

COLLEGE COUNSELING HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The College Selection Process.....	1
College Counseling at Episcopal High School.....	1-2

THE COLLEGE SEARCH

Know Yourself.....	3-4
College Characteristics.....	4-5
Collecting Information.....	5-6
Planning a Visit.....	6-8
Episcopal High School College Visit Policy.....	8-9
Narrowing Your List.....	9
An Alternate or Gap Year.....	10

ADMISSION DECISION OPTIONS.....	11-12
--	--------------

COLLEGE TESTING.....	13-16
-----------------------------	--------------

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

The Application.....	17-18
Deadlines.....	18-19
The Essay.....	20-22
Recommendations.....	22
Extracurriculars, etc.....	23

APPLICATION REVIEW.....	24-26
--------------------------------	--------------

NACAC STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE.....	27
--	-----------

FINANCIAL AID AND MERIT-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS.....	28-31
--	--------------

APPENDIX

NCAA.....	32-33
Internet Sites.....	34-35
College Resource Bibliography.....	36

THE COLLEGE SELECTION PROCESS

Deciding where you will go to college is one of the most important and exciting things you will do while you are at Episcopal High School. You may be wondering about your college options and wondering what colleges will want you. The answer is that many colleges will! Remember, colleges are recruiting and selecting students just as you are selecting a college. While you may or may not be competitive for every institution, there are many good colleges that will hope to enroll you in their freshman class. So relax and remember that this is one of the great adventures of your life. We have prepared this handbook for you and your parents so you will know more about how the process works. The college admission process will be easier and more enjoyable if you do the following:

- ◆ **Be thoughtful about what you want and need in a college.**
- ◆ **Keep an open mind.**
- ◆ **Plan ahead.**
- ◆ **Research your options carefully.**
- ◆ **Be attentive to requirements and procedures. They vary from college to college.**

While you may well find a college that is clearly your top choice school, there is no such thing as “the best college” or the “only” college for any student. Given the range of excellent colleges and universities to choose from, you should be able to develop a college list that includes several attractive, compelling colleges that will serve your needs well. Your college application list should include institutions that are likely to offer you admission, and it may also include “reach” or more unpredictable schools. You may find a first choice college early in the process, or you may still be debating which of several colleges will be your final choice in April of your senior year. Carefully and thoughtfully undertaken, the process can and should be fun, productive, and satisfying. Casually or carelessly approached, the results may not be as positive.

Know Yourself. You have to start here. Know who you are and what your goals are. What are your talents and interests? What do you want the four years of college to bring? How hard are you willing to work? How liberal or conservative are you really? How much can you and your family realistically pay for college? How adventurous are you? Do you want to go farther away or be closer to home?

Believe in Yourself. You have much to offer many colleges. You have had the opportunity to have a splendid high school education. You have wonderful teachers, coaches, and parents who believe in you. Be confident. Be excited about who you are. This is one time in your life when you can “crow” about your achievements.

COLLEGE COUNSELING AT EPISCOPAL HIGH SCHOOL

The College Counseling Office is open and accessible to all EHS students and their parents. The office’s library offers extensive resources to assist students in the college research process, including college catalogs and videos, guidebooks and directories, and computer and web resources. The college counselors are available for consultation throughout the year and encourage students to begin the exploration process early.

Parents are encouraged to meet with members of the college counseling staff when they come to campus and to telephone or e-mail us with questions whenever we can be of assistance. The college counselors also participate in Parents’ Weekends and are available for individual meetings at that time.

Admission officers from 70-80 colleges and universities across the country schedule individual visits to EHS each year to meet with interested prospective students and the college counselors. Meeting with these representatives is a good way to learn more about colleges and to allow the visiting admission officers to meet interested students. EHS also welcomes nearly 200 college representatives to our College Fair each October, providing our students with an excellent opportunity to talk with admission officers and to learn more about various colleges.

While we encourage students to take advantage of the resources of the College Counseling Office throughout their time at EHS, the formal college planning process takes place in the following stages:

Freshman and Sophomore years: The college counselors and the resources of the College Office are available to students. Freshmen and sophomores are asked to attend the fall College Fair and to take advantage of the spring Parents' Weekend college planning workshops. In the spring of the sophomore year, the class meets with the counselors and begins the college research process.

Junior year: During the first semester, juniors will meet with the college counselors to discuss aspects of the college research and admission process. In the second semester, each junior will have individual college-planning meetings with his or her assigned college counselor to create a list of colleges to be researched and visited during the spring and summer. The counselors and English faculty also offer essay writing and other workshops. The counselors encourage juniors to schedule follow-up meetings as needed during the spring semester.

Senior year: In the early fall, seniors will meet again with their counselor to continue finalizing a college application list and to discuss college application procedures. The College Office will assist and advise students throughout the application process and aftermath.

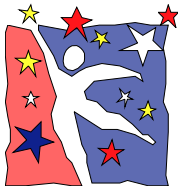
THE HONOR CODE

The principles of the Honor Code are meant to apply to all aspects of a student's life, and nowhere are they more important than in the college application process. An applicant's character and integrity are important to colleges, and violations of the Honor Code and actions requiring disciplinary action will be judged both by Episcopal and the college. Any falsification of information on the application or cheating, such as plagiarism on the essay, may seriously jeopardize your acceptance.

Episcopal must maintain a relationship of trust and total honesty with colleges if we expect them to believe and act upon our recommendations about our students. Anything less than that will have immediate and negative results.

Does it matter to colleges if you are suspended or asked to withdraw from a school? Recent history has clearly proved that the answer is yes. The student must notify the institution of any change in status, and admission offices will expect an honest and frank description of the situation as well as enrollment details if transferring to a new school. If a student is not forthcoming, colleges can and usually refuse admission.

The traditions of EHS and its Honor Code tell colleges that you are expected to meet and are capable of meeting a certain standard, and that falling short of it is a serious matter indeed. Your actions reflect your character, and that is part of what colleges are looking at as they evaluate your application. Don't give them any reason to doubt you.



THE COLLEGE SEARCH

Selecting the right college takes time. Before embarking upon your search, you should be introspective. Asking yourself some important questions will help you prioritize your college criteria. Then you should begin collecting information about colleges. Today there are innumerable ways of gathering information about schools. While conversations, recommendations, and viewbooks offer a rich amount of material, it is vital that you visit campuses to truly gain a sense of a college. Finally, as you proceed with your search, you should narrow your options, optimally including three categories of schools in your final list: safety/foundation colleges, “targets,” and “reach” options.

Know Yourself

Before you jump in the car to visit 10 colleges in four days or pay megabucks for a dozen colleges’ application fees, stop and think. What are you looking for in the place you shall call home for the next four years? Reflect on your Episcopal experience and your growth. Are you the same person today that you were when you arrived as a new girl or boy? What type of college or university will best fit you today---and allow you to grow? Begin by contemplating some key questions:

Goals

- What values are most important to you? What concerns occupy your thoughts, time, and energy?
- What people, events and experiences have influenced you the most? Why?
- How do you define success? What are some examples of your own success? What would you like to accomplish in the future?
- What types of careers or jobs seem most appealing to you?

Academics

- What are your academic interests? What classes have you enjoyed the most? Which have been the most difficult?
- How do you learn best? Do you prefer lectures or discussions? Do you prefer writing essays, taking tests, or completing short answers or multiple-choice questions?
- How would you describe your academic experience at EHS?

Activities, Interests and Hobbies

- What extracurricular activities have you enjoyed the most? What activities would you like to continue in college?
- What new activities would you like to begin in college?

- What leadership roles have you taken in school and your community? Think of a time where you have exhibited leadership. Describe the qualities you believe exemplify your leadership style.
- What do you consider your most significant contributions in high school? What are you most proud of accomplishing or contributing?

Developing Your Resume

You can also build a more specific inventory of your experiences during high school by compiling a resume of your activities and interests. Don't let the word "resume" scare you. Think of it as an organized activity list. What matters is its content. This list should summarize your high school experiences and exhibit all that you have accomplished in three or four years and can be of help as you begin to research colleges and complete applications. **Hint:** Microsoft Word has resume formats that can simplify your writing process, found under "New" in the File toolbar. Then open "Other Documents" to find a variety of resume templates.

Trust Yourself. Okay, you've reflected on your own preferences and tastes, perhaps revealing some qualities that will be vital for your chosen college to offer. Now, how do you translate that information into a list of schools that best suit your personal preferences? Answer: TIME and RESEARCH.

College Characteristics

GOOD NEWS: You are not searching for a needle in a haystack. There is no such thing as "the one" school, but rather several or even many appealing colleges that will suit you well. Remember that there are over 3,200 colleges and universities in the country as well as various international options. The key will be **NARROWING** your **CHOICES**.

Your college choices should match your personal preferences, right? While each college is different from the next, there are some basic characteristics to consider:

Type	Two-year/ four-year. Public or private. Church-affiliated. Liberal arts college/ research university/pre-professional (engineering, business, architecture, education). Coed or single sex. Calendar: quarter/semester/year-round/block.
Philosophy	Traditional or experimental. Career-oriented or deeply scholarly. Military.
Size	500-1000 students. 1000-5,000 students. 5,000-15,000 students. More than 15,000 students? What size feels right for you?
Location	Geographic region. Distance from home. Setting: urban, suburban or rural. Climate: cold, moderate, coastal, mountainous. Recreational /cultural activities nearby. Closest city.
Facilities	Academic: library, classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, computer/tech support, language labs, art studios, music practice rooms, writing center, study rooms. Athletic: individual/intramural/varsity facilities, weight room/cardiovascular equipment, athletic fields. Residential: large dormitories/ small clusters/apartments/houses, single rooms available, centralized/decentralized dining, alternative meal plans, required/guaranteed housing, roommate selection process.

Academic Life **Curriculum:** Freshman courses. Core requirements. Majors/minors/dual degree/interdisciplinary programs. Independent study. Research/internship opportunities. Study abroad.
Faculty: Student/teacher ratio. Class size ranges. Percentage of faculty with PhDs/number of classes taught by teaching assistants. Faculty accessibility, e.g. office hours. Freshman and upper class advising systems. Faculty diversity.
Atmosphere: Workload requirements. Competition. Students' attitudes toward learning. Exchange of ideas. Academic clubs.
Career Resources: Facilities/staff/advising. Pre-professional organizations. Graduate school information: percentage matriculating in graduate school, graduate school test preparation and application guidance. Job placement.

Students **Composition:** Gender ratio. Percentage of students living on campus and commuting. Geographic diversity. Racial/ethnic and international diversity. Religious diversity.
Community: Honor system. Open campus or significant regulations. Spirit of competitiveness. Diversity of opinions/tolerance of differences.
Activities: Prominent campus organizations. Greek system/eating houses. Religious/cultural/ethnic organizations. Music/theatre/arts/writing organizations and opportunities. Leadership opportunities. Athletic/outdoors clubs.

Affordability/Expenses: Tuition. Room. Board. Student fees. Cost-of-living expenses.
Need-based Financial Aid: Need-blind or need aware admission? Percentage of students receiving aid. Grants. Loans. Federal work/study.
Non-need based aid: Academic scholarships and their application procedures. Special talent scholarships. Athletic scholarships.

Collecting information

Step 1: Cast a wide net. Use the web. Colleges maintain comprehensive websites, and numerous college guides are available via the web. A list of popular web directories is in the appendix to this handbook (See pages 34-35). Peruse the sites, take the virtual tours, and request printed materials, including an application, via the web. Also, review some of the comprehensive college fact books, like *Peterson's*, and some of the more subjective guidebooks such as *The Fiske Guide to Colleges*. A bibliography of guidebooks is listed in the appendix of the handbook (See page 36). In addition, the College Counseling Office maintains a current resource library, including college catalogs and DVDs.

Naviance/Family Connection: EHS subscribes to *Naviance/Family Connection*, a highly useful web-based college research resource that we make available to students and their parents in spring of the sophomore year. The Family Connection system provides extensive access to a variety of college resources including extended data on EHS students' admission results at hundreds of colleges over the past several years. You will find the system an interesting and highly useful resource.

Step 2: Close in on a few. As you discover schools of interest, read and question.

- Beyond the web, obtain each college's admission literature. You will often find interesting resources not found on the web and demonstrate visible interest in the college by requesting information.
- Attend EHS's **fall College Fair** in Flippen Field House, where representatives from nearly 200 colleges will be in attendance, many of whom are part of the admission decision-making process. This is a very good time to make a positive impression and to obtain information.
- Finally, college admission reps from a wide variety of institutions will visit EHS in the fall to meet with interested seniors. Although attending a meeting with a visiting admission officer does not typically count as an interview, the impression you make during that visit can be important. Go to the

meeting prepared to ask intelligent questions and make a favorable impression. You should dress for a college interview as if for a job interview. At school or on a college campus, class dress should be fine, but take a little extra care in your appearance. It will make a better impression.

Step 3: Meet with your college counselor. One of the primary functions of the college counselors is meeting with you individually to discuss your college plans. These meetings will take place beginning in your junior year and continue into your senior year. We will assist you as you brainstorm ideas and narrow your list of schools and discuss various colleges' strengths and admission criteria. We will also help you develop a working list of colleges best suited to your talents and interests.

Potential Pitfalls

All of the steps listed above are somewhat formal ways of gathering information about colleges. However, much of what you will learn—and already know—about various schools comes from a variety of informal, casual sources. While this information—from your parents, siblings, teachers and many others—is most helpful and quite important, there are some common traps of which you should be aware. Don't let the following personalities limit your vision:

- **The CONFORMIST:** You allow your friends to decide your college list and you “go along” with their own list. *However*, simply because a school is popular should not deter you from considering it. After all, there must be a reason it is widely admired.
- **TUNNEL VISION:** While you may have been born wearing a Michigan State tee shirt, don't limit your consideration of the other 3,199 schools out there. MSU may not even offer your preferred academic subjects. *However*, if your beloved institution from childhood turns about to be a great fit, even better!
- **The SCROOGE:** Cost is a major factor in college decisions; *however*, dismissing a school because of expense early in your search, i.e., before you have applied, may prevent you from learning about their financial aid and scholarship opportunities.
- **The ALMA MATER:** Many parents hold incredible loyalty to their alma mater and their enthusiasm may be contagious. *However*, parents remember that a few years have elapsed since you graced your beloved college's campus. Now it's your son's or daughter's turn to seek out that feeling and personal fit on a campus. And students, there are probably very good reasons why your parents love their *alma mater* so much. Give their college a good and fair look. It might be a fit for you.

Step 4: Plan visits. As you develop your primary college list with your counselor and parents, begin planning campus visits. We strongly encourage you to **make an appointment** at each destination. By making arrangements through the admission office, you will be able to take optimal advantage of available visitor services, maximize your time on campus, and demonstrate your interest in the college.

Colleges typically offer some or all of the following options for prospective students and parents:

- ◆ Student-guided campus tours
- ◆ A group information session or an interview
- ◆ Class visits
- ◆ Meetings with professors or coaches
- ◆ Overnight dorm stays
- ◆ Music auditions

General advice. While your activities on campus provide you with the means of gaining information, you help dictate the quality of your time spent. Ask questions of the students you meet. Read the student newspaper. Eat in the dining hall. Visit a residence hall. Take a look at the athletic facilities. Contemplate your comfort on the campus. Does it fit? Some **questions to pose** to your campus hosts may include:

Why did you select this school?
 Do most students live on campus? Are they on campus on weekends?
 How accessible are faculty to students?
 What do students do in their free time?
 Are there any current campus controversies?
 How close is the campus to local restaurants, shopping centers, movie theaters, etc?
 What is the relationship between faculty and students like?
 Do students take their academics seriously? What's the pressure like?
 Do all students have access to athletic facilities?
 What are the meal plan options? How is the food?
 Are the facilities well-maintained and accessible to students?
 How safe is the campus? Do students feel comfortable walking alone after dark?
 What are some of the campus traditions?
 How easy is it for freshmen to become involved in activities?
 What activities are the most popular among students?
 What would you change about the school?
 How are freshmen advised? How are faculty advisors assigned?
 What academic support services are available?
 What is the placement record for graduate schools?
 Do you have an honor code? Is it effective? Do the students support it?
 How difficult is it to get into the classes I want to take?



Be advised. When you travel to college campuses, you are a guest and should comply with campus regulations. This is particularly important when staying overnight on campus. Visitors who violate campus rules are often reported to the admission office and, in extreme cases, may be asked to leave campus. This will not reflect well in the admission decision.

The Interview

Few colleges require interviews as part of the application process, and many don't even offer them. However, some institutions are happy to provide them if you want to schedule one. There are several different types of interviews:

- ◆ **The on-campus, personal interview.** You meet individually with a member of the admission staff, giving both of you the opportunity to ask and answer questions. Whether or not this interview is used as part of the admission evaluation, you should treat it as if it is.
- ◆ **The on-campus, group interview.** This is purely informational for both your family and you and not used as an evaluative tool. The admission office will share relevant admission criteria, and you will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- ◆ **The off-campus/alumni interview.** A graduate of the college who lives in your hometown or in the Washington area usually conducts this interview during the school year. Alumni interviews are customarily a minor part of the evaluation process. College admission materials will detail a school's policy about alumni interviews and how to schedule one. The College Counseling Office will be glad to help facilitate the meeting if necessary.

General Advice: Prepare for your meeting by reading the college's literature. Be aware of what it offers. Arrive a few minutes early for the interview and relax. The interviewer will ask if you have any questions, so have a few prepared in advance. It is good to write them down before you go. Begin the interview feeling good about yourself and your talents, and you will convey that attitude to the interviewer. The admission officer is not trying to trip you up; he or she simply wants to get to know

you. Be yourself and enjoy the meeting. **Send a prompt thank-you email afterwards**, making it personal, enthusiastic, and brief. It will help to distinguish you in the interviewer's mind, and it will reflect well upon you.

Questions an admission officer may ask in an interview:

Why do you think you and this college are right for each other?
Where else are you applying? What is your present first choice?
What are your academic interests?
What are your plans for the future?
What have you liked or disliked about your high school? If you were the head of your school, what would you change?
What would you like to tell me about yourself?
What newspapers and magazines do you read? What books have you read recently? What television shows do you watch?
Tell me about your family.
What hobbies do you most enjoy?
What events in your life have shaped you as a person?
How would your best friend describe you?
What do you feel about: the needs of the environment? Race relations? The homeless in our society?
What do you consider your strengths? Your weaknesses?
What do you want to get out of your college experience?

Finally, before you leave find out who the admission office representative is for EHS. Many colleges assign admission representatives to geographic areas, and that person will be involved in your application's review and decision. You and your family may find it helpful to communicate with this person through the application process.

EPISCOPAL'S COLLEGE VISIT POLICY

Visiting a college is the best way to discover whether that college is right for you. Plan to visit colleges whenever you can, but especially in the summer or during school vacations, either before or during senior year. You will find that during the summer months most admission offices are well prepared to receive prospective students and parents, and they usually have a lively staff of students who conduct tours. (Ask them those questions you didn't ask the admissions staff!). Because visitor traffic is typically heavy on most campuses during spring break season and during July and August, be sure to call ahead of time to schedule an interview, tour, group information session, or other activities.

Seniors are allowed **THREE** excused class days to visit colleges. Such days away should be reserved for visits to top college choices or for special invitations from colleges for scholarship competitions, athletic programs, or similar occasions. With permission, juniors are allowed to miss **ONE** class day in the spring semester to visit colleges. College Weekends do cost leave points (which is a good use of leave points!), and the college counselor and dean of students must approve all college leaves. For approval, the college visit should include official plans with the admissions office, in the form of one or more of the following:

An information session or interview
A tour
Class attendance
Special admission office-sponsored programs

The deans of students, college counselor and/or student's teachers will judge whether the student's academic situation would be adversely affected by missing class and will make a decision accordingly. The student should make arrangements for the trip at least one week in advance, including the routine leave permission fax or email from his or her parent. (See the EHS Student Handbook for standard procedures for a weekend leave.)

NARROWING YOUR LIST

In reading about colleges, listening to others--and yourself--and visiting campuses you are narrowing the list of colleges that appeal to you. In the fall of your senior year, your college counselor will meet with you to discuss this narrowed list. How long should it be? The answer, of course, will depend upon you. However, the final list should reflect a degree of decision-making about where you will hope to go to college and, for most students, will range in size from one to six or eight schools. While we do not set a recommended number of schools, we do offer one guideline: include a range of selectivity. In other words, include **predictable**, **target** and **reach** schools on that list, **even if you plan to apply early decision somewhere**.

- You should seek out a **predictable** college or two whose offerings and characteristics you find compelling and attractive. Because your academic credentials fit the college's admission profile very well, you can feel generally secure about your likelihood of admission here. Such colleges provide an attractive "**foundation**" to the application list and create some security in the sometimes unpredictable college admission process. In the event that a "predictable college" is your only option in the spring, a good choice guarantees a happy outcome to the process.
- **Target** schools (you should have several) closely resemble your own profile (course load, GPA, test scores) and meet many of your personal criteria. These schools admit students with similar records to yours and are selective in their admission. While past records indicate similar profiles, your admission is not guaranteed. Each year's applicant pool differs, and most schools will have more qualified applicants than they do spaces.
- **Reach** schools are the most selective and unpredictable among your chosen few. They admit the lowest percentage of applications and their admission profile averages may exceed your personal record. While they are the most difficult into which to be admitted, you may wish to apply to a couple of schools in this category. You may get in.



Bottom line- This is your journey. Yes, some colleges will be more or less accessible to you than others, but there are many excellent options out there. We have numerous resources available to assist you--and especially within the College Counseling Office. It is your responsibility to decide how you will take advantage of them. Come see us!

AN ALTERNATE OR GAP YEAR

Not every student from Episcopal wants to enter college in the fall immediately following his or her graduation. You may need to make money, to reinforce some skills, to mature, or you may just want a different experience. There are many options available. Following is a partial list:

A Post-Graduate Year. Some boarding schools have programs for post-graduate students. A "PG" year may strengthen your academic credentials, develop athletic talents, and make your overall high school record more attractive. Results exceeding those that a student achieved at EHS can expand college options. However, less distinguished performance during the PG year will not help a student in the college admission process. This option should be discussed seriously with parents, teachers, and your college counselor.

A Year Abroad. Colleges such as St. Andrews (Scotland), Franklin College (Switzerland), and the American University in Paris have set up one-year programs for American students. While you can earn college-level credit in a European setting, deferring admission to an American college can be a little trickier. Some colleges will want to treat the student as a transfer candidate. Other colleges will not be willing to defer students who are doing academic work at other institutions. Investigate carefully a college's policies in these areas if you have been accepted and wish to pursue a semester or a year abroad. Otherwise, there are many foreign study and service opportunities outside of a college setting for students who would like to spend a gap year abroad.

English Speaking Union. Episcopal has sometimes hosted students from England for a semester or full year as part of the same program in which English public (i.e. private boarding) schools accept a small number of American students for a year of study. The experience involves living and studying under the British system. To enroll in the ESU program, a student must be admitted to ESU through its competitive admission process and be accepted to a college where he or she has deferred entrance for a year.

Americorps. Billed as the domestic Peace Corps, Americorps is a national service corps of 40,000 volunteers, most of whom are between the ages of 17-24. As an Americorps volunteer, you live and serve in communities across the United States in projects ranging from building homes and restoring parks to mentoring children. A recent EHS graduate spent a year as a member of an Americorps fire-fighting unit. Americorps provides room and board, health care, and a living allowance as well as a \$4725 education award for college costs. For more information, check out their website at www.americorps.org.

Other gap year options might include the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), internships and volunteer activities, full-time employment, foreign language studies, arts programs, and so on. Taking a semester or a year off does not deter students from attending college, but usually provides a better foundation for the experience. If you are seriously considering postponing college entrance, think about some of these worthwhile alternatives. A useful book about alternate year options is *Taking Time Off: Inspiring Stories of Students Who Enjoyed Successful Breaks from College and How You Can Plan Your Own* by Colin Hall and Ron Lieber. A web search of the phrase "gap year" will also yield a number of interesting resources.

ADMISSION DECISION OPTIONS

A number of notification options are available to you in the college application process. Although the options vary from college to college, most schools offer more than one application plan under which you are notified of admission decisions, with some as early as the fall of senior year. Basic definitions of these different options are as follows:

Early Decision. Early decision is a commitment-based plan offered by about 200 colleges for the student who has **firmly** determined his or her top choice of college by the fall of the senior year. If that college is not a definite first choice, a student should not apply under early decision. A student submits an application by a set deadline, usually in October or November, and the college notifies the student of its decision, generally by early to mid-December. A number of colleges also offer a second early decision round, usually with a deadline of January 1 and notification around February 1. Colleges may accept, defer, or reject the early decision applicant. If deferred, the application is placed with the regular pool for consideration in the spring. If accepted, the student is **ethically bound** to attend the institution and must withdraw any other applications immediately. A student may apply to other colleges prior to early decision notification, but may have only one application under Early decision consideration at any time and **must be prepared to honor his or her commitment**. Early decision enrollment deposits are usually due in December or January.

Advantages to the plan are that you may finish the application process by mid-December, and you will send a strong message of dedication and interest to the admission committee. This demonstrated interest can be helpful if you are deferred and may give you a slight edge over the other applicants in the spring. Be very sure of your choice.

It is not necessarily easier to gain admission under an early decision plan, and at many colleges it is tougher. In fact, since senior grades and test scores are very important in the admission process, colleges frequently defer early applicants to see how senior grade and score trends progress. Your early decision application will be judged chiefly upon your academic record through the junior year, the first quarter of the senior year, and scores from SAT's and/or ACT's taken by October of the senior year. If your application will be strengthened by the work you do in the course of the senior year, it may be best to apply regular decision. Keep in mind that most colleges accept the majority of their students from the regular decision pool.

If financial aid is essential, it is usually possible to obtain a preliminary financial award or evaluation. If the award is not sufficient, you may appeal, or you may sometimes be excused from your early decision contract and be allowed to apply elsewhere. **If it will be important for you to secure financial assistance for college, early decision may not be the way to go.** Applying to several colleges under regular decision plans will enable a family to better compare a range of financial options.

Early Action. Offered by an increasingly large number of colleges, this plan resembles the early decision plan in most ways, except that it is **non-binding**. A student accepted under early action is not required to make a commitment until May 1, the national Candidates' Reply Date. This option allows you to express interest in a college and to receive an earlier admission response while also exploring other college options. Students are often either admitted or denied under early action, but they may also be deferred to the regular decision cycle.

Regular Decision. Most students follow this plan, through which they file their applications in the fall or early winter of senior year and are notified of the colleges' decisions in March or April. Application

deadlines generally fall in January or February, and, if admitted, a student must submit an enrollment deposit by May 1, the national Candidate's Reply Date.

Rolling Admission. Some institutions offer this option, in which the admission office reviews applications as they are received and releases decisions within a few weeks of application receipt. The earlier you apply, the earlier you are notified AND the more likely you may be to find a space. Spaces **do** fill up, so apply early, no matter what the deadline. Increasingly, rolling admission institutions prefer to receive applications by December 1. At some larger public institutions, freshman housing is also assigned on a rolling basis, and an earlier acceptance will help you secure dormitory space. Enrollment deposits are typically refundable up to the May 1 National Candidate's Reply Date.

Waiting Lists. A waiting list decision means that a college has neither accepted nor rejected a student, but holds out the possibility for admission should space in the class become available. Students are sometimes placed on the waiting list because of a drop in senior grades (**colleges are attentive to mid-year and often third quarter senior grades!**) or because the college has many more **admissible** applicants than spaces. While not yet admitted, the waitlisted student has fared better than the pool of students to whom the college has denied admission.

In some years a college will admit a large number of people from its waiting list and other years none or very few, depending on that year's deposit trends. Lists vary tremendously from year to year and school to school, and a student can expect to hear about the availability of space as early as the beginning of May or as late as August 1. Most colleges try to give wait-listed students a final decision by early July.

If offered a place on a waiting list, you will be asked by the college to inform them of whether or not you wish to remain on the list. You should respond to them promptly. It is not inappropriate to convey a keen interest in attending the college, if that is the case. Many students are offered waiting list slots at schools they have decided they don't wish to attend. Colleges are glad to know which waitlisted students are truly interested in enrolling.

Since most colleges are not in a position to notify students of their status until after the May 1 Candidate's Reply Date, it is important that a waitlisted student submit an enrollment deposit by May 1 to one of the colleges that has admitted him or her. After May 1, colleges will not accept a deposit if their freshman class has been filled, and it is important that you cover an enrollment option for the fall. If offered admission from the waitlist at your first choice college, it is appropriate to notify the first college at which you have deposited that you have made other plans. While the first deposit is probably non-refundable after May 1, it is not unethical to change plans, and your withdrawal may open a space for a waitlisted student at that college.

Colleges routinely expect a number of students to withdraw from the entering class during the summer, and their accounting for that may work to your advantage if you are waitlisted. **Whatever you do, do not deposit at TWO schools. That is unethical, and it can result in both colleges canceling your acceptance.** While you may accept a place on more than one waiting list, you should never hold an enrollment reservation at more than one college at a time.

Be sure to keep your college counselor apprised of your waitlist and enrollment status. We are here to help you explore your options and work through the process.

COLLEGE TESTING

TESTING REQUIREMENTS: Testing requirements vary from college to college. While some accept only the SAT, most institutions are pleased to accept scores from both the SAT or ACT. A growing number of colleges make the submission of standardized test results optional. It is important that you be aware of the testing requirements of each college on your list.

SAT Subject Test (often referred to as SAT II's) requirements vary considerably as well, with many colleges not requiring them at all. Since a number of colleges add or drop Subject Test requirements from year to year, **it is important to research the requirements of each of the colleges to which you will apply.** Not meeting testing requirements—especially when applying to highly selective colleges—will weaken your application in relation to other candidates or render it "incomplete."

If applying under an early decision or early action plan, it is especially important for you to be aware of testing requirements, especially regarding SAT Subject Tests. The October, and sometimes November, SAT testings are early enough for scores to be considered in the early plans of some, but not all, institutions.

Students who qualify for and plan to take extended time tests must contact Anita Doyle, EHS's Learning Specialist, to make arrangements for special testings. Both the SAT and ACT programs have very specific and somewhat rigid standards for extended-time testing qualification (see page 15).

Registration deadlines are important! Students are required to register for all admission tests ahead of time, and the testing agencies are very strict about registration deadlines, which are well in advance of the testing dates. Testing centers—and especially the one located near EHS—fill up early, so register for the tests as early as possible. For SAT testings, you should request the T.C. Williams High School test center in Alexandria (test center #47115), and for the ACT, West Potomac High School (test center #192590), also in Alexandria.

Either the student or parent can register for the SAT or ACT by setting up a personal account on the testing agency's website. Because these are protected accounts, EHS cannot register students for the tests. For more information or to register for a test, access the following links:

SAT: www.collegeboard.com or ACT: www.act.org

--Important note: Students must personally arrange for the testing agencies to send SAT or ACT scores to each college to which they are applying. Many colleges require students to have all scores sent directly from the testing agency.

STANDARDIZED TESTS: There are six types of tests commonly used by colleges and scholarship sponsors to evaluate a candidate's ability and achievement:

PSAT/NMSQT (Taken in October of the freshman, sophomore, and junior years)

The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) is used primarily as a practice test to prepare students to take the SAT in the junior and senior years. Since the test is constructed for junior-year level students, freshman and sophomores at EHS take the PSAT primarily for practice and exposure to the testing format.

National Merit Scholarships and recognition are based on results of the PSAT given in the fall of the student's junior year (also known as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test or NMSQT).

You do **not** get two chances at posting a National Merit score. Students who repeat a year, for example, and take the test officially a second time, will find their scores flagged (with an asterisk) to indicate their ineligibility for National Merit recognition. At EHS, the PSAT is also taken for practice by freshmen and sophomores. Scored on a scale of 20-80 on the Critical Reading, Math, and Writing sections, the PSAT parallels the 200-800 scoring of the SAT. The SAT is scaled with mean scores of 500 on each section. Similarly, 50 is the mean score on each section of the PSAT.

SAT I: REASONING TEST (Taken in junior winter and/or spring and fall of senior year)

The SAT Reasoning Test is a measure of the critical thinking skills you'll need for academic success in college. The SAT assesses how well you analyze and solve problems—skills you learned in school that you'll need in college. Detailed information about the SAT may be found at:

www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/SATI.html.

- ◆ The Critical Reading section measures a student's reading comprehension ability and ability to analyze reading passages; to recognize relationships between parts of sentences and between pairs of words, and vocabulary skills.
- ◆ The Writing section measures a student's ability to organize and express ideas clearly and to develop and support ideas in a short writing exercise. Multiple choice questions measure your ability improve sentences and paragraphs and identify writing errors (such as diction, grammar, sentence construction, subject-verb agreement, proper word usage, and wordiness).
- ◆ The Mathematics section measure problem-solving abilities involving arithmetic, algebra, geometry, functions and data analysis.

SAT II: SUBJECT TESTS (Taken in junior spring and/or November or December of senior year)

These one-hour tests are designed to measure a student's level of achievement in a particular subject, such as English, foreign language, history, mathematics, or science. Most, but not all, subject areas have a related SAT test. Up to three SAT II Subject Tests can be taken on one test date. Certain SAT II exams are offered only on specific dates, and students need to carefully plan their test schedule. We recommend that students take SAT II's in May of the junior year and/or in November or December of the senior year.

Students must closely check SAT II requirements at each college. While many institutions do not require SAT Subject Tests, some colleges require two or three of the tests for admission, and others use them for placement. Failure to meet these requirements can place a student at a minor or even significant disadvantage in the admission process. While most institutions do not specify which Subject Tests a student should take, other colleges have very specifically defined requirements.

ACT (AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST—Taken in spring of junior year and/or fall of senior year)

This battery of tests consists of four sections covering English use, reading, mathematics, and natural sciences reasoning. Since most colleges also require the ACT's optional writing section, EHS students should plan to take that portion of the test. The entire battery takes about three hours. Like the SAT, the ACT is given several times a year, including April, early June, October, and December.

Most colleges throughout the country accept both the ACT and the SAT. Thus, it is sometimes an advantage to send colleges scores from both tests. Many institutions will base an admission decision on a higher ACT or SAT score when students present both and when there is a disparity in scores between the two tests.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

Colleges usually require students whose native language is not English to take the TOEFL. Because the verbal portion of the SAT does not always provide an accurate measure of the non-native speaker's fluency in English or verbal abilities, the TOEFL can provide colleges with a more accurate indication of a student's command of English. Many colleges require international students to submit a TOEFL score, which is used in addition to SAT Critical Reading and Writing scores. It is wise to register early for this test since this area's test centers tend to fill up quickly. Colleges will often publish the minimum TOEFL score that they require for admission.

Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

Technically speaking, Advanced Placement exams are not required college admission criteria, except that colleges take note of enrollment in AP classes, and students should be aware that good scores on AP exams earned during junior year can enhance their admission profile. Exams are given in May and cover the equivalent of college-level material in a specific AP course. These exams require academic preparation more extensive than is found in a normal high school course. The exams are graded on a scale of 1 to 5. While placement and credit policies vary from college to college, scores of 4 and 5 – and sometimes 3 – can earn students advanced college credit and/or placement. Some Episcopal students have entered college with sufficient credit to be classified as sophomores.

Advanced Placement scores do not automatically appear on the EHS transcript. However, if AP results will strengthen a student's admission posture, we will report AP scores to colleges on the transcript. Strong sophomore or junior AP scores may enhance your application. Some colleges will ask students to self-report their AP scores in their application for admission.

LEARNING DIFFERENCES AND EXTENDED TIME TESTS. The SAT and ACT tests are offered in different forms to accommodate students with learning differences or disabilities. Students who qualify for these tests may take them with extended time and in other special needs formats. Special tests may be necessary for some students, and they are sometimes taken in addition to standard-timed tests.

At many institutions, there are no special tracks or special programs for students with learning disabilities. Other colleges can offer extensive programs and accommodations. Sometimes a college will have a special committee who will review a student's application in order to determine whether a student can do the work at that institution. They look for compensatory skills and evidence that such skills support the student's ability to do college-level work in the academic areas that the college will require of them. Admission committees will consider a student's academic record at Episcopal to be an important predictor of the student's success in college.

Taking Non-standard Tests.

The Educational Testing Service of the College Board offers non-standard administration of the SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests and the Advanced Placement exams to qualified students. Approval for accommodations from ETS is separate from, and not guaranteed by, approval for academic accommodations by Episcopal High School. For additional information, visit www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/accom.html or contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 609-771-7137 or ssd@collegeboard.org.

The ACT has established policies regarding documentation of an applicant's disability and the process for requesting accommodations. For details visit www.act.org/aap/disab/policy.html.

No distinction is made on the score report for students who have taken the SAT or ACT exam with extended time. Scores appear exactly as scores from regular administrations.

In order to qualify for accommodations on College Board and ACT tests, students must have a complete psycho-educational evaluation. Please contact Anita Doyle, EHS's learning specialist, for more information on required documentation (email: abd@episcopalhighschool.org).

Please note the process for requesting extended time from the College Board is a separate process from the ACT.

TESTING OPTIONAL COLLEGES

A number of colleges and universities are “score optional” in their admission process—that is, they allow a student to apply without submitting SAT or ACT scores, if they so choose. In such situations, an admission committee typically places primary emphasis on the academic record and the application responses. It is not necessarily an advantage to a student not to submit scores, and your college counselor can assist you in deciding whether going “score optional” in an application to a given college is to your advantage. Since some colleges require students who do not submit scores to have interviews and to provide additional essays or other materials, be sure to review admission materials carefully. And do not hesitate to contact admission offices for additional information about their testing optional philosophy and procedures.

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

THE APPLICATION

Step 1. Decide upon your final list of colleges. If you have not already done so, be sure that each college has your name on its prospective student mailing list. Doing so will ensure that you receive up-to-date admission materials and demonstrate your interest in the college. Most colleges and universities have applications and other information online, but paper versions of applications are also downloadable or available from admission offices.

The Common Application. While colleges have their own specific application for admission, a consortium of more about 300, mostly private, colleges publish and accept the **Common Application**. The advantage to this application is that you complete only one form and write one essay and send copies to multiple colleges. The limitation is that you can only use the Common Application with participating schools. If you plan to apply to two or more schools that accept the Common Application, using that form is an efficient way to complete your applications. **The Common Application can be easily filed online, and colleges will consider the form exactly the same as their own.** Some use only that form.

If you applying via the Common Application, **it is still important that you secure and review each college's printed admission materials for information about special programs or procedures** and sometimes for additional forms (such as the institution's financial aid application). Many colleges will also require a **supplementary form** if you use the Common Application. It is **imperative** that you return that form in order to complete your application. These supplements are typically found on the Common Application and colleges' own websites. The Common Application is easily accessed at www.commonapp.org, and the paper version is available in the College Counseling Office at the beginning of each school year.

Step 2. As you secure your forms, check over each application carefully in order to get a sense of what you will have to do to complete your applications. You should be looking for:

- ◆ **The Application Deadline** - You want to submit the application to the college **before** that date, if possible. It is also better to send in applications with **rolling admission** deadlines as soon as possible because enrollment and sometimes housing spaces can fill up quickly. (See DEADLINES on page 18).
- ◆ **Testing Requirements** - Testing requirements vary from college to college, and it is important that you carefully plan to meet the testing requirements of each of the schools on your list. Most colleges accept both the SAT and the ACT. Some require specific SAT subject tests, while other colleges encourage but do not require them. If applying early decision to a college, it may be imperative that you meet testing requirements by October of the senior year. (See TESTING on page 13)
- ◆ **Recommendations** - How many recommendations do your colleges require? You should ask teachers to write letters for you by October 1 of the senior year. (See RECOMMENDATIONS on page 22)

- ◆ **Interviews** - Are interviews required, advised, or even available? Schedule them early, if they are required. Most Ivy League schools, as well as other very highly selective institutions, will schedule alumni interviews after you have applied. It is very important to have an interview and visit a campus if the college requires or recommends it. Because college interview calendars often fill up days and even weeks in advance, it is good to schedule interviews well ahead of a campus visit. (See the INTERVIEW PROCESS on page 7)
- ◆ **Financial Aid** - Check for deadlines and any additional applications the college may require other than the **FAFSA** or **CSS Profile**. Deadlines, procedures, and policies vary greatly from college to college. (See FINANCIAL AID on page 28)
- ◆ **Essays** - Some applications don't require an essay: some call for two or three. Make sure you know how much time will be involved for each application. If more than one of your colleges accept the Common Application, one essay may suffice for several applications. (See THE ESSAY on page 20)

Step 3 Request teacher recommendations well in advance of the deadlines, and **preferably no later than October of senior year**. Try to request all recommendations at once. Give stamped, addressed envelopes, due dates, and your data sheet to each faculty member who is writing a recommendation for you. Remember that many teachers will have a number of recommendations to write in addition to their teaching and other obligations. Lining up letters from two junior and/or senior teachers should meet the requirements of nearly all colleges. The College Office will provide you with the stamped, addressed envelopes

Step 4 **Make copies of the applications as you complete them to keep as a record.** Applications both mailed and sent on-line can occasionally get lost en route, so keep copies just in case. **MOST IMPORTANT:** make your application neat, logical, and readable. Whether sending applications on-line or by mail, forms can almost always be downloaded and completed on your computer, which ensures legibility. The application should be carefully and completely filled out. **Another important tip: If handwriting an application or other admission form, never use pencil.**

Step 5 Begin writing your essay or essays. Rewrite, proofread carefully, and make copies. We strongly encourage you to begin working on essays during the summer following the junior year.

Step 6 Request transcripts from the College Counseling Office by signing our *Transcript Book*. **Without your written permission, EHS cannot send your transcript.** (See deadline calendar on page 19)

Step 7 Check over your applications when finished to be sure that everything is signed, that all parts are included except the recommendations and transcript, **and that you have a CHECK or credit card provision for the application fee.** Applications without a fee are sometimes placed in a "no fee" file, delaying consideration. **Mail the applications by and preferably before the deadline!** Keep a copy of your application—they sometimes get lost in the mail and via e-mail.

Deadlines Are Important

Make sure you know each college's application deadline. Colleges frequently will not extend a deadline. Applications received late may be automatically rejected, receive less than priority consideration, or be put on the waiting list. Some institutions will simply return the late application to a student without any consideration of it. Don't preclude a college option by missing a deadline. Try to finish all of your applications by the end of Christmas vacation--or sooner!

In order to get their work done by the decision notification date, admission officers begin reading applications well before the filing deadline. Submitting your applications earlier in the cycle will enable admission offices to process your file, notify you if anything is missing, and prepare your file for evaluation. Applications that arrive at or after the deadline are processed later and during a more hectic time in an admission office. Later applicants are often not notified as quickly of missing items because of the “crush” of paper and processing at that time of the year.

Keep in mind that there are deadlines for requesting transcripts from the College Counseling Office as well, which ensure that we will have your transcript and counselor recommendations ready to meet college deadlines.

<u>Application Due to College</u>	<u>Request Transcript By</u>
October 15	October 1 and preferably earlier
November 1	October 1
November 15	October 15
December 1	November 1
December 15	November 1
All other deadlines:	December 1

Incomplete Applications. If you submit Part I of a two-part application and decide not to complete the rest of it, please notify both the college involved and the College Counseling Office. Not doing so causes the college unnecessary inconvenience and expense. The same holds true if you decide to withdraw an application. Do it as soon as possible. Notify College Counseling if you did not apply to a college after requesting that we send your transcript. **In order to keep track of the applications that you have filed and in order to work with college admission offices in an informed and effective manner, we need to know the status of each of your applications.**

Class Rank. As is the procedure at many independent and some public schools, **Episcopal does not rank its students** because of the competitive and rigorous nature of our college preparatory program and the relatively small graduating classes. However, we do send each college a school profile from which colleges will be able to better understand our grading system, curriculum, rigor, and the competitive nature of the school. The college counselors’ letters, which are written for each student, will further describe distinctive aspects of EHS’s grading scale and programs. Such information will help most colleges understand and evaluate our transcripts without inclusion of class rank.

Note: A class ranking estimated from a student’s position on the High List is not an accurate or valid ranking. Please do not provide such an estimate to colleges. College admission officers consider class rank, when provided, to be based on the cumulative GPA for grades 9-12.

THE ESSAY

While there are college applications that do not require essays or writing samples, most colleges want to know more about you. They are going to ask you to describe your life, experiences, hopes and dreams, personality, achievements and reasons for selecting their college. This is an opportunity to sell yourself. In most cases, the essay is the most personal contact that you will have with the admission committee of the college, so you want to present yourself well. The essay can shift the balance of the admission decision, for or against you. EHS's college counselors and English faculty offer essay-writing workshops and assistance and are also glad to review essays with you.

Read That Paragraph Again! At most institutions, the essay is reviewed as an example of your writing style and ability as both a part of determining your potential for success at the college and as a means of comparing applicants. A well-written essay may enhance your chance of admission, while a shabbily written writing sample can clearly diminish your chances. Students can be denied admission to a college on the basis of a careless, indifferent essay. Remember: thousands of students just like you, with similar talents, backgrounds, and experiences, are trying to answer the same question in those essays. Do your very best!

Writing the Essay: Your application essay gives you a chance to display enthusiasm, intelligence, leadership, talent, maturity, writing style, and originality. If you make a self-conscious effort at writing a "deeply meaningful" essay, you may not succeed. Be yourself. Tell your story. The skills that are required in preparing good, polished, imaginative essays are those taught in your English classes.

Think of the essay as an opportunity to introduce your personality, the things that make you unique and interesting. It is a vehicle for describing your accomplishments, goals, and keenest interests. If you have a good sense of humor, let that shine through. Write about how you spent a summer helping your little sister learn to play basketball, if that experience was important to you. Talk about creating your own fishing flies or learning to rock climb. Describe a "disaster" that you survived while working your first job. You can reveal much about your resourcefulness that way, as you can by describing a fear you overcame. An essay about how you spent some time in another person's shoes and learned to see the world differently can be very effective. Many things **you** have experienced or accomplished can become good essays.

A LIST OF DO'S & DON'T'S

- ◆ Write clearly and in your own style or "voice."
- ◆ Pick a topic that will reveal something about your experience and about who you are.
- ◆ Respond to the question asked or topic proposed on the application.
- ◆ Be attentive to the organization of your essay; develop your topic in a logical and sequential way.
- ◆ Also be attentive to spelling and grammar. Don't forget to use "spellcheck."
- ◆ Clearly introduce your topic, develop it, and logically conclude the essay. Don't digress or ramble.
- ◆ Give yourself plenty of time to write your application essays. Start with a rough draft that you revise until you are comfortable with it. Do not try to write essays the night before the application deadline!
- ◆ Many colleges invite students to optionally submit a graded writing sample. Keep copies of well-written graded work that illustrates your writing ability and academic potential.

- ◆ It may be possible to use an essay for more than one application. However, if one essay topic doesn't adequately address the essay question of another application, don't use it. The admission officers reading your file will think you've missed the point of their question or that you have responded in a careless fashion.
- ◆ Don't write in a pretentious or stilted style.

- ◆ Don't attempt obscure or offbeat humor that might not be understood by the reader.
- ◆ Don't use generalizations. Write clearly and substantiate your point of view with specific examples.
- ◆ Don't make the essay too long or too short. Most applications stipulate a suggested length, so follow the instructions—but you don't need to worry if your essay is a little shorter or longer than the prescribed word-length. It is usually appropriate to submit all or part of the essay on attached sheets of paper if it does not fit the space provided on the form.
- ◆ Handwritten essays are often harder to read than printed ones. Make sure that your final product can be read. Proofread for errors. Sometimes, it's hard to tell the difference between a keyboard error and poor grammar or spelling. Don't give the reader undue reason to question your ability to write.
- ◆ Don't toss your essay off. Be careful, and take pains with it. It says something about **you**, and that should be worth your concentration and energy.

Remember! Once again, the Honor Code prevails. Plagiarism on an essay can result in the rejection of an application or withdrawal of an offer of admission.

Sample Essay Questions: Listed below are typical examples of questions asked by competitive colleges. When several choices are given, they usually ask you to select just one. Read these over carefully, and start to think of how you might answer them.

- ◆ Since our knowledge is limited to the information provided, why not then use this opportunity to tell us about anything you think we should know?
- ◆ a) What do you see as the turning point(s) or important events in your life and why do you view them as such? b) Who are the people who have done the most to influence your personal development and in what ways were they influential? c) What have you learned from your extracurricular involvement? d) Describe the social atmosphere at your school and tell how you fit in it.
- ◆ Write a short essay about an intellectual, social, political, or personal issue you feel is important. We are interested in your choice of topic as well as the quality of its presentation.
- ◆ a) React to something you have read recently. b) What brief message would you beam to civilizations in outer space to describe the nature of the humans on our planet? c) Ask the ideal question and answer it.
- ◆ a) Briefly discuss a book that has made a great impact on you. b) Discuss briefly the one or two extracurricular, work, or community activities that have meant the most to you. c) Write a brief essay of 200-500 words on any topic of direct personal importance to you.
- ◆ a) If given the opportunity to spend an evening with any one person, living, deceased, or fictional, whom would you choose and why? b) If you had the power to eliminate one problem which exists in the world today, what would it be and why? c) If you were given the opportunity to leave a time capsule for posterity in the cornerstone of your city hall, what one book, one mechanical object and one other item of your choosing would you leave as a statement about life in the late twentieth century and why?
- ◆ Please use this space to discuss more fully any academic or intellectual interest that is especially significant to you. For example, you may wish to discuss an intellectual theme or movement, an idea, an author, or a research topic. No matter what you choose to discuss, understand that we are looking for your reflections on how and why this has influenced you intellectually.
- ◆ a) Describe, in narrative form, the most creative solution you've ever undertaken to solve a non-classroom related problem. b) You have been asked by your school to teach an elective semester course based upon your academic and co-curricular interests. In this essay, you must write an introduction to your course to explain to prospective students your purpose and goals for the course as well as the methods you will use.
- ◆ a) Evaluate a significant experience or achievement that has special meaning for you. b) Discuss some issue of personal, local, or national concern and its importance to you. c) If you could travel

through time and interview a prominent figure in the arts, politics, religion, or science, for example, whom would you choose and why?

- ◆ You are meeting your college roommate for the first time. You can bring only three items with you to your dorm room. What items would you bring to provide a first impression of your personality, character, or interests? Please elaborate.
- ◆ One essay option presented on the Common Application is simply to write on a topic of your choice—an option that will give you a great opportunity to write about a subject of particular interest to you.

Auditions, Tapes, Portfolios If you are a musician, a photographer, an artist, or an athlete, colleges often are interested in seeing samples of your work in addition to an essay. Some art and music programs will require a portfolio or an audition. While many institutions welcome the submission of optional materials as supplements to the application, others will not make use of such materials. Application instructions will usually give you an idea of what optional materials are appropriate. If you do decide to submit a portfolio, DVD, or slides of your work, make sure they are the best quality you can get. Fuzzy sound and color won't help your application. Don't overdo it; admission officers don't have time to watch a 60-minute video or read through long supplementary submissions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Most colleges require at least one or two teacher recommendations, and some want them from specific teachers, such as an English or math teacher. Above all, it is essential to find a teacher who knows you well and has knowledge of your accomplishments, character, and potential. A teacher, advisor, or coach may be in a good position to write about you in a detailed and evaluative fashion. Some colleges request peer recommendations, which should be written by a friend who can write a balanced, fair assessment of your abilities and qualities. Character recommendations, usually written by family friends, alumni, or prominent and influential people, are better if the person knows you well. Letters from people who know your parents but don't know you won't do you justice or carry much weight with an admission committee; a letter from an employer or internship supervisor will mean more to an admission officer.

Give each person you ask a fair chance to decline your request for a recommendation. Someone may feel that he or she is not in a position to write you a good, well-informed recommendation. Provide the writer with the recommendation form from the application, an information sheet detailing your activities and interests, if appropriate, and **a stamped, addressed envelope. Make sure that you request the recommendations well in advance of all deadlines and optimally by October 1.** You may request additional letters later, but you will be placing an increasingly heavy burden on your teachers the later you ask. Just remember that all of your classmates are asking for recommendations at the same time as you are. Be thoughtful, be organized, and be grateful. And read each college's recommendation stipulations carefully!

Confidentiality and Waivers. Because of federal laws involving rights of access, most college recommendation forms give you an opportunity to sign a release, waiving your rights to see the recommendation. Unless you have strong, personal reasons against it, you are encouraged to sign the waiver. Often a person will not feel as free to write an honest, fair, flattering recommendation if there is the chance that you will see it. You probably wouldn't be able to see the recommendation anyway: many colleges have a standard practice of destroying recommendations after the admission decision has been made, thus guaranteeing confidentiality.

EXTRACURRICULARS, etc.

Applications for admission routinely request information about your extracurricular interests and accomplishments. Colleges are interested in knowing about your talents and interests that relate to endeavors both in and out of school. In completing your applications, you should describe your hobbies, community service activities, sports, school clubs, summer activities, jobs, internships, and other interests pursued both at EHS and at home. Colleges are interested in students' talents in art, music, theater, or creative writing as well as religious, community, and political activities.

Admission officers also like to see evidence of leadership in any realm of your life, either as a monitor, a captain of a team, in community service, or as editor of the literary magazine, and they hope to enroll students who can understand what leadership is. A good question to ask yourself as you complete an application is: How have I made a difference in the communities in which I live?—as a leader or as a participant. Sometimes leadership emerges from active and committed involvement in an endeavor or organization—more than from an elected office or position.

At the same time, not everyone is a leader. Colleges are really most interested in knowing about your keenest and most focused extracurricular interests, and they are interested in knowing more about your involvement in school and community. They are more impressed with the student who makes an outstanding contribution in a few extracurricular areas than with the one who belongs to many organizations and does not have time to contribute much to any. A thoughtful description of your life outside the classroom will reflect the activities that are **most meaningful and significant to you** and will help describe to the college who you are. Your application should give readers a good sense of your interests and talents, but at the same time colleges are interested in how you budget your time and manage both your academic and extracurricular commitments. A college is in fact looking for all sorts of students with all kinds of interests who will be attracted to the college's extracurricular and academic offerings.

Don't be unduly modest in your applications; your strengths and accomplishments will make you attractive to colleges. Let the college know who you are and about what you will bring to them. And remember, some of the activities and accomplishments that you consider routine or ordinary may actually help set you apart in an applicant pool as an interesting candidate.

The format in which colleges request extracurricular information will vary from application to application. Respond accordingly, and don't hesitate to elaborate about special interests on additional sheets of paper. That information may catch the eye of the application readers. If applying on-line, you can mail additional information to the admission office for inclusion in your application. Be sure to include your name, address, and social security number at the top of each sheet of paper.

Remember: Admission officers are more *interested* than *judgmental* in their review of your extracurricular interests and pursuits. They're eager to know about the endeavors that have been important to you.

APPLICATION REVIEW

How colleges review applications for admission will vary from college to college. Some larger public universities make admission decisions using a computer formula that measures the extent to which students have met minimum grade, testing, and course credit requirements. At the majority of private colleges and the more highly selective publics, admission officers base their decisions on careful and often multiple readings of applications, looking at numerous factors. Thus, as you complete your applications, **bear in mind that readers and evaluators will be attentive to and interested in what you are presenting in your application.**

Ranges of selectivity and admission patterns at individual colleges can vary somewhat from year to year as applicant pools increase and decrease in size and as colleges modify enrollment targets or admission criteria. Thus, predicting admission or denial of an application is not a precise science. Most colleges publish freshman class profiles, which provide useful statistics about their applicant and admitted student pools. These profiles often make it possible to compare your test scores and GPA with typical statistical ranges to get a general sense of where your credentials might fall in a college's applicant pool. If you fall very far below the middle profile range, the college may not be a likely admission option. You will find that colleges typically do not report **average** SAT scores but rather the score ranges of the **middle 50 percent** of their entering classes for each of the SAT sections (Critical Reading/Math/Writing).

Grades and Program of Study. Colleges look first and foremost at the student's academic record, taking into account the actual grade trends and program of study. EHS's graduation requirements meet most standards for admission, but you must check each specific college's requirements to make sure. Minimum requirements and what it takes to be competitive varies from college to college. Because admissible applicants to highly selective colleges typically outnumber the available openings, "admissible" is often not synonymous with "competitive." Such institutions are admitting the **most highly qualified applicants** in the pool and having to waitlist or deny many **very admissible, but less competitive students.**

It is important to **keep in mind that for highly selective colleges minimum requirements are just that—minimums, and most successful candidates exceed those minimums in some, if not several, academic areas.** While many selective institutions require three science credits, most admitted students present four. Colleges value advanced, honors and AP courses, and all colleges will find four or more years of a foreign language (or four or five years of math) more impressive than three.

While at EHS, you should take the strongest program that your academic background suggests you can handle successfully. Certainly, if you can earn strong grades in an honors section in any subject, you should be in that section. Colleges are looking for students who are willing and able to accept a challenge. The admission committee is also going to note improvement in specific academic areas and over the course of your four years of high school. Not everyone does well in all subjects all through high school, but the student who shows adequate improvement and mastery of challenging subjects may well appear to be a solid candidate for admission.

While taking into account a student's GPA, college admission officers are more attentive to grade trends. While lower grades in the freshman and sophomore years might weaken an overall grade average, an upward trend in grades in the junior and senior years will make a strong and positive statement. Colleges are looking closely at all of your work from freshman year on, although grades in the more advanced courses in the junior and senior years will be the most important. **Colleges do not overlook senior slumps**, which can greatly and negatively affect an admission decision. Admission committees will require submission of mid-year senior grades, but they will also frequently request third quarter senior

grades before they finalize the admission decision. Steady, upward, or downward trends may ultimately define the final admission decision.

Testing. Standardized tests carry more weight in the selection process at some colleges than at others, but colleges do not typically base an admission decision on scores alone. Admission tests provide a college with a nationally standardized measure of academic aptitude and background that helps frame a comparison of applicants who are coming from diverse secondary school settings. Test scores are looked at in relation to the academic record and the program of study. This combination of academic data helps colleges both predict the success of an applicant in the collegiate setting and compare the applicant objectively with other applicants.

In many admission situations, **higher grades accompanied by lower scores** is a more compelling combination than **lower grades and higher scores** because of what the academic record tells a college about academic accomplishment and motivation. In the most highly selective admission situations, the applicant pool is often so large and strong that the great majority of admitted students will present strength across the board.

Most colleges will use the best Critical Reading and Math scores drawn from multiple SAT testings. They also use the best SAT II Subject Test or ACT scores if a student repeats a test. If an institution has different testing policies, they will be stated in the admission materials.

Rounding factors and special admission categories. Admission committees do look beyond the primary academic data when reading an application. Recommendations from the college counselor and teachers help define a student's academic accomplishments and potential. The essay serves as a writing sample and often provides more information about who the student is, as do the descriptions of extracurricular activities, honors, and awards. Supplementary information provided by the student or in additional recommendations may add to the overall picture, and at some colleges, interviews are used in an evaluative way in the process.

Often, students will fit in special applicant categories that can give them a preference or an edge in the admission process:

- ◆ **Instate/out-of-state admission status:** If you are applying to a public institution, state residency will give you an admission preference over out-of-state applicants. Many state institutions publish both their in-state and out-of-state requirements. While policies vary from college to college, some public universities consider the children of alumni within the parameters of in-state admission standards. Out-of-state student enrollment quotas and admission standards vary greatly from institution to institution.
- ◆ **Legacy status:** At many colleges, sons and daughters of alumni are given a degree of preference in the selection process. Because colleges define who is a “legacy” in different ways, you will find that preferred status sometimes does or does not extend to siblings, grandchildren, cousins, etc. of alumni. Ask colleges how they define legacy status. While legacies are accorded preference in different ways by colleges, an admission committee still typically must be able to predict a legacy's success in its academic program in order to offer admission. Sometimes being related to a major donor or supporter of a college will give you an edge in the selection process—but not always. It never hurts your case to make sure that a college knows that you have a connection to the institution. Whether or not it ultimately affects the admission decision, you will usually find that colleges are interested in knowing about such connections.

- ◆ **Minority students:** Recognizing and affirming the advantages of multicultural diversity in the collegiate setting, colleges are seeking an ethnically and racially diverse population, and under-represented minorities are often actively recruited. Students of your ethnic or racial background may be under-represented on some campuses and not on others. While a college will be looking for evidence of achievement and a prediction of success, minority student status may be an advantage in the admission process.

- ◆ **The special talent:** A student with exceptional ability in an area and who meets basic academic standards may receive special admission consideration. The winner of a piano competition, an all-state running back, a published writer, a commercial-quality photographer, or the nationally ranked squash player may all be desirable. You will find that colleges in all of the NCAA's various divisions have an interest in recruiting talented athletes. Admission officers are seeking to admit a **diversely talented** student body. If you have a special talent, write about it in your application. It may give you an edge.

NACAC STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

The National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC) requires its members to follow certain principles and regulations. EHS is ethically bound to follow and enforce them. These include providing colleges with a transcript, school profile, and official school recommendation for each candidate, counseling students and their families to file a reasonable number of applications, and advising students not to sign any contractual agreements with a college without carefully examining the contract. Other important principles include the following:

Episcopal High School will:

- ◆ Report any significant changes in a candidate's academic status or qualifications between the time of recommendation and graduation (consistent with federal, state, or local regulations including any failures, disciplinary action, etc.)
- ◆ Counsel students and their families to notify other institutions when they have accepted an offer of admission, and to deposit at only **ONE** school.
- ◆ Encourage students to be the sole authors of their applications and essays, and to counsel against inappropriate assistance on the part of others.
- ◆ Urge candidates to understand and discharge their responsibilities in the admission process.
- ◆ Monitor colleges' responses to the applications and candidacy of EHS's students to insure that the colleges abide by the NACAC policies and principles that govern their professional activities.

Candidates will:

- ◆ Comply with requests from colleges for additional information in a timely manner.
- ◆ Respond to institutional deadlines and refrain from stockpiling acceptances.
- ◆ Refrain from submitting multiple deposits or making multiple commitments. Submitting multiple enrollment deposits can result in cancellation of enrollment by all colleges involved.
- ◆ Respond to institutional deadlines on housing reservations, financial aid, health records, and pre-scheduling of courses.
- ◆ Inform the college counselor of situations where college admission offices are not abiding by principles of fair and professional conduct.

FINANCIAL AID and MERIT-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS

Given the considerable variation in cost from one college to another, students and parents should determine the financial parameters, if any, that will guide and determine the final college choice. Colleges and universities offer a wide variety of financial assistance options, ranging from need-based financial aid to purely merit-based scholarships to low and no-cost payment and loan programs designed for students both on and not on need-based financial aid. Because financial aid and scholarship programs, application procedures, and filing deadlines vary considerably from institution to institution, students need to carefully research the aid options offered by each of the colleges they are considering.

Often not included in the cost outline of most colleges are “miscellaneous” costs, which vary greatly from one college to another. At one school, a student ID card may provide access to all activities, but at another may only be a license to buy tickets. It is important to talk with students and admission officers about out-of-pocket expenses when you visit a college. At one college, \$150 a month may cover all incidental expenses, while at another \$100 a week may run you a little short. Fraternity and sorority fees and off-campus housing costs at schools that offer limited on-campus housing can add considerable extra expense to four years of college.

The cost of a college education may be reduced in many ways. A student’s summer earnings are often a good source of spending money. On-campus jobs, athletic scholarships, and ROTC programs also help a student cover college expenses. Colleges generally include a work-study job as a part of a need-based financial aid package and include a summer earnings expectation in the financial aid package. Many companies also have educational support programs for children of employees.

All families who are interested in applying for financial aid should review each college’s admission materials for information on financial aid options and application procedures. While some colleges require submission of their own financial aid form, almost all colleges require submission of one of either the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE. Many colleges accept either form. **If you are not sure whether or not you will qualify for need-based aid, you should apply. Something may be available.**

FAFSA. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid gives access to federal loans and college work-study and is used as the primary financial aid application by many colleges. This form is processed without charge and should be filed as soon after January 1 as possible. Revised by Congress each year, it is available and typically filed on-line via www.fafsa.ed.gov.

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE. The Profile is a supplemental aid application required by many institutions in addition to their own institutional aid form. Administered by the College Scholarship Service of the College Board, students must pay a \$25.00 registration fee for an initial application as and a processing fee of \$16 for each additional college aid application. The College Board accepts registrations beginning on October 1 of the senior year via www.collegeboard.com, which also provides detailed information about the form and related procedures. The Profile should be filled out early in the application cycle and in accordance with the colleges’ financial aid application, as soon as college choices are known.

DO I QUALIFY FOR NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID?

Parents are usually in a better position to answer this question than are students, but it is often hard to assess how much aid you might qualify for as you begin the college application process. If you have received need-based aid at EHS, there is a good chance that you may get some from your future college. However, the national aid formula used by colleges is not the same as that employed by boarding schools. The College Board provides parents with a very useful aid “estimator” on its website. The various calculators found at www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/add-it-up/401.html can be useful tools that will help you assess both college costs and possible aid qualification.

FACTS TO REMEMBER

- ◆ Colleges have only so much financial aid money, and some colleges have more money available than others do. Therefore, it is important to meet aid application deadlines and to research the wide range of financial assistance options---for both students who qualify for need-based aid and for those who do not.
- ◆ Not all colleges meet full, demonstrated financial need. Find out early what the policy is at the schools in which you are interested. The college will provide as much aid as it can, but it will not always meet the need demonstrated in the FAFSA or Profile analysis.
- ◆ While many colleges admit students regardless of their ability to pay, not all colleges have a need-blind admission policy. In other words, the college will take into consideration a student’s ability to pay when making the admission decision. The student who is not applying for aid may be in a better position for admission. Again, ask about the institution’s policy.
- ◆ Begin to find out early on all you can about available money. There are additional scholarships, although many are tied to specific majors (engineering or the arts, for example). There are books available in the College Counseling Office and in your local library. Any agency that promises to find you money for college for a fee should probably not be used. If you have access to the web, check <http://www.finaid.org>.
- ◆ Ask the college to which you apply what is the average loan debt of a graduating student. Some colleges offer more free scholarship money in an aid package, while others offer more loans. The loan component of aid packages can vary greatly from college to college.
- ◆ **Financial aid application deadlines vary from college to college—and are often different from admission application deadlines. Be sure to check each college’s deadlines carefully!**

FINANCIAL AID OPTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The availability of need-based financial aid for international students varies greatly from college to colleges—ranging from very limited to generous options. However, many institutions are not able to provide any aid to students who are not permanent residents of the United States. Each college and university will be able to provide information about the need-based and merit-based scholarship options available to international students. Consult college websites and admission materials for more

information about their aid policies and procedures—and do not hesitate to contact the college directly for more information. Most admission offices have a designated advisor who works directly with international applicants and their parents.

ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Many sources of money are available to a student. Often, financial aid packages involve a combination of aid options. Sometimes the scholarship is just that: a scholarship with no strings attached except a requirement of remaining in good standing academically. Sometimes a scholarship awarded by an outside source will reduce a student's financial aid package, whereas at another school, a student may keep the outside scholarship as additional aid.

Merit-based and special scholarships - Some students may find other additional sources of income.

Athletes and other exceptionally talented students may receive packages with as much as full costs plus an allowance. Some colleges offer straight merit-based scholarships, based on SAT scores and academic average, special talents and accomplishments, and essays and interviews. These may range from the total package of a highly competitive, prestigious honor scholarship to a modest increment of \$500 or more. While some scholarships are awarded unsolicited by the college (sometimes as a recruitment incentive), some scholarships require nomination by the student's school or by alumni or other organizations.

Often, highly competitive merit-based scholarship programs require students to submit a special application. Such applications frequently include essays, which can play a major role in the scholarship award process. On-campus interviews are also often a part of the final round in merit-based scholarship competitions. Consult colleges' admission literature or websites for information about special scholarship opportunities and application requirements.

Need-based scholarships - Awarded by the college based on the **FAFSA** and/or **Profile** evaluation.

In-state tuition for out-of-state students - These are usually tied to a specific program or a merit-based scholarship. Check with individual public colleges regarding such policies. Also, residents of the District of Columbia qualify for in-state fees at public institutions throughout the nation, although admission is still based on out-of-state parameters.

Grants (state and federal) - Supplemental Opportunity Grants and Pell Grants are federally-funded. Many states offer tuition assistance grants to state residents attending private colleges within their state.

Student loans - Guaranteed student loans or loans made directly to parents for undergraduate education usually have a low rate of interest until graduation, and then become regular loans. Federally subsidized student loans have deferral options for students who are attending graduate school and very manageable repayment schedules.

Tuition assistance programs - There are a variety of tuition programs under which parents may make college payments in increments rather than in one or two lump sums per year. Monthly payment programs, with and without interest, are administered by private organizations and by many colleges and universities. Many colleges allow pre-payment of tuition, to be returned to the family should the student not enroll. In some cases, such a program includes a fixed cost guarantee. Colleges will detail such programs in their admission materials.

Co-op programs - Some colleges, particularly engineering schools, have programs that allow a student to spend one or a series of semesters away from school working in a job related to the student's major. The benefits from such programs are many: these jobs are paid, which helps meet some (or all) expenses; on-the-job experience makes you a more attractive candidate for employment after graduation; and you may receive a job offer from one of your employers.

ROTC - Excellent scholarship opportunities are available through the Army, Air Force, Marine and Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps. A student who is thinking of a career in the military or who wants leadership experience should consider applying. Information about each of the service branch's programs is easily found on their websites.

On-campus employment - Most colleges have a regular job pool for students who are both on and not on need-based financial aid. Most aid packages require the student to earn some money during the school year and, in most cases, the experience is beneficial to the student. Working as a physics lab assistant, for example, would be valuable experience for a physics major.

Summer employment - Summer jobs can serve many purposes. Students who want special training or exposure find that working for the National Park Service, on Capitol Hill, for a local lawyer or business person, or for some industry can provide both experience and background on which to base career decisions. Such jobs can also enhance your post-graduate plans (If you don't need the money, volunteer!) If you qualify for need-based financial aid from a college, they will typically budget around \$1,500 from summer work in their calculation of an aid package.

NCAA

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is the governing body for the athletic programs of 1,280 colleges, universities, sports conferences, and organizations. One major division of this organization manages collegiate recruitment and eligibility for prospective student athletes. In fact, the NCAA has very specific regulations which colleges and students must follow in order to pursue a collegiate athletic career in either Division I or II programs. (**For comprehensive information from the NCAA, go to <http://ncaa.org>**). Episcopal's coaches and athletic staff are also excellent resources as you explore intercollegiate athletic options.

Recruitment

Talented student-athletes may become sought-after college prospects. College coaches and team representatives recruit athletes in a variety of ways throughout the latter years of high school, including visiting camps, writing letters, calling students, inviting athletes to visit their campuses and attending high school competitions. The NCAA carefully regulates athletic recruitment, particularly Division I and II programs.

General Regulations for Division I and II athletics (see "NCAA Guide for College-Bound Student-Athlete" for more specific guidelines and exceptions for individual sports.)

Personal Contact

The NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete provides detailed descriptions of the rules governing coach/prospect contact during the high school years. Rules vary from sport to sport and during each year of high school, and the Guide will detail specific guidelines and exceptions for individual sports. Updated annually, you will find the 28-page guide at <http://ncaa.org> .

Official Visits

- You are allowed one expense paid, i.e. "official" visit to a particular college campus during your senior year.
- You may travel on no more than five official visits total.
- Before an official visit you must provide the host institution with a copy of your PSAT, SAT or ACT test scores. Division I recruits must also provide a copy of your transcript.

Contacting a Coach. You will want to contact coaches as you explore your college and athletic options.. The athletics section of a college's website will provide names and contact data for coaches along with extensive information about college teams. Prospective students will often find an inquiry form on these sites. You should also create a data sheet about yourself and your experience in your sport and send it to coaches, expressing your possible interest in their program and college. Also, when you visit colleges try to schedule a meeting with the coach while you are on campus.

Be Advised: If you hope to play intercollegiate sports, be careful of assuming that all the coaches tell you is accurate. Sometimes their information reflects concrete assessment of your credentials by the admission office, and sometimes it does not. It is not that coaches are untruthful; it is just that they are contacting athletes all over the country and talking with a large number of possible recruits. They know they can not recruit all of them. Furthermore, if a coach is not in full communication with the admission

office, he or she may encourage students who fall outside of the admission parameters. It is your responsibility to follow several leads and understand the admission criteria. Work with your coaches here and with the college counseling office to manage both the recruitment and admission process. It is wise to file an application regardless of what the college's athletic department can do. **Do not assume anything until you sign.** Again, your EHS coaches and counselor are here to assist you in the process.

Eligibility

To compete for a Division I or II athletic team, the NCAA must first deem you an academically eligible player. This applies to all prospective student-athletes, including those who plan to walk-on and try out once they arrive on campus, not simply recruited athletes.

- Students who wish to play **Division I** must meet minimum SAT/ACT scores and grades. The exact scores/grades are based on a sliding scale. For example, a student who has a 2.4 on a 4.0 scale must score 860 on the combined SAT (Critical Reading/Math).
- If a student intends to play at a **Division II** school, he or she must have a 2.0 GPA and minimum 820 SAT (Critical Reading/Math).
- Division I requires a minimum of 16 core academic courses, which all EHS students exceed.

The Clearinghouse

In order to pursue a Division I or II athletic career, you must register and be certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse during high school. The NCAA Clearinghouse will review your transcript and test scores to ensure that you have fulfilled basic academic requirements for either D-I or D-II programs. The eligibility requirements for the divisions differ.

To register with the Clearinghouse:

- Review eligibility and registration rules on the NCAA website.
- Following the completion of junior year, complete the **Student Release Form**, found on the website.
 - Students must submit two copies of the form to the guidance offices of each school they attended in high school.
 - The schools will submit the completed form, including a copy of your transcript to the Clearinghouse.
 - There is a **\$60** processing fee (\$85 for international students) payable to the Clearinghouse. Fee waivers are available for eligible students.
 - You must also have your **SAT or ACT scores** sent to the Clearinghouse as soon as possible. You should include the NCAA code **9999** on your score request form for direct submission by the testing agency.

Be advised: Gaining clearance from the NCAA in no way automatically corresponds to admission decisions. Furthermore, your forms are processed based upon colleges' requests, not your own. If no colleges inquire about your eligibility, the NCAA will not process your application.

ONLINE and TESTING RESOURCES

COLLEGE SEARCHES & ADMISSION INFORMATION

http://www.collegeboard.com	College Board (SAT tests, college searches, CSS Profile).
http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/cohome.htm	<i>US News & World Report's</i> College resources/interactive research site
http://www.universities.com	Another college search (search by region and/or alphabetical)..
http://www.collegeview.com	College View (for a general overview of the application and financial aid process and information on over 3,000 schools).
http://www.collegenet.com	College Net (search for information about colleges).
http://www.nacacnet.org/StudentResources	National Association of College Admission Counseling (handbook for parents/students)
http://www.gocollege.com	School search and virtual tours and campus maps.
http://www.petersons.com	Peterson's Guide online (search and overviews).
http://www.campustours.com	Online college tours
http://princetonreview.com	The Princeton Review online (search and overviews)
http://www.fastweb.com	College research resource
http://smart.net/~pope/hbcu/hbculist.htm	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
http://mappingyourfuture.org/MiddleHighSchool	College and career planning resources
http://students.gov	Information for students from the U.S. Government

ONLINE APPLICATIONS (also typically found on each college's own websites)

http://www.commonapp.org	Common Application (online application to download for Common Application affiliated colleges).
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FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

http://www.finaid.org	The most comprehensive financial aid site.
http://www.collegeboard.com	The College Board on-line; various resources
http://www.fastweb.com	Financial aid and scholarship search (updated daily).
http://www.fafsa.ed.gov	FAFSA online.
http://www.petersons.com/finaid	Peterson's Education Center
http://www.acenet.edu	Coalition of America's Colleges and Universities
http://www.ftc.gov	Project Scholar\$cam is a national educational campaign headed by the Federal Trade Commission to alert parents of fraudulent scholarship opportunities.
http://salliemae.com	Financial planning for college and loan information

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

<http://.ncaa.org>

National College Athletic Association (includes handbook with information about intercollegiate athletics eligibility for the college-bound student-athlete).

TEST INFORMATION & PREPARATION

<http://www.collegeboard.com>

SAT information, practice, and preparation

<http://www.act.org>

ACT information and preparation

<http://www.review.com>

The Princeton Review

<http://www.kaplan.com>

Kaplan course information

www.mytutor.com

Summit Educational Group (tutoring in DC/Boston areas)

www.huntprograms.com

The Hunt Course-SAT prep classes/tutoring in Alexandria

ON-CAMPUS TEST PREP AT EHS

We offer periodic, optional SAT prep classes at EHS for a very reasonable fee. A class is typically available each January/February for interested juniors only and in September/October for seniors only. The College Office is also able to refer students and parents to independent SAT tutors who have worked successfully with EHS students in the past.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF COLLEGE RESOURCE BOOKS

While this list is far from exhaustive, it is a good place to start as you begin to do research on colleges and universities. Bookstores and web-based booksellers will offer you other good resource options.

COMPREHENSIVE, GENERALLY OBJECTIVE COLLEGE REFERENCE BOOKS

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, Barron's Educational Series

The College Handbook, The College Board

Competitive Colleges, Peterson's

The Fiske Guide to College, Edward B. Fiske, Sourcebooks Inc.

Peterson's Guide to Four Year Colleges, Peterson's

SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCE BOOKS ABOUT COLLEGES AND RELATED TOPICS

Book of Majors, The College Board

College Guide for Performing Arts Majors, Peterson's

College Money Handbook (How to Get Money for College), Peterson's

Colleges That Change Lives, Loren Pope, Penguin Books

Cool Colleges for the Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, Late Blooming, and Just Plain Different,
Donald Asher, Ten Speed Press

Fiske Guide to Getting into the Right College, Edward Fiske, Sourcebooks Inc.

How to Get Into the Top Colleges, Richard Montauk and Krista Klein, Prentice Hall

International Student Handbook (of US colleges), The College Board

Is There an Engineer Inside You? A Comprehensive Guide to Career Decisions in Engineering, Celeste
Bain, Professional Publications, Inc.

Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years. Karen Levin Coburn and Madge
Lawrence Treeger, Adler and Adler

Looking Beyond the Ivy League, Loren Pope, Penguin Books

Scholarship Handbook, The College Board, New York

Summer Opportunities for Kids and Teenagers, Thomson-Peterson's

The Best 368 Colleges, The Princeton Review

The Insider's Guide to Colleges, The Yale Daily News

SAT and ACT PREPARATION, GUIDE BOOKS

Barron's SAT 2400: Aiming for the Perfect Score, Barron's Educational Series

Cracking the SAT, Princeton Review

The Official SAT Online Course, The College Board, www.collegeboard.com

The Official SAT Study Guide, The College Board

The Official Study Guide for All SAT Subject Tests, The College Board

How to Take the SAT, Marcia Lawrence, Plume Books, New York, NY

Math SAT 800: How to Master the Toughest Problems, Dan Eiblum et al, Booksurge Publishing

The Real ACT Prep Guide, ACT

COLLEGE BOOKS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES

College for Students with Learning Disabilities or ADD, Thomson-Peterson's

Campus Opportunities for Students with Learning Differences, Judith M. Crooker and Stephen
Crooker, Octameron Associates

GAP YEARS and CAREER INFORMATION

*Taking Time Off: Inspiring Stories of Students Who Enjoyed Successful Breaks from College and How
Can Plan Your Own*, Colin Hall and Ron Lieber, Noonday Books

What Color is Your Parachute?, Richard Nelson Bolles, Ten Speed Press