



# College Planning Guide

2022-2023

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Welcome Parents/Guardians! We are at the start of an exciting time in your daughter's academic career. Within this booklet is all the information you'll need to begin the college search, learn about the college process and explore your daughter's post-secondary school options. There is much to consider and campuses to explore but with the knowledge that you will gain, you will search confidently for your daughter's 'next step'.

The Guidance Department is ALWAYS here for any questions that you or your daughter may have! We look forward to working closely with your daughter, assisting her and you along the way!

Sincerely,

Anne Perez  
Director of Guidance

Kim Bedrosian  
College Counselor

Linda Smith  
School Counselor

Terry Smeraglio  
Guidance Assistant

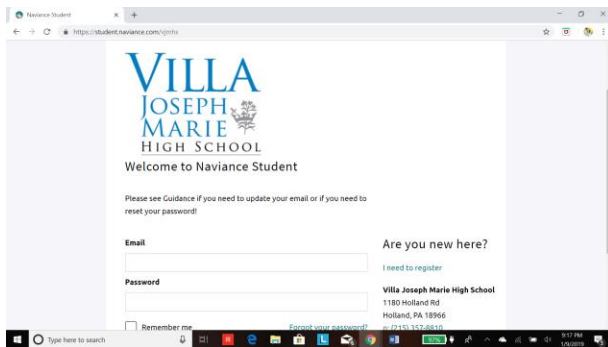


We are pleased to offer *Naviance Student* and eDocs from Naviance, a Web-based service designed especially for students and parents. *Naviance Student* is a comprehensive website that you and your daughter can use to help in making decisions about courses, colleges, and careers. *Naviance Student* is linked with Counselor's Office, a service that we use in our office to track and analyze data about college and career plans, which provides up-to-date information that's specific to Villa Joseph Marie High School. **It is necessary that we have an email address for each person (mom, dad, daughter(s)) so you can all receive up-to-date information.**

- Visit our school's Naviance Student site:

<https://student.naviance.com/vjmhs/>

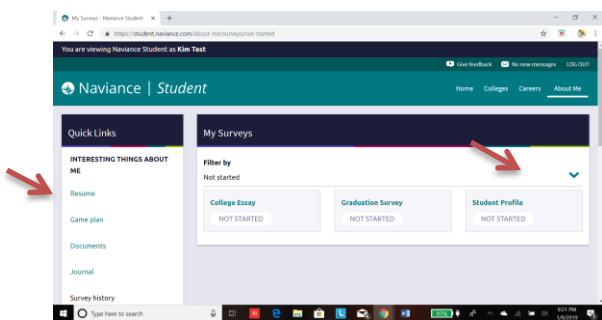
- If you have an account, login with your email and password.



- For those of you visiting the site for the first time, please enter your personal registration code in the New User box and follow the on-screen instructions to create your own account.
- If you need your account reset, please contact the Guidance Department.

## Exploring Your Naviance Account

### "About Me"



Students will complete the ***Student Profile***, under the 'About Me' tab and then to 'My Surveys'. This completed form will enable your counselor to write a letter of recommendation. **This is mandatory and due May 1, 2022. A letter cannot be written if this is not completed.**

# “Colleges”

The screenshot shows the Naviance Student interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Colleges', 'Careers', and 'About Me'. Below this is a 'Quick Links' sidebar with options like 'SuperMatch®', 'MY COLLEGES', 'Colleges match', and 'Colleges Visits'. The main content area is titled 'Colleges I'm thinking about' and features a search bar and a 'Compare Me' button. A table lists colleges with columns for 'College', 'Delivery type', 'Added By', 'Expected Difficulty\*', 'Application Deadlines', and 'Interest'. One entry is visible: Holy Family University, added by a student, with 'N/A' for difficulty and deadlines, and 'N/A' for interest.

College	Delivery type	Added By	Expected Difficulty*	Application Deadlines	Interest
Holy Family University		Student	N/A	N/A	N/A

Use the *‘colleges I’m thinking about’* link to keep track of your running list of colleges/universities. This list will be used during your individual college planning meetings. As you apply during senior year, you will move the schools into the *‘colleges I’m applying to’* page.

**College match**, **college search**, and **SuperMatch** are all great resources to begin your research. Take a look at the *‘scattergrams’* and use the *‘college compare’* option to see how your academic performance compares with previous Villa students who applied to the college.

College Admission Counselors will schedule information sessions in the fall. You can sign up for these visits by clicking on *‘view all upcoming college visits’* on the homepage. Do not miss this opportunity to meet with the representative who will most likely be reading your application. Villa hosted approximately 100 schools in fall of 2021.

The scholarship list in Naviance posts information for students. The list is updated frequently throughout the year and parents and students are encouraged to review the list often for scholarship opportunities.

# Application Deadlines

## ***Regular Decision***

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Regular decision students must meet the stated deadline. Decisions are made and applicants are notified by a specific date, usually in March or early April. Most colleges give students until May 1st (the common reply date) to accept or reject their offer.

## ***Rolling Admissions***

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Rolling applications are reviewed as soon as the file is complete. Decisions are rendered on a continual basis and students are notified as soon as possible.

## ***Early Action***

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Early Action (EA) allows applicants to submit their completed application during the early part of their senior year (typically Oct. 15, Nov. 1, Nov. 15 or Dec. 1), with admissions decisions arriving before winter break. Some colleges limit applicants to a single EA application – this is called *single choice early action*. Some colleges now have two early action deadlines. Accepted EA students may continue to apply to other colleges under the regular decision plans since EA is NON-BINDING!

## ***Early Decision***

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Early decision plans (ED) are **BINDING**. Students may apply to **ONLY ONE COLLEGE** 'ED' and must agree to attend that institution if accepted. Some colleges (as per past history) tend to accept a large portion of their freshman class from the Early Decision applicant pool, so there can be an advantage in applying ED. Early Decision applicants may find their applications accepted, denied, or deferred to the regular decision pool. **Accepted Early Decision students MUST withdraw all other college applications from consideration when they receive their ED acceptance.** While ED may provide an "edge" in the admission process, it is appropriate ONLY for students who are SURE of their first choice school and have visited and thoroughly researched the school's programs. Early decision pools tend to be extremely competitive, so applicants must be strong candidates. Students who NEED to compare financial aid offers from several colleges should probably not lock themselves into Early Decision!

An Early Decision intent needs to be discussed thoroughly with parents/guardians and your counselor.



# Applying to College

Take the time to research and you'll be able to streamline your initial list down to a manageable number of schools. Once you know what you're looking for, you can start crafting a list of colleges that fit your specifications. Don't include a school on your list that you won't be willing to attend. As your list takes shape, include schools that fall into each of the following three categories: dream, good fit, and higher likely.

- 2 – 3 dream schools
- 2 – 3 good fit schools
- 2 – 3 higher likely schools

A ***dream school*** is one where your academic credentials fall below the school's range for the average freshman. They are more challenging to be accepted into, but they should still be possible.

A ***good fit school*** is one where your academic credentials fall well within (or even exceed) the school's range for the average freshman. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to be accepted to several of your match schools.

A ***higher likely school*** is one where your academic credentials fall above the school's range for the average freshman. You can be more confident in being considered for acceptance. There is no safety in admissions, but there are schools for everyone.

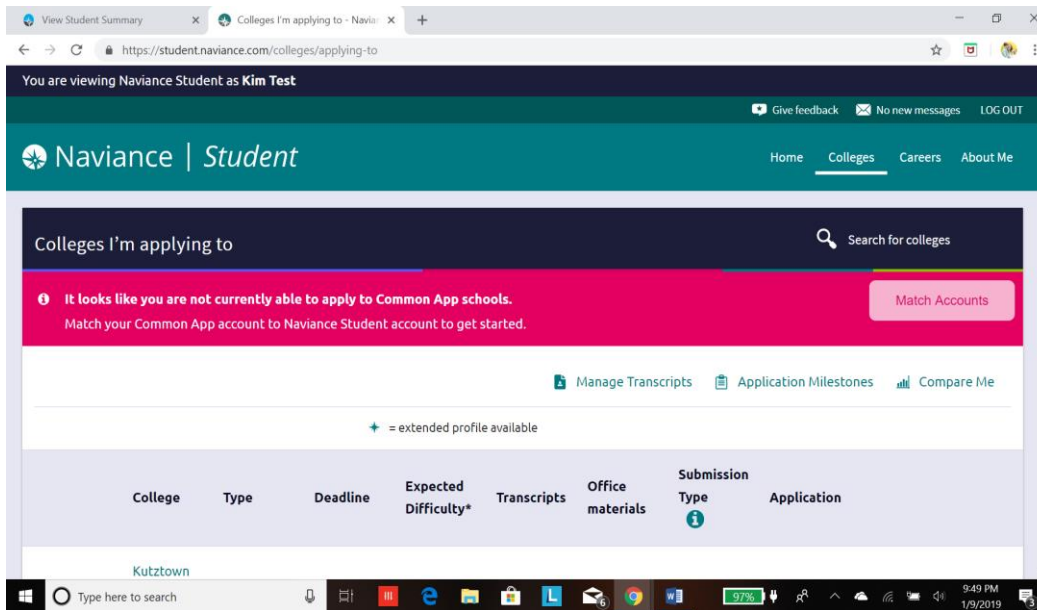


# The Key Components of the College Application Process

- If the school to which you are applying is a Common Application member, you are encouraged to use the Common Application to apply, in order for your Guidance documents to be sent electronically via Naviance eDocs.
- If the school is not a member you will apply using the college's online application or the Coalition application.



[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)



- **You must sign the FERPA Waiver & Authorization on CA. Then enter your email and match your Common Application Account in Naviance, under 'colleges I'm applying to'. Your supporting documents cannot be sent until the match is complete. Input your email and click on 'match'.**
- Send official SAT/ACT scores to each college/university from the testing site, as required. **This is the student's responsibility.**
- Complete every application thoroughly. Use spell check; double check all entries. Answer every question completely.
- Include your college essay.
- Send supplemental materials (portfolios, essays, videos), if required.
- There are a growing number of colleges and universities that do not require submission of SAT or ACT scores. Fair Test ([www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org)) includes a list of schools on its website. A school that does not require standardized test scores usually has alternative requirements. If you are applying "test optional" or "test flexible", check to see if that school requires an additional essay, graded paper, or letter of recommendation. Check each college for current policy.
- Your file is not complete until every component of your application is finished prior to the designated deadline!!!

## Application Fast Facts

**School Code: 392990**

**GPA: 4.0 weighted scale**

**Number of students in your graduating class: 90**



# Requesting Letters of Recommendation and Transcripts

## *Letters of Recommendation*

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During the second semester of your junior year, you will request a letter of recommendation from two teachers.

Letters of recommendation requests is a two-step process:

1. **Add your teacher requests in Naviance under ‘Colleges’, then ‘Apply to College’**
2. **A pink ‘teacher recommendation request’ form must be given directly to the teacher by the student with completed answers to the questions listed on the pink form.**

***This is due March 1, 2022. It is mandatory that you ask two teachers for a letter of recommendation.***

*If applicable, request a letter from a teacher that teaches you in a subject that will be relevant to your college major. We encourage you to ask for a recommendation from teachers of core academic subjects.*

## *Request a Transcript*

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To request a transcript to be sent to a college, a student must send request through Naviance in the “colleges I’m applying to” tab and then obtain the proper “Authorization to Send Transcript” form ([Blue Sheet](#)) from the Guidance Office and fill it out completely. You will indicate each school or scholarship to which you apply to on this form. This specific form, which you are required to sign, gives our school permission to mail or send electronically a copy of your cumulative record (grades) to a specific post-secondary institution- college, university, business school, technical school, scholarship committee, agency, etc.

Student athletes must register with NCAA at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org) Please see Guidance for more information.

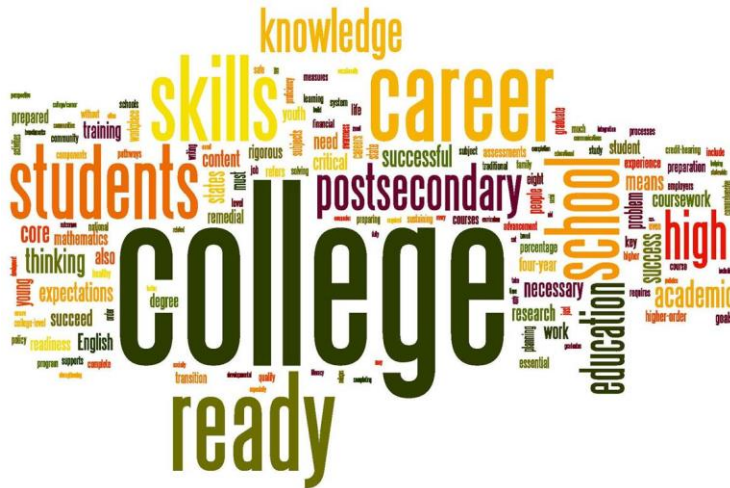
➤ **MEETING ALL APPLICATION DEADLINES IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY**

Please be aware that **10 WORKING DAYS** are required to process each application.

- **October 15, 2022** deadline to submit all blue transcript request forms for **November 1<sup>st</sup>** applications
- **November 1, 2022** deadline to submit all blue transcript request forms for **November 15<sup>th</sup>** applications
- **November 15, 2022** deadline to submit applications **before Thanksgiving break**
- **December 15, 2022** deadline to submit applications **before Christmas break**



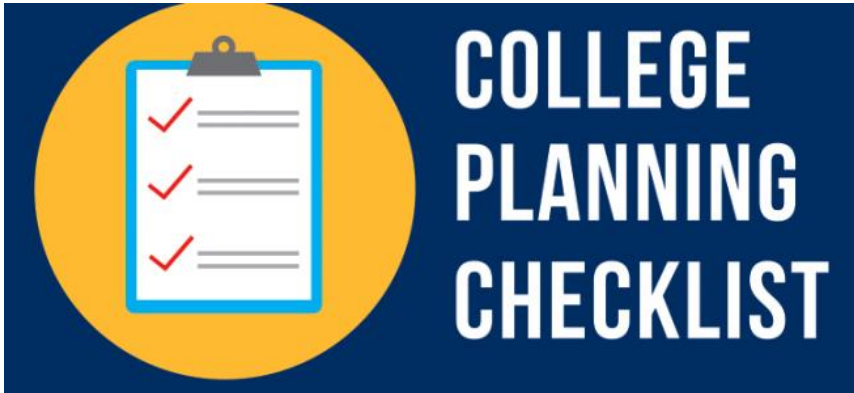
## College Interviews/Questions: Most Frequently Asked



- How is your senior year going?
- What goals have you set for yourself and how do you plan to achieve them?
- Why have you chosen this school? (Preparation and genuine interest are important.)
- Tell me two of your strengths. What, in your opinion, is your greatest weakness?
- What has been your greatest challenge in life?
- What are you most proud of?
- What will you contribute to our college community?
- What would your friends say about you?
- What do you see yourself doing 10 years from now?
- What factors have you considered in choosing your major?
- What book have you read recently (independently of school assignments)?
- What questions do you have for me? (Be prepared with a few questions!)

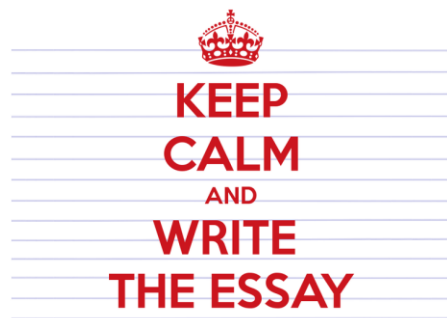
**Always finish the interview with a sincere handshake and follow-up thank you note.**

## College Visits:



- Take an official campus tour.
- Take a virtual tour ahead of your visit.
- Have an interview with admission officer, if possible.
- Participate in group information session at the admission office.
- Sit in on a class (or two!)
- Talk to a professor in your chosen major(s).
- Talk to a coach in your chosen sport.
- Talk to a counselor in the career center.
- Spend the night in the dorm with a current student.
- Bring your transcript and copy of test scores.
- As a family, complete the Net Price calculator, located on each college's financial aid site.

## The Essay/Personal Statement



In actuality, students have very little control over many components of their applications – the transcript, the standardized tests; the letters of recommendation are, by the beginning of senior year, a “done deal.” The one area in which a student can have a true and positive impact is the essay. Unfortunately, many students fail to put the time and effort into this component. A good/effective/decision-impacting essay takes brainstorming, editing and re-editing. **THE COLLEGE ESSAY SHOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF WRITING CRAFTED DURING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL CAREER.**

A well done, original essay can “speak” for the applicant in a most forthright and engaging manner and can be the “yes” factor. The purpose of the application essay is to allow the admissions committee to really “view” the student – to see the student’s passions, struggles and personality – the unique “third dimension” which sets each person apart as an individual.

Typical themes address intellectual interests and achievements, passions or talents, or what is meaningful and significant to the applicant. Some points to consider:

- Clearly answer the questions posed – “discuss” means to examine, analyze, and present both sides of the issue. “Describe” means to characterize and elaborate. “Explain” equals the how or why, i.e., the clarification or interpretation.
- When given a choice of essay topics, avoid the one that is easiest to answer and instead select the topic that allows one the opportunity to answer or voice the question that may arise from the review of the application. Topics to address in a straight forward manner on an essay include why a grade fell to a B- or C, how a passion for history was developed or why there is lack of participation in school clubs.
- Follow the art of writing process. Brainstorm topics; type a rough draft. Obtain feedback from people who one respects. On the first draft, request the reader to comment upon the ideas, the flow, and the level of persuasiveness, rather than grammar. Revise essay patterns following patterns in feedback; aim for clarity and meaning. Repeat the process, correct grammar, tighten up organization – watch sentence structure and prevalence of “I” statements. Proofread carefully and ask others to do the same.

A sparkling essay will not excuse mediocre grades and an undistinguished record but effectively employing the essay opportunity can (and does) make the difference between an accepted or rejected decision by the college of choice.



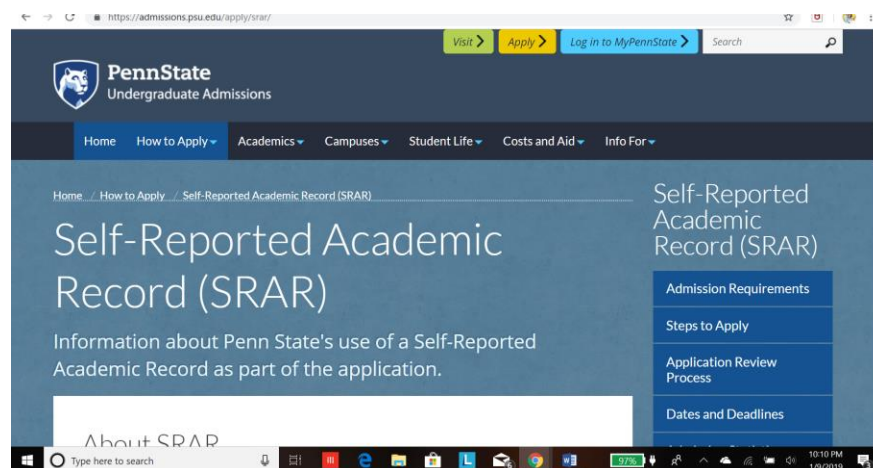
## College Admissions Tests Dates and Registration Deadlines

SAT <i>www.collegeboard.org</i>	
Test Date	Registration Deadline
March 12, 2022	February 11, 2022
May 7, 2022	April 8, 2022
June 4, 2022	May 5, 2022

ACT <i>www.actstudent.org</i>	
Test Date	Registration Deadline
April 2, 2022	February 25, 2022
June 11, 2022	May 6, 2022
July 16, 2022	June 17, 2022

## SRAR Self-Reported Academic Record

- One of the new trends in admissions is that students have to self-report their courses, grades, and sometimes test scores that they have received over the entirety of their high school careers. Colleges that are currently requiring the SRAR are Penn State, Temple, and University of Pittsburgh.
- Students need to check the college's website and application list to ensure they complete all application requirements.



## Sample: Teacher Recommendation Request Form

### TEACHER RECOMMENDATION REQUEST FORM

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER/ADVISOR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE TITLE (s): \_\_\_\_\_

INTENDED MAJOR (s), IF KNOWN: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENTS:** Please check off that each of the following items is completed before submitting this form in person to each teacher:

- **Ask 2 teachers in-person.**
- **Send a Naviance request to each teacher.**
- **Complete this form & email a version to each teacher.**
- **Thank each teacher when submitting the hard copy.**

**\*\*\*Please answer the following questions thoroughly and thoughtfully on a typed document. The more information you provide to your teachers, the better!**

1. What challenged you most in this course (s)?
2. What was most interesting to you in the course?
3. What are the skills you believe you learned in the course? Provide an example of when you demonstrated or used them.
4. Reflecting on your experience in this course, what is the single most prominent achievement that you will remember and are most proud of?
5. If enrolling in the course was optional, please explain why you chose to do so. Did the course meet your expectations?
6. What made you pick this course and this teacher to write your letter of recommendation on your behalf?
7. What two adjectives would you pick to describe yourself and why?
8. Describe an assignment you liked the best in this course - what topic did you write about/present about/learn about? Why did you like it?
9. **For non-classroom recommenders**, why did you select this particular staff member? What did you gain from this experience?
10. What are you most looking forward to in college?

# Sample: Authorization to Send Transcript Form

**Villa Joseph Marie High School  
Authorization to Send Transcript Form 2022-23  
VJM School Code: 392990**

Please return this form to Mrs. Bedrosian 10 working days prior to your earliest deadline.

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

Intended Major \_\_\_\_\_

**School(s) to which you are applying to:**

Name of School	Deadline	Decision Type (ED, EA, Rolling, RD)	Teacher letters to send: (prioritize)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Please check off that the following items have been completed before submitting this request form:**

- Updated "Colleges I'm applying to" list in Naviance to match the above list.
- Student Profile completed in Naviance for counselor letter.
- FERPA signed & Naviance/Common Application accounts matched.

**Please read the following statement & sign below:**

"I request that Villa Joseph Marie High School provide educational records, including grades, courses, and any other information required by the above named school. I understand that this information is to be used by the college Admissions office in evaluation of my application & that this information shall be confidential. The school counseling office is NOT responsible for sending test scores and submission of student applications. The counseling office will submit Q1 grades, as requested by the college and Midyear/Final transcripts to schools once grades are posted and available."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**FOR GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT USE:**

Date form submitted by student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date documents submitted to college: \_\_\_\_\_



## Junior Year College Planning Checklist:



### *First Semester:*

- Do well in your classes and maintain good grades.**
- Take the **PSAT**.
- Attend college tours & rep visits to Villa (in person & virtual).
- Practice using your Naviance account and start exploring schools.
- Add schools to your “thinking about” list.**
- Organize a **testing plan** based on the new guidelines set out by each college admissions office. Test prep is a family decision, but there are many free ways to practice for all types of tests.

### *Second Semester:*

- Do well in your classes and maintain good grades.**
- Try the SAT and ACT, and prepare for AP exams (if applicable).
- Attend College Planning Night (3/22/22 at 7 p.m.) with your parents/family members.**
- Course selection**-examine the requirements by each college & for specific majors (do your research and ask questions)
- Build a resume (Naviance, Word, etc., do have sample formats)
- Think of 2 teachers who you would like to request college letters of recommendation from and submit a pink form. We will do the requests together and pink sheets are due to teachers by March 1st.**
- Create an account at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) .
- Complete your Student Profile in Naviance by May 1st.**
- Register for APPportunity Camp with Mrs. Bedrosian (August prior to Senior year)**

### *Into the summer:*

- Explore pre-college options and summer opportunities in your intended major and/or career fields.
- Visit college campuses/attend virtual tours.
- Check your email regularly.
- Clean up your college list in Naviance.
- Touch base with Mrs. Bedrosian.
- Register with the NCAA eligibility center, if you are going to be a recruited athlete.
- Start your applications after August 1st. Create a list of deadlines.**

## Senior Application Checklist:

- Naviance Application List is current
- Naviance and Common Application matched
- Application Submitted
- Supplements Submitted (if required)
- Sent test scores (if sending)
- SRAR submitted (if required)
- Application fee paid (if applicable)
- Interview (optional? required?) (if applicable)
- Submitted Blue Sheet (Transcript Release) to Mrs. Bedrosian (Gives permission to send counselor letter, teacher letters, transcript, etc.)
- FAFSA and/or CSS Profile submitted (starting October 1st [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov))
- Once applied, check email for links to portals to check status of applications for each college.
- Provide Mrs. Bedrosian with acceptance and scholarship letters.**

Senior  
Year



**NOTES:**