



The College Search and Application Process

Common factors that may influence your college choices:

- Geographic Location
- Size
- Environment
- Co-educational
- Cost
- Curriculum
- Resources
- Reputation
- Academic Rigor

How do I research colleges?

- Collegeboard.com- Great one-stop shop where you can create a college search based on all of the above factors.
- Books. Example: *Princeton Review*, *The Insider's Guide to the Colleges*
- With your Counselor
- Web-sites listed in Useful Links. This form can be located at www.stmaryhs.org under the Guidance Tab.

Define your search by:

- Determine which schools best fit your needs—Compare and Contrast.
- Visit the college/university website.
- Visit campuses and meet with representatives.
- Ultimately, you want to choose about 5-8 schools.
 - 2-3 “safety” schools-high school transcript exceeds admission’s requirement.
 - 2-3 “target” schools-admissions requirements match your high school transcript.
 - 2 “reach” schools- admissions requirements may be higher than your high school transcript.



I know where I want to apply, now what?

Obtain Applications

You may obtain applications one of two ways, either:

- Download an application from the college or university's website.
- Log onto the Common Application website-www.commonapp.org

Review the Personal Statement, Essay, and/or Supplemental topics.

- Be sure to meet the requirements.
- If there is an option of submitting a writing sample, consider sending a graded paper, essay, or term-paper.

Supplemental Documents:

Resume:

- Please follow the template that has been or will be given to you by your counselor. The resume provides more in-depth and/or supporting information for the admission counselors.

Teacher Recommendations:

- All students must ask **TWO** teachers from their Junior year for letters of recommendation. See your counselor for the **required** teacher recommendation form. Any supplemental forms needed by the college/university must be given to the teacher as well. Please be mindful of application deadlines. **Teachers require 10-15 school days to process your request.** It is highly recommended that students ask teachers at the beginning of the school year. Teachers will bring their letters to the guidance office.

Guidance Counselor Recommendation:

- If a letter of recommendation is required or you would like your counselor to write one for you, the student must complete their Autobiographical Sketch.



Types of Admission Deadlines

Early Decision

- Most colleges offer an early decision option in the fall by which a student typically applies by November 1st or 15th and is notified by mid December of the college or universities' decision—accepted, deferred into the regular admission pool, or denied. In recent years, more colleges and universities are accepting a larger number of early applicants. Early decision is binding! If you are accepted at a school through the early admission process, you must attend that school. Students may only apply to one school early decision.

Early Action

- Early action does NOT bind students to a college/university. Students may apply to other colleges early, regular, or rolling. A final decision from the college or university is usually by mid December. The student has until the National College Deadline of May 1st to determine if they would like to attend that college.

Rolling Admission

- Colleges using rolling admissions review applications as they arrive. It is to your advantage to submit your application early to these colleges.

Regular Admission

- Each college that uses a regular admission process has its own deadline.

BE MINDFUL OF DEADLINES!

I am ready to Apply!

Complete the Application

- Although many of you will be applying online, it is always a good idea to have a paper copy of the application to use as a “draft” copy.



- Be sure to type or print neatly.
- Make note of all of the admission and financial aid deadlines for all of the colleges to which you are applying. A sufficient amount of time (10-15 school days) must be given to guidance to send corresponding documents.
- If an interview is required or recommended, contact the admissions office to make an appointment.
- Submit your application with all application fees. Be sure to keep a copy of the confirmation message you receive after submitting your application online.

I APPLIED, now what do I do?!

Transcript Request and Secondary School Report Forms:

- All students must submit a Transcript Processing form for **ALL** schools that they have applied. Transcript Processing form is available in the Guidance Office. Attach any Secondary School Report forms to the Transcript Processing form. Without a signed Transcript Processing form, no information will be released.

Once the guidance office has received a Transcript Processing form (Reminder: 1 for each school), the following is sent to the college/university:

- Official Transcript
- Teacher Recommendations
- Counselor Recommendation
- Secondary School Report Form
- Resume
- Mid-Year Grades will be automatically mailed once mid-term exams have been completed.

Guidance requires 10-15 school days to process your request. Please be mindful of all application deadlines!

- For example: If you have an application deadline of December 15th, your transcript processing form is due no later than December 1st.



Standardized Test Scores:

- Students must request their SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and/or ACT scores be submitted to the college/university from www.collegeboard.com and/or www.act.org. We **DO NOT** send standardized test scores to colleges.

Mid-Year Reports:

- Mid-Year reports are sent directly to **ALL** schools the student has applied.

I'm Accepted! 😊

- Be sure to submit your deposit by the May 1st deadline to the college/university that you will be attending in the Fall.

Final Transcript:

- A Final Transcript will be sent **ONLY** to the school that you have chosen to attend. Students will be asked to complete a final transcript release form **BEFORE** any documents are released. Please see your counselor for this form.

