

BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING... I want you to take this quiz to get a [Reality Check](#) on how much life costs and what you really need to make to live. If you are unsure of what you want to do take this [Interest Finder](#) to explore where your career interests match skills you could learn to get a job. You can also use [MyNextMove](#) to look for careers that match your interests!

1) Start building your college list! We want to at least have 5 schools listed so that you have your choices! Some of them may even be on the list for [Free College Application Week which is through CFNC](#). To do this, you can use [Niche List for Colleges & Community Colleges within North Carolina](#) & the [College Builder Quiz](#) to identify some universities/community colleges that you could be interested in. Notate the location, average GPA, and Student Life to determine whether a school is a **likely, match, or reach.**

Use this [Google Sheet](#) for your list to make a copy that you can personalize and add to your Drive.

[Here is a list of all the NC College Application Deadlines for Fall 2025](#)

[*You can use the Common Data Set to help narrow down your list, understand the factors that schools actually take into account, and see the standardized test and GPA averages*](#)

You may want to look into [NC College Connect Schools](#).

NC College Connect is a program that offers qualified students with a weighted GPA of 2.8 and above the opportunity for a simplified application process at select UNC System universities and their local North Carolina community college. Participating institutions include:

- Elizabeth City State University
- Fayetteville State University
- University of North Carolina Asheville
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- University of North Carolina at Pembroke
- Winston-Salem State University

2) [Create a CFNC account](#) [\(USE YOUR PERSONAL EMAIL\)](#)

[*If it says you already have an account, let Mr. Schwanke know and he will find your account*](#)

[Step By Step Guide On How To Create A CFNC Account](#)

3) [Create a Common App Account!](#) The Common App is a central, online application for students to apply to over 1000+ colleges and universities around the world! It is where you'll find the [Common App Essay prompts](#), add your recommenders ([send them your brag sheet as well](#)), and research which colleges you want to apply to. You can find a guide on [how to use Common App here!](#)

4) [Complete the RDS \(Residency Determination Service\)](#) - [\(sign in using your CFNC account\)](#) The RDS determines if you qualify for in-state or out-of-state tuition for NC schools and is open continuously! [\(RDS is confidential so any information you put into it will not be shared with immigration authorities\)](#) It is used in order to help you pay for school as an **IN-STATE RESIDENT** as out-of-state tuition is **3 TIMES MORE THAN IN STATE**.

Fill out these online sheets to prepare - [ENGLISH RDS FORM](#) - [SPANISH RDS FORM](#)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A PAPER COPY, COME SEE MR. SCHWANKE IN THE RESOURCE HALL (BETWEEN THE MAIN OFFICE AND THE MEDIA CENTER)

Here is a step-by-step video on how to complete the RDS

 **KHS Class of 2023: RDS Tutorial**

5) [Create an FSA ID \(FAFSA Account\) and have your parent\(s\) create one too!](#) [\(If your parent\(s\) DO NOT have a Social Security Number \(SSN\), that is okay! They can still create an account!\)](#) [Here is a free, online, downloadable guide in multiple languages explaining FAFSA!](#) The **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is to apply for Federal Student AID and opens on **October 1st**. **BE SURE TO CREATE A FSA ID AND HAVE YOUR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) CREATE ONE.**

6) [Fill out the CSS Profile](#) (only if necessary)

If you are looking to apply to [UNC Chapel Hill, Duke, Elon, Wake Forest, or Davidson](#) in North Carolina, you are **REQUIRED** to submit the CSS Profile in your first-year application. The CSS Profile is a non federal financial aid application that can help students unlock financial aid from private sources. It opens on **October 1st**. You and 1 parent need an account to fill it out along with **paying an initial fee of \$25 and \$16 for any additional school** you want to add. [Get started here with the CSS Profile](#)

7) Look into Scholarships! You can also start your scholarship search now. Look into the [CFNC Scholarships](#). Scholarship applications also depend on the university! [Check out the Jordan Student Services website on the scholarship page](#). If your household income is below \$80,000 a year then you may qualify for the [NC NEXT Scholarship](#). It pays for more than half, if not all, of tuition and fees at any of the 16 public universities in the state! You can also look at more scholarships on my [Scholarship Slide](#) and bookmark ones you want to apply to!

8) Check out released essays to get a preview of what colleges may be looking for! Use this as a base and if you need me to look over your essays, please share them with me! Work with your English IV teacher to go over your essay (if you had English IV last year or have it next semester, reach out to that teacher now) I would create a base essay based on the Common App prompts so you can send that to multiple colleges! **14 released college essays:** <https://www.shemmassianconsulting.com/blog/college-essay-examples>

Common App Essay Prompts: <https://www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts>

Websites used:

[CFNC](#) - Used for in state colleges & community colleges

[Common App](#) - Used for colleges all over NC and beyond

[RDS](#) - Used for residency status for in-state colleges & community colleges

[Xello](#) - Access Xello thru the RapidIdentity NCEdCloud to help further build your college list with their college search tool

[FAFSA](#) - Free Application for Federal Student Aid

[Jordan High School Scholarship Page](#)

Hope this helps, and let me know if you have any questions! **To schedule another appointment and view more college info, click here:** https://linktr.ee/jhs_dukecac