*Flex High School – Cleveland*

# College Application Guidebook



***Flex High School***

**Mrs. Sterlekar - Principal**
**Ms. Woodward - School Operations Manager**
**Mrs. Bates - School Counselor**

# Applying to College Step by Step



Applying to Colleges requires a detailed approach. This guide has been developed to help you through the process step by step. Please follow each step closely; failure to do so may result in your application being incomplete or incorrect. These steps are laid out, in detail, in this guide.

STEP 1 – COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION ON THE COMMON APP, COMMON BLACK COLLEGE APP OR DIRECTLY TO THE COLLEGE

STEP 2 – REQUEST TRANSCRIPTS BE RELEASED THROUGH MS. WOODWARD

STEP 4 – CONFIRM WITH COLLEGES THAT THEY HAVE RECEIVED YOUR SCHOOL DOCUMENTS

## *College Application Timeline for Seniors*

**Flex High School requires that all requests for transcripts be submitted to the office *two weeks before the application deadline*.**

Make sure to follow our Flex High School calendar. Days off do not count towards the two week request window.

**DEADLINES 2024/2025: (Always allow two weeks for processing at FHS before a college/scholarship deadline!)**

| College Application Deadline: | | THS Processing Request Deadline: |
|---|---|---|
| **OCTOBER 15** | → | **OCTOBER 1** |
| **NOVEMBER 1** | → | **OCTOBER 15** |
| **DECEMBER 1** | → | **NOVEMBER 17** |
| **JANUARY 1 – MID-JANUARY** | → | **DECEMBER 4** |

# ***STEP 1***

***COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION ON THE COMMON APP OR DIRECTLY TO THE COLLEGE.***

Which one should you choose? If the school you are applying to is NOT a common app school then you will need to apply directly to the college on the college website. If your college IS a common app college and you are applying to multiple colleges, it will save you time to fill out the common application.

THE COMMON APPLICATION

## GUIDE TO THE COMMON APPLICATION
## 2024-2025

**Q: What is the Common App?**

**A: The Common Application (informally known as the Common App) is an undergraduate college admission application that applicants may use to apply to any of more than 900 member colleges and universities in 49 states. NOT ALL COLLEGES ARE COMMON APP SCHOOLS. If you are applying to multiple common app schools, one common application can be used for all schools, eliminating a lot of redundant work.**

**Q: Should I use the Common App?**

**A: If you are applying to multiple colleges that are Common App schools, we recommend that you use the Common App. Fill it out once and then it can be sent to all of these schools. Don't be afraid that colleges will pay less attention to The Common App than their own application—they won't. So if you have two or more Common App colleges on your list, use it!**

****If you are only applying to one college or to several colleges that do not use the Common App, you will apply directly to the University via their individual webpages.**

**Q: How do I know what schools are Common App Schools?**

**A: CLICK HERE to find out which schools use the Common App.**

***Step by Step Guide to filling out The Common Application***

**CREATE AN ACCOUNT:**

1. **ALWAYS use your personal email for applications. Your school email address will likely put college emails into the spam folder and also your school email address will be immediately deactivated once you graduate.**
2. **Use the same username and password for all college applications.**
3. **The Common App requires a password that has uppercase, lowercase, number and character requirements so save it in your phone for the future!**

**COLLEGE SEARCH TAB:**

1. **This is where you search to find colleges to which you plan to apply and add them to a centralized list.**
2. **Make this the first thing you do after setting up an account so that you can see the requirements for each institution!**

**DASHBOARD/MY COLLEGE TABS:**

1. **In these two tabs, you can see specific information about your chosen schools, see application requirements, and manage the sending of your applications.**
2. **This is where you will find the FERPA link to click and authorize the release of your transcripts and materials.**
    - **FERPA TIP: You MUST complete the FERPA release in this section**
    - **FERPA TIP: You only need to complete the FERPA release once and it will cover all schools.**
    - **FERPA TIP: When asked if you waive your right to see recommendations, say YES.**

**COMMON APP TAB (Seperate Guide Sheet also available)**

1. **This is the actual Common Application that you need to complete. Below is a breakdown of many of the sections within the application to provide guidance…**

    **a. Under PROFILE:**
    - **TIP – Under Personal Information: Use your FORMAL NAME – be consistent**
    - **TIP – Under Contact Details: Use the same email for ALL college applications and then make sure you check your email!**
    - **TIP- Under Common App Fee Waiver – Only say yes if you meet the criteria for and have turned in Free and Reduced Lunch paperwork with Flex High School. If you are requesting a fee waiver, you MUST alert your school counselor or it will not be applied!**

    **b. Under EDUCATION:**
    - **Under Current and Most Recent School- Date of entry is your first day as a Freshman**
    - **Under Graduation Date: June 1, 2024**
    - **Under Counselor Information:**

      **rwoodward@flexhigh.org**

    **c. Under Grades:**
    - **Class rank reporting – no**
    - **GPA Scale – 4.0**
    - **Graduating class size – NA**
    - **GPA Weighting – Non weighted**
    - **Rank Weighting – Non weighted**

- **If you need a copy of your course history to enter, please contact Ms. Woodward.**
- **Under <u>Current Year Courses –</u>**
  - **List ALL courses**
  - **Make the course name the same as what is in your schedule.**

**d. Under <u>Honors –</u>**
- **Honors courses that may be on your transcripts from another school**
- **Any CCP courses**

**e. Under <u>Testing –</u>**
- **Whether or not you report your scores in this section, please remember you also have to have all test scores sent directly from the testing company.**
- **If you have an upcoming test, you can put it under "Number of future sittings you expect."**
- **For ACT – The first thing you will put in is your highest COMPOSITE score from one single test date, then you put in your highest subscores out of all your test dates.**
- **I have heard about Common App using a different reporting scale than what the ACT uses. If you run into this issue, please follow the following link for clarification on comparing scores.**
  **CLICK HERE**
- **For SAT – You input your highest subscores out of all your test dates.**

**f. Under <u>Activities –</u>**
- **You only have room for 10**
- **You will be asked to describe the activities but space is limited to a few sentences for each activity.**
- **Guesstimate hours per week and weeks per year.**

**g. Under writing <u>– (there is an additional guide to writing prompts at the end of this college application guide)</u>**
- **Writing prompts are NOT REQUIRED for all colleges but some require them. The Common App will let you know if the essay is required for the colleges you have inputted.**
- **If you have already written your college essay(in class or on your own) , you do have the ability to link your essay to your Common App account.**
- **Personal Essay – Work on your essay outside of this application in MS Word, Google Docs etc and when it is ready, copy and paste it in the Common App. Please remember that all of your chosen Common App schools will receive the same essay. It is recommended that you have your essay proofed by another set of eyes.**
- **Additional information – Only use this section if you wish to provide details of circumstances or qualifications not reflected in the application.**

**<u>QUESTIONS LINK UNDER EACH INDIVIDUAL COLLEGE</u>**

1. **The questions tab under each college includes additional questions you must answer that are specific to each school. Some schools have been sneaking in additional writing in the questions section!**
2. **Sometimes based on the way you answer these questions, it may generate additional writing prompts, so please pay attention!**

**2023-2024 COMMON APPLICATION ESSAY PROMPTS**

1. **Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.**
2. **The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?**
3. **Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?**
4. **Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?**
5. **Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.**
6. **Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?**
7. **Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.**

**CLICK HERE to learn more about the Common App essay prompts**

# ***STEP 2***

## ***COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT PROCESS THROUGH THE OFFICE***

1. **NOW IT'S TIME TO FILL OUT YOUR TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM THROUGH THE VIRTUAL TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM**
    a. **Meet with Ms. Woodard two weeks prior to request your transcripts**

2. **Gather all of your necessary items, transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc.**

3. **Test Scores:**
    a. **We does not send out ACT or SAT scores to colleges. It is the student's responsibility to submit test scores to the colleges.**
    b. **Log on to your www.actstudent.org and/or www.collegeboard.org accounts to have your ACT and/or SAT scores sent to the colleges to which you have applied.**
    c. **If a school you are applying to is test optional, please reach out to their admissions office to make sure this is the case and obtain any pertinent information from them not submitting test scores.**

# ***STEP 3***

Call Ms. Woodard where you applied to confirm that they have received your school documents. If they have not received your documents, please check with Flex High School to confirm that they were sent.

Good job, YOU DID IT!

Additional Resources:

## The College Essay




**What Admissions Officers Want to Find: The essay is a window into your mind and personality; it reveals your uniqueness—what you think about, what drives you and what you aspire to be. An effective essay can compensate for a weakness in other parts of the application.**

- **The best essays begin with a "hook" to catch the reader's interest.**
- **Writing honestly about yourself-genuineness is important.**
- **Write a unique essay.**
- **Focus on a single area.**
- **Be proud of your achievements, but don't brag.**
- **Avoid repeating in your essay what you have written elsewhere.**
- **Have someone, a parent, teacher or school counselor read your essay and make suggestions—revise it.**
- **Focus on educational or personal reasons for going to college, not on social, economic or family reasons.**
- **Clarity and originality of thought is important.**
- **Show maturity.**
- **Organize your thoughts. Brevity is key.**

- **Use precise and economical language.  If you can say it using less…use less.**
- **Always check grammar, spelling and punctuation.**

- **Use specific detail to "show" rather than tell.**
- **Avoid negativity.**
- **Make sure your ideas are well-organized and your writing shows logical progression.**
- **Demonstrate your ability to think in a nuanced, sophisticated manner.**
- **Use strong, specific diction.**
- **Vary sentence structure.**

**If you intend on playing a sport at a Division I or II college, you must register with the NCAA.**

https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/??links.ncaa-play-college-sports_en_US??

**Once registered, you must complete a set of tasks, the most important of those being:**

***Request an "INITIAL" transcript.**
***Follow up in the School Counseling office by turning in a Transcript Release Form.**
***Have ACT/SAT scores sent directly from the test company.**
***Request a "FINAL" transcript IN MAY.  Again, this is done within your NCAA account.  .**
**(Refer to your NCAA account for other tasks)**