. How do you stand out from your peers in this particular teacher's class?
2. Some adjectives that describe you best in this class.
3. How do you feel about your experiences in this teacher's class(es)?
4. Do you feel you worked to the best of your ability during the year? Explain reasons why you were unable to work to the best of your ability.
5. Give an example of a time in this teacher's class when you remember learning something that you felt was new, exciting or particularly interesting?
6. Describe your interactions with your instructor and your peers, give examples. (Are you only concerned with a grade? Do people seek you out for help or group projects?)
7. How did you contribute?
8. Share a specific example of your nature that you feel exemplifies your attitude and demeanor as a student.
9. What was your favorite or most memorable aspect of class, why?
10. What do you plan on pursuing in college?

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Cheryl Pedisich
Superintendent

Kevin Scanlon
Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services

Jeffery Carlson
Assistant Superintendent for Business Services

Gary B. Dabrusky, Ed.D.
Assistant to the Superintendent for Human Resources

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