

Senior Parent Info Night Q&A

When will senior groups be?

They start tomorrow. Students should watch for an email invite from their counselor.

How can students meet with their counselor?

If students would like to meet with a counselor one on one, they should reach out to us by email to schedule an appointment.

DEADLINES:

What are the most common deadline dates:

October 15 - about 5 schools

November 1 -- MANY schools, for Early Decision and Early Action

November 15 - a small number of schools - For ED and EA

December 1 - for some EA or Regular Decision (Rutgers, Penn State, UC system -- last call!)

Early January (January 1 - 5) - Regular Decision, Early Decision 2

January 15, February 1 - The last real deadlines

Early Decision: Can a student reapply after being denied in ED?

Not in the same year, no. They are done for the year's application cycle at that school.

Does Early Action give a better chance of being accepted?

It depends upon the school. For some schools - yes - and Mrs. Thomson is clear with students which schools those are (notably: Penn State, Maryland, Purdue). For other schools, admission rates are the same -- but Early Action does give an earlier decision (December/January vs late March).

Are the schools with restrictive early action worth applying to over their regular decision?

Does it give any better chances?

Generally, we see consistent decisions here -- but the applicant pool in REA is much smaller. Students also hear back earlier.

If applying REA does not prevent the student from submitting their other apps early (which would depend on the specific college list in question), then there is no harm in applying REA.

If there is a 10/15 deadline, when do the students need to submit to ensure the school has time to get the supporting documents sent in time for 10/15?

The student needs to have the school on their SCOIR applying list by 9/30 (two weeks ahead). The brag sheet and teacher recommendation requests also need to be done by this date. We'll work in parallel with the student. Both parties have until 10/15 at midnight to submit (though most of the 10/15 schools do have a later deadline for receipt of school documents).

What is an ED agreement?

If you are applying Early Decision, the student, parent and counselor must sign a binding contract that states if your student gets accepted to that school, you student will be going there. This is signed electronically on SCOIR and is submitted by the school counselor along with other school documents when the student applies.

TRANSCRIPTS, GPA'S AND TESTING:

How does the counselor know to send the transcript and when to send it?

Counselors use SCOIR to find all of this information. Students MUST put schools on their SCOIR Applying list with the correct deadline plan AT LEAST 2 weeks before the deadline (they can set it all up right now - it only takes a few minutes!).

Then, when a student applies and then moves to the school to Applied in SCOIR, we know to send out the things the school wants. When deadlines get close, we will send our school materials ahead....as long as the students has it on their SCOIR applying list with that deadline date!

Where can I see my child's GPA?

It's on their transcript, which can be found under Grading > Transcripts in the Parent Portal. You will see a weighted GPA and an unweighted GPA in the lower right corner. The GPA is also available in SCOIR.

Remember that HHS does not use a GPA on the 4.0 scale - we use the 100 point scale.

What is the difference between weighted and unweighted gpa and how to translate to the gpa score

The unweighted GPA is the raw grades of what students earn in their courses. Weighted GPA takes into account the course level. We weigh CP, Honors and AP courses according to rigor level. Both weighted and unweighted GPAs are on transcripts. Students should use exactly these numbers when asked for this info on applications. They should not convert to a 4.0 scale.

Do 1st and 2nd marking period grades affect the GPA?

Nothing changes on the transcript after 1st marking period -- grades don't appear there, and the GPA does not update. While the GPA updates in February -- senior grades have VERY little affect on the GPA. They are added in at ½ the credit value of the course -- so we are talking about 17.5 credits (max) versus the 110 a student has already earned. Also, students have already applied well before these changes are made --- but students should plan on some of their schools wanting to see these mid-year grades in February (unless they've already gotten decisions from all of their schools!)

When is the transcript updated?

The transcript is updated when a student changes a schedule (adds or drops a class). Otherwise, no updates until February, when 1st semester grades are posted and GPAs updated (see above question).

How does a student calculate their GPA and how do they know how colleges look at the GPA?

Students do not calculate their GPA. When asked to report GPA, students should report the GPAs as shown on their transcript.

Many colleges will recalculate during the admission process, and that is done by the admission process using a process specific to that school. Students can certainly ask colleges if they recalculate GPAs, and how they consider grades in the admission process.

How do students know if they need to send a transcript or self-report?

They should review the requirements on the school's admission website to be sure they know what the school needs, and if there are any particular requirements. Schools also send a LOT of emails, reminding students that they still need to do more things (like complete a self-reported academic record)! If it's a transcript, the counselor will automatically take care of it after a student moves the school to Applied in SCOIR.

Do you also track schools that require first semester and final grades of the senior year ?

Yes. We know which schools require mid year grades. Final grades are only sent to the school students commit to.

If a school requires an OFFICIAL SAT score, when does that need to be sent?

This means the score must be ordered from the testing agency -- and they send the score to the school. Students order this online on the College Board or ACT website. They should order at least 2-3 weeks in advance to ensure it's received by the deadline.

If Test Optional, what is the minimum SAT score you should submit? If the GPA is only 3.0...

First, remember that HHS doesn't use a 4.0 scale. If we were to convert, a 3.0 would be in the neighborhood of an 85.

The score a student would be advised to submit would depend very much on the schools in question, what the score is, and how the student compares to typical applicants to the university.

A good tip can be to look at the Scattergrams on SCOIR. If the students GPA puts them within that middle 50% of students who have been accepted from Hillsborough, but the test score pulls them down in the graph -- then it probably doesn't help. If the score pulls them up in the graph near other admits - probably helpful!

How do we know which school allows score choice for SAT and for which ones you have to submit scores from every SAT you took?

Schools will generally have this on their website, and the College Board will prompt students per the school's policy when they order the scores. One that has always wanted all scores is Georgetown. Some others do want all scores, but superscore on their own (like UMD).

If the SAT is superscored from 2 different attempts, do we pay twice to submit the scores from both attempts?

For SAT, you pay per school. You would select both dates, the school receives both dates, and they superscore on their end.

Do schools superscore SAT scores? How do you enter manually? Should you send multiple scores from College Board?

Not all schools accept super scores - this will vary school by school. If schools accept self-reported scores - you will enter that within their application. If they require official scores, College Board will prompt students to send the correct scores based on the school's policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

When do we get the recommendation letters?

Students do not receive their recommendation letters and cannot view them. They will get a notification when the teacher uploads to SCOIR. Counselors send letters to colleges after a student moves the school to Applied in SCOIR or as deadlines get close (as long as the school is on the Applying list in SCOIR!)

How many teacher letter of recommendations should be requested?

In general, we recommend that students ask TWO core academic subject area teachers (Math, Science, Social Studies, World Language, English). This will surely cover them no matter where they apply. If the schools they have on their list are not picky about it being from an academic core teacher - the student can absolutely expand to other areas, or use a non-teacher (if their schools will accept them).

COLLEGE LIST

Is it a good strategy for my child to apply to about 5 reach schools (out of range), 5 safety schools (in range), and 5 match schools (in the middle)? If this isn't the recommended approach, what does HHS suggest as the best way to balance college applications?

This would be a balanced list and would give a student options. It doesn't have to be 15 -- but they want to be sure to have some good options that they like that are probable schools (almost certain admission). Most schools are advised to be in the match range (~ 35-75% odds).

How do I know which coming to visit?

Students can view the full visit schedule in SCOIR. There are some highlighted right on the main page, or they can go to Visits and Deadlines in their menu. Parents, you can also [click here](#) to see the list of who is coming (so you can provide a nudge for your child to check their SCOIR account to sign up!)

Can you give more details about additional essay for Rutgers honors?

The essay question can be found in the Rutgers application (or the Rutgers portion of the Common App). More information can be found on the Rutgers Honors website.

SCOIR & COMMON APP

How do parents get on SCOIR?

Parents were all invited to SCOIR. If you do not have your login - email your School Counselor and we can invite you again!

Can we link Scoir and Common App?

There is no linking of the two. Students who use the Common App do need to cut and paste their Common App ID number from the Common App into SCOIR. While it doesn't link them, it's one way that helps colleges to match applications and materials.

Can info in the Common App be changed between applications?

Yes. What is sent to the college is what is in the application at the time the student hits submit for that college. If students are changing things like essays - they should be very careful to be sure the "right" essay is in there at the right time.

Could you please explain how parents can access my child's SAT scores through the SCOIR app?

Scores are located on the Profile page in SCOIR...but the only people that can see this are student, counselor, and parent(s)/guardian(s). Colleges can not see this. If applying with scores, students must self report scores or send official scores direct from the testing agency, depending on each school's policy.

How do we know when the Counselor letter and LOR has been sent to our colleges?

The student can click on the school tile on their My Colleges. Then scroll down - there is a record there of what was sent and when.

Is the Student Brag Sheet Survey on Scoir?

Yes, students can find it under the Assignments list on the front page when they login.

Maryland made a specific point about saying that to be considered in the Early Action process all documents need to be in (not just the application). What does that mean for the application process or is this typical?

UMD is one of the few that is REALLY strict about this. Our office submits all materials we have by the deadline for all schools though, so it's not an issue for us (as long as the student had it on their Applying list in SCOIR with the right decision plan (EA) at least 2 weeks before the deadline). The biggest place this makes a difference is in sending official SAT/ACT scores -- because the student needs to order them in early to mid October to ensure they are RECEIVED by November 1.

FINANCIAL AID

When is the right time to complete FAFSA?

After October 1 (when it opens) and anytime before the student's first financial aid deadline (which may be as early as November 1, but is more commonly in early December).

Can I submit the FAFSA before I apply for admission?

Yes you apply for FAFSA regardless of where you have applied and if you have heard from schools. It can be edited later if you add (or remove) schools from your application list. The FAFSA will open October 1 this year.

Does applying for financial aid reduce the chances of acceptance, all parameters being equal between two applicants...

The majority of schools are need blind. If need for financial assistance is considered in the admission process, the school would be considered "need aware". This is a great question to ask of schools (or you can google for it).

If you already have one student in college, can the same FAFSA be used for that student and the new applicant?

Each student submits their own application. When they invite the contributor (parent), that info may carry forward from kid to kid....but each kid needs to do their own part, and the apps are submitted separately.