

The College Application Process

It's exciting to plan your future. Unsure of where to start? Use SCOIR to help you search colleges and look at how you compare in the scattergram data. Research the best you can, including attending events/ activities that the schools offer, attending college fairs, and speaking with the school admissions counselors.

1. **Applying to college.** You can apply to college either directly through the ***school's website***, the ***CommonApp***, or ***SCOIR***. When creating accounts, make sure you keep track of your usernames and passwords!
 - a. **Types of Admissions:** Regular, Rolling, Early Decision (binding), Early Action/Priority. **Be mindful of application deadlines!**
 - b. **CommonApp:** <https://www.commonapp.org/>
 - Create your CommonApp Account. You will be given a CommonApp ID (CAID)
 - Complete the Education Section (notes: BMHS GPA is weighted, exact, grades on a scale of 100, Academic Achievements include Honor Roll)
 - Add the colleges that you intend to apply to (note: not all schools participate)
 - Complete FERPA waiver; only list recommender names, not email addresses
 - **Do NOT request letters of recommendation through CommonApp; letters of recommendation are requested and sent through SCOIR**
 - c. **Through SCOIR**
 - This is another tool that colleges use; however, not all schools participate.
 - d. **Directly to the school's website.** Some prefer that you apply directly to them.
 - For example, Ocean County College has an application directly on their website. You can find it at www.ocean.edu
 - Another example: Brookdale Community College: <https://www.brookdalecc.edu/>
 - e. **Supporting documents that complete your application include:**
 - i. Your official transcript (which includes your classes & grades, your Senior Year courses, your weighted & unweighted GPA) (*BMHS sends*)
 - ii. Teacher/other letters of recommendation (*BMHS sends*)
 - iii. Your SAT/ACT test scores (*Student sends through CollegeBoard*)
 - iv. Financial information for financial aid eligibility (*Parent/Guardian submits*)
2. **Letters of recommendation:**
 - a. Choose **1-2** people who you feel would write a good recommendation for you. This could be a teacher, coach, administrator, boss, clergy member, etc.
 - b. It is polite and good practice to ask them in person, first. If they agree...
 - c. If they are a BMHS employee, you will request their letter of recommendation through SCOIR under "Application Documents." **DO NOT request it through CommonApp.** If they are not BMHS staff, they can email/mail their recommendation to your counselor.

3. **Scoir:** <https://www.scoir.com/>

- BMHS uses this to streamline the college application process. Use it to search for colleges, **compare yourself on the scattergram/analyze feature**, organize the list of schools you apply to, request letters of recommendation from teachers, and notify the Guidance Department of your applications. Your official transcript, letters of recommendation, and other supporting documents are sent from BMHS to the institutions you apply to.
- **Complete the FERPA section (Authorization and Waiver of Rights)**
- **Complete “My Profile” in SCOIR - ensure that all of the information is complete and accurate. Make sure the Senior Brag Sheet is filled out also. This will assist everyone in writing your letters of recommendation.**
- Watch the videos posted in “My Drive” on your Scoir account. This will help you navigate your way through SCOIR.
- **Request letters of recommendation through SCOIR, under “Application Documents.”** Once you request on the site, SCOIR will generate an email to your teacher. Please give the teachers a deadline of when you need your letter posted by.
- Add the colleges you are applying to to the My Colleges list. Record your CommonApp ID number if applicable.
- **Once you have completed and submitted your college application (using CommonApp, SCOIR, or directly through the college), simply drag the college from the ‘applying’ column over to the ‘applied’ column.**
- Notify your counselor to confirm you have applied- by email, or send them a direct message in SCOIR. Your letters of recommendation and transcript will be sent to those colleges. **Please be sure to submit your application before notifying your counselor that you’ve applied.**
- Some colleges require Mid-Year Transcripts to be sent in addition to your initial transcript. These are not automatically sent; please notify the Guidance Office if your schools require it.

4. **Test Scores.** If you have taken the SAT and/or ACT, please be advised that BMHS does not send your scores. If you choose to send your scores, you will do so under the respective sites. Note that the sites do charge a fee to do so; if you sign up for any future test dates, you can usually include schools at time of registration for free. The sites are:

- SAT: www.collegeboard.org
- ACT: www.actstudent.org

5. **Financial Aid.** www.studentaid.gov

- You can apply for Financial Aid on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in October this year.
- This is based on personal family financial data. Parents/Guardians complete this using their tax documentation from the last two years.
- A great resource to use is HESAA, which will be used for those applying to colleges in NJ: <https://www.hesaa.org>
- NJ Dreamers can access financial aid information here: <https://www.hesaa.org/Pages/NJAlternativeApplication.aspx>
- Some schools may prefer/ require the [CSS Profile](https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/). This also opens up on October 1st, and is available on the Collegeboard website. (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>). Please be aware: there is a fee associated with creating a CSS Profile.

6. **Scholarships.** There are many scholarship opportunities that students can apply to!
- Local scholarships are usually made available to BMHS students through the our

Scholarship Google Classroom Code: **gyukb6et**

- Colleges may offer scholarships based on merit, needs, majors, etc.
- There are many scholarship websites in existence. Be wary of sites that are looking for payment. Some great sites include:
 - www.scholarships.com
 - www.fastweb.com
 - <https://www.raise.me/>
 - www.chegg.com
 - www.niche.com
 - Scholly by Sallie Mae
 - <https://jlvcollegecounseling.com/>
 - <https://scholarsapp.com/>
 - <https://scholarshipamerica.org/>
 - <https://www.salliemae.com/college-planning/college-scholarships/>
 - www.collegeboard.org (This is the site used for the PSAT/SAT/AP. There are scholarship opportunities available.)
 - Student Scholarships Website: www.studentscholarships.org
 - UNIGO Scholarships: www.unigo.com
 - USA Scholarships: <http://usascholarships.com>
 - Career One Stop:
<http://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-scholarships.aspx>
 - Petersens College Search:
<https://www.petersons.com/college-search/scholarship-search.aspx>
 - Cappex: <https://www.cappex.com>
 - Collegeboard Big Future: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>
 - Questbridge:
<https://www.questbridge.org/high-school-students/national-college-match/scholarship-details>
 - Giveback: <https://www.giveback.ngo/scholarship-program-9th-grade-students/>
 - Governor's Urban Scholarship:
<https://www.hesaa.org/Documents/GUSScholarshipProgram.pdf>
 - Governor's Industry Vocations Scholarship:
https://www.hesaa.org/Documents/NJ-GIVS_program.pdf
 - Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Scholarship:
https://www.hesaa.org/Documents/STB-LEOM_program.pdf
 - World Trade Center Scholarship:
https://www.hesaa.org/Documents/WTC_program.pdf
 - NJ Foster Care Scholarships:
<https://www.hesaa.org/Documents/NJFCFlyer.pdf>
 - CSS Profile (which does require a fee to join):
<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

7. **Loans.** These are some sites that can provide loan information:

1. NJ Class: <https://www.hesaa.org/Pages/NJCLASSHome.aspx>

2. Direct PLUS Loan: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/plus>
3. Sallie Mae: www.salliemae.com
8. **NCAA.** This is for collegiate athletes. If you are interested in playing a Division I or II sport in college, or have been in contact with coaches, you will need to have an NCAA account. You can create an account at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

The Steps, simplified...

- ☐ Use the filters on SCOIR to help you research schools, and decide how you are going to apply.
- ☐ On SCOIR, complete the **“Waiver of Rights.”**
- ☐ Invite a parent or guardian to SCOIR, so they can sign the **“Release Authorization”**. ***This and the “Waiver of Rights” will enable your transcript and letters of recommendation to be sent.***
- ☐ Under “My Colleges,” you can follow schools, and add schools to which you plan to apply. You will also use this feature to communicate/identify when you have applied to schools.
- ☐ Work on your college application essay!
- ☐ Think about who you’d like to request a letter of recommendation from. It is good practice to have a face to face conversation with them first to confirm. Then, request the letter from the teacher/staff member under “Application Documents.” Be sure to give your recommenders time to write their letters.
- ☐ Be mindful of application deadlines. Your application must be in by the respective college deadlines.
- ☐ When you apply to a school, please indicate that you have applied under “My Colleges.”
- ☐ Send test scores (SAT/ACT) if needed.
- ☐ Financing your education... parents/guardians apply for Financial Aid; students apply for Scholarships.