

**Dominion High  
School  
Class of 2024  
Post-Secondary  
Handbook**



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## Exploration and Discovery

### **Post Secondary Training Can Change Your Life**

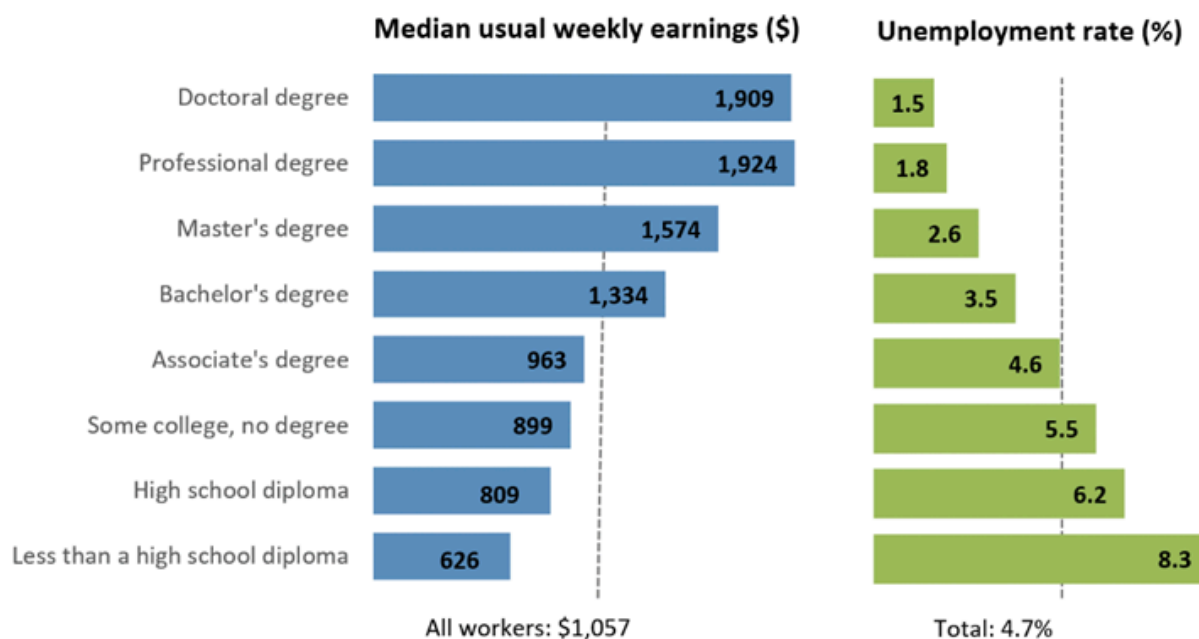
Your odds of career success are much higher if you attend college.

People who attend college:

- Report they have more job satisfaction than those who did not attend.
- Typically live healthier lifestyles, and are more likely to have access to employer-provided benefits including: medical insurance, retirement plans and paid time off.
- Are more involved in their communities through higher levels of volunteering and voting.

Finally, talk with people who have gone to college—most will tell you it was fun!

### **Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2021**



Note: Data are for persons age 25 and over. Earnings are for full-time wage and salary workers.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

## Post-Secondary Opportunities

The term “Post-Secondary” refers to all opportunities available to you after high school. By knowing all available opportunities, you can find a good match for you. Seniors might consider:

**Apprenticeships** - Students will study and develop skills with in-field experiences under the tutelage of skilled technicians. Apprenticeships are usually in skilled trade fields.

**Career and Technical Institutions** - A highly specialized curriculum designed to learn a specific skill and find employment in a technical field.

**College and Universities** - 4-year institutions that offer Bachelors, Masters, and Doctorate degrees. Colleges might be private or public, liberal arts or research institutions.

**Community College or Junior Colleges** - 2 year institutions with multiple academic departments. Offers traditional academic, continuing, and remedial education. Offers technical skills programs (certificates) or general education programs (Associate degrees) that might be eligible to transfer to 4-year institution.

**Gap Year** - Students may choose to work, travel, volunteer, or complete required military service. Gap years are most effective in partnership with a reputable, established organization. They often involve travel and/or helping underserved populations.

**Military** - Training, experience, and study are often incorporated when students enlist in a branch of the armed forces.

## SchoolLinks: College and Career Readiness Software for students and their families.

LCPS purchased Career and College Exploration software for all students and their families.

## Find Your Path -

Students will need to complete a career and college personality assessment prior to being able to access SchoolLinks. There are 63 prompts and students will need to choose agree or disagree for each.

## **Preparation**

What are college looking for?

### **Choosing the Right College**

Your college selection is an important decision, but where do you start?

#### **Finding the Right College**

Every person is different. Your background, interests and personality are just a few things that make you original and unique. Depending on many factors, each person has a different experience preparing for college. Let your personal interests, goals and situation influence your decisions throughout the process.

#### **Explore Career Fields**

Identify careers that interest you and determine which majors will best prepare you for that career. Investigate the academic requirements necessary to enter into those majors.

#### **Consider Your Academic Strengths**

The best way to identify a career field or major course of study is to look at the academic subjects you already enjoy, especially those in which you perform well. Identify majors that concentrate in these subject areas to ensure selection of a major you'll likely enjoy and do well in. Once you've identified a major or majors, identify colleges that offer those majors.

To help get you started, visit the following resources and career assessment websites:

- [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)—Occupational Outlook Handbook with more than 1,500 jobs descriptions and their likely pay scale.
- [www.khanacademy.org/college-careersmore/career-content](http://www.khanacademy.org/college-careersmore/career-content)—Videos and articles containing detailed information on several types of jobs as well as general advice when starting in the workplace.
- <https://roadtripnation.com>—Videos and interactive tools to help students determine the right college type, major and career.
- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>—Career exploration exercises and educational requirements needed to achieve college and career goals.
- [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)—The U.S. Department of Labor's interactive database of occupational information

#### **Determine Support Services That Are Important to You**

Colleges offer more than just academics to help students succeed. Health and wellness care, counseling, child care, food support, tutoring, mentoring and legal support are examples of support services made available to students to help them succeed at college. Research support services offered by the colleges you are interested in and determine if these services meet your needs.

#### **Resources Available College Matches**

- <https://www.unigo.com/>

## Campus Visits

Visiting a college campus is among the more helpful ways to determine whether you want to spend several years there. Visiting the campus and interacting with current students better captures the intangibles factors that are impossible to capture in written materials or on the website. Summer camps, career fairs, and sporting events are excellent ways to begin to see college campuses, but during high school, students might consider some of these activities when visiting a campus

**Campus tour** - Walk around campus guided by a current student. These are administered through the office of admissions. Best when students are on campus.

**Information Session** - Large group presentation with a broad overview of academic programs, admissions, financial aid, and school culture.

**Attending a Lecture** - Some colleges will arrange for you to sit in a regularly scheduled lecture. Notify the college of a prospective major to sit in the most relevant class.

**Prospective Student Events** - Large organized events, sometimes called Preview Day or Open House, for potential students including information sessions, tour, and often a opportunity to hear a panel discussion or campus event.

**Lunch with a student** - Admissions may organize a informal lunch with a current student. This is an opportunity to have a very informal, relaxed conversation with current students and try the campus food (also, very important)

**Overnight Visit** - Shadow a current student for an entire day and participate in college life. An overnight will likely provide the most authentic college preview experience. Often the preferred method to recruit students with unique resumes and student-athletes.

**Meet an Admissions Counselor** - If after the information sessions and tour you have specific questions, you can have a one-on-one interview with an admissions officer where you ask the questions.

**Formal Interview** - Many college provide evaluative or informational one-on-one interviews with admissions staff or alumni. Though increasingly less common for undergraduates, students with strong personal skills might request an interview.

**Fly-in Opportunities** - Fully funded travel, accommodations, and meals for students. Usually offered to students who come from underrepresented or low-income backgrounds.

**College Fairs** - Large numbers of colleges in central locations for students to meet share information. LCPS hosts a College Fair in Late September. There are numerous college fairs in Northern Virginia.

**High School Visits** - College Representatives visit Dominion High school to meet with students. These visits are coordinated through the Career and College Center.

### Virtual College Fairs

- NACAC <https://virtualcollegefairs.org/events>
- CollegeBoard Big Future [cb.org/bigfuturedays](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/)

### College Tours

- [LCPS Connect U](https://www.lcpsconnect.org/)
- <https://www.youvisit.com/collegesearch/>

- <https://campustours.com/>
- <https://www.ecampustours.com/>

## Important Questions for College Visit/Rep Visits

### Questions About Admissions

- Does **demonstrated interest** play a role in the admission process?
- Are there any exceptions to your **test-optional policy**?
- Does **legacy** play a part in admissions and, if so, who is considered legacy?
- Do admissions interviews, if offered, play a role in the process?
- Are interviews conducted by alumni, students or admissions officers?
- Are there any majors for which enrollment is capped?

### Questions About Academics

- Are classes taught by professors or teaching assistants?
- What is the average class size?
- How/when do incoming freshmen get course selection advising for their first-semester classes?
- Who gets priority in the course registration process – is it by grade level, honors programs, etc.?
- How many classes do students take a semester?
- Are classes more theoretical or hands-on in nature?
- How easy is it to switch **majors** or schools within the university?
- What is the breakdown of requirements for most majors?
- What percentage of students choose to **study abroad**?

### Questions About Academic Support

- What tutoring services are available?
- Are tutoring services free?
- How often do students meet with **academic advisers**?
- How accessible are professors outside of the classroom?
- What types of resources are available for students with disabilities?

### Questions About Financial Aid

- What percentage of students receive **financial aid**?
- Are merit scholarship estimates built into the school's net price calculator?
- How much financial need does the college typically meet?
- How much extra money should I budget for costs beyond room, board and tuition?
- Do financial aid packages remain the same over time or are they adjusted to reflect tuition increases?
- How do **outside scholarships** affect a financial aid package?
- Do accepted students receive their **financial aid award letter** at the same time as their offer of admission or later?



## Questions to Ask Tour Guides About Student Life

- When you first came to the school, how did you get involved?
- How did you meet your friends, and what do students do for fun?
- Do many students attend varsity athletic games?
- How does the school build community and foster [cultural understanding](#)?
- What are the hot-button issues on campus?
- What are some of the school's main events or traditions?

## Questions About Campus Housing and Community

- Are students required to [live on campus](#)?
- What percentage of students live on campus?
- How do students choose a residence hall and a roommate?
- What do students say about living and dining on campus?
- Do most students choose to live off campus after freshman year?
- What do the campus and community feel like from a [safety perspective](#)?
- How would you describe the [surrounding community](#) and the relationship the college has with it?

## Questions About Work and Research Opportunities

- What types of [research opportunities](#) do students have access to outside of the classroom?
- What type of career guidance is offered by this school?
- Are [internship or co-op](#) opportunities available through the college?
- What percentage of undergraduates have had an internship or research experience by the time they graduate?
- Is it common for freshmen and sophomores to get research or internship opportunities?

## Questions About Student Outcomes

- What is the four-year graduation rate?
- What are the requirements to graduate in four years?
- What is the retention rate from freshman to sophomore year?
- What is the average level of [student loan debt](#) upon graduation?
- Are [career advising services](#) available to alumni or only to enrolled students?

## Build a College List in SchooLinks

## Demonstrated Interest

Demonstrated interest refers to the practice of colleges and universities tracking how much an applicant has officially engaged with their school. For schools who use demonstrated interest as an evaluative metric, they believe a prospective student who has engaged more is more likely to enroll if admitted. Not all schools use demonstrated interest, however, if they do, students and families should thoughtfully plan to engage with the admissions department.

### Common Demonstrated Interest Activities

1. Join the Mailing List
2. Attend an official, live visit or event
3. Interview
4. Read and engage with email content
5. Write the school specific optional essays
6. Apply early
7. Contact your admissions counselor

### **Virginia Schools that Consider Demonstrated Interest**

Christopher Newport University  
College of William and Mary  
Emory & Henry College  
George Mason University  
Roanoke College  
Sweet Briar College  
Virginia Military Institute  
University of Richmond  
Washington and Lee University

\*Data pulled from College Transitions Website May 2023

Campus Lifestyle Results - Assessment in SchoolLinks

## Decoding Admissions Lingo

Wholistic Review

Single Class

College Specific

Early Action

Early Decision

Rolling Admissions

Research Institution

Testing Optional

Test Blind

Demonstrated Interest

## Choosing the Right College Worksheet

**STEP 1:**

In the top row,  
make a preliminary  
list of colleges the  
interest you

**STEP 2**

Think about important  
factors you want in a  
college. Then prioritize  
each factor in the level of  
importance column.

**STEP 3**

Eliminate college that  
do not have what you  
are looking for. Rank  
the remaining colleges.

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FACTORS TO CONSIDER	COLLEGE (FILL IN NAMES OF COLLEGES THAT INTEREST YOU)			
		1.	2.	3.	4.
	<b>Program of study:</b> Which programs does the college offer to help you achieve your career goals?				
	<b>School size:</b> Do you prefer a large or small college? What is the student population?				
	<b>Class size:</b> How large do you like your classes to be? What is the student-to-teacher ratio?				
	<b>Support programs:</b> Which programs does the college offer to help you stay in college and graduate?				
	<b>City and neighborhood:</b> Do you prefer a city or a small town? What is the population of the city or town?				
	<b>Campus culture:</b> When visiting each college, get a feel for its "personality." How does it match yours?				
	<b>Distance from home:</b> How close do you want to live to your family?				
	<b>Extracurricular activities:</b> Do you have activities in your life that you can't live without?				
	<b>Religious affiliation:</b> Do you want to attend a college affiliated with your religious beliefs?				
	<b>Net price:</b> While one college may appear to be less expensive, what will your final cost be after receiving grants and scholarships? Use <a href="https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price">https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price</a> to identify your likely estimated cost.				
	<b>Financial aid options:</b> Does the college have special financial aid options? These could include things such as a tuition payment plan to spread out your payments or a guaranteed cost of attendance as long as you are enrolled.				
	<b>Outside learning options:</b> Does the college offer internships, externships, study abroad or service learning opportunities?				
	<b>Housing options near campus:</b> How close or far is housing? Will you need a car, or are where you live, shop and work within walking or biking distance?				

## GPA

## Course Selection

# College Admissions Testing

We encourage students to take an SAT or ACT at least one time before the end of their junior year. Students register on the SAT or ACT website. If you are in need of a fee waiver, please contact Mrs. Elisa Rivera ([Elisa.Rivera@lcps.org](mailto:Elisa.Rivera@lcps.org)) for assistance.

SAT: <https://www.collegeboard.org/>

- [SAT testing dates](#)
  - Saturday, October 7, 2023 (registration deadline: September 2, 2022)
  - Saturday, November 4, 2023 (registration deadline: October 7, 2022)
  - Saturday, December 2, 2023 (registration deadline: November 3, 2022)
- Free SAT Test Prep: [Khan Academy](#)
  - **Tip: link your Khan Academy account to your CollegeBoard account for tailored test preparation.**

ACT: <https://www.act.org/>

- [ACT testing dates](#)
  - Saturday, October 22, 2022 (registration deadline: September 16, 2022)
  - Saturday, December 10, 2022 (registration deadline: November 4, 2022)
- Free ACT Test Prep:  
<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/learning-resources.html>

ACT/SAT Concordance to Compare Scores:

<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/scores/act-sat-concordance.html>

**Do the research! It is important to know the testing requirements for your school of choice.**

- **Testing Required:** These colleges expect applicants to submit results from SAT and/or ACT.
- **\*Test-Optional:** These colleges allow applicants to decide if they would like standardized test scores to be a part of the application file.
- **Test-Free:** These colleges do not accept standardized test scores for admissions decisions.

**\*Test Optional Information**

Test optional indicates schools will not penalize you for not having test scores. To find test optional colleges/universities visit <https://www.fairtest.org/>.

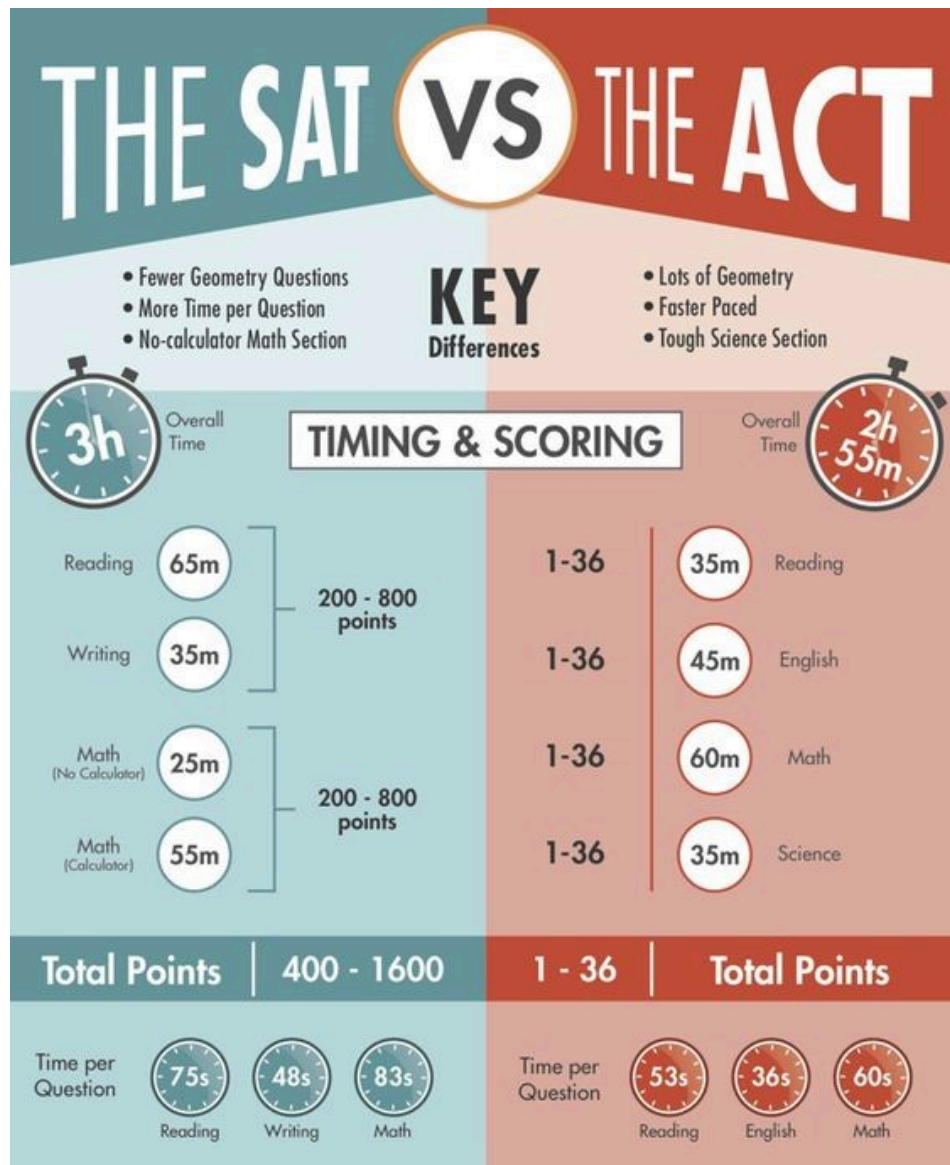
## Important Distinctions: Test Options vs Test Blind

Juniors who take the SAT and ACT in November and December of their 11th grade year get the highest test scores.

The SAT covers topics students typically cover in Algebra II. ACT has simple statistics but less Algebra.

Dominion High School's College Board Code: CEEB # 472-178

Dominion High School's Test Center Number: # 47089





# Application

## College Application Organizer Worksheet



### WORKSHEET: ORGANIZE YOUR APPLICATION INFORMATION

Make copies of this page, and complete the information for each college you are seriously considering.

COLLEGE NAME	
--------------	--

#### COLLEGE INFORMATION

Address for application: \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Admissions office phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

CEEB code\* (College): \_\_\_\_\_ (High School): \_\_\_\_\_

\*CEEB codes can be found at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

	Requested	Received	Thank you sent
Reference 1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference 2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference 3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### VISIT

Visiting campus? YES ☐ NO ☐ Dates of visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person you're meeting	Date/time	Location
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

#### CONTACTS

Name	Phone	Email	Notes
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

APPLICATION DUE	/ /
<input type="checkbox"/> Postmark date	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrive-by date

#### ESSAYS

Essays required? YES ☐ NO ☐

	Complete
Topic 1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic 2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic 3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### INTERVIEWS

Interview required? YES ☐ NO ☐  
Thank you sent? YES ☐

Interviewer	Complete
Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Title: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Other requirements? YES ☐ NO ☐

Task	Complete
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>



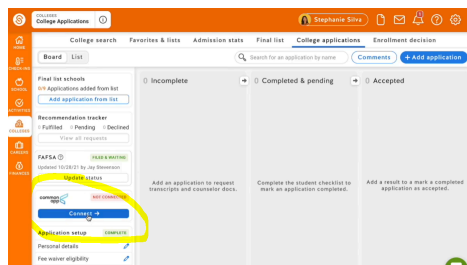
Organizing Your Application Information worksheet is part of the 2020-2021 *Opportunities Preparing for College Guide and Workbook*. This free college planning publication provides students and families with important information and tools to guide their pursuit of postsecondary education. These books are available in English and Spanish. Full PDFs of each *Opportunities* booklet can be downloaded at [www.ecmc.org/opportunities](http://www.ecmc.org/opportunities).

[English](#) | [Spanish](#)

## Using School Links

### Connecting the Common App to SchoolLinks

1. Navigate to “Final List” = Colleges → Final List
  - a. Students must have schools in their Final List to automatically populate to the College Application Manager
2. Navigate to Applications = Colleges → College Applications
  - a. On First Log in - need to enter:
    - i. Mailing address (Must match College Applications)
    - ii. Email Address (Must match College Applications)
    - iii. Do you qualify for a fee waiver?
    - iv. Sign FERPA Waiver
3. Connect Common App Account

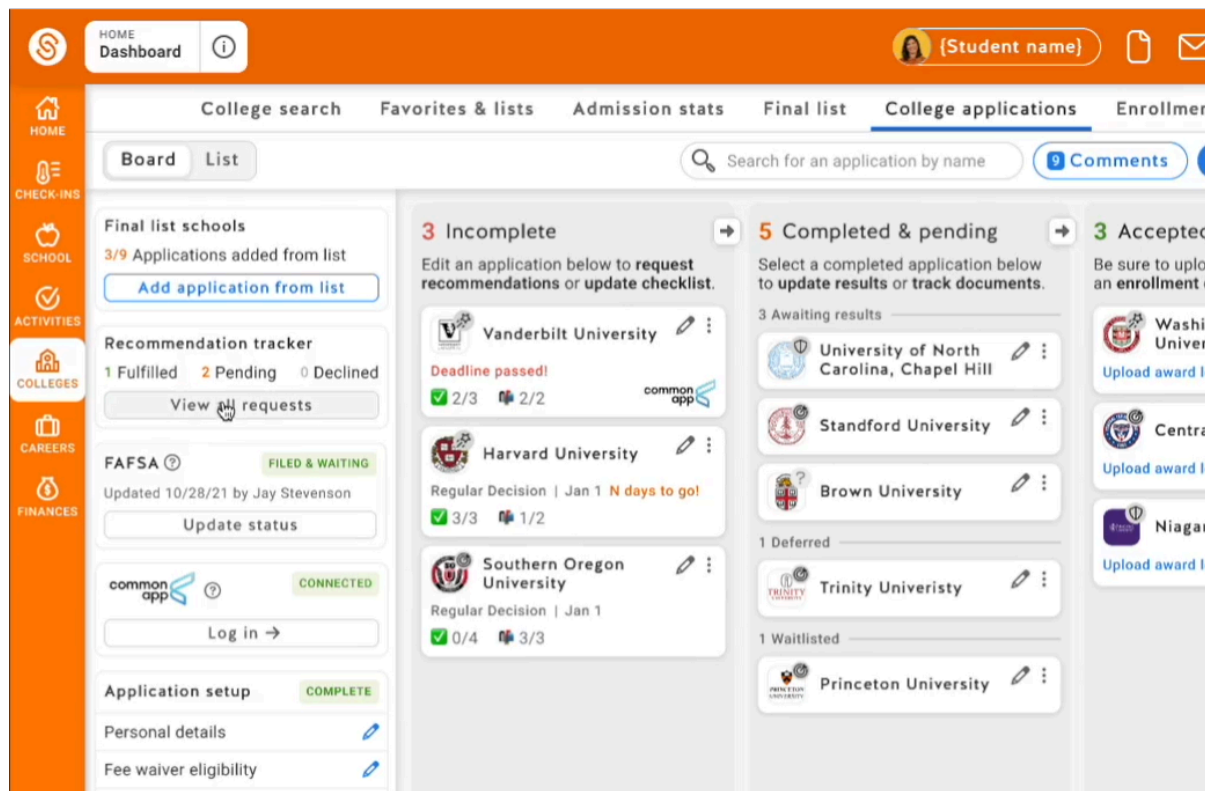


- a.
4. Must complete the FERPA Waiver in Common Application
  - a. Connect your account or Create your account
  - b. Follow Directions
  - c. Students will need to sign the FERPA waiver in Common Application (Seperate from SchoolLinks)
  - d. Navigate back to SchoolLinks and “Refresh”
5. Must Connect to request Letter of Recommendation
  - a. To request Letters of Recommendation in SchoolLinks, students must sign the FERPA Waiver.
  - b. Students
  - c. Instantly shows status of application portions.

### Create an Application in SchoolLinks

6. Add a school to the “My Schools directly into the Common Application
7. Create an application in SchoolLink by clicking on the blue “+Add Application” button at the top right of the Application Manager Page
  - a. Then they will search for the college
  - b. Students must Navigate to the Common Application → Questions complete all fields so they can be returned to SchoolLinks.
- 8.
9. Walk students through the Dashboard





i.

## Admission Results

Navigate to the College Application Manager in SchoolLinks and find the completed application and click on the ellipses button and click “Add Results”.

1. You can upload a photo of the Acceptance letter
2. Provide a Condition of Acceptance
3. Upload an Award Letter

## Enrollment Decisions

Using the top navigation bar in SchoolLinks, students should find the Enrollment Decision. This will prompt the counseling department to send your final transcript to the school of your choice.

- (Optional) Students can add the name of a school that isn't listed in the Accepted column
- (Optional) Students can add an enrollment deadline prompting a reminder to notify the school.

**Making an enrollment decision in SchoolLinks does not notify the college.** Seniors will need to communicate with the college on their own.

## Common App

Not all colleges use the Common Application and some colleges offer more than one way to apply. There is no preference on application type. [See which colleges are part of the Common Application here](#). Create an account by going to <http://www.commonapp.org/>

## General Information

- Only questions with an asterisk (\*) next to them are required
- A green check mark indicates a section has been completed
- Instructions and tutorials are available on the right hand side of every page
- Application Requirements \_\_\_\_\_



- **Dashboard** - a summary view of all of your colleges on the Common App
- **My Colleges** - college-specific questions, recommendations and FERPA, and where you will submit individual applications
- **Common App** - information that will go to every college on your list on the Common App
- **College Search** - add colleges to your Common App in this tab
- **Financial Aid Resources** - learn about financial aid and scholarships

### \*\* When to Submit Your College Application \*\*

Regardless of what type of application you're using (Common App or a School-specific application) - *you do NOT have to wait for your transcript and/or letter of recommendation to be sent to submit your application*. As soon as you feel that your application is ready to submit, go ahead and hit Submit! Colleges consider applications "Submitted" by when you (the student) hit submit - not by when they receive your transcript/letter of recommendation.

## Link Your Common App With SchoolLinks

It is mandatory to link your Common App account with your SchoolLinks account so counselors and teachers can send supporting documents (transcripts and letters of recommendation) to your Common App schools.

- In SchoolLinks, go to **Colleges** → **College Applications** and click **Link Common App Account**
- Follow the prompts on the screen to link your account
- Additionally, you need to complete the following three steps in your Common Application to finish the linking process:
  - Add at least one college to your Common App under **College Search**
  - Enter Dominion High School, Sterling as your high school under **Education**
  - Complete the [FERPA waiver](#) under **My Colleges** → **Recommenders and FERPA**

After your Common App & SchoolLinks accounts are synced, the colleges/universities added on your Common App account will automatically be imported into SchoolLinks. If you add additional colleges/universities at a later date, they will be updated & added to your SchoolLinks account nightly.

*Note: When linking your SchoolLinks & Common App accounts, just clicking the link button in SchoolLinks & accepting the terms doesn't actually give your counselor all of the access they need to send your transcript to your Common App schools. Please follow the steps in our Common App Help Guide, which includes steps for completing the FERPA Waiver on the Common App, in order to finish the link between Common App & SchoolLinks.*

## Common App Tab

### Profile Section

- Use your legal name as it appears on official documents
- Common App Fee Waiver - Check "no" unless you are on free/reduced lunch or have another qualifying circumstance. See your counselor if you are unsure if you qualify.

## **Education Section**

### **Current or Most Recent Secondary School**

- CEEB Code: 472178
- Date of Entry: August 2020 (if you started at DHS in 9th grade)
- Graduation Date: June 2024

## **Colleges and Universities**

Use this section if you have taken a dual enrollment course Find NVCC, GMU and Shena... info

### **Grades**

- Class size: **336**
- Class rank: (See transcript in StudentVue)
- GPA scale reporting: **4.0 Cumulative**
- GPA: use your weighted GPA
- GPA weighting: **Weighted**

### **Current or Most Recent Year Courses**

- We use a semester scheduling system
- These are your senior year courses. Only include courses where you receive credit. Do not include lunch, study hall, early dismissal, late arrival, etc.

### **Honors**

- This section is for academic honors ONLY. Extracurricular and other awards can be included in the Activities section.
- You are limited to five honors. Sample honors: AP Scholar, Honor Roll, National Merit, etc.

### **Community-Based Organizations**

- Does not include assistance from your counselor or college/career staff at NNHS

## **Testing Section**

- You can self-report ACT, SAT, AP Scores, etc. on the Common App. Please remember, even if you self-report, some schools will want you to send official test scores directly from ACT/CollegeBoard. Verify on a college's website.
- Many colleges are [test-optional](#). It is imperative that you carefully read each college's testing policy and follow the requirements for each college.

## **Activities Section**

- You are limited to 10 activities. List them in order of importance. Activities can be reordered once typed into the application.
- Activities include any activity in or outside of school from 9th-12th grade.
- Include a brief description (150 characters max) of the activity and your contribution. No need to use complete sentences here. Commas and semicolons are your friend!
- Estimate the number of hours per week and weeks per year you were involved

## **Writing Section**

### **Personal Essay**

- The main essay has a 650 word limit. You can see the colleges that require this essay; it should not be written for a specific school.
- Answer the prompt. If you have a personal essay that does not fit into one of the prompt questions, choose the last prompt.

## **Additional Information**

- The COVID-19 question is optional. All students were affected by COVID-19, so this question should only be answered if you have something to share that is outside what all of your classmates experienced as a result of the pandemic. Click the COVID-19 FAQ link for more information.
- The additional information section is another spot in the application where you can include anything that you feel is important for an admissions committee to know about you but doesn't fit anywhere else in the application.

## **Courses & Grades Section**

- This section only needs to be filled out if any of your colleges require it.
- I can access a copy of my transcript(s) or official grades: Yes
  - Find a copy of your unofficial transcript in Infinite Campus under Documents
- Grading Scale: A-F
- Schedule: Semesters
- Leave Final Semester Grades blank as we do not report final semester grades at NNHS
- If you took a weighted course that does not have the word "Honors" in the title, you can still choose "Honors" for Course Level to indicate it was a weighted course (i.e. Spanish 4, Advanced Chem, etc.).
- You can include summer courses in the year which you took them. For example, if you took a summer course before 9th grade, you can enter it with your 9th grade courses. If you took a summer course before your senior year, enter it in with your 11th grade courses.

## My Colleges Tab -

Expand each college to see information and questions specific to that college.

### **Questions**

- Be sure to indicate admission plan/deadline preference! This will automatically populate in SchoolLinks and will drive submission of supporting documents (transcripts and rec letters) so deadlines are not missed.

### **Recommenders and FERPA**

- Complete the [FERPA Release Authorization](#). This must be completed in order to request recommenders on SchoolLinks and to send transcripts. It only needs to be completed once and your answer cannot change once submitted. We highly recommend waiving your right. Waiving your right ensures colleges are reading candid and honest letters from your recommenders.

### **Review and Submit - Common App**

- **You must submit each college application separately.**
- Do a print preview before sending to ensure all of your answers are there. **Tip:** this is how many admissions professionals will view your Common App. Once you submit your application, you will be unable to change your responses. You can change responses for any future applications you submit

## **Requesting Transcripts & Letters of Recommendation**

### **Insight Sheets**

Many colleges/universities require a counselor letter of recommendation. Counselors' letters of recommendation speak from a whole child lens and provide information based on students' insight sheets. The student insight sheet is **required** for a counselor letter of recommendation. When filling out your insight sheet, the more detail provided, the stronger the letter of recommendation will be. Students should plan to submit their insight sheets to their counselors by the end of junior year.

**NEW:** students are welcome to complete a special insight sheet for their teacher letters of recommendation if/when teachers ask for more information prior to writing a recommendation letter.

## Student Insight Sheet

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Student Insight Sheet

For Counselor Letter of Recommendation

Many colleges and universities require or recommend a letter of recommendation from a school counselor. Letters of recommendation are intended to provide additional insight about you as a student and person beyond what is reflected in your college application and academic transcripts. Try to avoid general statements, and instead provide specific details and examples that illustrate your point and bring it to life. For instance, instead of writing, "I learned a lot about myself through being a member of the track team," share what you learned and how you were changed or affected by the experience. If you faced any challenges or obstacles, share how you overcame those obstacles and how it has changed you. Please know that answering any or all of the following questions is not required and you have the right to disclose as little or as much as you would like.

1. What are your future goals? Discuss what you hope to study in college, your future career aspirations, a personal goal, and why going to college is important to you. (It's okay if you're undecided or have a few general interests.)

## Parent/Guardian Insight Sheet (optional)

Students Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent/Guardian Insight Sheet

For Counselor Letter of Recommendation

Many colleges and universities require or recommend a letter of recommendation from a school counselor. Letters of recommendation are intended to provide additional insight about your student beyond what is reflected in his/her college application and academic transcripts. Although I know many students well, there are always facets of their character or personality that I have not had the opportunity to learn about through our interactions at school. As a parent/guardian, you are able to share unique insight and perspectives about your child that no one else can. Please know that answering any or all of the following questions is not required and you have the right to disclose as little or as much as you would like; however, I will likely use any information you provide in my letter of recommendation to colleges. By providing information for the questions below, you are giving me your permission to use that information in my letter of recommendation. Thanks!

1. What do you admire most about your child?

## Insight Sheet for Teacher Recommendations (optional)

### Teacher Recommendation Worksheet

**Please forward this form directly to the teacher preparing the recommendation.**  
**DO NOT email this form to your counselor**

To (Teacher name) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

FROM (Student name) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Email \_\_\_\_\_ Student Cell \_\_\_\_\_

School Counselor Name and Email \_\_\_\_\_

Intended College Major \_\_\_\_\_ Career Goal \_\_\_\_\_

***MY FIRST COLLEGE DEADLINE THAT NEEDS A TEACH RECOMMENDATION IS:*** \_\_\_\_\_

## College Application Platforms

Colleges and Universities do not have a preference to which application you use to apply. The application platforms, like Common App and Coalition, allow students fill out one application and then can use it to apply to several different schools at once. We encourage students to look at prospective colleges to determine which application platform(s) they'll use. Students can create their accounts and begin composing their essays in the spring or over the summer.

### [Common App](#) Most Used at DHS

The Common Application, which is accepted by more than 1,000 schools, helps streamline an essential part of the admissions process for students. Through the platform, first-time and transfer applicants alike can apply to multiple colleges at once. So students only have to fill out details that most schools require – such as name, address and extracurricular activities – one time.

### [Coalition for College Access \(Coalition App\)](#) Particularly helpful to First Gen and Low Income

The Coalition Application is accepted by 150 institutions. Save application materials and get creative with your “Locker.” Access resources and tools that help low-income and underrepresented students, including resources for financial support. You can report up to eight extracurricular activities

[SREB: Academic Common Market](#) - The Southern Regional Education Board's, SREB's Academic Common Market has enabled students to **pursue out-of-state college degrees at in-state tuition rates**, through agreements among the states and colleges and universities. To qualify you must:

- Be a resident of one of the 15 SREB states.
- Select a program eligible for residents of your home state.
- Complete the admission process at the institution offering the eligible Academic Common Market program.
- Be certified as a resident of your home state by contacting the ACM coordinator for your state of residence

[Common Black College Application](#) - Allows for students to apply to multiple historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Currently there are 64 Member institutions and students **pay a one time \$20 application fee** to submit their applications to any of the 64 schools on the application.

- [An Introduction to the Common Black College Application](#)

## Writing the College Essay

### Boot Camp Presentation Slides

#### Boot Camp College Essays

#### 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 all 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.

#### Coalition Application Essay Prompts

1. Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
2. What interests or excites you? How does it shape who you are now or who you might become in the future?
3. Describe a time when you had a positive impact on others. What were the challenges? What were the rewards?
4. Has there been a time when an idea or belief of yours was questioned? How did you respond? What did you learn?
5. What success have you achieved or obstacle have you faced? What advice would you give a sibling or friend going through a similar experience?
6. Submit an essay on a topic of your choice.



#### Reminders

1. Write about something that's important to you.
2. Don't just recount—reflect! Anyone can write about big experiences. Describe what you learned from the experience and how it changed you.
3. Being funny is tough. What you think is funny and what an adult working in a college thinks is funny are probably different.
4. Start early and write several drafts.
5. No repeats. What you write in your application essay or personal statement should not contradict any other part of your application—nor should it repeat it.
6. Answer the question being asked.
7. Have at least one other person edit your essay.

#### Writing Structures

- **Personal Narrative**
  - You can think of Narrative Structure as classic Hollywood movie structure, focusing on a challenge that fundamentally changed your life. You can think of this approach to writing an essay as breaking down into three basic sections:
- **Challenges + Effects**
  - This part gets into specific detail regarding a specific challenge the student has faced, and the various effects of that challenge. Tough stuff you've been through. Big experiences. Their subsequent impacts. Various obstacles you've had to overcome.
- **What I Did About Them**
  - Actions you took to overcome those challenges and their effects, often to meet specific needs. These actions help to illustrate your values and growth.
- **What I Learned**



- Lessons and insights you've gained through these experiences. Reflection on how your experiences have shaped you and why that matters.
- **Montage**
  - Montage is something you've likely all encountered before. It's a technique that involves using separate elements (pictures, words, music, etc.) to create a new whole. These elements are usually connected around a central theme so that information can be delivered in a more efficient way. Examples might include 5 high school activities, 5 pieces of art, 5 pairs of shoes, etc. Tips - be visual, write what you know, find metaphorical themes. [☰ Montage Essay Outline](#)
-  [Outline for a Five-Paragraph Essay.pdf](#)
-  [Narrative essay outline Template.pdf](#)

### Assessing Your Essay

- **Core Values** (aka Information)
  - Can you name at least 4-5 of the author's core values?
- **Vulnerability**
  - Does the essay sound like it's mostly analytical or like it's coming from a deeper, more vulnerable place? Another way of asking this: Does it sound like the author wrote it using mostly his or her head (intellect) or his or her heart and gut?
- **"So what" moments** (aka Important & interesting connections)
  - Can you identify at least 3-5 "so what" moments of insight in the essay? Are these moments kind of predictable, or are they truly illuminating?
- **Craft**
  - Do the ideas in the essay connect in a way that is logical? Is it interesting and succinct throughout? If not, where do you lose interest?
  - Does the essay represent a series of carefully considered choices and that the author spent a lot of time revising the essay over the course of several drafts?


### Sample Essays and Hints from Admissions Offices

- [John Hopkins Essays the Worked](#)
- [Hampton College Essays that Worked](#)
- [Harvard Essays the Worked](#)

## Choosing and Enrolling in College

Now that you have your admission decisions and financial aid packages in hand, the ball is officially in your court. At this stage, instead of hoping colleges will see value in your application, colleges are hoping you see enough value in them to enroll.

Trust your instincts and return to the list of criteria that you put together throughout your search. Which school of the options you have meets that criteria most closely? You may have attended admitted student programming either on campus or in your local area that helped you narrow down your options as well. It can be helpful to chat with current students about their experience if you are having difficulty making a final decision. Do not be afraid to ask the admissions office to connect you to resources like students, professors, and support offices on campus if you have questions that will help you determine your decision.

 [MakeYourDecision.pdf](#) Worksheet focused on helping students understand the net cost of attendance to help students make a decision about college.

### Confirm Enrollment

Students need to notify the College they intend to enroll at before May 1st. Usually this involves sending a deposit.

### Withdraw Other Acceptances

#### Request Your Final Transcript

Navigate to the College Application Manager in SchoolLinks and find the completed application and click on the ellipses button and click “Add Results”.

4. You can upload a photo of the Acceptance letter
5. Provide a Condition of Acceptance
6. Upload an Award Letter

Using the top navigation bar in SchoolLinks, students should find the Enrollment Decision. This will prompt the counseling department to send your final transcript to the school of your choice.

- (Optional) Students can add the name of a school that isn't listed in the Accepted column
- (Optional) Students can add an enrollment deadline prompting a reminder to notify the school.

Making **an enrollment decision in SchoolLinks does not notify the college**. Seniors will need to communicate with the college on their own.

### Stay on Top of Enrollment Requirements:

**Deferring Enrollment:** Many colleges offer an opportunity for a student who has been admitted to delay or defer enrollment for a year or a semester. Students who defer an offer of admission may choose to work, travel, pursue special programs, or complete required military service. Requesting a deferral usually requires a written explanation, to be reviewed by the admissions committee, of how you plan to spend your time during the deferral period. A deposit is also often required by the college to hold a place in the next class. A student who defers admission to a college cannot attend another

college or earn credits elsewhere during the time off, unless the institution that extended deferred admission is notified in advance and agrees.



## **Financing College**

Financing may be the most important step in attending college. Education is expensive! It is important to remember that nearly all students qualify for some type of Financial Aid. This section is an introduction to Financial Aid to help you make informed educational decisions.

### **UNDERSTANDING COLLEGE COSTS**

**Tuition** - The cost of tuition charged by a college depends on many factors. The most significant factor is whether the school is public or private, in-state or out-of-state. Focusing on the sticker price can be misleading.

**Fees** - Many colleges charge fees for other services. Examples include:

- Technology fees      · Enrollment
- Health center   · Library
- Parking                      · Student activities

**Room and Board** - Room and board means basic living expenses for housing and food. On Campus Room and Board is very convenient and eliminates or includes food, transportation, and possibly other perks (like laundry).

· **Public Colleges:** Tuition is generally lower because they receive funds from state taxes. Most four-year and two-year public colleges charge higher tuition for non-residents than for legal residents of the state in which the college is located. However, some bordering state residents may be treated as legal residents of that state under a reciprocity agreement.

· **Private Colleges:** Tuition is usually higher than at public colleges. Private colleges do not receive public funding for their operations. However, private colleges often have more financial aid resources that can help you pay for college.

**Books and Supplies** - The burden of purchasing texts falls on students and families. Some schools allow students to rent books, digital texts, or free resources to reduce this cost.

**Personal Expenses** - Additional expenses on personal items: like hygiene, events, restaurants, ect.

**Transportation-** Students who plan to study some distance from home will need to consider the cost of transportation to and from the school.

### **SAVING**

Families should make a plan to save for their child's college education. Families benefit from tax saving programs and plans offered by colleges, employers, and the state. Two reputable options available in Virginia are **Virginia529** and **CollegeAmerica**. It is important to remember that need-based financial aid is based primarily on income. In fact, the expected family contributions only takes into account 5.6% of a families total assests. This means that a family who has saved \$10,000 will increase the EFC by \$560.

### **FINANCIAL AID**

Virginia has two applications for Financial Aid the FAFSA and the VASA. Completion of either application is the single most important part of the financial aid process, and it takes most students less than one hour to complete.

### **WHAT THE FAFSA DOES**

Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is important! Your eligibility for federal financial aid, including loans, grants and work-study opportunities, is calculated using the Federal Need Analysis Methodology, a formula mandated by Congress. Many states, colleges and scholarship providers also use FAFSA

submissions to determine financial aid. The formula takes into account families financial condition, calculating an Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Schools will use the EFC to create a Financial Aid Package.

## FSA ID WORKSHEET

**fsaid.ed.gov**

**Federal Student Aid IDs are required for students to electronically sign the FAFSA. One parent of a dependent student will also need to create an FSA ID. \* KEEP IN A SAFE PLACE.**

<b>1</b>	<b>ENTER AN EMAIL ADDRESS</b> _____ The email address must be unique to each individual. You will not be able to use the same email address for student and parent. DO NOT use high school email accounts.
<b>2</b>	<b>CREATE A USERNAME</b> _____ Must be 6 — 30 characters. Avoid using personal identifiers like your name or birthdate.
<b>3</b>	<b>CREATE A PASSWORD</b> _____ Must be 8 — 30 characters. Avoid personal identifiers.
<b>4</b>	<b>COMPLETE YOUR PROFILE</b> 1. Enter your social security number 2. Enter your birthdate 3. Enter your name exactly as it is listed on your social security card Social Security matches are confirmed within 1 to 3 days. Errors can cause delays.
<b>5</b>	<b>CHALLENGE QUESTIONS &amp; ANSWERS</b> 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
<b>6</b>	<b>VERIFY YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS &amp; MOBILE PHONE NUMBER</b> FSA will send an email with a code that must be entered to verify your email address. FSA will send a text message with a code used to verify your mobile phone number. Your FSA ID is ready to use!

\*Parents without a social security number cannot create an FSA ID; they'll sign the FAFSA by mailing a signature page to the Federal Student Aid Program.

# Completing the FAFSA

## fafsa.gov

Students must complete the FAFSA each year they wish to receive financial aid for college. The following steps will help you complete and submit your FAFSA as soon after it become available.

1	<p><b>GATHER MATERIALS</b> – Gather this information before you go to FAFSA.gov to complete your FAFSA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card or Alien Registration Card</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Federal income tax returns, W-2s and other records of money earned for the specified year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Current bank account balances and records of investments and untaxed income</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If you're a dependent student, you'll also need your parent(s)' information. Determine your dependency status with UCanGo2's Dependency Questionnaire at <a href="http://startwithfafsa.org/resources">startwithfafsa.org/resources</a>.</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>CREATE AN FSA ID</b> – The Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) is the username and password students use to complete the FAFSA. The parent of a dependent student also needs an FSA ID to sign the FAFSA. (Parents with no SSN are ineligible to create an FSA ID, but will be able to print and sign a signature page.)</p>
3	<p><b>FILL IT OUT</b> – After you start your application at FAFSA.gov or on the myStudentAid mobile app, you will complete the sections below:</p> <p><b>Student Demographics</b> –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter your full name and birthdate as shown on your Social Security card.</li> <li>• Male students must be registered with Selective Service to receive financial aid. You can register directly on the FAFSA by checking "Register me."</li> <li>• Double-check your name, date of birth and Social Security number. Even one small error could cause delays.</li> </ul> <p><b>School Selection</b> – Select the college, university or career technology center you plan to attend. You can select up to 10 schools. You will also need to indicate whether you plan to live on campus, off campus or with a parent.</p> <p><b>Dependency Status</b> – A list of questions will determine whether you are considered dependent or independent on the FAFSA. Dependent students will be required to provide parental information.</p> <p><b>Parent Demographics</b> – Dependent students must enter information about their legal parent(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your parents are legally separated or divorced, list the parent you lived with most during the last 12 months.</li> <li>• If your parents are legally separated or divorced and you lived with them equally, list the parent who provided the most financial support in the last 12 months.</li> <li>• If your divorced parent is remarried, list both your parent and step-parent.</li> <li>• If your parents are unmarried but living together, list information for both parents.</li> <li>• If your parent is undocumented, use 000-00-0000 as his/her Social Security Number.</li> </ul> <p><b>Financial Information</b> – You can enter the specified federal income tax information manually or use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT). The IRS DRT allows users to securely transfer data from their tax return directly into the FAFSA, which is faster and easier. Users must have an FSA ID to access tax information. To learn more, visit <a href="http://StudentAid.ed.gov/irsdrft">StudentAid.ed.gov/irsdrft</a>.</p>
4	<p><b>SIGN AND SUBMIT</b> – Review your answers on the Summary, correct any errors, then enter your FSA ID to electronically sign your FAFSA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are considered dependent, your legal parent is also required to sign your FAFSA.</li> <li>• If necessary, you or your parent can print a signature page, sign it and mail it to the address indicated.</li> <li>• Don't forget to click SUBMIT at the bottom of the screen.</li> <li>• Review your confirmation page for information about the schools you've selected and an estimate of your financial aid eligibility.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>FOLLOW UP</b> – Watch your email for a Student Aid Report (SAR), which provides a copy of your FAFSA responses. Your college may also send you requests for further documentation before sending your financial aid offer. This letter will contain the types of financial aid offered to you by the college(s) you've chosen.</p>

## SCHOLARSHIPS

# **HIGH SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

## **Freshman Year**

### **Academics**

- ☐ Take the PSAT
- ☐ Focus on your study habits and finish the school year strong
- ☐ Use SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) goals to keep you on task
- ☐ Keep up your grades—colleges look at your grades in college prep courses
- ☐ Identify your interests and skills to help you focus on your goals
- ☐ Read everyday
- ☐ Set your sophomore class schedule with your counselor to include honors classes

### **Extracurricular Activities**

- ☐ Join a club or try out for a sports team
- ☐ Volunteer for something you find important
- ☐ Start your High School résumé

## **Sophomore Year Checklist**

### **Time Management**

- ☐ Research and implement ways on how to make the most efficient use of your time
- ☐ Include self care time in your schedule

### **Academics**

- ☐ Keep up your grades—colleges look at your grade point average (GPA)
- ☐ Review your four-year academic plan with your counselor
- ☐ Plan rigorous academic courses for your junior year
- ☐ Take AP or Dual Enrollment courses while in high school and earn both high school and college credit

### **Extracurricular Activities**

- ☐ Join a club or try out for a sports team
- ☐ Volunteer for something you find important
- ☐ Explore summer opportunities—be mindful of application deadlines

### **Career Exploration**

- ☐ Seek summer opportunities to work or volunteer in your field of interest
- ☐ Take an interest inventory—it expands your ideas for careers you may enjoy
- ☐ Have conversations with counselors, teachers, family and community members about their career paths and what they studied in college
- ☐ Complete the Academic and Career Plan with your counselor.
- ☐ Let your school counselor know if you are considering a military academy upon graduation.

## **Junior Year Checklist**

Prepare and Sign up for the [ACT/SAT](#).



- ☐ For many colleges and universities, the ACT and SAT remain optional.
  - ☐ See if your college is test optional at <http://fairtest.org>.
- ☐ Take the NMSQT given in October.
- ☐ If you plan to ask for testing accommodations (due to disability), be sure the College Board has approved your eligibility.
- ☐ [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org) - Free test prep available at [ACT Academy](http://ACTAcademy)
- ☐ [sat.collegeboard.org](http://sat.collegeboard.org) - Free test prep available through [Khan Academy](http://KhanAcademy)
- ☐ Fee waivers are available to eligible students.
- ☐ If you're in AP classes, register for the AP Exams given in May.

### Create a College List

Finding a College is about ["Goodness of Fit"](#).

- ☐ Make lists of your abilities, social/cultural preferences, and personal qualities. List things you may want to study and do in college.
- ☐ Learn about colleges. Look at their websites and find colleges at [Naviance Supermatch](#) Talk to friends, family members, teachers, and recent grads of your school now in college. List the college features that interest you.
  - ☐ Attend LCPS College Fair *September 24th, 2023 @ Independence High School*
  - ☐ Sign up for College Visits in the Career Center
- ☐ View College Score Card <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>

### Request Letters of Recommendation

- ☐ [Student Insight Sheet](#) - Please make a copy, complete, and share with your counselor.
- ☐ [Parent Insight Sheet](#) - Please make a copy, complete, and share with your counselor.
- ☐ [Teacher Recommendations](#) - Completing this document will help your teachers write a high-quality letter of recommendation. Students should complete a thoughtfully crafted form for each teacher.

### Financial Aid

- ☐ Learn about Financial Aid. <https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/do-you-need-money.pdf>
- ☐ [Use a free scholarship search](#) to find scholarships for which you might want to apply. Some deadlines fall as early as the summer between 11th and 12th grades.
- ☐ Estimate your financial aid need. Financial aid can help you afford college. Use financial aid calculators like the ones at [bigfuture.org](http://bigfuture.org) or simply complete the FAFSA to find your EFC.
- ☐ Parents and student should create an [FSA ID](#). Save this information for the FAFSA in your Senior Year.

### Senior Year

#### College List

- ☐ Narrow your list of colleges to between 5 and 10.
- ☐ [Plan to visit](#) as many of these colleges as possible.
- ☐ Sign up to meet with College Representatives visits through the Career Center.

### Get Organized

- ☐ Create a checklist and calendar to stay organized. Dates and task to record include:
  - ☐ Tests you'll take and their fees, dates, and registration deadlines
  - ☐ College application due dates
  - ☐ Required financial aid application forms and their deadlines (aid applications may be due before college applications)
  - ☐ Other materials you'll need (recommendations, [transcripts](#), etc.)
  - ☐ Your high school's application processing deadlines
- ☐ Take note of college applications requirements and deadlines.
  - ☐ Use the [College Application Organizer Worksheet](#)

### **College Applications**

- ☐ Attend the College Bootcamp August 9th or 15th @Dominion High School
- ☐ Complete the Common Application
  - ☐ Note Teacher Recommendations in Common Application
- ☐ Submit [Transcript Requests](#) at least 4 weeks prior to college due date.
- ☐ Send you SAT or ACT scores along with applications.
- ☐ Complete required and optional essays and personal statements.
- ☐ Optional: Finalize portfolios, audition materials, interviews, or writing samples if required as part of the application

### **Entrance Exams**

- ☐ Register for the SAT and/or ACT if you didn't take a college entrance exam as a junior or want to take one again.

### **Financial Aid**

- ☐ Review the financial aid application process and timeline required by the colleges
- ☐ Register for an [FSA ID](#), student's parents/guardians must also register for an FSA ID (<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>)
- ☐ File the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA), which is delayed until December (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-foraid/fafsa>)
- ☐ Information from the 2021 tax year will be used for the entering class of 2023 as they apply for financial aid for the 2023-2024 academic year
- ☐ Attend the Financial Aid Workshops November 1st at Dominion High School
- ☐ Be aware that private colleges may require additional financial information from the CSS Profile (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>)
- ☐ In-state financial aid opportunities for undocumented, DREAMer and DACA students by completing the VASA ([www.ecmc.org/students/resource-guides.html](http://www.ecmc.org/students/resource-guides.html))
- ☐ Search and apply for scholarships ([www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com), <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org> )
- ☐ Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) once FAFSA has been processed and make any needed corrections

### **After Application**

- ☐ Check your email frequently for additional information colleges might request within their timeline
- ☐ Continue scholarship searches over winter break and continue to submit applications

### ***Spring***

### **Academics**

- ☐ Keep up your grades—college admissions are conditional and can be rescinded if you do not continue academic excellence
- ☐ Check with the colleges where you have applied before considering dropping a senior year class; colleges expect you to complete all of the high school courses you listed as "in progress" on your admissions application
- ☐ Take your Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams
  - ☐ Indicate in My AP account the college, university or scholarship program where you'd like your cumulative AP Score Report to be sent.

### **College Decision**

- ☐ Check your email or college admissions portal for admission decision notification
- ☐ Carefully review your financial aid offer for each college where you have been accepted and compare offers;
- ☐ Finalize your financial aid; accept your financial aid offer or work with the college's financial aid office to adjust it
- ☐ If you'll be attending a four-year college, notify and place a deposit at the college of your choice by National College Decision Day (May 1)
- ☐ Inform *every* college of your acceptance and/or decline of the offer of admission and/or financial aid by university published deadline.
- ☐ Optional: Division I or II Student-Athletes need to request their Final Amateurism Certification on their NCAA Eligibility Center or NAIA account.

### **College Admissions Follow-Up**

- ☐ Sign into your college portal and review your task list and deadlines
- ☐ Check your email for correspondence and deadline reminders
- ☐ Request your final transcript through the Senior Survey
- ☐ Ask about college placement tests.
- ☐ Sign up for summer and/or fall orientation.
- ☐ Discuss housing and submit a housing deposit to make sure you have living arrangements



## Special Interests Resources/Tools




- Common Black College App <https://commonblackcollegeapp.com/>
- Top 25 Colleges for Latinos  
<http://www.latinomagazine.com/spring2015/spring2015/top-25-colleges-for-latinos.html>
- Native American College Resources on the Internet  
[www.hanksville.org/NAresources/indices/NAcollege.html](http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/indices/NAcollege.html)
- Catholic Colleges Online [www.catholiccollegesonline.org](http://www.catholiccollegesonline.org)
- Council for Christian Colleges and Universities [www.cccu.org](http://www.cccu.org)
- Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life [www.hillel.org](http://www.hillel.org)
- LGBT Campus Climate Index [www.campusclimateindex.org/](http://www.campusclimateindex.org/)
- Combined BA-MD Programs <http://services.aamc.org/currdir/section3/start.cfm>
- Student Athletes
  - NCAA I & II
    - Register with the [NCAA Eligibility Center](http://www.ncaa.org/eligibility-center)
  - NCAA III & Undecided
    - No registration needed, create a free [Profile Page](http://www.ncaa.org/profile)
  - NAIA
    - Register with the [NAIA Eligibility Center](http://www.naia.org/eligibility-center)
- Students with Special Needs
  - Virginia College Quest [www.vacollegequest.org](http://www.vacollegequest.org)
  - LD Online: Resources for the Learning Disabled [www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)
  - SERI: Special Education Resources on the Internet <http://seriweb.com>
  - Educational Testing Service Office of Disability Testing [www.ets.org/disability](http://www.ets.org/disability)
  - HEATH Resource Center Online Clearinghouse on Post-Secondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities [www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)
  - Association of Higher Education and Disability [www.ahead.org](http://www.ahead.org)
- Gap Year
  - Thinking Beyond Borders [www.thinkingbeyondborders.com](http://www.thinkingbeyondborders.com)
  - Americorps [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org) Projects Abroad <http://www.projects-abroad.org/>
- Service Academies
  - US Air Force Academy [www.usafa.edu](http://www.usafa.edu)
  - US Military Academy at West Point [www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)
  - US Naval Academy [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)
  - US Coast Guard Academy [www.cga.edu](http://www.cga.edu)
  - US Merchant Marine Academy [www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)

## DHS Post-Secondary Events


### 2021-2022 SY

- **Class of 2023 Post-Secondary Planning Night** - January 25, 2022
  - Event Recording (English): <https://www.wevideo.com/view/2539473627>
  - Presentation Slides (English):
    - 📄 Class of 2023 Post-Secondary Planning Night- Including Script

## 2022-2023 SY

- **College Application Bootcamp** - August 16, 2022 & August 24, 2022
  - Presentation Slides (English):
    -  Bootcamp Counselor Presentation #1
    -  Bootcamp Counselor Presentation #2
    - [Financing College](#)
- **College Application Bootcamp (Family Session)** - August 24, 2022
  -  Bootcamp Counselor Presentation - Family Session (English)

## 11th Grade Presentations -- Naviance Tools

- 1st Post-Secondary Planning Presentation:
  -  11th Grade Post-Secondary Planning Meeting (2022)
- Overview of Naviance Video:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFNxCo9XZ5s>
- Directions to use SuperMatch:
  - <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1563323252/bcsk12org/g1bssxi1vtf4lwxyvgru/SuperMatch-.pdf>
- Directions to add colleges to college list
  - <http://nphs.org/counseling/documents/navianceaddingcolleges.pdf> (Only complete steps 1-4)
- College Search Reference Guide:
  - <https://www.lcps.org/cms/lib/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/27391/The%20College%20Search%20Reference%20Guide.pdf>
- Exploring Career Interests:
  - [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DLaeWPAy28yaO7Quc2dDqJvH\\_3agrDqp/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DLaeWPAy28yaO7Quc2dDqJvH_3agrDqp/view)

## Helpful Naviance Reference Guides

As mentioned in the last section, Naviance is an extremely helpful tool when it comes to the entire college application process, including researching colleges. However, at Dominion, we also use Naviance for a few key college application processes. These processes include: adding colleges to your list, requesting teacher letter of recommendation, and tracking all school based document submissions (letters of recommendation, school profiles, transcripts, and more).

There are a few things that students need to complete in Naviance in order for the entire process to run smoothly. We will cover these tasks during College Application Bootcamp, but the following reference guides are a good place to return to if you forget the process or want to see the step by step breakdown.

- [The College Search Reference Guide](#)
- [SuperMatch Reference Guide](#)
- [The College Application Process Reference Guide](#)

The reference guides listed below are not tasks that are required by the DHS Counseling Department for students to complete, but are things that we feel are useful in the college application process:

- Finding and Tracking Scholarships Reference Guide

### **Picking a good college match**

Below are some good questions to ask when you speak with a college rep or visit a college campus. Asking the same questions at each college can help you to make a more accurate comparison between different schools.

#### **Students**

- Can you share some characteristics of the student body in general?
- From what economic, racial, ethnic background are the majority of students?
- Are there clubs, activities, or housing that are minority related?
- What do students like most about the college? Like least?
- Where are most of your students from geographically?

#### **Social life and activities**

- What do students do for fun?
- What is the role of fraternities and sororities on campus? If I didn't want to join, could I have a satisfactory social life?
- What are the dominant social groups on campus?
- What role do team sports play in the social life of the college? What happens on football or basketball weekends? If I didn't want to join in, would I still be able to find friends and things to do?
- Is there a good balance of academics, social life, and extracurricular activities?
- What is the alcohol culture on campus? How is the college handling it? What is the incidence of binge drinking? Do students feel safe on campus? If I don't drink will I be able to find friends and things to do?

#### **Life on campus**

- Can you describe the dining options on campus? What are the types of food plans? All you can eat? Vegetarian? Kosher?
- What are the housing options on campus?
- Do most students live on or off campus?
- Is on campus housing guaranteed all four years? Is it required?
- What kinds of facilities does the student center have? Do students hang out here? Are there other places that students hang out?
- How would you rate the fitness center?
- Is there a doctor, nurse, psychologist, or career counselor on campus? What is the waiting period for appointments?

- Can you tell me about the services on campus for students with learning needs or other disabilities? What percentage of the students use these services?
- How good is the security on campus?
- Is the library well equipped with books, research materials, computers and copy machines?

#### The off-campus community

- What is there to do in town? How would I get there?
- Do the town and the university get along well?
- Are students welcome in the town? Do students have a good reputation in the town?

#### Academics and faculty

- What is unique about the education at your college? What is the educational philosophy of the college?
- Is the honor code working? How widespread is cheating?
- What is the most popular major on campus? Why?
- Do you think that students are generally enthusiastic about their classes? Do people talk about their courses outside of class?
- How would you characterize the academic pressure and workload?
- Are there research possibilities with the faculty? In what areas?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the academic advising system?
- What is the quality of student and faculty relationships? Is the faculty interested in and accessible to students after class? Do faculty members participate in student activities?
- How difficult is it to get your necessary classes and graduate in 4 years?
- Are most freshman classes taught by graduate students, part-time professors or fulltime faculty?
- What is the average size of most freshman classes?

## Contact Information

If there is anything else that you need help with or any questions that you have that were not addressed within this packet, please do not hesitate to reach out to your/your students' counselor. Counselors can be reached by email or phone. Students and parents are also more than welcome to set up appointments with their counselor if they would prefer. Please see the table below for more information.

DHS Counseling Office Phone: 571-434-4412

DHS Counseling Office Website: <https://www.lcps.org/domain/1190>

Ms. Jennifer French	Students with Last Names A-B	Jennifer.French@lcps.org	<a href="#">Click here to book an appointment</a>
Mrs. Amanda Brougham	Students with Last Names C-E	Amanda.Brougham@lcps.org	<a href="#">Click here to book an appointment</a>



Mrs. Sarah Bustard	Students with Last Names F-I	Sarah.Bustard@lcps.org	<a href="#">Click here to book an appointment</a>
Ms. Nicole Winfree	Students with Last Names J-Ma	Nicole.Winfree@lcps.org	<a href="#">Click here to book an appointment</a>
Mrs. Amanda Patel	Students with Last Names Mc-P	Amanda.Patel@lcps.org	<a href="#">Click here to book an appointment</a>
Ms. Shannon Nieves	Students with Last Names Q-Sm	Shannon.Nieves@lcps.org	<a href="#">Click here to book an appointment</a>
Mr. Zachary Turner	Students with Last Names Sn-Z	Zachary.Turner@lcps.org	

Mrs. Rivera, our Career Center Specialist is another resource for students in their post-secondary planning and can be reached at [Elisa.Rivera@lcps.org](mailto:Elisa.Rivera@lcps.org) or you can schedule an appointment with her [here](#).