KNIGHT'S CODE TO COLLEGE

Delaware County Christian School College Handbook 2010-2011
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Dear DC Student and Parents,

The most important decision you will ever make is whether to enter a relationship with Jesus Christ and the second will be your choice of a lifelong mate. Because it will affect how you think and what you do as an adult, the third most important decision may be which college you choose to attend.

Your experience at the college you choose, whether it is Christian or non-Christian, will influence the way you interpret all of life. It will affect the way you look at yourself and at others with their needs, problems and goals; the way you handle money, mistreatment by others, success and failure, tragedy and victory; your values for the next four years, as well as major decisions about your life’s direction. Along with providing you with information, the purpose of this handbook is to offer you a way to organize the college planning process and your parents a brief synopsis of how to be involved.

Parents should be active participants in the college exploration and application process. Visit campuses with your child and participate in programs offered by admissions officers. Make certain your child has been thorough in his/her search; review the admission and financial aid applications and offer guidance in their completion; make certain that tasks get completed and forms are submitted on time; and finally, be the support and counselor when decisions are made.

God has a plan for your child and selecting a college is one of life’s most important decisions. That decision not only represents a significant financial investment, but the choice influences so much of who your child will become in all areas of life. I hope this guide will help you in your preparations and decisions. If at any time you have questions or I may be of help, please call or come by for a visit.

Sincerely,

Trevor Creeden, Director of College and Career Counseling
Renae Pieters, Director of Guidance
## DC Grading Scale/G.P.A. Conversion Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Regular NGA/GPA</th>
<th>Honors NGA/GPA</th>
<th>AP NGA/GPA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Life With Christ</td>
<td>Doctrine</td>
<td>Romans (semester)</td>
<td>Elective (semester)</td>
<td>Apologetics (semester)</td>
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<td>Elective (semester)</td>
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<td>Electives: Biblical Drama, Calvin Seminar, Christian Family, Christian Theology, Contemporary Issues in Christianity, Discipleship, Intro to Pentateuch</td>
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<td>English 10</td>
<td>English 11</td>
<td>English 12 (Honors)</td>
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<td>English 12</td>
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<td><strong>Math (3, 3.5, 4 total credits required, depending on track) Italic indicates elective choices</strong></td>
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<td>Algebra II (Honors)</td>
<td>Math Analysis</td>
<td>Probability/Stats (Honors)</td>
<td>Intro to Calculus</td>
<td>AP Calculus BC or AP Statistics</td>
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<td>Geometry (Honors)</td>
<td>Algebra II (Honors)</td>
<td>Math Analysis</td>
<td>Probability/Stats (Honors)</td>
<td>Intro to Calculus or Discrete Math</td>
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<td>Algebra II</td>
<td>Algebra III/Trig</td>
<td>Probability/Stats</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Geometry</td>
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<td>Probability/Stats</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td>Probability/Stats</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Chemistry (Honors)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physics-Mechanics</td>
<td>Physics-Waves</td>
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<td>AP Biology or AP Physics B with Department Permission</td>
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<td>Physics-Waves</td>
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<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>Environmental Issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
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<td>World History I (Honors)</td>
<td>AP World History</td>
<td>AP US History</td>
<td>AP US Govt/Politics</td>
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<td>US History (Honors)</td>
<td>AP European History</td>
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<td>World History II</td>
<td>US History</td>
<td>American Government and Economics</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>AP European History</td>
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<td><strong>World Language (completion through Level III required; at least 2 credits earned during HS)</strong></td>
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<td>German II (Honors)</td>
<td>German III (Honors)</td>
<td>German IV (Honors)</td>
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<td>German I</td>
<td>German III</td>
<td>German III</td>
<td>German IV (Honors)</td>
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<td>Spanish I</td>
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<td>Spanish IV</td>
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<td><strong>Additional Requirements</strong></td>
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<td>Physical Education *</td>
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<td>Health (semester)</td>
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<td>Freshman Seminar</td>
<td>Career Stewardship (semester)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>PE requirement may be alternately fulfilled through participation in at least 4 seasons DC athletics</em></td>
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### Electives (requirement varies; must have .5 arts electives)

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<th>Fine Art II (1)</th>
<th>Fine Art III (1)</th>
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<td>Photography III (.3)</td>
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<td>Photography III (1)</td>
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<td>Comp Graphics I (.3)</td>
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<td>Comp Graphics III (.3)</td>
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<td>Comp Graphics I (1)</td>
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<td>Comp Graphics III (1)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal Workshop (.3)</th>
<th>Concert Choir (.5)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concert Band (.5)</td>
<td>Concert Choir (.5)</td>
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**Audition may be required**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drama Elective (.5)</th>
<th>Yearbook (1)</th>
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<td>Drama (.5)</td>
<td>Yearbook (1)</td>
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**Audition required**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Math Club (.3)</th>
<th>Math Club (.3)</th>
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</table>

**Prerequisite for Comp Prog I=completion of both Alg I and Geometry with C or above**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Skills (.2)</th>
<th>Writing Skills (.2)</th>
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</table>

**Psychology may only be taken once for credit**

|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Math Club (.3)</th>
<th>Math Club (.3)</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Electives listed below DO NOT appear on the student’s daily class schedule, though they do appear on any listing of classes the student is taking. The class work is done outside of the classroom schedule.

**Credits are earned as listed.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knight Tones (.5)</th>
<th>Knight Tones (.5)</th>
<th>Knight Tones (.5)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>audition required</td>
<td>audition required</td>
<td>audition required</td>
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<table>
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<th>Hi-Q (.5)</th>
<th>Hi-Q (.5)</th>
<th>Hi-Q (.5)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Approval required</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tech Crew Fall (.50)</td>
<td>Tech Crew Spring (.50)</td>
<td>Tech Crew Fall (.50)</td>
<td>Tech Crew Spring (.50)</td>
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**Graduation:** Students must have a minimum of 24 credits from 9th-12th grades to satisfy the DC graduation requirement.

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<th>Science</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Math</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 credits</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>World Language</th>
<th>Fine/Performing Arts</th>
<th>Physical Education</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Electives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 credits**</td>
<td>0.5 credit</td>
<td>1 credit</td>
<td>.3 credit</td>
<td>(varies)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Math Credits required for graduation depends on the student’s math track

**Must complete at least 2 years of a World Language in HS, including a Level III Course:**

**RESOURCE ROOM (no credit, varying times) and/or ACADEMIC SKILLS (1) may be selected or required for students**
THE COLLEGE PLANNING PROCESS—THE BASICS

Your Transcript—What it is and why it is important

- The transcript is the official record of all your hard work from 9th-12th grade showing the final grade and credit given for each completed course. It also shows your high school activities, honors, and awards.
- Cumulative G.P.A. is re-calculated at the end of each semester only. Colleges will only see final grades.
- The transcript is what college admissions counselors will look at most closely to determine if you can be admitted to their school. They will look at both the cumulative GPA and the classes that you have taken.

EVERY YEAR is IMPORTANT, Beginning as a Freshman!

Key Tips For Freshman:

✓ The most important semester can be the first semester of your freshman year because that GPA is what sets the mark for the rest of your high school career.
✓ Make sure you understand how many points each assignment, project and test is worth. The more points an assignment is worth, the bigger the impact your grade on it will have on your overall grade in the class.
✓ The easiest way to make an A in a class is to start out making A’s on all the assignments, from the very first one, and then keep the effort all semester long.
✓ Always try to keep your GPA at 3.0 or higher.
✓ If you don’t earn any A’s during a semester, it’s hard to make honor roll, unless ALL of your grades are B’s.
✓ If you fail a class that is also a graduation requirement you will have hurt yourself in a variety of ways. If you fail with a grade below 60, you will have to retake the course (think summer school) and the failure will remain on your transcript even when you have made up the credit toward graduation. If you fail with a grade between 60-69, you will have to complete course work over the summer and retake the final exam, and your grade can only be raised to a 70, or D-, still negatively impacting your GPA.

Please note, incoming 9th graders, that your Grade Point Average (GPA) begins to accumulate the very first day you are at DC and continues to accumulate throughout your four years of high school. A poor GPA in 9th grade will have negative effects in subsequent years. The chart below illustrates the difficulty of overcoming a poor start in high school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9th Grade GPA</th>
<th>10th Grade GPA</th>
<th>11th Grade GPA</th>
<th>Cumulative GPA that colleges will see</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLANNING TOOLS FOR YOU

Your College Board QuickStart Account

The College Board gives you the opportunity to have a free QuickStart account once you have taken the PSAT. Every sophomore and junior here at DC takes the PSAT in October, so you can open your QuickStart account as soon as you received your sophomore score report if you choose.

OPENING YOUR QUICKSTART ACCOUNT:

Use your PSAT Score Report to register. The registration process requires:
- Your Name (as it appears on the PSAT Score Report)
- The 10-character code (upper-right corner of the PSAT Score Report)
- Your Email address

You will also be asked to specify your gender, provide a birth date, and high school graduation date. Finally, you will also be asked to create your own unique username and password.

Tools available to you from your QuickStart Account include: A personalized SAT study plan and Skill Improvement for the SAT, Personality profile, preliminary college suggestions, Major and Career Research.

Your Naviance Account

Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, you will have your own account with Naviance. Naviance Succeed is an online suite of products and services that promotes your college and workplace readiness through increased collaboration, rigor, and transparency in the college and career planning process. Naviance Succeed brings together the best in course, college and career planning systems to provide you with a framework to direct your own education, establish your long and short-term goals and plan for your success after high school.

We know that you and your parents will be working together to make the important decisions which will guide your future and we want to provide as much information and support as we can in that process. We believe the Naviance program will provide information resources and data to help you and your parents with deciding how you can best prepare for college, how to choose which colleges to apply to and how to negotiate the actual application process.

Seniors each year will be working in their Naviance accounts exclusively to inform the guidance department of where they are applying, requesting transcripts and letters of recommendation and updating their account to reflect what college/university they are going to attend. The guidance department at DC will send all application documents (transcript, letters of rec, resume, etc.) electronically through Naviance.
We encourage you to make wise choices for your courses of study in your high school years, and to understand the impact the choices you make now will have on your future. Utilizing the many features available to you through Naviance throughout your high school career will be of great value to you!

OPENING AND USING YOUR NAVIANCE ACCOUNT

FOR STUDENTS:

Every 8th-12th grade student at DC will have access to Naviance through Family Connection. DC encourages each student to have an e-mail address that they check and maintain on a regular basis because the guidance department will be using e-mail as a primary means of communication with students through Naviance. For a student to log-in to their account after their account has been activated please follow the following steps:

1) Go to www.connection.naviance.com/dccs
2) Enter the e-mail address
3) Enter password

*** If you do not remember your password or you need to receive the registration code to activate your account please e-mail Mr. Creeden at tcreeden@dccs.org

FOR PARENTS

Parents will have their own account separate from their child that will allow them to monitor their child’s progress in Naviance, recommend colleges that they think their child would be a good fit for, and receive regular updates and announcements from the DC Guidance Department. For parents to log-in to their account they need to follow the same steps as the students above.
MY COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDELINES BY YEAR

**Freshman Year:**

- I understand DC’s grading system.
- I understand the grade point conversion system and course weighting system (which tells me how many grade points each letter grade is worth) that is used at DC.
- I know DC’s graduation requirements and how many credits I need to graduate.
- I understand that colleges will want me to do more than the minimum graduation requirements, and will want me to challenge myself by enrolling and doing well in the most challenging classes I can handle.
- I will try to develop good working relationships with my teachers and counselors.
- I understand that the colleges that I apply to will see the classes that I took during 9th grade, the grades that I earned in those classes, the GPA that I earned each semester, and my cumulative GPA.
- **I have logged into my Naviance account and input the appropriate information.**
- I understand that my cumulative GPA is probably the biggest factor in college admissions.
- I know the activities that are offered and organizations that exist at DC and have chosen several in which to actively participate.
- I have written down academic goals and have set my priorities for this year.
- I have committed to spend time in study every single day.
- I will keep track of my grades in my classes so that I always know where I stand and if I need to work harder to improve my grade to reach my goals.
- I attempt every assignment, project, and test so that I don’t earn any zeros.
- I try to earn the highest grades I possibly can.
- I have begun exploring colleges, majors and careers and have reviewed the results of my ACT Explore which I took in October of my freshman year.
**SOPHOMORE YEAR**

- I have tried to earn the highest grades I possibly can.
- I have actively chosen challenging courses and will continue to choose courses which challenge me.
- I understand the difference between four-year colleges, two-year colleges, and trade schools.
- I understand that admission to four-year colleges varies from college to college. Some are guaranteed admission, while others are selective or highly selective.
- I understand the credentials that selective and highly selective colleges will expect me to have if applying to such schools is my goal.
- I understand what a college major is.
- I have thought about some careers and majors that I might be interested in.
- I have explored careers, majors, and colleges.
- **I have logged into my Naviance account and updated all information I need to.**
- I understand the level of education that I will be expected to complete in order to pursue the careers that I am currently interested in.
- I have thought about my extracurricular activities and considered which ones I want to give the highest priority to during my junior and senior years.
- I have reviewed the results of my PSAT which I took in my sophomore year to determine what areas I may improve in and have opened My College Quickstart account.
- I understand I will be taking the PSAT in October of my junior year and I have taken the PSAT seriously because good things might come my way as a result of high scores.
JUNIOR CHECKLIST

This checklist will help you stay organized. Place a check in the box when you complete each item.

**Fall/Winter**

- Work hard and get good grades. Junior year grades are very important.
- Plan your test schedule and register for the SAT and/or ACT. Refer to testing section in this handbook.
- **Log into your Naviance account and update all information I need to.**
- Continue exploring careers and majors that interest you. Take the Do What You Are Assessment in Naviance
- Begin your college search.
- Plan senior year courses. Do they meet the admission requirements at the schools you are interested in applying to?
- Attend college fairs
- Look into summer enrichment programs, interests, summer jobs, special programs, etc. May is too late!
- Meet with Mr. Creeden and your parents to discuss all your options.

**Spring**

- Take the SAT or ACT at least twice; if you have interest in applying to highly selective schools, take the number of SAT II's required in May or June.
- Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you.
- Continue to update your Naviance information, including your resume.
- Consider visiting colleges during spring break.
- If you have a D or an F in a course required for college admission, sign up for summer school.

**Summer**

- Evaluate your college list, narrowing it down to 6-10 schools. Write or e-mail colleges for information/applications during the summer. Access their web sites. Start your essays/personal statement.
- Organize all the information for your resume and complete resume.
- Try volunteering during the summer in your career interest area.
- Know who you are going to ask for recommendations.
- Know what your GPA is at the end of your junior year.
- Plan visits to the schools you are most interested in.
- Pray for God to direct and guide you in your college decision making.
SENIOR CHECKLIST

This checklist will help you stay organized. Place a check in the box when you complete each item.

August/September

- Meet with Mr. Creeden two weeks prior to beginning of senior year.
- Log into your Naviance account on a weekly basis.
- Take strong academic classes and keep up your grades. They do count!
- Attend any college fairs you can and meet with college representatives who come to visit DC
- Retake ACT (if necessary)
- Register for the College Scholarship Service (CSS/Financial Aid Profile) IF required by the private college where you plan to apply.
- Review your 6th semester transcripts for necessary college/graduation requirements.
- Look into summer enrichment programs, interests, summer jobs, special programs, etc. May is too late!
- Request recommendations from any teachers, friends, employers, etc.
- Begin filling out college applications.
- Begin first draft of any required essays/personal statements, if not done during summer.

October/November

- Attend any college fairs you can.
- Take repeat SAT/SATIIs in October (if necessary).
- Meet with college representatives who come to DC
- Finish your essays and resume. Remember to proofread!
- Submit applications for Early Decision or Early Action.
- Submit applications for any November 1st or 15th application deadlines.
- Have College Board send your SAT/ACT scores to each college by their requested deadlines if they have not already been sent
- Begin to look for scholarships

December–February

- Submit applications for any December-February deadlines.
- Attend Financial Aid Information Night
- January 1- Filing period opens to submit FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- Plan visits to colleges.
- Send mid-year transcripts to the colleges/universities that request it.
- Continue checking out and submitting scholarship applications
March–May

- Continue to apply for local and national Scholarships
- **March 2**: Deadline to file FAFSA.
- Review your acceptances and financial aid offers. Check out housing opportunities at your colleges. Wait to hear from all the colleges you applied to before you make your final decision.
- Notify the college of your choice. Send a deposit to be received by **May 1**.
- Send in housing deposit.
- Apply now through early summer for community colleges
- Notify colleges you have decided not to attend.
- Check all placement exams at various colleges.
- The guidance office at DC will send your final semester transcripts to the college you will attend after the conclusion of the school year.
- Take time to thank those who helped you.
- Enjoy your summer and work hard!
ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR PENNSYLVANIA
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS
*As reported by the university in the 2010 Peterson’s Guide to 4 Year Colleges

MOST DIFFICULT
Bryn Mawr College
Bucknell University
Carnegie Mellon University
Curtis Institute of Music
Gettysburg College
Grove City College
Haverford College
Lafayette College
Lehigh University
Penn State-Schreyer Honors
Swarthmore College
University of Pennsylvania

VERY DIFFICULT
Alleghany College
Dickinson College
Franklin and Marshall College
Muhlenberg College
Penn State-Abington
Penn State-Altoona
Penn State-Berks
Penn State-Erie
Penn State-Harrisburg
Penn State-University Park
Saint Joseph's University
Ursinus College
Villanova University
Washington and Jefferson College

MODERATELY DIFFICULT
Albright College
Alvernia College
Arcadia University
Art Institute of Philadelphia
Bloomsburg University
Cabrini College
California University of PA
Carlow University
Cedar Crest College
Chatham University
Chesnut Hill College

College Misericordia
Delaware Valley College
DeSales University
Dusquesne University
Eastern University
East Stroudsburg University
Edinboro University
Elizabethtown College
Gannon University
Geneva College
Gratz College
Gwynned Mercy College
Immaculata University
Indiana University of PA
Juniata College
King's College
Kutztown University
LaSalle University
Lebanon Valley College
Lincoln University
Lock Haven University
Lycoming College
Mansfield University
Marywood University
Mercyhurst College
Messiah College
Millersville University
Moore College of Art and Design
Moravian College
Neumann University
Penn State-Beaver
Penn State-Brandywine
Penn State-Dubois
Penn State-Fayette
Penn State-Hazleton
Penn State-McKeesport
Penn State-Monte Alto
Penn State-New Kensington
MODERATELY DIFFICULT, con’t
Penn State-Shenango
Penn State-Wilkes Barre
Penn State- Worthington Scranton
Penn State- York
Pennsylvania College of Art and Design
Philadelphia Biblical University
Philadelphia University
Point Park University
Robert Morris University
Rosemont College
St. Francis University
St. Vincent University
Seton Hill University
Shippensburg University
Slippery Rock University
Susquehanna University
Temple University
Thiel College
Thomas Jefferson University
University of Pittsburgh
University of Scranton
University of the Arts
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia
Waynesburg College
West Chester University
Westminster College
Widener University
Wilkes University
Wilson College
York College

MINIMALLY DIFFICULT
Art Institute of Pittsburgh
Baptist Bible College of Pennsylvania
Central Pennsylvania College
Cheney University
Clarion University
Devry University
Harrisburg University of Science and Technology
Keystone College
Lancaster Bible College
La Roche College
Mount Aloysius College
Valley Forge Christian College

Key:

**Most Difficult:** More than 75% of the current freshman were in the top 10% of their high school class and scored over 1310 on the SAT I. About 30% or fewer of the applicants were accepted.

**Very Difficult:** More than 50% of the current freshman were in the top 10% of their class and scored over 1230 on the SAT I. About 60% or fewer of the applicants were accepted.

**Moderately Difficult:** More than 75% of the current freshman were in the top half of their high school class and scored over 1010 on the SAT I. About 85% or fewer of the applicants were accepted.

**Minimally Difficult:** Most current freshman were not in the top half of their high school class and scored somewhat below 1010 on the SAT I. Up to 95% of applicants were accepted.
## ADMISSION STANDARDS FOR SELECTED OUT-OF-STATE UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS

*As reported in Peterson's 2010 Guide to 4-Year Colleges*

### MOST DIFFICULT
- Amherst College
- Brown University
- CA Inst. Of Technology
- Columbia University (NY)
- Cornell University
- Dartmouth College
- Duke University
- Emory University
- Georgetown University
- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins
- The Julliard School
- Mass. Inst. Of Technology
- New York University
- Princeton University
- UNC- Chapel Hill
- United States Air Force Academy
- United States Military Academy
- University of Chicago
- University of Notre Dame
- Stanford University
- Washington and Lee
- Wellesley College
- Williams College
- Yale University

### VERY DIFFICULT
- American University
- Bard College
- Boston University
- Elon University
- Fordham University
- Georgia Tech
- Hillsdale College
- North Carolina State University
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Parsons New School for Design
- State University of New York
- Taylor University
- University of Florida
- United States Naval Academy
- University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign)
- University of Michigan
- Vanderbilt University
- Wake Forest University
- Wheaton College
- University of Wisconsin-Madison

### MODERATELY DIFFICULT
- Auburn University
- Calvin College
- Cedarville University
- Clemson University
- Houghton College
- Rider University
- Rutgers University
- St. John’s University
- University of Delaware

### MINIMALLY DIFFICULT
- Liberty University
- Regent University

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**Key:**

**Most Difficult:** More than 75% of the current freshman were in the top 10% of their high school class and scored over 1310 on the SAT I. About 30% or fewer of the applicants were accepted.

**Very Difficult:** More than 50% of the current freshman were in the top 10% of their class and scored over 1230 on the SAT I. About 60% or fewer of the applicants were accepted.

**Moderately Difficult:** More than 75% of the current freshman were in the top half of their high school class and scored over 1010 on the SAT I. About 85% or fewer of the applicants were accepted.

**Minimally Difficult:** Most current freshman were not in the top half of their high school class and scored somewhat below 1010 on the SAT I. Up to 95% of applicants were accepted.
## FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Academic programs: Does the college offer the programs you are interested in?</th>
<th>11. Quality of Program: Is the college known for a particular program? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program you are interested in?</th>
<th>21. Graduation Rates: What percentage of students graduate? How long does it take for most students to graduate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Christian vs. Secular: Does the school have ministry opportunities for you to get involved in? Do you want a biblically-based education?</td>
<td>12. Campus Safety: Are the dorms secure? Does the college offer an escort service for late at night? Are there police phones on campus? What is the crime rate at the campus?</td>
<td>22. Graduate School: What % of graduates go on to graduate school immediately upon graduation? What % are accepted by the medical, business or law school or their choice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Selectivity: Is the college most competitive, highly competitive, very competitive or non-competitive?</td>
<td>13. Rural, Suburban or Urban: Is the school in a large city, college town, or rural setting far from any major city?</td>
<td>23. Placement: How many graduates go right into the marketplace? Is there a job placement office that assists?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chances of Admission: Be realistic. What are your chances of getting in? Is this a &quot;reach&quot; or a safety school?</td>
<td>14. School Size: Is the school small (fewer than 1,000 students, medium or large (more than 15,000 students)? Does size matter to you?</td>
<td>24. Library: How many books are in the library? Is it computerized? Is the campus library tied into a larger network?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Difficulty: Will the work be a challenge for you, too advanced or too easy? Is it a grind school? A party school?</td>
<td>15. Geographical Diversity: Is the college a regional one attracting students from the same state or region? Or does the school attract students from all over the US or the world?</td>
<td>25. Facilities: Are there adequate sports and recreational facilities? A swimming pool? Athletic field for non-varsity? Music practice rooms?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Costs: What is the cost, including tuition, fees, room and board, books, transportation and travel, and spending money?</td>
<td>16. Ethnic Diversity: What % of the students are from minority groups and how does the school handle race relations?</td>
<td>26. Athletic programs: Does the school offer a wide variety of intercollegiate and intramural sports programs? Are there adequate programs for women?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Financial Aid: Does the school offer merit-based aid or is all financial aid based on need? Does the school negotiate its financial aid offer?</td>
<td>17. Other Students: What are the students like? Will you fit in? Will you be able to make friends?</td>
<td>27. Computers: Are computers required for incoming freshman? Are there adequate computer facilities on campus? Can your child have a PC in the dorm?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Commuters vs. Residents: Do most students commute from within town or do most students live on campus?</td>
<td>18. Curriculum: Is there a core curriculum for all students in your program? Do you have freedom to choose courses?</td>
<td>28. Socialization: Does the school offer a full complement of activities? Are there sororities and fraternities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Living conditions: Is campus housing available and guaranteed for all four years? Are the dorms co-ed? Are there single-sex dorms? Are alternative housing arrangements available?</td>
<td>19. Advanced Placement: Does the school accept AP credits? For what score? Do you get sophomore standing or more in-depth courses while retaining freshman status?</td>
<td>29. Internships: Are there opportunities for hands-on experience while you are in college? Do any of these pay a salary or stipend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Location: Is the school close to home or clear across the country? Could you easily go home for a weekend? How about a Thanksgiving break?</td>
<td>20. Study Abroad: Does the school offer a study abroad program?</td>
<td>30. Honors Program: Are there honors programs available? Who is eligible?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You have heard about the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT I, SAT II, ACT, AP and TOEFL, but do you understand what they are and which choices you have? If you have been confused and a bit hesitant to ask, the following will help you.

**PSAT/NMSQT – PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST—taken in school and registration is done for you**

- The PSAT is a practice SAT I test that evaluates a student’s ability to do college level work. Scores are not put on student’s high school transcript and are not sent to colleges for entrance. The NMSQT portion is not a separate test, but uses the scores from the math, verbal reasoning, and writing to find the top 1% of the nation’s juniors for eligibility in participating in Merit and Achievement programs. The PSAT is offered here at DC once a year in October and is taken by all sophomores and juniors.

**SAT I – SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST**  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

- The SAT I is a college admissions test comprised of Critical Reading, Math and Writing sections. Students can register to take this test by mail or online at the address above. The test is administered in October, November, December, January, March, May and June. We offer the test at DC on the October, January and June dates. You do not have to take the test at DC, if another site is more convenient for you. College bound juniors generally find it wise to take this test twice in the spring semester of their junior year and then in the fall of their senior year if needed.
- Colleges want to see the best score on each section.
- December of senior year is the latest test date that seniors can take the SAT and expect those scores to be considered by college

**ACT – AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST**  
[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

- The ACT is a college admissions test that tests English, mathematics, natural sciences, and social studies. All colleges will accept either the SAT or ACT and will accept the test with the highest score. If you find that you did not do well on the SAT, you might take the ACT, which is administered on different dates than the SAT. Most college-bound juniors take this test in the spring of the junior year or the fall of their senior year. The ACT also has an essay portion of the exam that is optional. We offer the ACT on the September, February and April testing dates.
SAT II – SUBJECT TESTS

- SAT II tests are placement tests required for admissions by certain colleges, generally those with the most competitive admissions. The student selects subject areas to be tested. Be sure to check college requirements before signing up for the SAT II.
- Students should know which SAT II subject tests are required by the colleges to which they plan to apply. Most colleges that require subject tests desire students to take two to three tests (one being in the area you are looking to major in). Students applying to engineering or pre-med programs should check achievement requirements carefully.
- SAT II subject tests are one-hour, multiple choice tests covering specific subject areas, scored from 200-800. They are held on the same testing dates as the SAT I. You cannot take SAT I and II on the same day.

AP – ADVANCED PLACEMENT

- AP tests are placement tests taken after completing a college level course (AP class). Universities may grant college credit with qualifying scores. You must check with the colleges you are interested in to see what scores they will accept. Tests are administered in May to students completing the appropriate AP course. These scores are not used for admission purposes.

TEST SIGN UP AND SENDING SCORES PROCEDURES

- Test dates can be found on www.collegeboard.com for the SAT I and II exams and www.actstudent.org for the ACT. Literature that lists all of the test dates will also be given to each junior and senior at the beginning of the school year.
- It is strongly recommended that you apply online, but paper registration materials are available in the guidance office.
- If you are eligible for special testing accommodations, additional procedures are required, so contact the Discovery Center well in advance.
- Plan ahead and register on time. Avoid standby, for places are not always available and cannot be guaranteed.
- Additional Score Report Forms, Financial Aid Forms, College Board Registration Bulletins, and related materials are available in the guidance office.
- Very few schools accept the scores as they appear on your DC Transcript so you must send your SAT or ACT scores directly to the colleges you are applying to from the College Board or ACT websites.

THE CEEB OR SCHOOL CODE FOR DC IS: 392998
WHICH COLLEGE ADMISSION TEST SHOULD I TAKE?

- All universities and colleges accept either the SAT or ACT. Because research indicates that many students perform quite differently when they take both, it may benefit you to take both. The option is yours as colleges typically utilize the higher of the two scores for admission and scholarship purposes.
- Remember, there is never a penalty for taking the test early or taking one over, so do what best prepares you to take hold of your future. It is important to remember that an entrance test score is only one piece of information a college looks at when considering your application. Your application, transcript, content of courses completed, school and community activities will also be considered.

A Word About Standardized Test Prepping

Because your high school record is the single most important part of your admission folder, don’t forget that good grades in demanding courses are more important than standardized test scores. Don’t spend so much time trying to improve these scores that your grades suffer and involvement in school suffers.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

The awarding of financial aid can be based on need, merit (high GPA, rank, test scores), or special qualifications such as community service, race, intended major, or extracurricular ability.

Financial Aid Based on Need

The majority of the student population in higher education today is receiving some kind of financial aid from colleges and/or the state and federal governments based on need.

A. State Aid
In order to apply for state aid, a student and parents must first be sure to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

B. Federal Aid
The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be filed if you wish to receive any kind of need-based aid from the government, the state, or the college. You apply for the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Communication regarding the completed FAFSA are communicated back to you by email. Parents, you will need your tax information in order to complete the application; submit the FAFSA as close to January 1st as is possible for you. When the government receives the completed application, it makes a determination of an Expected Family Contribution. The EFC is required by
colleges in order to determine the amount of aid they will offer. The filing priority date for the FAFSA is **March 2**. It is certainly possible to send the FAFSA in after this date, but there is less of a chance that aid will be available even if a determination is made that a student should be entitled to a certain amount. It is a good idea to contact the financial aid offices of specific colleges if there are circumstances that are not addressed by the FAFSA or the determined Expected Family Contribution.

**WILL WE QUALIFY?**

As a general rule, if parents have a question about whether or not they would qualify for financial aid, they should go ahead and apply. Often families with large incomes do qualify, depending on other financial commitments (number of children in private school or in college, medical bills, etc.). Some colleges and universities are able to make “need-blind” admission decisions, but some do not. **Admission and financial aid officers consistently tell families to try for aid if it will help make college affordable.** Some students and parents do not apply for financial aid because they think they will not qualify for aid or they think that aid is not available. Money is available to students who demonstrate NEED. “NEED” is defined as the difference between what it costs to attend a specific college and what the family can pay toward the costs.

\[
\text{Cost of Attendance} - \text{Family Contribution} = \text{Financial Need}
\]

It is important to remember that the cost of attendance is a variable which is dependant upon the cost of a specific college. The Family Contribution is a constant. Since the amount that the family pays remains the same, a student would be eligible for different amounts of aid at different colleges. **Do not rule out a specific college based solely on the cost of education.**

**PENNSYLVANIA STATE GRANT PROGRAM**

A grant is a financial aid award that does not have to be paid back. The Pennsylvania State Grant Program provides State Grant awards to eligible Pennsylvania residents in need of financial assistance to help them afford the costs of higher education.

PHEAA administers the Pennsylvania State Grant Program at no cost to taxpayers, ensuring that every dollar appropriated to the program goes directly to students.

State Grant awards may be paid in part or in whole with funds provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Federal Leveraging Educational Assistance
Partnership (LEAP) program, or the Federal Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP) program.

**How do I apply, and what is the deadline for State Grant applications?**

First, file the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid); the FAFSA serves as your application for a Pennsylvania State Grant. You must file it every academic year that you plan to go to school.

**First-time applicants**

After submitting your FAFSA—if you meet the Pennsylvania State Grant Program eligibility requirements—PHEAA will ask you to provide additional information via the online Pennsylvania State Grant Form.

1. You will receive an email directing you to the Pennsylvania State Grant Form on Account Access.
2. Sign in or create an account with American Education Services (AES), a division of PHEAA.
3. Provide us with some basic information so we can quickly process your application for consideration.
4. Print, sign, and mail your Pennsylvania State Grant Form to PHEAA to complete the process.

**Deadlines**

**First-time applicants:**
- **May 1** immediately preceding the academic year if you plan to enroll in a degree program or a college transferable program
- **August 1** if you plan to enroll in business, trade, or technical school; a hospital school of nursing; or a 2-year nontransferable program at another institution

**Renewal applicants:**
- **May 1** is the deadline to submit your renewal FAFSA. To notify PHEAA of any changes such as marital status, reduced income, medical/dental expenses, or other life events, complete the appropriate State Grant Document.

**How is a Pennsylvania State Grant award determined?**

State Grant eligibility is calculated in accordance with the federal Need Analysis Formula and Pennsylvania State Grant policies.
LOANS

• FEDERAL PERKINS LOAN PROGRAM

The Federal Perkins Loan Program provides low-interest loans to help needy students finance the costs of postsecondary education. Students can receive Perkins loans at any one of approximately 1,800 participating postsecondary institutions. Institutional financial aid administrators at participating institutions have substantial flexibility in determining the amount of Perkins loans to award to students who are enrolled or accepted for enrollment. Borrowers who undertake certain public, military, or teaching service employment are eligible to have all or part of their loans canceled. In general, schools are reimbursed for 100 percent of the principal amount of the loan canceled, and the reimbursement must be reinvested in the school's revolving loan fund. These institutional reimbursements for loan cancellations are an entitlement.

• FEDERAL STAFFORD LOAN

Undergraduate Stafford Loans are fixed-rate student loans for undergraduate students attending a college or university that participates in the Federal Family Education Loan Program. Stafford loans can be used to pay tuition, and other eligible school expenses. Stafford loans are not based on credit, and they can be subsidized or unsubsidized depending on the student's financial need. Subsidized Stafford Loans are federally guaranteed loans based on financial need. Interest does not accrue on the loan while you are in school at least half time, or during any future deferment periods. The federal government "subsidizes" (or pays) the interest during these times. Unsubsidized Stafford Loans are federally guaranteed loans that are not based on financial need. Interest will accrue from the time the loan is disbursed to the school, but can be deferred until 6 months after graduation.

• FEDERAL PARENT LOAN FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

PLUS Loans are for parent borrowers and are not need based. PLUS loans provide additional funds for educational purposes. They are variable interest rates, capped at 9%. PLUS loans are made by a bank, credit union, or savings and loans association through a process similar to Stafford Loans. Parents may borrow up to the cost of attendance. Repayment begins 60 days after the final disbursement.
FINANCIAL AID BASED ON MERIT AND SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Colleges and universities, private organizations and companies provide merit and specialized scholarships. Grants, scholarships are outright gifts of money.

A. Colleges and Universities

By checking off appropriate boxes on the application form or completing a separate application, a student lets a college know that he wants to be considered for an academic scholarship. Winning such an award depends on an outstanding high school record or an outstanding talent. Some institutions offer special scholarships in athletics, music and more – be sure to read the literature thoroughly. All schools have different criteria for their institutional scholarships. Please apply for these if you plan to apply to a private school.

B. Private Organizations and Companies

Numerous private organizations and companies send applications for scholarships to the college counseling office. The criteria may range from a superior academic record, to the excellence of a specific project or essay, to an unusually high degree of volunteer involvement in the community. In addition, there are competitions for scholarships available to students with special qualifications having to do with ethnic background, special talents, and religious beliefs. Students will be notified of these scholarships as they arrive. Many companies also offer scholarships to children of employees (e.g., Hewlett Packard, Xerox, Chevron, IBM, Gulf Stream, etc.).

C. Local Scholarships

Please click on “Scholarships” in your Naviance account to access the latest local scholarship information at DC.

GRANTS

- FEDERAL PELL GRANT

Pell Grants are awards to help undergraduates who demonstrate financial need pay for their education after high school. For many students, these grants provide a foundation of financial aid, to which aid from other federal and non-federal sources may be added. Pell Grants range up to $4,310 maximum. Unlike loans, grants do not have to be paid back. To apply for a Pell Grant, you simply check “yes” to the appropriate question on your FAFSA. Your financial information is then automatically forwarded to the Pell Grant Program.
and the institutions that you list on the spaces provided on the form. The college financial aid office determines the size of the reward.

- **SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANTS**

  Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) are awarded to undergraduate students having greatest financial need. Priority is given to Pell Grant recipients. As with other grants, it does not have to be paid back.

- **FEDERAL WORK STUDY PROGRAM**

  The Federal Work-Study Program provides jobs for undergraduate students who need financial aid. FWS gives you a chance to earn money to help pay your educational expenses. Your pay will be at least the current Federal minimum wage, but it may also be related to the type of work you do and its difficulty. Your total Federal Work-Study award depends on your financial need, the amount of money your school has for this program, and the amount of aid you get from other programs. The financial aid office at the college you plan to attend is responsible for determining your eligibility and may arrange the job.
GENERAL COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Since admissions policies vary, you must check with each college you are considering **BEFORE YOU APPLY** to make sure you understand and requirements. College Admissions websites generally list admission requirements. These may include:

- Entrance test (only certain colleges)
- Grade Point Average range that the school accepts
- Completion of specific college preparatory courses may be required at some institutions
- Letters of reference (optional at some institutions; required at others)
- Personal interview may be required by some institutions
- Samples of previous work; e.g. portfolios or tapes may be required for students interested in art, dance, music, where performance skill may be a criteria for admission
- Personal statement or essay

TYPES OF ADMISSION

**Standard Admission:**
Application and supporting documents must be submitted by a set date in the senior year. The dates vary from November 30 through March 15. The college then takes action on all the applications and notifies all students of its decision at the same time. Notification dates for the majority of the schools fall on or around April 1. If accepted you have until May 1 to let the school know if you intend to accept the offer of admission.

**Early Decision:**
This program is for students who select a particular college as a definite first choice. The application, as well as all supporting documents, must be submitted early, usually in November. The college then takes action and notifies you, usually in December, whether you have been accepted or deferred to the standard admission review period. **If accepted, you are under agreement to attend that institution and must withdraw all other applications, therefore you may only apply to ONE school as an Early Decision candidate. Most schools require you to sign a statement that you understand these conditions when applying Early Decision. Students considering very selective schools should strongly consider applying to one of these schools Early Decision, as a large proportion of accepted students at these schools come from Early Decision candidates. Students who need financial aid should give careful consideration to applying for Early Decision because financial aid might be affected.**
Early Action:
This program is similar to Early Decision in that you will receive an acceptance decision earlier than April (usually between December and February) but you do not have to commit yourself until the reply date in May and can continue to apply to any other schools. The college can refuse admission as well as defer or accept an applicant under this system. Application completion dates range from October 1st-November 15th.

Rolling Admissions:
The many state universities and some private schools that use this program act on your application as soon as the file is complete. They notify you of the admissions decision within weeks of receiving the complete application. Under this system, you usually do not need to reply until the reply date in May.

Open Admissions:
Some colleges do not practice selective admissions and offer admission to all high school graduates who apply. Community colleges are an example of this type of admission.

MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT WHERE TO APPLY

- Study all available information carefully to familiarize yourself with the institution. A good place to start is by exploring the school’s website.
- If possible, talk to alumni of the institution, preferably in your proposed major, keeping in mind that atmosphere and requirements change with time and vary from one institution to another.
- Talk to faculty members and to the college counselor who may be familiar with the programs at the colleges or universities you are considering.
- Request catalogs from the institutions you are considering and also ask for any additional information on the specific programs related to your chosen major.
- Visit each of the schools being considered whenever possible to assess how well it meets your needs.
- Utilize all available information to narrow choices before making application, since application fees are non-refundable.

WHEN TO APPLY

- The selection process should begin during your junior year in high school, although it is never too early to start gathering information about colleges or universities you may want to attend.
- Actual application should be made during the first semester of your senior year in high school.
• Plan to take any required tests prior to the end of the first semester of your senior year.
• Familiarize yourself with the application deadlines for each institution so that the test scores and transcripts can be secured and sent before the stated deadlines.
• Contact instructors well in advance to insure that letters of recommendation will be submitted before the stated deadlines.
• Turn in Secondary School Report form or Counselor Report form to the guidance office
• File early for financial aid, well in advance of stated deadlines.
• File your admission application early, especially if you know that the major of your choice has few openings.
• **Students who need financial aid should give careful consideration to applying for Early Decision because financial aid might be affected.**

### HOW TO COMPLETE A COLLEGE APPLICATION

Before you start filling out applications, you should:
- Visit the campuses of as many possible of the colleges you are considering.
- Narrow your list of schools to which you are going to apply to no more than six. The cost to apply to each college averages from $40 to $75 or more each, so narrowing the number of colleges to those you are really interested in attending is cost effective and saves you unneeded work.
- Copy the application for practice and as a work copy.
- Read the application directions before you begin to fill it out.
- **Make sure your SAT/SAT II and ACT scores are sent by the testing company to each college where you apply.**

### THE COMPONENTS OF THE APPLICATION:

**The Application**

The application includes simple biographical information such as your birthday, family members and addresses. Frequently you will need to write essays, which are intended to acquaint the admission committee with your experiences, strengths and weaknesses, and writing ability. Check out the section “Writing the Essay” in this handbook for advice about essays.

**A Word About Electronic Applications:**

An ever-increasing number of applications are turning to advances in technology to make the application process easier. When you access a college’s Web site, you will usually find two ways to complete the application:
1) Complete the application online and submit it electronically (via the college’s Web site).

2) Download and print out the application, to be completed by hand and mailed.

Most schools much prefer electronic submission; some will waive application fees for online applications.

If you fill out the application and submit it online, be sure to print out a copy of what you send.

The Transcript

To a college admissions office, the single most important part of the application is your transcript – above SAT’s, above activities, above recommendations. When scrutinizing transcripts, admissions officers consider not only what grades you have earned, but also the curriculum’s level of challenge and creativity (How many courses has the student taken per semester? Has the student continued studying a language over time? Has a student taken the most challenging courses for his ability? Has the student shown a depth of commitment to art, music, drama, publications or athletics?). The more selective the college, the more its admission office will look for challenging coursework (such as AP college level courses taken during the last two years of high school).

***Please note that DC does not place rank on the transcript; when schools require it, we do supply a decile ranking for students.

Standardized Tests

You should note carefully which tests are required by colleges of interest to you. When reading about admissions statistics; it is important to remember that colleges are publishing average SAT and ACT scores; do not automatically eliminate a college from consideration if your scores fall below them (If your scores fall below the average, your chances for admission would be strengthened with some significant compensating talent, such as athletic, musical, artistic or leadership ability). Students must remember to have testing agencies send official records or previous tests directly to each college receiving an application and must confirm receipt of those scores.

A Word About Standardized Test Prepping

Because your high school record is the single most important part of your admission folder, don’t forget that good grades in demanding courses are more important than standardized test scores. Don’t spend so much time trying to improve these scores that your grades suffer and involvement in school suffers.
Extracurricular Life

Colleges want to know what students are engaging in or devoted to outside the classroom. Although a wide variety of activities may seem impressive, colleges look closely to see how significantly a student has contributed, such as a leader, innovator, etc. Activities could include painting, writing poetry, studying a musical instrument – virtually anything about which a student feels impassioned.

**Commitment and depth are more significant than the number of pursuits.**

Clubs formed a couple of months into the senior year, for instance, look suspect. Community service is very important to colleges and scholarships; especially service related to what the student is interested in pursuing as a major.

Teacher Recommendations

Many colleges ask for two academic subject teacher letters of recommendation. These recommendations provide a detailed analysis of a student’s approach to learning. Typically, a student chooses a junior and/or senior-year teacher who knows his or her work well and who may know him outside of class. It may also important to get a letter or two from an individual that knows the student outside the classroom (coach, boss, youth pastor, etc.)

It is crucial that the student be considerate of teachers in the application process. A teacher should first be asked if they would write such a letter. The student should give the teacher plenty of time (at least two weeks) to write and should provide the teacher with a resume. It should be made clear to the teacher what they should do with the letter of recommendation when they are done.

The Interview (Please see the section *Interviews* at the back of this handbook)

Colleges that require an interview as part of the admissions process can accommodate students through alumni interviewing locally. Whereas decades ago the interview was significant factor in making an admissions decision its primary purpose now is to answer any questions a student may have about the college. It simply enables the admission office to personalize its understanding of a candidate more fully or for scholarship qualification or application purposes.

The Essay (Please see the section *Writing Your College Essays* in the next section of this handbook.

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**OBTAIN LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION & SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT**

It’s up to you to make sure that your high school transcript and Secondary School Report are sent to each college and university you are applying to and that each person you have asked to write a recommendation completes it on time.
You must request a transcript be sent to a school by logging into your Naviance account and clicking on “request transcript” under My Colleges. Please e-mail or call Mr. Creeden if you have any questions.

- Contact each teacher, boss, or friend you wish to write a recommendation at least two weeks before you wish to have it.

## APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

- Make a copy of the FAFSA for practice and as a work copy.
- Fill out the FAFSA and file form between January 1 and March 2. The earlier you file the form, the better. You can apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov/
- If you apply to private colleges, contact each college to find out their financial aid filing and the forms they require in addition to the FAFSA. If the CSS Profile is required, you must register for the Profile about four weeks before the deadline for financial aid filing for the private colleges.
WRITING YOUR COLLEGE ESSAYS

Colleges often include one or more essay questions on their applications. Some schools require you to write on a specific topic; other request essays on personal goals and ambitions. Personal comments give admissions officers an opportunity to evaluate your writing ability and to estimate your potential contribution to the non-academic life of the college. The essay may describe family financial responsibilities, extra-curricular and travel experiences and special circumstances. The more competitive the school, the more importance is placed on the essay.

There is no one way to write an effective essay, but the following is a list of suggestions that will help:

**DO**

✓ Try to encapsulate the main idea in one sentence before writing
✓ Write clearly – if it sounds vague, change it
✓ Use words with which you feel comfortable
✓ Express, not impress
✓ Edit and rewrite until your essay says what you mean
✓ Check all spelling and grammar before typing your essay onto the application
✓ Be specific and use details
✓ Let the first draft sit a while without reading it

**DON’T**

✓ Use slang
✓ Try to be “cute”
✓ Begin your essay with “My name is…”
✓ Digress from the original topic
✓ Continue your essay beyond the specified number of words
✓ Be too general – focus on one meaningful episode in your life rather than a complete history
THE HIGH SCHOOL RESUME

Getting into college is like trying to get a good job. In both cases, you need a way to sell yourself. That’s where your resume comes in. A high school resume works like a professional resume. If you are a junior, planning on applying to colleges that do not accept everyone who applies (that’s most colleges), you are going to be competing for a spot in the freshman class. You need a tool to market yourself, something to make you stand out. A resume is the answer. To put together a high school resume, you need to do some serious reflection. Get a piece of paper and pencil. Ask someone in your family, who knows what you have accomplished over the years, to sit with you for an hour or so. The purpose of exercise is to chronicle the highlights of your academic and extracurricular career.

1) Start by listing the biggest academic honors you’ve garnered, starting with the 9th grade. Most colleges are interested in only your four years of high school. Please note, though, that if you have done something exceptional in middle or elementary school, make note of it. Academic honors include honor-roll recognition, essay-writing awards, science competitions, and the like. Take time to discuss your history. Make note of everything that comes up.

2) Now turn to your extra-curricular. This category includes clubs you’ve belonged to, class offices you’ve held, sports, band, yearbook, and all the other non-academic activities you’ve done. Don’t forget non-school-related items such as volunteering at a nursing home and jobs you’ve worked. Include special interests like photography, hiking, writing, and so forth. Detail your uniqueness. You’re trying to paint a portrait of yourself; create an action inventory

3) When you are finished listing everything, put the items into chronological order by category.

When you are done, you’ll have a one-sheet profile of your best work and activities. You can include a copy of the resume with all of your applications to offset the application’s limited space. Don’t be afraid to market yourself. If you don’t, who will?

*Please see the sample resume in Appendix F*
INTERVIEWS

There are three basic types of interviews:

Personal Interview on Campus with an Admissions Officer: A college admissions officer provides information about the college and the prospective student shares information to supplement his/her completed application, transcript and letter of recommendation. This interview suggests that the student has a serious interest in the college. He/she should be well prepared for the interview.

Personal Interview with Local Alumnus: Following the application deadline one or two members of local alumni committees contact the college applicant. Student preparation for this interview is important

Group Interview on Campus: In a group setting students discuss thoughts and concerns about information not covered in the college literature. (It is unlikely that personal questions will be asked of individual students during this session.)

Preparing For The College Interview

Students should know general information about the college before interviewing. A senior must remember to be appropriately dressed, prompt, and prepared to respond to remarks in a thoughtful yet brief manner. The following questions are typically asked during an interview session:

1. Why do you want to go to college?
2. Why do you want to attend (Name of College)?
3. What are your favorite subjects? Why?
4. Do you have any heroes? Any heroines?
5. What is your greatest strength as a person?
6. What people have the greatest influence on you?
7. Who is/are your favorite author(s)?
8. What subject(s) creates difficulty for you in school?
9. What will be your possible field of study or major in college?
10. Are you involved in community activities? What have you done?
11. What are your extracurricular interests? Do you plan to pursue them in college?

Students should also ask questions in the interview session. Consider questions regarding types of students, teaching staff, housing, fraternities and sororities, social opportunities, and professional school opportunities (i.e. graduate school). Please see Appendix G for Interview Tips & Questions
THE COLLEGE VISIT

Each student is allowed two days of absence during their senior year in order to visit colleges. Students should miss as few days of school as possible.

To get the most accurate feel for a place, try and visit while the college is in session, attend some classes and spend the night.

Parents and students should consider visiting some colleges over spring vacation during junior year. A visiting high school student can get at least a feel for the size and appearance of the campus and for its setting. The summer following junior year provides another opportunity. Some students have visited colleges in August, just before the beginning of senior year, and have found many students on campus. The final stages of college visiting might take place during the last two weeks in April of the senior year.

Aside from visiting classes and spending time with students, the most important aspect of the campus visit is talking to students at the college. Tours are almost exclusively led by current students and provide a good opportunity to ask questions. But feel free also to stop students in the cafeteria, visit student admission volunteers, ask to see a dorm room, or arrange an overnight or a meal with students.

To schedule for college visits, phone the admissions offices. Telephone numbers are available in Appendix. They will let you know when tours are offered, if an interview can be arranged, whether or not they can accommodate a visitor overnight – they can even serve as travel agents in terms of directional advice.

While students are visiting a campus, they may think they will remember every detail. However, after several such visits, the campuses begin to blur in the mind’s eye, so students should keep a brief record of impressions, list of names, and descriptions of the campuses for later reference. A hand-held tape recorder or camera is a surprisingly useful tool.

Note: Admission officers love to hear from students directly. Whether or not a visit is possible, a friendly call from students is an outstanding way to gain insight and make a personal connection.

Please see Questions to Ask a College Representative in Appendix A
PARENT’S ROLE:

Opportunities to attend college are greater than ever. Students need your support to guide them through the college process. By far the most important influence is you! Parents can help with:

- Alerting children to application deadlines
- Meeting testing deadlines
- Encouraging a typed or neatly printed application
- College visits
- Scholarship and financial aid applications
- Attending a financial aid workshop at your school
- Parent signatures on various application, scholarship or financial aid forms
- Attending meetings with counselor
- Personal insights when talking with child about college
- Loving and supporting your child during the ups and downs of the college application process
- Patience, Patience, Patience!

Note: The college application process (application, requesting recommendations, turning in forms, talking to admissions counselors, writing essays, registering and sending SAT or ACT scores, etc.) should be the student’s responsibility to complete. The parent role is best utilized as a support system for the student.

SCHOOL’S ROLE:

- The school’s role in the college application process is to give each student all the information and training they need to help them make the wisest decision possible when it comes to choosing a college or university to attend. We here in the guidance department at DCCS want to help guide each student to where God might have them attend. This includes activities such as workshops, college fairs, college visits to HHCA, classroom visits by the counselor, one-on-one and parent meetings with the counselor, e-mail updates by the counselor, the publication of this handbook that each high school student has, and even discipleship/accountability groups that the students attend.
- Compile and send a transcript package upon request that a transcript be sent through their Naviance account. The transcript package consists of:
  - Courses, grades, GPA, and test scores.
  - School profile
  - Counselor’s recommendation/Secondary School Profile if submitted
  - Resume (if submitted by a student)
• Letters of recommendation (if requested and submitted by a student)

• A file is kept for each senior the entire year with test scores, letters of recommendation, resume, etc. You just need to give the guidance office one copy of everything and copies will be made when additional copies need to be sent.

• The student’s final transcript will automatically be sent to the college they will be attending in the first week of June. You do not need to submit a request.

THE COLLEGE BOUND ATHLETE

Character, scholastic achievement, and athletic ability are the keys to securing athletic scholarships. When selecting a college you will want a good academic “fit” as well as a place to showcase your athletic talent. Student athletes need to concentrate on their grades and test scores as much as their sports.

Most colleges and universities that sponsor sports programs belong to one of three major athletic associations:

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (NCAA)

The NCAA is the largest association, and is in charge of all areas of athletics for four-year colleges including recruiting, eligibility, and financial aid. There are over 36,000 NCAA student-athletes and over 126,000 of them receive either a partial or full athletic scholarship. The NCAA has three divisions. NCAA Division I is considered the top sporting level. Division II ranks below Division I and generally offers a lesser number of athletic scholarships. In Division III there are no athletic scholarships but other forms of financial aid, as well as academic scholarships, are sometimes awarded. The NCAA imposes strict high school academic requirements for student-athletes who wish to continue playing their sport in college.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS (NAIA)

The NAIA is similar to the NCAA, but serves a smaller number (approximately 300) of four-year colleges and universities. The NAIA is also divided into three divisions. NAIA schools view athletics as part of the overall educational process with the emphasis on “student” in the term student-athlete. More than 90 percent of NAIA institutions offer athletic scholarships but, in general, Division 1 schools offer more sports scholarships than Division II schools.
NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (NJAA)

The NJAA represents two-year colleges exclusively and has three divisions. Approximately 45,300 athletes compete in one of 24 regions and every year the NJAA hosts 50 national championships. NJAA Division I colleges may offer athletes a full athletic scholarship, Division II colleges may offer only partial scholarships that cover tuition, fees, and books while Division III colleges do not offer scholarships.

Responsibilities of Prospective Student-Athletes

Online Registration Instructions:

1. Go to www.ncaaclearinghouse.net
2. Follow all the directions given by the NCAA
3. Request a transcript be sent to the NCAA Clearinghouse through Naviance account.

To Be Certified By the Clearinghouse

1. The completed Student Release Form and fee must be received at the clearinghouse by the spring of the senior year.
2. An official transcript must be mailed directly from every high school attended.
3. Complete the Foreign Student Application (if applicable).
4. SAT or ACT scores must be sent directly from the College Board.
5. Final transcript must be sent. **If all the steps above are completed, this is taken care of by the guidance department. You do not need to inquire about this.**
6. The certification process for students participating in Division I or Division II colleges should be started at the end of the junior year.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES

Admission:
- What factors do you consider when making an admission decision?
- When must I choose a major?
- How can I arrange a campus visit? Are there any special visitation days on your campus coming up?
- What are the application deadlines for admission and financial aid?
- What is the average high school GPA of the entering freshman class, and what is their average GPA after freshman year?
- What kind of courses should I be taking in my senior year of high school?
- Do you accept AP test credit?
- Is the SAT II Required

Financial Aid:
- What are the application deadlines for financial aid?
- What is the total estimated student budget for a year?
- What kind of financial aid is available?
- How many students receive financial aid? What is the average reward?

Programs of Study:
- What types of internship/co-op experiences are available?
- What percent of a typical freshman class will actually graduate from your college? In how many years?
- How does the institution place students in their freshman class?
- Do you have my major?
- What are considered your top programs?
- How do you assign faculty advisors to students, especially those who are undecided about their majors?
- What additional academic services do you offer to students (tutoring, career counseling, study skills workshops)?

Campus Life:
- What types of extra-curricular activities are there on campus?
- How many of last years freshmen returned their sophomore year?
- Is yours a “suitcase college”, where students go home on weekends?
- How many students live on campus? What percentage of the student body is residential/commuter?
- How are roommates selected?
- How safe is your school? Where can I obtain statistics about crimes on and off your campus?
- Is there transportation on an off campus?
## APPENDIX B

### COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

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<td>* athletics, intramurals</td>
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<td><strong>Campus Visits</strong></td>
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APPENDIX C

MILITARY OPPORTUNITIES

IMMEDIATE BENEFITS

1. Educational and career training (technical and professional)
   - college degrees: associate, bachelor, graduate
   - vocational or technical certificates
   - certificates of completion of civilian apprenticeship programs
   - high school diplomas or equivalency documents
2. Opportunity to become a commissioned officer through ROTC or military academies
3. Travel
4. Specific guaranteed training upon entry
5. A community with a variety of attractions
6. Free medical and dental care
7. Lower cost commissary and post exchange service
8. Guaranteed pay
9. Promotion opportunities
10. A cadre of trained consultants and counselors

LONG-TERM BENEFITS

1. New G.I. Bill
2. Scholarships and Fellowships
3. Pay bonuses
4. 30-day paid vacation every year
5. Development of leisure-time skills
6. Certain housing, medical and educational services for families
7. Low-cost life insurance
8. Lifetime retirement benefits after 20 years service

TERMS OF ENLISTMENT

There is a mandatory eight-year service obligation for all branches of the military which may be split between active duty and reserve duty. The required proportion of the time spent on the active duty and reserve duty varies with each branch of the military. Check with the military recruiters for details.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Age – At least 17 and not have reached your 22nd birthday on July 1st of the year.
2. Marital Status – Unmarried
3. Character – Good moral character
4. Medical Standards – Good physical condition
APPENDIX D

QUICK FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST

- Estimate and understand costs for EACH college (direct and indirect)

- Attend Financial Aid Workshop in the fall

- Ask for information

- Be sure to follow college’s deadlines

- Do you need a Profile?

- Submit ALL required documents.

- Complete and submit a FAFSA (after January 1 and before March 2)

- Respond to all requests for additional documents
  * Respond to requests for additional information about your need analysis form
  so that there will be no further delay in processing your request for aid.

- Understand award letters and ask questions

- Check to see if other financial aid forms are required

- Keep a copy of all forms submitted

- Use a “Certificate of Mailing.”
APPENDIX E

General Tips For a Student With a Learning Disability

• If you have any specific questions regarding the transition to college with the accommodations you received at DC, be sure to set up an appointment with Dr. Hutchison, the Director of the Discovery Center.
• It is unusually optimal to have support systems in college similar to support systems that were available in high school (e.g. a 504 Accommodation Plan)
• Be sure to talk with several students with learning disabilities who are in the program when you visit each campus.
• Application requirements for a formal program may vary, but minimally include the following:
  ❖ Evidence to support the designation of a learning disability:
    ▪ A recent report from a qualified psycho educational diagnostician, which gives the results of a WAIS-III and an achievement battery.
    ▪ High School transcript
    ▪ Results of SAT I or ACT (timed with extended time)
    ▪ Letters from teachers of academic subjects describing the level of the courses being taken by the student, as well as performance.
    ▪ Campus interview

• Formal programs for students with learning disabilities are in demand. It is therefore important to complete applications and send in supportive information as soon as possible.

Questions For The Initial Telephone Call To Colleges

• What are the testing requirements for students with learning disabilities (WAIS-III, Woodcock-Johnson III, etc.)
• Will it be necessary to update tests? Programs usually require that tests have been administered within the past three years.
• Are there any other special application requirements?
• What are the high school course requirements? Are there any requirements waived for students with learning disabilities?
• Ask that they send you a student profile for entering students with learning disabilities (test scores, GPA, rank, and any other data used).
Joshua Beitelspacher
PO Box 295
505 Palmquist Ave.
Hayti, SD 57241-0295

High School Activities:

Football
- Team Captain (12th)
- Varsity Letter (11th & 12th)
- All-Conference Honorable Mention (12th)
- Academic All-State (12th)
- Most Improved (11th)

Yearbook
- Editor (12th)
- Design Editor (10th & 11th)
- All-State (10th, 11th, and 12th)

National Honor Society
- Two-Year Member (11th & 12th)
- Reporter (12th)

Student Government
- Student Body Secretary (12th)

Math & Science Contests
- Captain of the 1st Place team at South Dakota University Physics Bowl (12th)
- 3rd in Physics at DSU (11th)
- 2nd in Senior Math at Northern State University Math Contest (11th)
- 3rd in Physics at DSU (11th)
- Honorable Mention in Senior Math at NSU (11th)
- 2nd in Advanced Algebra at NSU (10th)
- 1st in Geometry at DSU (9th)

Science Fair
- Two-Year Participant (9th and 10th)
- Presenter at Minnesota Jr. Science and Humanities Symposium (10th)
- 3rd Place Physics Divisions at the Eastern SD Science and Engineering Fair (9th)

Newspaper
- Staff Writer (10th)

High School Honors:

National Merit Finalist (12th)
Graduated 1st in a class of 58 (12th)

Academic Awards
- Academic All State Gold Medallist (12th)
- Academic Excellence Award (12th)
- Principal's Leadership Award (12th)
- Bill O'Keefe Memorial Scholarship (12th)
- State Regeants' Scholar (12th)
- Presidential Award for Academic Excellence (12th)

September Student of the Month (12th)

Best Overall Math Score Awards
- Calculus (12th)
- Advanced Math (11th)
- Algebra II (10th)
- Geometry (9th)

Other Activities:

Hayti Helpers 4-H Club
- 11-Year Member (1991-2001)
- Washington Citizen Focus Trip (2001)
- 4-H Western Roundup Trip (1999)
- Held Various Offices (1993-2001)

Hamlin County 4-H Junior Leaders
- Secretary/Treasurer (2001)
- President (2000)

Hayti Lutheran Parish Luther Leagues
- President Sr. Luther League (2000)
- Treasurer Jr. Luther League (1997)

Work Experience:

Appendix G

Interview Tips and Questions

Reminders:

- BE ON TIME
- Develop rapport
- Don’t sit down until the interviewer(s) sits down
- Sit up straight
- Eye contact
- Don’t look tense…just relax
- Use more than just “yes sir” or “no sir” answers
- Ask a couple of questions yourself
- Firm handshakes at the beginning and end of the interview

Possible Questions:

- What are your biggest assets/strengths?
- We would be making a big commitment to you if you received this scholarship or were accepted to our school, what kind of commitment would you be making to us?
- What has been your biggest achievement?
- How did you spend last summer?
- What is the most difficult situation you faced?
- What do you want to do after you graduate from college?
- Which of your extracurricular activities is most rewarding and why?
- What courses have you enjoyed the most?
- Who do you consider to be your role model?
- Do you believe you are a role model to others?
- Why should you get this scholarship or be accepted to our school instead of one of the other applicants?
- Are your grades an accurate reflection of your potential?
- What have you done that has shown leadership throughout high school?