



St. Catherine of Siena Academy



Dear parents and students of the class of 2021,

Your daughter has met with me, her guidance counselor, regarding college admissions. Please take time to look at some of the items discussed during our meeting.

What is needed for a college application?

- Transcripts (Parchment.com)
- Current senior year schedule
 - All classes count and class changes are not recommended after application has been submitted
- Letters of recommendation
 - Complete the Letter of Recommendation Assistant sheet (provided in the folder)
 - Students are highly encouraged to send Thank You notes to their recommenders
- ACT/SAT Scores
 - Send from CollegeBoard and ACT
 - Due to COVID, is it required or recommended by the university?
 - All seniors will be taking the SAT w/essay at SCA on October 14, 2020
- Essays

How many colleges to apply for:

Five to eight colleges is the recommended number. They should all be colleges you would be happy to attend. It's good to apply to at least one reach college (one that you have a chance of getting into but it's a stretch). But most should feel like good, realistic matches.

What is early decision or early action:

Check the specific college and note early decision and early action deadlines.

- Early decision plans are binding – a student who is accepted as an ED applicant must attend the college. (ED Deadline: Typically, **November 1**)
- Early action plans are nonbinding – students receive an early response to their application but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date of May 1.

How to apply:

All colleges offer online applications. Go to the college's web page and find the application link.

This is the time to...

1. Look at the requirements for each of the colleges
2. Make a list of the application, essay topic(s), testing and financial aid requirements for each college.
 - Complete the College Research Sheet (provided in the folder)
3. Set-up a timeline



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It's best if you can express everything about your qualifications and qualities in the materials requested. Colleges spend a great deal of time creating their applications to make sure they get all the information they need about each applicant.

Essays and/or Personal Statements

There is no need to write a brand-new essay or personal statement for each application. Instead, devote your time to producing a great version of basic application parts.

- Look over essays you have already written
- Share your ideas and essays with parents, teachers and counselor so they can help you craft the strongest essay possible.
- You should use a couple of hours each weekend to complete college essays and supplemental questions.

Admissions Scores

The admission scores and grades that colleges show on their websites are averages or ranges — not cutoffs. There are students at every college who scored lower (and higher) than the numbers shown.

Remember that colleges consider many factors to get a more complete picture of the applicant. For example, they look at the types of classes you have taken, activities in and out of school, recommendation letters, your essay and your overall character. Colleges are looking for all kinds of students with different talents, abilities and backgrounds. Admission test scores and grades are just two parts of that complete picture.

College Cost

Remember that after financial aid packages are determined, most students will pay far less than the "sticker price" listed on the college website. You don't know if you can afford a college until after you apply and find out how much aid that college will offer you (if you're accepted). Fill out the FAFSA (see below) as early as October 1st to qualify for the most aid.

Even if the aid package the college offers is not enough, you have options. Many colleges are willing to work with students they have chosen for admission to ensure that those students can afford to attend.

The FAFSA application should be filled out every year you are enrolled in college. Fill out the FAFSA as early as October 1st to qualify for the most aid. Go to <https://fafsa.ed.gov>