

JOSEPH CASE HIGH SCHOOL

Senior Class: **The College Application Process**

2024-2025



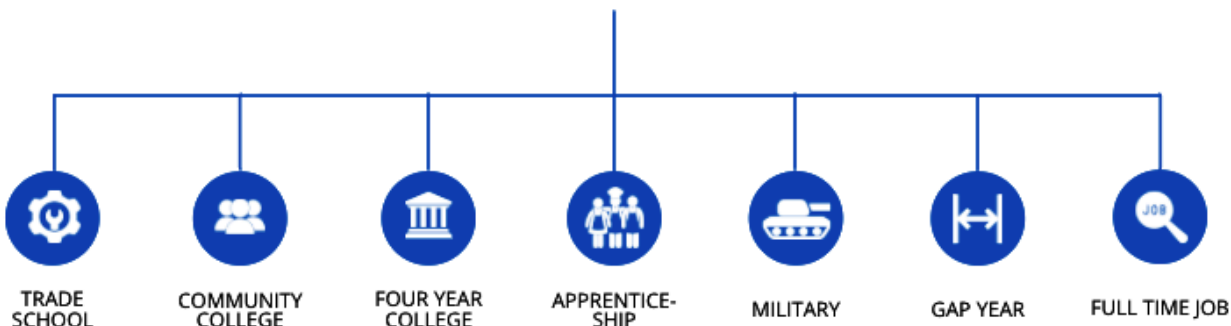
PLANNING GUIDE

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THE BIG PICTURE

WHAT'S AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?



SENIOR TIMELINE

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Register for the Fall **SAT I/SAT II** at sat.org/register. Make sure you send your scores to the schools where you are applying. Register for the ACT exam at www.act.org if applicable.
School Code: 222105
- Make an appointment with your guidance counselor to discuss your post-secondary plans.
- Research applications for schools of interest.
- Begin narrowing down your list of the schools for which you wish to apply.
- Give senior activity sheet to teachers/counselors for letters of recommendation.
- Decide on **early action/early decision/regular admission** and research **deadlines**.
- Involve your parents/guardians.

OCTOBER-DECEMBER

- Narrow down your college list.
- Continue to work hard in your classes.
- Request recommendation letters from teachers/counselor.
- Polish your college essay and create a final draft.
- Continue to communicate with guidance throughout this process.
- Financial Aid application submission begins in October. Visit studentaid.gov.
- If you plan on filing for financial aid online, apply for student AND parent PIN numbers at studentaid.ed.gov.
- Early action and early decision deadlines are usually November 1st and November 15th.
- **OBSERVE DEADLINES!!!!** You are responsible for getting your applications out on time, not your parents/guardians, teachers, or counselor.
- Last chance to sign up for SAT I/SAT II exams
- Make sure you know which financial aid forms you need to complete (i.e. [FAFSA](#), [CSS Profile](#)).
- Submit SAT scores through your [collegeboard](#) account.

JANUARY

- Register with NCAA if playing a Division I or II sport at college www.ncaaclearinghouse.com
- Continue to complete college applications and complete financial aid applications
- **OBSERVE DEADLINES.**

FEBRUARY- MARCH

- Understand that schools take time to make a decision.
- Request mid-year reports to guidance if necessary.
- **OBSERVE DEADLINES!!!** Complete and mail out applications to schools.
- Complete FAFSA and watch for available local scholarships.

APRIL

- Continue your scholarship search. In April, **Case High School Scholarship Trust, Inc.** application is available to students in the guidance department. Students/parents should check in the Guidance Department often for other available scholarships, also review websites such as www.fastweb.com and www.swanseaschools.org/o/jchs/page/scholarships.

MAY

- Send deposit to school of choice
- **CELEBRATE** with **FRIENDS/FAMILY!!** Thank your parents/guardians for their help.
- Send thank you cards to the people who wrote recommendation letters for you and who awarded you scholarships.
- Sign up for New Student Orientation at your selected school.

JUNE

- **GRADUATE** from Joseph Case High School. **CONGRATULATIONS!**
- Now help your junior friends/relatives through this process; you are a master at it now.
- Finalize your college choice with your counselor; the Guidance Department will send out your final transcript when you let your counselor know what college you will be attending.



MISSION: To provide opportunities and pathways in a safe, supportive and technology-rich environment that engage, challenge and inspire students to achieve college and career readiness and to contribute to our 21st century community.

JOSEPH CASE HIGH SCHOOL

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SAMANTHA ESSEX, Adjustment Counselor

IAN MAHER, Guidance Counselor

KEITH R. MELLO, Adjustment Counselor

CASSIE REIS, Guidance Counselor

College Visit Protocol Form

- Senior students are allowed a total of three (3) excused absences for college visits, tours, and/or placement tests only.
- Junior students are allowed a total of one (1) excused absence for college visits and tours and/or placement tests.
- ***All visits must be approved by the Director of Guidance one week before the scheduled visit.*** One way to procure this is to have an appointment with an admissions officer in writing. The date and time of the appointment should be clearly indicated on a written document.
- Within 24 business hours of submission, your request will be approved, rejected or modified. For example, a late morning appointment at a local college does not necessitate being excused from school for the entire day.
- If you leave school during regular hours, students still need a dismissal note from their parent or guardian. Please include a phone number where this person can be reached.
- When you return to school, please present guidance with a follow-up document from the school you visited that states the date and time you were at the college.
- Finally, most colleges and universities offer late afternoon tours and appointments, as well as weekend opportunities for visitation.

Activity Participation: No student will be allowed to participate in any activity unless he or she is present for at least five full periods during that school day. In the event that extenuating circumstances exist which are going to prevent member/athlete from meeting the provision above, then he or she must receive an excuse from the Principal on the day immediately prior. In an extreme emergency (which arises early on the day of the event) the Principal must be contacted no later than second period of the day. Those students who participate in extracurricular activities will also be expected to follow the eligibility requirements stated in their Agenda handbook as well as the Academic Probation guidelines listed. All school rules apply during extracurricular activities. **Please complete the following information and obtain the necessary signatures.**

Student's Name: _____ Year of Graduation: _____

College to be Visited: _____ Visit # 1 2 3 Date of Visit _____

Time of Visit: _____ Student's Signature _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Director of Guidance _____

******Before leaving the college you are visiting, please obtain the following signature, and Seal/Stamp of the College, or a letter on College Letterhead indicating your name, appointment date, and time.**

College Representative _____ Title _____

Return this form to Mrs. Bulk in the Guidance Office

The content of all Swansea school publications is available upon request in languages other than English.

Swansea Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of Swansea Public Schools from, or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

Why should you go?

Admissions counselors say that a student decides in the first five minutes of being on a campus whether they like it or not. A school may appear great on paper, but not in person. When you visit a school, do the following things:

1. Take a student-guided tour. They know best about the college experience.
2. Attend a class if possible.
3. Try cafeteria food.
4. Pick up copies of student publications such as newsletters, etc.
5. See the dorm rooms/athletic facilities/student activity areas, etc.
6. Stay overnight with a friend, if possible.
7. Find the commuter lot.
8. **ASK QUESTIONS.** Ask what you can't read in the college books.

What you should be asking:

1. Are you happy here? Was this school your first choice? Would it be now? Why or why not?
2. Are there job opportunities available on campus for students?
3. How do you register for our classes?
4. Is the faculty nice? Are the courses challenging?
5. How did you know you wanted to go here? What are the pros/cons of attending this school?
6. Is this a safe campus?
7. What extra-curricular/intramural activities are available?
8. What are the dorm rules? Are they strict?
9. Is the campus/school fun?
10. What do most students do on the weekends? Do most go home?
11. What is the visitation policy for friends, etc.?
12. What is common bathroom etiquette?
13. Are there laundry facilities available? Where? Cost?
14. How is the cafeteria food? What are the food options on campus? Any suggestions for local restaurants?
15. What do I do if I don't like my roommate?
16. What is the process for housing selections? Is there a lottery?
17. What activities are available in the area? Any free activities available?
18. What clubs/organizations are there at the school?
19. What technology is available on campus – is the internet available in the dorms/classrooms?
20. What is the policy on having laptops in the classroom?
21. What is the attendance policy?
22. Can you make your own schedule?
23. How many hours per week do you have to put aside for homework/studying?
24. Is there an orientation program available for new students? When?
25. What did you (student) write about in your application essay?
26. What classes did you, (student) take during your senior year in high school?
27. Is there a career/job placement center on campus? Do you get help with resumes?

Sample Thank You Letter to an Interviewer

Date

Name of College visited

Address

Dear (Name of interviewer):

It was very nice to meet with you on (date of interview). I would like to thank you for the time and consideration you gave to me during my admission interview at (name of college).

I particularly enjoyed (add point(s) which impressed you).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Your signature)

**Don't forget to make an appointment with
your Guidance Counselor to
begin the college application process.**

Your Guidance Counselor will help guide you through this process **one step at a time!!**

The College Application Process

What to expect from your Counselor:

- ☐ A one-on-one appointment with you to discuss post-graduation plans.
- ☐ Interest, support and encouragement.
- ☐ Suggestions for schools to look at.
- ☐ Feedback.
- ☐ Guidance through the college application process.
- ☐ Sharing of knowledge and resources.

What not to expect from your Counselor:

- ☐ Know your thoughts.
- ☐ Send out your application materials.
- ☐ Keep track of your deadlines and appointments.
- ☐ Apply for you to schools or scholarships.
- ☐ Write recommendations without notice or your Senior Activity sheet.

What your Counselor expects from you:

- ☐ Send out applications, essays, etc., on time!
- ☐ Be responsible for applications, scholarships, deadlines, decisions, recommendations, essays, financial aid (FAFSA); register for SAT (we will help you, but not do it for you).
- ☐ Keep an open mind and be open to new ideas/suggestions.
- ☐ Fill out applications accurately and neatly, sending them out on time.
- ☐ Ask questions when you are unsure about something.
- ☐ Make transcript requests at least two weeks before the due date.
- ☐ Keep scheduled appointments.

After deciding what colleges, it's time to apply.....

Let's Look at the Application

There are many different parts of an application that make it complete. They include:

- The Application
- The Essay
- Transcripts/Profile
- SAT's/Subject Area Tests/ACT's
- The Fee
- Recommendation Letters
- Rank/GPA

1. **The Application:** Students may apply via [Common App](#), the school's site or in person. Research each college application protocol.
2. **The Fee:** Fees vary depending on the college while others are free.
3. **Recommendations:** You should select teachers, counselors, etc., that you feel know you well to write your letters of recommendations. Ask yourself: Who did I connect with and why? When you have figured this out, ask them if they would write you a letter of recommendation. Aim for three teachers. You will need to fill out an activity sheet (located in the Guidance Department). This is a guide for you to use. The idea is for you to "brag" about yourself. Write down all of your accomplishments, awards, work experiences, travel experiences, etc. The more information you include on the sheet, the better your recommendation will turn out. Make copies and give them to your teachers/counselor who are writing letters for you. Be sure, at the end, to write them thank you letters. It takes a lot of TIME to write letters of recommendation so give your teachers/counselor plenty of it!! **Check to see how many letters your colleges require!!**
4. **The ESSAY:** The college admission essay requires careful thought, consideration, and time. Do NOT think you can write your essay in ten minutes! This is your chance to show colleges that you are interesting and would be an excellent representative of their school upon graduation. See your English teacher for help. Essay prompts are on Common App or the college's site.

Some tips for writing your essay:

- Be yourself. Be funny, but not too funny
- Be original, authentic and true to yourself. Use descriptive words.
- Get their attention with a good opening line – make them want to read more.
- **Proof, Proof, Proof!!!!** You don't want to send an essay full of grammar mistakes.
- Don't complain, repeat information, change your writing style or write what you think they want to hear.
- **Here are the Common App essay prompts for 2024-2025:**
 - 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.
 - 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?
 - Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
 - 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?
 - Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

- Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- 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.

5. **Transcripts/Profile:** Colleges need to see what you have taken and how you did. Every course you have taken since freshman year will appear on your transcript. This will be sent with your application. A school profile is also sent along with your transcript (GPA and class rank are included on the transcript).

6. **SAT/Subject Tests/ACT:**

SAT - www.collegeboard.org

ACT - www.act.org

Many schools are now test optional. Please check the requirements of each school to determine if you should submit your scores. If you need to submit your scores, you can do this through your SAT or ACT account.

SAT DATES		ACT DATES
November 2, 2024		October 26, 2024
December 7, 2024		December 14, 2024
March 8, 2025		February 8, 2025
May 3, 2025		April 5, 2025
June 7, 2025		June 14, 2025
		July 12, 2025

****REMEMBER...**It is your responsibility to send your official exam scores to the college/university of your choice from the website*******

College Admissions Exams: The CEEB Code for Joseph Case High Schools is **222105**

How the first-year Common App works

A quickstart guide for students using the first-year Common App.



1

Add colleges

Get started by adding colleges to your list. You can find colleges to apply to in the College Search tab of your Common App account. The College Search tab also has information and links to help you research each college. More than 1,000 colleges use Common App! Go to commonapp.org/explore to start exploring.

2

Stay organized

Each college has its own set of specific requirements and supplements. When it comes to tracking this information and staying organized, we're here to help! Use the "Requirements Grid" and each college's "College Information" page to find this information.

To start your college application checklist, check out our "My College Requirements" worksheet at commonapp.org/ready.

3

Complete and submit

Answering all the questions in the Common App tab is a great way to start your applications. For each college you will:

- Answer college specific questions
- Invite and manage recommenders
- Complete other supplements (if applicable)

After all these sections are complete, you are ready to submit your application! Submission is simple: review, pay (if applicable), and submit.

How does my application get there?

When you submit we combine your responses from the Common App and college specific questions, as well as any supplements, into one form. Your counselor, teachers, and other recommenders complete their reports and evaluations separately.

As recommenders submit their forms, they will be sent to the college to be added to your application.

Financial Aid: Sources and Programs

Financial aid programs are designated to assist those, who without such assistance, would be unable to meet the costs of a post-secondary education. Financial aid comes from several different sources: The federal and state government, colleges and universities, local private organizations and scholarship programs, and banks.

In general, eligibility for financial aid is based on need. Some financial assistance is awarded not on the basis of need but for scholastic excellence, athletics, or other specialized talents. Much of the financial aid awarded, however, is need-based. Need will vary from college to college according to the cost of attending the school and how much the student/family is expected to contribute to the student's education. Need is not one set dollar amount.

The student/family's expected contribution (**EFC**) is an amount determined by a formula established by Congress that indicates how much of a student's family's financial resources should be available to pay for school. Student/family financial information is collected in two ways.

1. The CSS ([College Scholarship Service](#)) Financial Aid **PROFILE** form
2. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([FAFSA](#))

While the **FAFSA** is used to apply for most federal and state aid, the **CSS PROFILE** is the form used by most institutions (private) to dispense their own funds. Colleges may also require students to fill out financial aid forms specific to their given institution. In determining the financial aid package, private colleges are not bound by the analysis of need presented in the FAFSA.

The **FAFSA** should be completed each year, online starting in October. One may register for the **PROFILE** service early in the fall. This is especially important for students applying early decision or early action. The organizations and colleges that are to receive the results must be identified on the forms. The **FAFSA** and **PROFILE** forms, along with other financial aid information is available on-line.

FAFSA: www.studentaid.gov

PROFILE: www.collegeboard.org

A student eligible for aid will likely be offered a financial aid package composed of the following components: self-aid (loans and work study), and gift aid (grants and scholarships which do not have to be repaid). Some schools vary the proportion of each kind of aid based on the student's academic performance or other factors.

FAFSA®

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the single most important application a family can file to be considered for financial aid. It is administered by the U.S. Department of Education, required by all colleges and universities, and has no application fee. You can visit fafsa.gov to complete the application, which becomes available this December. To complete the FAFSA, both the student and a parent will need an [FSA ID](#), which can be obtained online at any time. You can learn about creating your FSA ID and other resources for families [here](#). If you need assistance with the FAFSA, take advantage of [FAFSA Day](#), a free resource for Massachusetts families. You can also view our webinar, [Understanding the FAFSA](#).

CSS Profile™

The CSS Profile is required by almost 400 colleges, universities, and scholarship organizations, and is used to determine the distribution of an organization's own financial aid funds. More information is available in our [CSS Profile webinar](#). To complete the application, visit the [CSS Profile website](#).

College or University Financial Aid Application

Some colleges require their own financial aid application in addition to the FAFSA. To find out if a college on your list has an additional application, contact the school's financial aid office.

Information Required on Financial Aid Applications

Your applications for financial aid will request information about parent income and assets, student income and assets, household size, and number of children attending college. More information about the specific questions on each financial aid application can be found in the links mentioned above.

After You Apply

What happens after your applications for financial aid are submitted? Read about the next steps in the process in our [After You Apply details](#).

FAFSA is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Education and PROFILE is a registered trademark of the College Board. MEFA is not affiliated with either organization.

DEADLINES

Each application list specifies the deadline for submission. There are many different admission options each with varying deadlines.

Regular Decision: This is the most common admission option. It means that you submit your application by the college's deadline, and it lets you know by a specified date if you have been admitted or not.

Early Action: Many selective colleges have this admission option. With Early Action, you send in your application earlier, and the college sends you its decision earlier. Make sure you read the instructions from each college carefully because some colleges have additional restrictions on their early action programs. Academically strong students will often apply to one Early Action school. You are making a decision without a financial aid package so be sure you want to attend the school.

Early Decision: You can apply Early Decision to only one college. You are committing yourself to going to a particular school if you decide to apply Early Decision. You should only apply Early Decision if you have a clear idea of your first-choice college. If you are looking at several colleges and don't want to limit your choices yet then Early Decision is not for you. If you apply to other schools, you risk having your Early Decision School reject your application.

Rolling Admissions: There is no deadline for this option. Schools review and make decisions on applications as they receive them.

Wait List: Colleges and Universities use this term when they deny you admission initially, but may accept you later on if other candidates refuse their offers of admission.

Adapted from the following source:
The National Association for College Admission Counseling

Resources

College Search & Scholarship Search: (local scholarship information also available on Joseph Case High School website)

College Board: www.collegeboard.org
Princeton Review: www.princetonreview.com
Peterson's: www.petersons.com
America's Best Colleges: www.usnews.com
My Majors: www.mymajors.com
Fast Web: www.fastweb.com

You can also visit the Guidance Department for help with your college search.

Financial Aid:

FAFSA Online (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): www.studentaid.gov/
Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority: www.mefa.org
State Scholarship: www.doe.mass.edu
Big Future: www.bigfuture.org

Athletics:

NCAA: www.ncaa.org

SENIOR ACTIVITY SHEET

GPA: _____

Class Rank: _____

Intended

Major: _____

Name : _____

Counselor: _____

YOG: _____

List your High School Activities, Clubs, Sports, and any Offices you have held or will hold. Please be sure to list any outside activities that you have participated in during the last four years: Church Events, Work, Volunteer Services, etc. Put an "X" in the year cell for each year that you participated in that activity. **Provide a copy of this sheet for every individual writing a letter of recommendation for you.**

Activity	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12
Honors and Awards	Gr. 9	Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12



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CASSIE REIS, Guidance Counselor

Here are a few things to keep in mind regarding transcripts for colleges or future employment after graduation...

- Transcripts will be mailed to the school/s you list on your exit survey sheet. Transcripts are normally mailed out by the first Friday after graduation.
- Transcripts and employment verification can only be sent directly to the school or verified if you have completed and returned a blue employment/transcript sheet authorizing this to be done.
- If transcripts are needed in the future: You may contact Mrs. Swanson in the guidance office. Your high school guidance counselor does not handle this once you graduate. You may either:
 1. Phone 508-675-0568
 2. E-mail: colleen.swanson@swanseaschools.org
 3. Fax: 508-646-4405 attention to Mrs. Swanson
- When calling to request a transcript, the following is required:
 1. Your name when you attended school
 2. Your date of birth
 3. Your EXACT YEAR of graduation
 4. Your current phone number in the event we need to reach you

If we are mailing this for you, you need to supply the exact name and mailing address.

If an employment agency is requesting high school verification, we need all of the above, including your signature authorizing us to release for you.

- Transcripts normally take 24 to 48 hours after notification to be processed, mailed, or faxed so please plan accordingly.

Things to remember after Graduation:

- We only order **ONE** Diploma, which is given to you. We do not keep a copy on file.
- Your health information (originals) is given to you at graduation. We **DO NOT** keep copies.

Place this information in a safe, secured place for future referral.

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