Three Major Components of a College Application
1. Student’s application: Application, required writing, supplemental questions, fee
2. Standardized testing--Sent directly from testing agencies, even if listed on an application
3. School documents – Transcripts, school profile, counselor recommendation, teacher recommendations

Key Tasks:
- Make sure that your Naviance “Colleges I’m Applying To” list is always accurate including college name, application type, deadline plan, and decisions received.
- Use the Common Application whenever possible; make sure your Common Application college list is also accurate.
- If using the Common App. complete the FERPA waiver – waiving your right to see your recommendations – asap. We cannot send documents until that is complete.

- Keep track of user names, passwords, applicant ID numbers, and other identifying info for each college.
- Be aware of how a college will communicate with you – emails, application portals, text messages, mail – and be sure to check frequently.
- Pay careful attention to communication from your colleges and from the College Counseling Office.
- Review all applications and writing with the College Counseling Office before submitting.
- Meet deadlines!
- Some colleges have a slightly different application process than listed below. U of Texas, U of California system, Texas A&M, and U of Georgia are quirky. The College Counselors will share more information about those specific applications in workshops and by email.
College List

Goal: Have a balanced college application list that fits the student academically, personally, and financially, ensuring choices at the end of the application process.

Hints:
- College Counselors will help you choose which application plan is strategically best for you.
- Be sure you are EXCITED to attend each college on your list, regardless of selectivity.
- Remember you are limited to 10 applications.

Task: Make sure all of your colleges are in the “Colleges I’m Applying To” list with accurate deadlines and application used.
Who: Student
When: Ongoing, and complete by Oct. 1
Where: Naviance “Colleges I’m Applying To” list

Task: Make sure your college list is balanced in terms of selectivity
Who: Student and College Counselors
When: Ongoing
Where: Naviance and meetings

Task: Make sure your college list is balanced in terms of financial fit
Who: Parents and student
When: Ongoing
Where: Net Price Calculator on college websites; conversation with college financial aid offices

Task: Match your Common App with your Naviance account. (If you aren’t using the CA, click the red “not needed” at the bottom of the screen.
Who: Student
When: ASAP
Where: Naviance “Colleges” Tab

Common App Account Matching - Incomplete
In order to match your Family Connection and Common App accounts, you need to do the following:
- Step 1 – Create a Common App account on Common App Online
- Step 2 – Sign the CA FERPA Waiver & Authorization on Common App Online

Common App Email Address: 
Date of Birth: 05/07/1999

Tips to successfully match accounts:
- Make sure you use the email address that you chose for your Common App account.
- Make sure the last name on your Family Connection profile matches the last name you used to create your Common App account.
- Make sure your date of birth on your Family Connection profile matches the date of birth on your Common App account.

Not Needed
Standardized Testing

Goal: Make sure all colleges and scholarship groups have required standardized tests.

Hints:
- Talk to College Counselors if you aren’t sure which scores to send where.
- Do not pay to rush scores...it actually takes longer for colleges to process rushed scores!

Task: Decide if you need to take any more standardized tests, particularly specific testing requirements.
Who: Student, College Counselors, and colleges
When: ASAP
Where: College websites, Naviance, meetings with CCO

Task: Register for any new tests if necessary.
Who: Student
When: Register ASAP for testing through December (the very last test appropriate for seniors)
Where: CollegeBoard.com or ACT.org

Task: Send test scores to colleges.
Who: Student
When: as soon as testing is complete
Where: CollegeBoard.com or ACT.org
Teacher Recommendations

Goal: Request recommendations from 1-2 academic teachers who preferably taught you in eleventh grade.

Hints:
- Quality, not quantity, is what matters. More is not better.
- Not every college accepts recommendations.
- The counselor recommendation will often include quotes from teachers, so many voices are represented.

Task: Review college teacher recommendation requirements for minimum, maximum, and specific subjects taught.
Who: Student
When: ASAP
Where: Colleges’ websites, Naviance

Task: Request teacher recommendations.
Who: Student
When: ASAP, but no later than Sept. 16
Where: In person conversation with the teacher

Task: Tell Ms. Bigham who has agreed to write your recommendation
Who: Student
When: ASAP but no later than Sept. 16
Where: email

Task: Remind teachers of deadlines
Who: College Counseling Office
When: At least 3 weeks before the student’s first college deadline
Where: Naviance

Task: Submit teacher and counselor recommendations to colleges by the deadline
Who: College Counseling Office
When: By the college’s individual application deadlines
Where: Naviance or college-specific website
# Transcripts

**Goal:** Make sure colleges receive an accurate, current transcript from Newman and any other high schools you have attended.

**Hints:**
- Let Ms. Hedgepeth know asap, but by Sept. 16th, if there are any inaccuracies in your transcript.
- If you attended another high school, ask Ms. Hedgepeth if we have that school’s transcript in our office.

**Task:** Review transcript for accuracy  
**Who:** Student and parents  
**When:** Any corrections to Ms. Hedgepeth by Sept. 16th  
**Where:** Ms. Hedgepeth’s office or email

**Task:** Request transcript sent to colleges  
**Who:** Student and College Counselors  
**When:** by the individual college’s deadlines  
**Where:** Naviance by checking “request” in the “Colleges I’m Applying To” list

### Colleges I’m applying to

Use this page to tell your counselor about colleges to which you are definitely planning to apply. Click “lookup” to find the name of each college. Click the “request” check box in the Transcript column if you need the school to submit a transcript to that college. If you are not sure about applying to certain colleges yet, you should add them to your list of prospective colleges.

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>I have submitted my application</th>
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**Task:** Send initial, midyear and final transcript to colleges  
**Who:** College Counselors  
**When:** by the college’s requested deadlines  
**Where:** Via Naviance or college-specific websites
College Applications

Goal: Submit accurate, reflective, proof-read applications to your colleges by the appropriate deadline.

Hints:
- As long as your portion of the application has been received by a college by their deadline, you have met the deadline.
- Work on your essay AFTER you have completed the rest of the application.
- Have a College Counselor review your application before you submit it.
- If an application item is missing 1 week after the deadline, tell the College Counseling office. We’ll follow up.

Task: Complete college applications
Who: Student, with help from parent and College Counselor
When: at least a week prior to a college’s deadline
Where: CommonApp.org, ApplyTexas.org, admission.universityofcalifornia.edu, apply.uga.edu, and others

Task: Review applications, including all required writing
Who: College Counselors
When: when complete, at least a week prior a college’s deadline
Where: meetings with College Counselors

Task: Submit college applications
Who: Student, with help from College Counselors
When: in most cases, by the college’s deadline
Where: Via application websites

Task: Make sure your application documents have been received by the college
Who: Student
When: About a week after you submit your application
Where: Common Application, college’s application portals

Task: Stay on top of communication from the colleges about your application status and required steps
Who: Student
When: Ongoing
Where: email and the individual college websites/admission portals
Essays and Supplemental Questions

Goal: Submit writing samples that tell your story, show your knowledge of the college, and demonstrate your writing ability.

Hints:
• Complete the rest of your application before tackling the essay and other writing sections.
• College Counselors are here to help you brainstorm topics and stories to tell that make sense in context of the rest of your application.
• Think about the story you want your essay to tell first; worry about which essay prompt last.
• Application readers learn so much about your true writing ability through short answers and supplemental questions. Pay as much attention to these pieces as your main essay.
• The Voice Memo recorder, if you have a smartphone, can be a helpful brainstorming and writing tool.
• Have a few people proof-read – College Counselors and an English teacher are great resources – but not too many. Too much advice can hurt, and your voice might get lost.

Task: Organize your writing by topic and deadline to see what might overlap.
Who: Student
When: ongoing
Where: Common Application and other applications

Task: Brainstorm ideas for essays and supplements
Who: Student, College Counselors, English teachers
When: sooner than later
Where: meetings

Tasks: Review drafts for ideas and structure
Who: Student, College Counselors, English teachers
When: sooner than later
Where: meetings

Task: Final review of writing
Who: Student and college counselor
When: at least 1 week prior to a college deadline
Where: meetings

Task: Submit required writing
Who: Student
When: by the college application deadline
Where: Through the application system
Interviews and other optional items

Goal: Provide additional information to the colleges that “fill in the blanks” and address information not otherwise provided in the application.

Hints:
- Think quality, not quantity. Anything additional sent to a college should be of the highest quality and should add significantly to your application.
- The “Additional Information” section is a great spot to share important information that’s not reflected elsewhere on your application. Talk to the College Counselors about how you might use that section.
- Not all colleges offer interviews, and most that do hold interviews with alumni in New Orleans.
- We’re happy to do a practice interviews to help you prepare.
- Send only what a college requests or allows. More is not better.
Financial Aid: Need-based and merit-based

Goal: Identify colleges that are affordable through need-based and merit-based financial aid.

Hints:
- Parents, please be up front and honest with your student about what you are willing to pay for college.
- Consider the total cost of attendance – tuition, room, board, books, clothing, travel, going out, incidentals.
- In general, in-state public universities have the least expensive out-of-pocket costs and out-of-state public universities have the highest out-of-pocket costs.
- Private colleges and universities are often the most flexible in terms of out-of-pocket cost.
- Net Price Calculators, available on all college websites, are helpful to determine a general out-of-pocket cost for a family.
- Most funding will come directly from the college, not outside scholarships or aid.
- You can writing an “additional information” letter for each college if the forms do not tell the full story of your financial situation.
- Pay careful attention to deadlines for financial aid and scholarships. Missing a deadline could keep you from funding opportunities.
- The future of TOPS is uncertain, and we will keep you updated with any news.

Task: Research potential out-of-pocket costs for each college and required forms
  Who: Parent
  When: ongoing
  Where: Individual college websites using Net Price Calculator

Task: Research merit-based aid opportunities at each college and through other sources
  Who: Parent and student
  When: Ongoing
  Where: College websites and FastWeb.com

Task: Apply for need-based aid using the FAFSA, required by all US colleges
  Who: Parent
  When: starting Oct. 1st
  Where: fafsa.gov

Task: Apply for need-based aid using the CSS Profile, if required by your student’s colleges
  Who: Parent
  When: starting Oct. 1st
  Where: css.collegeboard.org

Task: Apply for outside scholarships and funding
  Who: Students
  When: ongoing, but typically starting in January
  Where: individual college websites, FastWeb.com
Applying for financial aid is one of the most misunderstood—yet important—parts of the college admission process.

With changes coming to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), it's doubly important to understand the steps you must take to secure funds for college.

Starting this fall:
- Students will be able to file for aid beginning Oct. 1—a full three months earlier than previously allowed.
- And for the first time, applicants will use prior-prior year (PPY) tax information when reporting personal and family income. Currently, the FAFSA uses the previous year’s tax data.

Familiarize yourself with the frequently asked questions below, and discuss the new financial aid process with your counselor and college representatives.

Remember: Completing the FAFSA is essential for securing most types of financial aid for college. In addition to federal grants and loans, many colleges, states, and scholarship programs use the form to assess eligibility for their aid programs.

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**What do I need to do differently?** To make sure you are in the running for financial aid:
- Complete the FAFSA using 2015 tax information.
- File your FAFSA as soon as possible. The form becomes available Oct. 1.

**Who will be affected by the changes?** The Class of 2017 will be the first high school cohort to file the FAFSA on the new timeline using PPY tax data. All returning college students will also submit their applications following the new procedure.

**When should I complete the FAFSA?** File the FAFSA as soon as you are able. The federal government awards roughly $150 billion annually to college students through need-based grants, loans, and work-study funds. In addition to determining your eligibility for federal student aid, many colleges and states use the FAFSA when distributing grants. Money is limited in some instances, so don’t delay. If you file your application late, you run the risk of finding out that certain funds—such as work-study awards—are already gone.

**Will other college application deadlines move earlier into the fall?** At this point, it’s too early to tell how or whether changes to the FAFSA will affect the admission application process. What will remain the same is that colleges may not set college application deadlines prior to Oct. 15, nor can they require students to make an enrollment decision prior to May 1 of their senior year (with the exception of Early Decision).

**When will I learn my financial aid eligibility?** Institutional and state deadlines for awarding aid will differ. Hundreds of colleges and universities are expected to provide financial aid packages earlier than in previous years. But not all schools will be on the same timeline. Despite having earlier access to students’ financial data, colleges may need to estimate awards if state grant totals aren’t approved by legislatures in a timely fashion. Additionally, many colleges don’t finalize tuition for the coming academic year until the spring, a critical piece of information when estimating cost of attendance.

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NACAC is committed to supporting a successful transition to the 2017–18 FAFSA. This fact sheet is part of a series of materials about the 2017–18 FAFSA and prior-prior year guidelines. For more information, visit www.nacacnet.org/ppy.

NACAC is an organization of professionals from around the world dedicated to serving students as they make choices about pursuing postsecondary education.

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