



Wayside Sci-Tech HS COLLEGE COMPLETION

College Application Process FAQs **Wayside College & Career Center**

Seniors, please read through this ENTIRE document to prepare for college application season and BEFORE making an appointment with Mrs. Andrew to discuss your application process.

1. What application should I use to apply to college? FIRST, check with the college and universities to see what applications they accept. Most Texas colleges/universities accept ApplyTexas. It's most efficient to use ONE platform to apply. If all of your schools use one application, that's your best bet. For more on this see details in the APPLICATION section of this document.

2. What email address should I use in college applications? Students should use their **personal email address** in all applications and correspondence with colleges/universities. Your school email address expires after graduation, and may also be more likely to block correspondence from colleges or universities.

3. How do I send my transcripts to colleges? Students DO NOT send transcripts. AFTER a student has submitted their application via apply Texas, they will fill out the [Transcript Request Form](#)! Mrs. Andrew will email the school. Please make sure all information is correct on the form. Again, the big takeaway here is that STHS will not send transcripts or supporting materials UNTIL THE STUDENT COMPLETES THE APPLICATION ON APPLY TEXAS.

4. How do I get an application fee waiver? Check with each college to see what they require. The most common fee waiver is included WITHIN Apply Texas. You can request your [FEE WAIVER HERE](#)! Once filled out, bring it to Mrs. Andrew during FLEX so it can be signed.



5. How do I enter teacher recommendations? The student will add any outside letters to their application via their college/university student portal, AFTER THE STUDENT COMPLETES THEIR APPLICATION AND RECEIVES THEIR PORTAL FROM THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY. The student will either provide contact information for the person writing the recommendation or load the letter of recommendation, it will be college/university specific.

6. How do I enter outside recommendations? Letters of recommendation from outside STHS should be from individuals who support your application and field of study. The student will add any outside letters to their application via their college/university student portal, AFTER THE STUDENT COMPLETES THEIR APPLICATION AND RECEIVES THEIR PORTAL FROM THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY. The student will either provide contact information for the person writing the recommendation or load the letter of recommendation, it will be college/university specific.

7. Is it important to attend when a college I am interested in visits the College and Career Center? YES. Come by to say hello even if you have visited the campus. It is an opportunity to connect with an admissions rep who may review your application. Read on for more details about this.

8. What about scholarships? The largest amount of money you receive will come from the college/university you will attend. Typically this is in the form of merit money. Ensure you are aware of all priority scholarships/merit deadlines.

9. What do students overlook? Students should have their entire application reviewed by Mrs. Andrew before submitting. Correct any typos, grammatical errors, and mistakes to strengthen your application. Take the time for a full and robust review and revision process.



APPLICATION

Also, colleges/universities make changes each year. It is important that students go to each college/university website and review admission requirements prior to submitting.

Apply Texas Application (can be used by students applying ONLY to Texas schools)

Common Application (used by students who are applying both in Texas and out of state)

ACC Application (used for students applying to Austin Community College directly)

How should I apply to college in Texas? Students can apply to colleges in Texas beginning August 1. For students applying ONLY to Texas colleges/universities, ApplyTexas is one method to consider. It's best to use ONE platform, so don't use both ApplyTexas and Common App as it increases the amount of work. Check to ensure your school participates in the ApplyTexas application.

Do colleges on ApplyTexas require letters of recommendation or a school report from my counselor? It depends. The ApplyTexas online app has 2-year, 4-year, and public and private colleges. Most colleges don't require these, but some of the private colleges do. Check the college website in the admissions page to make sure you have all required materials turned in on time.

If a college is on ApplyTexas, Common App, or they have their own application, which one should I use to apply? That is up to you, but research this for all the colleges you plan to apply to and pick the one that will make your life easier. Make sure that you let us know how you applied to each school and don't forget to request your transcript.



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What other College applications might I be using to apply to college? Austin Community College is actually on the ApplyTexas application, but many dual credit students have already completed an online ACC application on their website. ACC prefers their own application Austincc.edu. **IF YOU HAVE TAKEN AN ACC COURSE, YOU NEED ENSURE YOUR DUAL-CREDIT TRANSCRIPT IS AVAILABLE TO YOU AFTER GRADUATION.**

What is the senior class size? The senior class (2026) total is (42) students.

What day do we graduate? This date is not set by the time most of you apply, you can enter May 22, 2026 as a placeholder.

Should I list my class rank? Some schools admit based on class position. Parents/guardians can request their child's class position by contacting the registrar and requesting class position along with a copy of their ID.

Which GPA should I list? The only GPA we report on your transcript is the weighted GPA. Next, you'll be asked to select the GPA scale. Choose 4.0 on a weighted scale. This may not, initially, make sense, but the theoretical maximum GPA is 4.8 on a 4.0 scale, reflecting the number of required unweighted courses as well as 1 additional grade point for pre-AP, AP, and advanced courses. All courses are included in the cumulative GPA.

Are there any senior year courses I shouldn't list? Common App allows you to list up to ten senior year courses. If you have more than ten courses, which is possible because of semester courses, prioritize your list. List your core classes first, followed by electives.

Any tips on writing essays? Most 4-year college applications require an essay. This is one of your first assignments in your senior PCC class so you will have some guidance from your teacher. [Here](#) is some good advice for writing your college essay. Remember that topics may vary from year to year, and



sometimes college to college. Take your time. It is the one piece that is 100% in your control.

Common App asks me if I wish to self-report standardized test

scores. Should I? Each college/university will be TEST REQUIRED AND/OR TEST OPTIONAL. With TEST OPTIONAL schools, you may need to submit an official SAT and/or ACT score via collegeboard.org or actstudent.org after you are accepted for English and Math placement (exhibits college readiness). You have options. If a college allows you to self report your test scores, you should report your score ONLY if you are satisfied with it, and are not applying to a college that is test optional. Remember, TEST OPTIONAL is really test optional, and you should not feel pressure to submit scores that are not representative of you. However, TEST REQUIRED means that you will need to submit official test scores to your college/university through either the College Board or ACT prior to your application being finalized.

The Activities section allows me to list only ten activities, clubs, internships, etc., but I have more. What should I do? There is an Additional Information option in the Writing section where you can list anything that you couldn't include in the Activities section or if you need to elaborate on any piece of your application.

What is Wayside's school code? The code (referred to as the CEEB or ETS code) is **440-391**. You'll need to list this code on just about every college application and when you're signing up to take SAT, SAT Subject tests, or ACT.

How many colleges should I apply to? Most Wayside students apply to 5 colleges. If you do your research to find a good financial and academic fit, and other criteria that are important to you, that should be enough. Each college has a net price calculator, make sure you understand your cost before you decide to apply. Typically, the more colleges you apply to, the more stress (and expense) is involved. My suggestion to those students



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applying to more than the recommended amount would be to plan, organize, and prioritize your process accordingly. Be aware of all of your deadlines and create those checkpoints along the way. You want every application you send to be the strongest representation of you as possible.

The schools you apply to should include at least one reach, one target (good fit), and one safety.

I see that the colleges I'm applying to will visit Sci-Tech this fall, but I've already been on their campus and have heard the admissions

presentation. Do I still need to attend the info session? Yes, even if it's just to pop in and say hello to the admissions counselor. More likely than not, the person visiting our campus is the first reviewer of your application. They could be very influential in your admissions decision. Introduce yourself, express your strong interest, get their business card, and follow up with a thank you email. Demonstrated interest is important for some schools, and a small gesture could go a long way, especially now without campus visits. DO NOT MISS THE OPPORTUNITY to hear any updates and to see the person who will review your application first. Be polite and make a good impression. It's about relationships.



RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

I'm only applying to public institutions in Texas. Do I need a recommendation letter? Texas public institutions, e.g. UT, Texas A&M, etc., do NOT require recommendation letters, but these letters can help strengthen your application file. Be aware that some schools, like Texas A&M University, will only read two recommendation letters.

Also, some honors programs, like UT Business Honors or Natural Sciences Honors, do require a teacher recommendation. In order for a recommender to send letters to Texas A&M or UT Austin, you must submit your application on applytexas.org, and then set up your account in UT or A&M portals, and there is a spot to put the email address of the person you are requesting a letter from. They will receive an email to upload the letter.

How much time should I give to my recommendation writers? Please give your teacher, counselor, or college counselor a minimum of 2 – 3 working weeks (not calendar weeks) before the deadline to complete their part of your application. This is especially true for December 1 deadlines (Thanksgiving holidays fall before this due date) and January 1 deadlines (winter holiday break falls before this due date).

What are you looking for exactly in my brag sheet responses? Students—this shouldn't be cause for stress. Think about it as good practice for your college application essays. We're especially looking for things that won't already be presented in your application. We want to provide a new, interesting glimpse of you as a student and individual. Parents—this is your chance to brag, brag, brag since most students tend to be pretty modest in their responses. We love the brag sheets, especially parent brag sheets. Give us lots of examples and anecdotes; they make your letters come to life!



Outside Letter of Recommendation? It is our recommendation that outside letters be loaded AFTER the student completes their application via their college/university portal. If the college/university does not provide a portal, the student should contact their admissions officer and ask about submission. Students will be prompted to either load the letter or provide contact information for the individual that will provide the letter. Same thing goes for letters from fine arts elective teachers.



FINANCIAL AID

What does the FAFSA stand for? Free Application for Federal Student Aid—note the word “free.” **Never pay to complete the FAFSA.** Stay away from sites like fafsa.com that charge you to complete the application – this is a scam. The official FAFSA site is fafsa.gov. Use this site to complete the FAFSA. We are all hopeful that the FAFSA will return to the normal schedule and launch on October 1, 2025 of this year.

When do students apply for financial aid?

The application cycle for the class of 2026 FAFSA HAS NOT BEEN RELEASED. The FAFSA website has NOT been updated. Linked below is information on what is needed to complete the FAFSA.

<https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out>

I’m thinking of applying early decision, what does my financial aid timeline look like? If applying early decision, you are usually required to submit your financial aid application (CSS/PROFILE or comparable school form) by November 15. If accepted, you will receive the financial aid award at the same time you are notified of your acceptance (mid-December). If the financial aid works for your family, you’re essentially done once you accept the award and pay your enrollment deposit. Since early decision is a binding agreement, you do not have the option of applying to other schools and comparing financial aid awards. I will end by saying Early Decision is a risk if you need to weigh all financial aid offers from other schools, and this is a determining factor in your decision to attend!

AND LASTLY



I have read this entire document and still have questions for Mrs. Andrew, or require her assistance with my application process. How do I request a meeting?

Mrs. Andrew will meet with EACH senior every 6 weeks to track progress!

Don't forget that the College and Career center is open during FLEX on Tuesday. You can also email me at kandrew@waysideschools.org.

Need a virtual appointment? [Click Here](#)

How can I keep up-to-date with College & Career information? ALWAYS check the bit.ly/STHSCOLLEGE website for the latest from Mrs. Andrew. There will be important information and deadlines during your senior year, so please make it a habit to check your email and the website. Follow the College & Career Center on Instagram @sthscollegebound for news and links.