

College Planning Handbook 2022-23



EASTSIDE CATHOLIC

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Welcome

Welcome to Student Services at Eastside Catholic!

At Eastside Catholic School, our Student Service Department is comprised of a dedicated group of school and college counselors who support students with a broad spectrum of resources. In middle school, students have access to a dedicated middle school counselor to address academic and social issues. High school students are assigned a school and college counselor based on their last name.

High school counselors help with academic issues surrounding a student's schedule, outside classes for credit, socio-emotional concerns and credit retrieval. They meet individually with students and offer small group discussions, large workshops and helpful resources to help students learn how to handle adolescents' ups and downs.

Our team of college counselors strives to help students find their best course of action after high school. That may include attending a four-year college or community college, taking a gap year, entering the workforce or pursuing an additional year of high school.

Prior to a student's junior year, college counselors provide support through various avenues, including school-wide college planning events, monthly newsletters and instructive Naviance guidance. Beginning junior year, college counselors offer one-on-one meetings with students and their families, grade-specific workshops, outside speaker presentations and access to a plethora of various online resources via Naviance.

The fall of senior year can be a hectic time for the important work that students and counselors do together for post-high school planning. During this time, the college counselor calendars are reserved primarily for senior support with application questions, recommendation letters and other post-high school planning details.

Our school and college counselors work together to prepare Eastside Catholic students for life after high school. We want students to leave EC with confidence, resilience, determination and knowledge to pursue whatever path they choose.

In this Handbook, you will learn how to best work with the Student Services Team and additional detail about the resources available to all families. We look forward to supporting you on this journey and next phase of your student's life.

Meet the Team



Claudia Goodhew

Department Chair

High School Counselor – Students with last names L-Z

cgoodhew@eastsidecatholic.org, 425-295-3052

Claudia joined Eastside Catholic with 20 years of experience working with youth. She has worked in mental health, crisis outreach and advocated for child victims in the criminal justice system. Claudia holds a Bachelor of Science in psychology from the University of Maryland and a M.Ed. in school counseling from Seattle Pacific University. Raised as a “military brat,” Claudia was born in Japan, grew up and lived in several countries and states, and was fortunate to attend high school in Guam. After 20 years in Seattle, she finally has a place to call home. In her free time, Claudia enjoys spending time with her family exploring the Pacific Northwest, traveling and reading.



Kasey Dauenhauer

High School Counselor - Students with last names A-K

kdauenhauer@eastsidecatholic.org, 425-295-3144

Kasey was welcomed to the EC community in 2020 as a high school counselor. Kasey earned her master’s in professional school counseling from City University where she also received her Master of Education. She holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Washington State University and is excited to be part of the EC community!



Livia Matteucci

College Counselor (A-K)

lmatteucci@eastsidecatholic.org, 425-295-3030

Livia joined EC Student Services Department as a college counselor in 2022. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology at Georgetown University and went on to teach middle school in Washington, D.C.

Livia is passionate about serving students from all backgrounds and is fluent in Italian and Spanish. She enjoys hiking, trying new recipes, and exploring the Pacific Northwest in her free time.



Cyrus Nassersaeid '08

College Counselor (L-Z)

cnassersaeid@eastsidecatholic.org, 425-295-3015

Cyrus joined EC Student Services team in 2019. He earned his master's degree from the University of San Francisco and his bachelor's degree from Gonzaga University. At GU, he received the Jeanne Foster Wardian Leadership Award, given to a student who demonstrates excellent academic achievements, disciplinary competence, commitment to education through service and integrity of character. Mr. Nassersaeid also received the Crusader Cross Award for excellence in service as a senior at Eastside Catholic. He has been involved with the Special Olympics since 2014.



Lakshmi Palaniappan

Registrar

lpalaniappan@eastsidecatholic.org

Lakshmi joined the Student Services Department in 2022. She previously worked for the Issaquah School District as a Registrar for 16 years. Lakshmi earned her master's and research degree in specialized in economics. She was raised in India and earned Lakshmi began her career as a college lecturer for four years in India. After moving to the U.S., she raised a family and later joined the

School Code and Information

EC CEEB Code	480067
School Address	232 228th Ave SE Sammamish, WA 98074
School Phone	425-295-3000
School Website	eastsidecatholic.org

College Planning Timetable by Grade Level

Listed below is the general “overview” of when students engage with colleges and college counselors regarding their college research and applications. While most students follow the traditional path, those who want to pursue a highly competitive college should pay attention to the academic and extracurricular differences. The considerations for the NCAA applicant are also specific. The different timelines are provided so all students have the same information and opportunities.

However, the path can differ for each student and should be considered relative to each student’s stress level threshold, aspirations and determination. In no way do we prioritize any of these paths over another. Our intention is to support each student on their journey, whether pursuing a four-year college, a D1 scholarship, a community college program, a gap year or any of the thousands of public or private colleges worldwide.

In general, ninth and 10th-grade students are focused on academics and extracurricular activities. For students interested in college, attending a presentation given by a college representative visiting EC or personally visiting a college campus is appropriate.

Juniors begin their intense interactions and college research with college counselors in December. The spring is reserved for junior family college planning meetings and helping junior students refine their college lists.

Seniors begin working in August on their college applications and essays. College counselors reserve the fall time solely for senior student application needs and questions.

All students are invited to attend the onsite visits to EC by college representatives and other schoolwide college planning events. These events include our annual College Planning Day and other targeted college presentations and resources by grade level which can be found in Naviance, Canvas, EC This Week and the school website.

Grade	Traditional	Highly Competitive	NCAA Athlete
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take appropriate course load. • Determine extracurricular activities of interest • Attend college visits in the fall (open to all high school students) and college planning events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take challenging course load. • Meet with your school counselor to determine 4-year academic plan. • Determine extracurricular activities of interest. • Attend college visits in the fall (open to all high school students) and college planning events. • Attend fall and spring college fairs • Take PSAT 8/9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take appropriate course load to meet NCAA core course curriculum • Meet with school counselor to determine 4-year academic plan that also meets NCAA requirements. • Start using Core Course GPA
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take appropriate course load • Focus on 1-2 areas of interest for resume and extracurriculars • Attend college visits in the fall (open to all high school students) and college planning events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take challenging course load • Reassess 4-year academic plan and when to incorporate AP classes • Pursue 1-2 areas of interest and consider how to gain depth and/or leadership in these activities • Attend college visits in the fall (open to all high school students) and college planning events • Attend fall and spring college fairs • Take PSAT and PreACT to determine which test to take junior year (compare scores) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take appropriate course load • Use Core GPA to make sure cumulative GPA meets NCAA expectations • Consider retaking any courses with low grades (if the core GPA is below NCAA minimum) • Create athletic resume and/or website with video • Reach out to coaches and teams, as NCAA allows

Grade	Traditional	Highly Competitive	NCAA Athlete
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take appropriate course load • Pursue 1-2 areas of interest for increased depth and/or leadership • Attend college visits in the fall (open to all high school students) and college planning events • Attend spring NACAC college fair in Seattle • Take spring SAT or ACT • Meet with college counselor after December for college planning meeting • Research colleges either online or in person (continue through the summer) • Write first draft of college essay before summer • Ask and secure 1-2 letters of recommendation from EC teachers by last day of school • Ask and secure 1 outside letter of recommendation (coach, instructor, boss, youth pastor, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take challenging course load • Reassess 4-year academic plan and when to incorporate AP classes. Junior year is usually heaviest academic load. • Take SAT or ACT in fall of junior year to allow time to retake several times, if desired • Continue leadership in extracurricular activities • Attend college visits in the fall (open to all high school students) and college planning events • Attend fall and spring college fairs • Meet with college counselor after February for college planning meeting • Research colleges via online or in person (continue through the summer) • Engage with colleges of interest (attend on campus events, meet with representatives at college fair, interview, etc.) • Write several drafts of college essay in English class so summer can be used to continue with supplemental essays • Ask and secure 1-2 letters of recommendation from EC teachers by the last day of school • Ask and secure 1 outside letter of recommendation (coach, instructor, boss, youth pastor, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register for NCAA Clearinghouse (in summer before junior year) • Take appropriate course load • Use Core GPA to make sure cumulative GPA meets NCAA expectations • Consider retaking any courses with low grades (if the core GPA is below NCAA minimum) • Update athletic resume and website • Actively reach out to coaches and teams, as NCAA allows • Work with EC coach and Athletic Director to get guidance and advice • Take SAT or ACT before spring; have scores sent to NCAA. • Ask and secure 1-2 letters of recommendation from EC teachers • Ask and secure the coach letter of recommendation and have it completed by summer in case an early application review is needed

Grade	Traditional	Highly Competitive	NCAA Athlete
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend summer college application workshops Meet one-on-one with college counselor as needed for help with applications Take SAT or ACT again, if needed, and have scores submitted to colleges Finalize college list and determine which colleges are Early Decision, Early Action or Regular Decision Complete applications and essays by November Research and complete scholarship applications Make final decision by May 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend summer college application workshops Meet one-on-one with college counselor as needed for help with applications Take SAT or ACT again, if needed, and have scores submitted to colleges Finalize college list and determine which colleges are Early Decision, Early Action or Regular Decision Complete applications and essays by November Research and complete scholarship applications Make final decision by May 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend summer college application workshops Meet one-on-one with college counselor as needed for help with applications Work with EC coach and Athletic Director for guidance about official visits, decisions Take SAT or ACT again, if needed, and have scores submitted to colleges and NCAA Complete applications based on guidance from college coaches

Naviance Resources

Naviance is an online college and career platform that many high schools have chosen to help students prepare for college. High schools use Naviance as a vehicle to submit documents (transcripts, letters of recommendations and reports) electronically to all colleges and universities.

Eastside Catholic juniors and seniors are required to access and utilize Naviance so college counselors can submit college application materials such as the letters of recommendation, counselor recommendation, school profile and candidate rating form.

Many tools and resources available to all students including a monthly college planning newsletter (customized by grade level), major and career exploration, personality assessments, resume tools, scholarship resources and a robust counselor filing cabinet called Document Resources. In addition to demonstrations in the fall, students and parents and guardians can access pre-recorded demos of Naviance in the Student Services section of the Eastside Catholic School website.

Getting Started

Upon enrolling at Eastside Catholic High School, all students have access to Naviance using their school credentials;

Naviance offers single sign-on for students only. Parents are provided with registration codes early in the year to log in and begin using Naviance. Families who have more than one student attending EC may have their accounts linked so that they may view their students' accounts together. While parents access their student(s) account, parents and students have different login information, usernames and passwords. Students should use their Naviance account with their EC credentials, not their parent's account. If a student or parent needs to retrieve their Naviance login information, they should contact their assigned college counselor.

Students and parents can use this link — student.naviance.com/echs — to access Naviance resources. We recommend that you bookmark this page for easy access.

Colleges and universities are not able to view any information in Naviance/Naviance Student. Documents can be sent through Naviance to colleges and universities, but the college personnel can only view the submitted information. Teachers and counselors only view the resume and parent questionnaire to write letters of recommendation.

Career and Major Exploration Resources

Naviance provides helpful tools for students to research majors and careers, in addition to college planning. Since the college exploration and selection process can vary significantly from student to student, career and major exploration is often the best (and first) place to start. Some students may have a clearly defined educational path early on for several reasons: they have decided on a major they would like to pursue; know which institution they would like to attend or are recruited for athletics. Many students may not know what field of study they would like to pursue in college or which institution they would like to attend, which is perfectly acceptable.

Interest and Career Inventories

We recommend that all students take interest and career inventories to understand what career fields and majors they might be best suited for. Interest and career inventories are short surveys or quizzes where questions about strengths and weaknesses and areas of interest are evaluated and matched with potential majors and careers. Students can learn about skills necessary for the job, typical daily tasks, and potential salaries by state within each profession.

In Naviance, the following inventories are available to all high school students.

Achieve Works Personality	The survey is based on the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory and is geared specifically for high school students. The resulting report gives students a synopsis of their Myers-Briggs personality type, with some helpful hints on one's strengths and blind spots. The report provides a list of compatible careers and majors to investigate.
StrengthsExplorer	Gallup's research has shown that students grow when they focus on what they do best rather than trying to improve on weaknesses. StrengthsExplorer assesses ten talent themes for individuals and identifies each student's three strongest emerging talents. It explains these themes, strategies for capitalizing on each, and action items to help students gain insight into their greatest talents – natural patterns of thought, feelings and behaviors – to leverage in the classroom and in life.

Achieve Works Learning and Productivity	The Achieve Works Learning and Productivity online assessment diagnoses students' unique learning styles based on an analysis of their personal preferences in 16 different areas. The results provide suggestions about learning other subjects and maximizing one's learning potential.
Achieve Works Intelligences	Achieve Works Intelligences uses the Multiple Intelligence theory (Howard Gardner, Harvard University) to reveal students' intelligence strengths and challenges, such as bodily-kinesthetic, musical, or interpersonal intelligence. At the end of each assessment, a personally tailored report identifies each student's unique natural intelligence, career matches and majors to investigate.
Career Interest Profiler	The Career Interest Profiler is an online career interest assessment for students based on Holland's interest codes. It allows students to complete an inventory that analyzes their interests and pairs the results with potential career matches. Once the survey is complete, students will view a results page that calculates their interest scores using six categories: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional.

College Resources in Naviance

Roadtrip Nation

In this resource, 140 people candidly shared their stories about how they went from college to their present situation. Two college graduates traveled across the nation in a forty-foot RV to meet with these individuals who had successfully defined their paths in life and include the chairman of Starbucks; a lobsterman from Maine; the director of Saturday Night Live; the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic; the first female Supreme Court Justice of the United States; head stylist for Madonna and the CEO of National Geographic Ventures. EC students have access to all these interviews on college, career and life!

Document Resources

At the bottom of the Naviance homepage, you will find many colleges and academic resources via the Document Resources link. More than 10 folders are grouped by subject to serve all high school students. Current seniors have a folder dedicated to their application resources, including application guides, organizers, essay prompts and more to support completing college applications. There are also sample student resumes, study skills resources, scholarship links and resources, college maps, standardized testing information and Student Services Department created PowerPoint presentations. Both parents and students have access to these videos.

Scattergrams

Naviance retains all the acceptance history of EC students so current students can see the GPA and SAT/ACT combination of applicants for every college. Naviance identifies whether they were accepted, denied or waitlisted. Within each college listed in Naviance, students and parents can access the Scattergrams and acceptance data for that college (school and national averages).

College Kickstart

We believe a balanced college list is critical for each student. New in 2021, we partnered with College Kickstart to provide hyper-current data and customized EC acceptance data to “grade” each student’s college list and move students towards a list that is more grounded and optimized for best outcomes. This assessment kicks in after students have created their initial lists and helps to classify colleges at appropriate levels for each student. With College Kickstart, families and students gain more control and confidence in the college application process. Eastside Catholic provides students with access to College Kickstart upon request.

Overview of College Admissions

Preparing for post-secondary education beyond Eastside Catholic is an exciting time for students and families. The process of exploring and applying to college will look different for every student and family.

The college counselors at EC are here to answer any questions students and families have and provide information, resources and assistance to smooth the process. This process has become more competitive over the past 10 years with higher education institutions receiving record numbers of applications each year for a limited number of spaces. This is especially true for Ivy League institutions, highly selective institutions and even state institutions such as the University of Washington.

We encourage students to undertake a healthy balance of academics, service and extracurricular activities. It is easy for students to over-commit themselves, leaving little time for them to enjoy this period in their lives or dedicate enough time to their health and well-being. Institutions do not require students to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities, but they do want to see students getting involved in areas of interest. Colleges and universities have noted that the desired candidate possesses quality activities and involvement rather than quantity.

Components of the College Application

While many things have changed in college admissions over the years, colleges still consider specific categories when evaluating applicants, and it can be helpful to understand what colleges consider and how much weight they put into each component. Naturally, the value of these different pieces can and will change depending on the college’s economic health and other outside factors. Regardless, colleges are trying to determine fit and interest within the application—two important criteria that can be assessed through multiple aspects of the application. The NACAC 2019 State of College Admission reported how colleges valued the different components of the college application, as the chart below demonstrates:

For the last few decades, the top four categories have weighed heavily in the admissions process. Colleges have determined that how a student performs academically in high school is an indicator of college success. The rigor of

courses taken relative to what a high school offers, grades and test scores are twice as important as the other components, including the essay, recommendations and extracurricular activities as the chart shows. Within the admission office, real people are reading the applications and trying to understand each applicant. This underscores the importance of students taking the most challenging course load they can handle rather than aiming for a higher GPA with less challenging classes.

An easier way to view this same data is shown below. Under each of the criteria is a more detailed explanation.

TABLE 7. PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2017

Factor	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
Grades in All Courses	220	74.5	15.0	5.5	5.0
Grades in College Prep Courses	220	73.2	16.8	5.9	4.1
Strength of Curriculum	219	62.1	21.9	8.7	7.3
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	221	45.7	37.1	12.2	5.0
Essay or Writing Sample	220	23.2	33.2	24.1	19.5
Student's Demonstrated Interest	218	16.1	23.9	28.0	32.1
Counselor Recommendation	218	15.1	40.4	26.6	17.9
Teacher Recommendation	219	14.2	40.2	26.5	19.2
Class Rank	220	9.1	29.1	34.1	27.7
Extracurricular Activities	219	6.4	42.9	32.0	18.7
Portfolio	219	6.4	11.9	26.9	54.8
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	219	5.5	18.3	35.2	41.1
Interview	219	5.5	16.4	28.3	49.8
Work	217	4.1	28.6	36.9	30.4
State Graduation Exam Scores	218	2.3	8.7	18.8	70.2
SAT II Scores	216	1.9	5.6	14.8	77.8

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2018–19.

- Academics (rigor, grades)
- Standardized Test Scores
- Essays
- Recommendations (counselor, teachers, outside letter)
- Resume/Extracurricular Activities
- Other Application Components

Academics

Every high school submits a copy of its official school profile with each student’s application. Including the school profile helps admission representatives evaluate each transcript relative to what courses were available for each student.

Colleges want to know whether a high school offered AP or IB curriculum or no advanced curriculum at all. For example, a student in a rural community without access to AP or IB at their public high school would not be penalized in the application process because those courses were not an option. Therefore, the school profile is an important “guide” for colleges when evaluating the rigor of a student’s transcript. Using the transcript, colleges will review the rigor of a student based on the number of AP, Honors and College in the High School courses on the EC transcript.

At Eastside Catholic, our school profile is crafted carefully and updated annually before the school year begins. The most current copy is available on our website for all students and college representatives. The profile highlights the unique characteristics of EC. It quantifies essential information for colleges, including the number of AP courses offered, the breakdown of cumulative GPAs for the current senior class, the grading scale and graduation requirements. Knowing all the information in the profile is important for colleges to assess what courses EC students enrolled in relative to what was offered.

The academic prerequisites differ by college, but most colleges prefer a traditional and classical college preparatory curriculum as the core foundation.

Public Universities	Private 4-Year Colleges
English, 4 years Mathematics, 4 years (WA state quantitative math requirement in senior year) Science, 3 years Social Studies/History, 3 years World Languages, 2-3 years Performing Arts, 1 year	English, 4 years Mathematics, 4 years Science, 3-4 years Social Studies/History, 3-4 years World Languages, 2-3 years Performing Arts, 1 year
Highly Selective Colleges	Community College
English, 4 years Mathematics, 4 years Science, 4 years Social Studies/History, 4 years World Language, 4 years Academic Electives, 2 years	Open door policy. Will accept EC graduation to enter community college. Might require specific academic requirements if student is applying to a specific AA or certificate program.

Please note: Senior year classes and grades matter. Colleges want to see students complete an academic schedule senior year similar to what they took in the previous three years. Washington State public universities have a Senior Year Quantitative Math requirement. Seniors are expected to take a math course in 12th grade if they have not yet completed pre-calculus. Grades are submitted after the first semester of senior year and then again after graduation. Colleges look at the final grades and can rescind an offer if a student has not maintained the same GPA and/or academic performance from previous years.

Standardized Tests

At Eastside Catholic, students are encouraged to take a PSAT and PreACT during their sophomore year (both are offered to EC students) to determine which test (SAT or ACT) they want to take and submit to colleges for admission. A concordance table that compares the two scores helps reveal any major strengths on one test over the other. This concordance table is in Document Resources in Naviance and is also easily accessible online.

Students generally take all official standardized tests for college admission during their junior year and possibly some in the fall of senior year. Taking tests senior year is not recommended as this is a busy time with applications. The testing timetable depends on when students have time to prepare for the test and whether they want to take it multiple times. It can take up to four weeks to receive the test results, so rather than taking tests back-to-back without any additional preparation, students are encouraged to plan for time in-between test dates to receive the results and allow extra time to study based on their specific areas that need improvement,

Tests Offered at Eastside Catholic

All freshmen take a practice PSAT 8/9 exam in the fall when the PSAT is administered to sophomores and juniors. This test exposes ninth graders to the test structure and provides a baseline score to assess future scores. Sophomores are offered the PreACT and the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall so they can use these results to determine which test (ACT or SAT) to study for and officially take during their junior year. Juniors who take the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall can qualify for scholarships. This is another helpful practice test before taking the official SAT or ACT. Eastside Catholic partners with several test prep providers to offer many free practice tests, in-person and virtual. Compass Prep regularly presents to EC students in the fall about trends in testing and they offer a free virtual PSAT, PreACT, SAT and ACT to EC students. Revolution Prep offers free ACT and SAT virtual exams on several weekends throughout the year and also provide workshops on executive functioning and college-ready topics. Huntington Issaquah offers in-person practice tests periodically. All of these testing opportunities are free to EC students.

Please Note: All PSAT exams are required for students to take as this is the only tool we use to assess the quality, retention and synthesis of our Eastside Catholic curriculum. The PreACT for sophomores is optional.

PSAT

The Preliminary SAT is a practice for the SAT. Juniors can qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Corporation's scholarship programs if they have top scores. The test measures verbal reasoning skills, critical reading skills, mathematical problem-solving skills and writing skills.

SAT

The College Board offers the SAT reasoning test to measure student's verbal, mathematical and writing abilities acquired through their education. Most students take the SAT for the first time in the spring of their junior year. It can be taken multiple times, although many colleges recommend limiting the number to three. While some colleges will allow students to pick and choose test scores, some colleges require students to submit all their SAT scores. In the 2022-23 academic school year, Eastside Catholic will host a school-day SAT on October 12 for seniors and on April 25. Registration information will be emailed to students and families prior to those dates.

The ACT

The ACT is a test of educational development that measures how much a student has learned. The test focuses on four subject areas: English, math, reading and natural sciences. Students generally take the ACT for the first time officially in the spring of their junior year. In some cases, colleges will allow students to select which subject scores they would like to send with their applications.

AP Placement Tests

Administered by the College Board, AP exams are offered in May; registration occurs in the preceding fall. Depending on the score (and the college requisite), students can earn college credit. Each college determines what score equates to credit at their institution. These are self-reported on the student application. Students do not submit official score reports until after their senior year. At that time, the matriculating college assesses how to grant credit for the AP score results.

Please Note: It is a student's responsibility to send AP score reports and transcripts to the college or university that they decide to attend to receive college credit. All AP score reports can be requested through collegeboard.org.

Test-Optional Colleges Post-COVID

As a result of the pandemic, many colleges dropped their test requirements completely. These colleges are genuinely test-blind and do a holistic evaluation of the applicant. While many colleges went test-optional during COVID and have communicated they will continue with the same policy for the near future, it may sometimes be in your best interest to submit a score. In the cases of highly competitive colleges, students who submitted their applications with a test score during COVID, had higher acceptance rates than those who did not submit a test score. College Kickstart will indicate this distinction based on historical acceptance data when students "run" their college list. We recommend that every student take an SAT or ACT, so they have the option to submit or not submit their scores. Students can talk with their college counselor about whether it makes sense to submit scores to all their colleges, some of them or none.

Keeping Things in Perspective

Standardized tests are only one component of the college application. With an increasing number of colleges going test-optional, they recognize that the results of four-hour tests do not always indicate college success or a good fit. If you choose to take the tests, do the best you can and let it be. Student Services at EC does not recommend taking the test more than three times. CollegeBoard, ACT and test prep facilities make money by tapping into test anxieties, so remember to keep things in perspective. Your test score does not define you!

- Registration and more information about the ACT exam can be accessed at act.org.
- Registration and more information about the SAT exam can be accessed at collegeboard.org.

A Few Suggestions

- Use free online resources to prepare for standardized tests (Khan Academy, act.org).
- Use free resources from the school or public library to supplement your preparation or purchase a test prep book so you can take several full-length practice tests.
- Take advantage of the free practice tests that Eastside Catholic coordinates or those offered for a minimal fee provided throughout the year (advertised in Naviance and EC This Week email).
- Only take unofficial practice tests until you are ready to take the test officially. Do not take official tests for practice as these scores might be requested when you apply.
- Plan for test preparation by choosing a time in the year when you can study. In between sports, over holidays and during the summer are good times that limit other schedule conflicts. Make test prep study time a commitment on your calendar.
- If you are taking the test at an unfamiliar facility, drive to it the night beforehand so you know the route and to minimize any stress.

Application Essay

Most colleges and universities require an essay as part of the application to their school. As mentioned in the previous section, the Common App contains several essay prompts that students can choose to respond to and submit to schools.

2022-23 Common Application Essay Prompts

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Even schools that do not use the Common App can require an essay in consideration for admission. Students can often compose one “main” essay and modify it as needed to use it to apply to various schools. Some schools have supplemental essays which are typically shorter in length. Supplemental essays can vary in topic and should be regarded as an important piece in college admission. While the Common App essay prompts are confirmed in February of each proceeding year, supplemental essays are usually not published until August 1 before the application year.

Colleges use application essays to gauge writing ability and to learn more about a student. Students are encouraged to write about topics important to them and highlight their unique character. Sometimes colleges include supplemental questions that ask the student if there is any additional information that a school should know about them. This question is an opportunity for students to address any hardships they may have encountered throughout high school. If a student had a particularly difficult semester or year and their grades went down, this supplemental essay is a place for them to address this occurrence. Other occurrences such as a death in the family, illnesses, depression are examples of items that can be addressed in this section. Anything that may have hindered or been a potential obstacle for a student that affected academic performance or impacted a student during high school is appropriate to address in a supplemental question that asks for additional information.

Additional Information Essay

In the Common Application, there is a dedicated space for students to address academic or personal issues not covered in other sections. The question is optional and appears in the “Additional Information” part of the application. Students can use this space to address transcript aberrations (credit recovery, courses taken outside of EC) or significant challenges that affected grades. Students are encouraged to talk with their college counselor about this additional essay and whether it would be appropriate to write.

College essay resources are posted in the Document Resources section of Naviance. Additionally, college counselors host essay workshops (Dr. Jonathan Brown) and provide access to The College Essay Guy’s resources and workshops throughout the spring and summer. Resources in Naviance include examples of powerful essays, advice for drafting the essays (diversity, supplemental and main), and the many websites and additional resources available to students. Naviance also has a resource list of college essay tutors for hire. Names added to that list are provided by EC families who have directly worked with a tutor and provided a recommendation. (Please note that all families are responsible for completing reference checks as needed.) Students have plenty of resources to author essays independently. However, for those who want feedback on each essay, a college essay tutor is often helpful.

Please Note: It is important for students to take the application essays seriously. It is always beneficial to have an adult, such as a parent, teacher, counselor or trusted advisor, proofread an essay. However, adults need to remember that essays should accurately reflect a student and their writing ability; therefore, it is best to avoid over-editing an essay. Lastly, students are encouraged to be creative. Real people are reading college essays and enjoy reading unique pieces of work.

Letters of Recommendation

Colleges and universities may require at least one letter of recommendation be submitted as part of the college application. However, some schools will not accept any. Visit each college or university’s admission webpage to determine how many letters of recommendation can be submitted and/or are required. The Common App, Naviance and College Kickstart indicate how many letters of recommendation are requested.

Teacher Letters of Recommendation

Juniors can ask their teachers for a letter starting in the spring of junior year. There is a specific process to secure the letters of recommendation that must be followed and will be communicated to students via email, in EC this Week and Naviance. In short, students ask their teachers face-to-face first. Students need to fully complete the required Teacher Recommendation Survey in Naviance (questions provided by the teachers). At that point, college counselors will “invite” the teachers from within Naviance so documents can all be submitted electronically. College counselors routinely check for completed teacher surveys and invite teachers, but students are encouraged to email the counselor to let them know the teacher survey is complete. Additionally, EC teachers are limited to writing a total of

20 recommendation letters to ensure time to write detailed and thorough letters for each student. Teachers maintain their respective lists and will not retain any students who do not follow the procedures. Some teachers have additional questions to answer. Students must recognize that teachers write these letters outside of class time, which is why the process starts in April of the junior year and requires specific steps. Teachers reserve the right to deny a student letter of recommendation if the student has not provided enough information, the student did not request a letter in a timely manner, or the student failed to complete the tasks in a timely manner. Teacher recommendation letters and forms are submitted through Naviance.

Process to Request a Teacher Recommendation

1. After April 1 of junior year, ask a core subject teacher face-to-face. Talk with teachers when things are quiet rather than during a class or between classes. Give them time to consider the request.
2. If they agree to write the letter, complete the Required Teacher Recommendation Survey in Naviance > About Me > Surveys.
3. Once the survey is complete, email your counselor so he/she can check the thoroughness of the survey and then invite teachers on your behalf.

Counselor Letter

Counselors write letters for each student in their assigned pool if the student has met the required expectations. Students are asked to complete the Counselor Survey before scheduling a one-on-one meeting so counselors can be prepared with specific college ideas. Students are encouraged to complete the survey thoroughly as more information helps the counselor to write the school letter of recommendation. The more interaction a college counselor has with a student, the more detailed and informed the counselor letter will be. Counselor recommendation letters and forms are submitted through Naviance.

Outside Letter

Students can request letters of recommendation to be submitted from people in their community or outside of their school if it is beneficial. Sometimes hearing from a coach, boss, instructor or someone else who knows the student outside of academics is welcomed. However, it should be noted that schools often put limits on the number of letters of recommendation that can be submitted and discourage letters of recommendation that are composed by family, friends or peers. Please consult the college counselors about how to submit outside letters of recommendation to various schools.

Please Note: Colleges will not read more than two core-subject teacher letters of recommendation. If a student wants a third letter, they should ask someone outside of academics. EC will not allow more than two teachers to write a recommendation letter for a student unless a college explicitly states that they require more than two academic teachers.

Resume and Extracurricular Activities

Resumes are not a required part of the college admissions process, but the information listed in a resume is often comparable to what you should list on a college application or talk about during a college interview. Having a resume will be necessary when applying for a job or conducting college visits. Even without paid work skills, students can list skills, honors, awards, accomplishments and activities.

Naviance has a Resume Tool where students can track these items. The college counselors recommend students add items to their Resume Tool beginning freshman year to maintain an accurate resume and list of activities to reference when completing a college application.

Naviance will create and format a resume based on the information provided. If students want a more professional

or editable format, Naviance Document Resources has sample student resumes.

Other Application Components: The Application

College applications are typically completed during the fall of senior year in high school, although most are available starting August 1. Students complete college applications independently but are welcome to meet with their counselors whenever they have questions, need clarification or need additional assistance when completing their applications. Some colleges use the Common Application, the Coalition Application or their distinct application. Some colleges offer all types so you can choose.

- **The Common Application.** The Common Application (referred to as “the Common App”) is an online application that can be completed and submitted to many different schools. There are nearly 900 colleges and universities that utilize the Common App. By completing this one application, students can apply to more schools in less time than completing individual applications for each school.
- **The Coalition Application.** The Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success was created to improve the application process for students and provide a platform that allows students to organize and apply to many different schools. The Coalition comprises over 90 institutions that graduate at least 70% of their students within six years. The Coalition has created a single application like the Common App.
- **University of California Application.** This one application can be submitted to nine different University of California colleges. It is helpful to have a transcript handy when completing this time-intensive application.
- **Apply Texas.** When applying to multiple public and some private colleges in Texas, students use this one application. Grades and classes are self-reported, so it helps to have a transcript handy when completing the application.
- **Service Academy Applications.** The process to apply for one of our nation’s Service Academies is quite different than the traditional college application. There are specific steps to receive a nomination and to submit the application and physical fitness forms. Naviance has detailed information about this process if students need details. Students considering this option should meet with their college counselor early in the spring of their junior year to meet all deadlines and complete the detailed process.
- **Common Black College Application.** For \$20, students can apply to 61 member HBCUs, and specify their top four choices
- **Canadian and International Applications.** UCAS is a common application shared by many international colleges (but not all). They use different criteria to assess applications and make final decisions. They are also not bound to the May 1 university college deposit deadline. Students interested in any international school should meet with their college counselor early in the spring of their junior year to understand the different criteria and processes.
- **Private Applications.** While many colleges use one of the applications mentioned above, some still have distinct applications and portals. When adding colleges to Naviance, students need to indicate which application they are using to submit all supporting documentation in a timely fashion.

We recommend that students complete the Common Application since it syncs with Naviance and makes submitting support documents like transcripts and letters of recommendation seamless and immediate. Other applications are not traceable, and some are submitted in paper format, which takes colleges up to several weeks to match with application files.

Please Note: There is a fee for submitting a college application. Some colleges may offer to waive the fee and some offer “fee waivers” to students who qualify, but most schools expect the fee to be paid to consider the applicant for admission. These fees can add up as a student applies to multiple schools. It is beneficial to double-check with a school

to see if they ever waive application fees or offer fee waivers (and the criteria for those fee waivers.)

To verify whether a college accepts the Common App, a student can check several spots:

1. The Common App has a list of schools that utilize the application, so students can explore schools by viewing the list.
2. When adding colleges to Naviance (Colleges I'm Applying To), Naviance will identify all the different applications each college offers.
3. Students can visit individual school websites and view their admissions page. On their admissions page, schools describe their application process and often note whether they accept the Common App, Coalition App or their own application.
4. Students can create a Common App account for free and then look up the schools in the application itself.

Regardless of the specific application, students should carefully complete all aspects of the college application as it demonstrates character and personality to the reader. Spelling, capitalization and other mistakes can affect how the application is viewed, so students are encouraged to carve out time to complete it carefully.

Transcripts

A student's transcript is the single most important item in the Admissions folder in Naviance. Course grades from a student's freshman, sophomore and junior year are evident; and the first semester senior year courses (uploaded by your counselor). At the end of the first semester, an updated transcript is submitted to all colleges listed in Naviance. Progress reports from first-semester senior year are only sent if requested by the college; College counselors will let students know if a request for first-semester progress reports is received. This request is typical for students applying "early decision" or "early action" as colleges want to know how students are progressing before making an admission decision.

Please Note: All students have access to their most recent transcript in PlusPortals in the Documents folder. This folder is accessible to both students and parents.

Important Notes About Submission of Transcripts

High school transcripts are sent to the colleges and universities on the student's list in Naviance. Naviance must be updated to send transcripts to the correct colleges. For seniors applying to college, transcripts are automatically sent three times during the academic year; students do not need to request that counselors submit these.

- **Initial Transcript:** An initial transcript will be submitted at the time a student sends an application to a school, usually in November.
- **Mid-Year Transcript:** During senior year, once first semester grades have been posted, a mid-year transcript will automatically be sent to every college and university on a student's list in Naviance. Some colleges and universities will admit students based on their performance during the first and second semester of senior year, so students must do their best the entire year.
- **Final Transcript:** A final high school transcript will be automatically sent to the college or university a senior chooses to attend. This school decision must be marked as the school of attendance in Naviance. EC counselors only send a final transcript to one college. Double depositing is highly discouraged as it is unethical and puts all student acceptances at risk. If a college finds out a student has double deposited, they have the right to withdraw their acceptance.

Transcripts Outside of EC

College counselors upload any outside transcripts into Naviance to be submitted with the EC transcript. While EC does

not include outside courses or grades on the EC transcript, we want to share this information as part of your application. We automatically upload and submit any outside transcripts (transfer, credit recovery) unless a student requests otherwise.

UWHS transcripts are generally not required as part of the application process. Once a student makes their final college decision, they should request an official transcript from UWHS courses. We do not have access to these transcripts.

High School Profile

Every school maintains and updates an annual school profile that helps colleges understand each school's unique characteristics. EC updates their school profile by September of each school year. The profile includes information about our curriculum, grading policies, school accreditation, standardized test scores, college matriculation and notes about our unique programs. The profile is typically sent to colleges with the Secondary School Report and is always located on the EC College Counseling webpage.

Secondary School Report

The Secondary School Report is completed by the school counselor and requests information about the student in the context of the EC curriculum and community. Specifically, colleges ask for the rigor of a student's curriculum compared to other EC students and any felony, suspension or expulsion violations.

The Interview Report

An interview with an admission representative or alumnus will rarely negatively affect a college application. The recommendation of a teacher who has worked with a student for several years is far more important and insightful.

While some colleges require and recommend an interview, some will not allow students to have an admissions interview. Smaller colleges tend to value interviews and more heavily weight this in the admissions evaluation. College Kickstart indicates which colleges require and/or recommend interviews and each college website should explain its policy and procedure around interviews. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate with the college for an interview if it is allowed.

Some tips for the interview:

- Be prepared to talk about your accomplishments and activities.
- Take a resume or listing of activities, so the interviewer has information in front of them about you.
- Arrive alone (you can have a parent drive you to a new location). Don't arrive with your parents or have them attend the interview.
- Dress appropriately. Students do not need to dress in a suit or fancy party dress. However, first impressions are especially important and dressing in clean and tidy attire shows the student respects and values the interview.
- Arrive early. If you are going to a new location, students should arrive early so the interview can start on time.
- Prepare several questions to ask of the interviewer that cannot be answered online. Arriving prepared demonstrates a genuine interest in the college.
- Be appreciative of the interviewer and their time. Say thank you and write a thank you note (or send an email) afterward.

Other Factors

At most selective colleges, all students have demonstrated they can handle a rigorous education. It can be hard to differentiate between applicants, so colleges often look to other factors to help in their decision. Additionally, colleges have institutional priorities that influence their decisions. Listed below are some of these factors.

Demonstrated Interest

Colleges want students who will ultimately accept their offer and attend their institution. They assess this based on the number and quality students' communication with the college, and many institutions track interactions. Demonstrated interest can be attending a college visit to EC, visiting with a college representative at the local college fair, visiting campus, attending an information session, emailing or communicating with the admissions representative, etc. This interest indicates that students are more likely to enroll in their college than other students who have had no communication. Since colleges want to achieve the highest yield possible, they will offer acceptances to students who have shown a genuine interest in their college and programs. Larger colleges and universities do not (and cannot) track demonstrated interest.

Legacy

Most private colleges respond to their graduate's loyal support by giving an edge to the children of alumni in the admissions process. Being the son or daughter of an alum will not make much difference for candidates who fall significantly short of the acceptance averages, but it can provide an advantage for otherwise competitive applicants. Some colleges may be more influenced by legacy status than others.

Artistic Talent

Colleges are interested in unusual and unique talents. Many colleges offer the opportunity to submit a portfolio that highlights a candidate's abilities. Look for special instructions in the application about whether a college will accept these materials and how they want the pieces submitted.

Athletic Abilities

Potential athletes are in contact with college coaches well before their senior year if they are a competitive applicant. The college coach plays a significant role in whether a student is offered an acceptance. The relationship between the prospective student and the coach should be a priority for any student wanting to play college-level athletics. If an EC student is interested in playing sports in college, they are encouraged to talk with their high school coach, the EC athletic director and their college counselor to help manage these contacts and responsibilities during the application process.

Diversity

As with the previous factors, it's hard to know how much this affects an admissions decision. While colleges will only accept students who can handle the academic load, they also value a diversity of cultures, languages, religions and races on campus to help prepare students for the global economy. Diversity questions are asked in every application and should be answered honestly.

Financial Independence

With the financial challenges of COVID, students who can pay full tuition are considered wild card. As with any business, colleges have a bottom line and need students who can afford their tuition. Applying without the need for aid is an advantage. A small number of colleges that are truly need-blind, but these colleges have large endowments that allow them to choose students without financial regards. Check a college's financial aid webpage for more information.

Completing the College Application

Creating a Well-Balanced List

The purpose of meeting with your college counselor in the spring of the junior year is to help create an appropriate list of colleges containing a mixture of safety, match and high reach colleges. The college counselor can look at the transcript, SAT scores, resume and historical data from EC students to help assess the likelihood of acceptance and help categorize a list of colleges.

The counselor's Junior Survey covers college size, location, academics, financial and other important issues for each student. Completing the survey helps the college counselor to prepare and suggest colleges. Questions in the survey will cover these topics (and more):

Size	What is the student population? How large are typical freshman classes? Small college is up to 3,000 students; medium college is 3,000-7,000 students; and a large college is over 7,000 students
Location	How far is the college from your home? What is the area surrounding the campus like? How accessible is public transportation? Where are off-campus cultural and social opportunities?
People	Who are the students and where do they come from? Consider race, ethnic origin, male/female ratio, geographical distribution and resident/commuter ratio.
Curriculum/ Facilities	What is the focus of the curriculum? Is the emphasis on teaching or research? What majors are available? Are there particular requirements for graduation? How about honors programs and internships? What is the quality of facilities such as science labs and athletic facilities?
Academic Rigor/Structure	Do you want an academically demanding environment, or would you prefer a school where you could do well without knocking yourself out? Do you want a highly structured academic framework, or do you want a curriculum that allows for independent projects? Do you want a liberal art or professional curriculum?
Social Opportunities	What clubs and teams are available? What intramural sports are available? Are there fraternities and sororities? Is there access to facilities such as darkrooms, practice rooms, art studios and fitness centers? What off-campus opportunities exist?
Personal Factors	Can your dietary, religious, residential and/or medical considerations be accommodated?

Cost	What is the total yearly tuition and fees, room and board, books and personal expenses? Is financial aid available (need and non-need based)? What are the limits on your family's college costs?
Other	Do you want to participate in off-campus internships? Would you be willing or need to work part-time while attending college? Is it important to study abroad during one or more of your college years?

During the Junior College Planning Meeting, students leave with colleges to research. The counselor will explain how to research colleges, but students need to dig deep into qualitative (CollegeBoard) and quantitative (Fiske Guide) data to assess which colleges will be a good match. With this information, and an official test score and a solid junior year transcript, counselors can better help students create a realistic list.

College Kickstart also helps students to understand the rigor of their list. While we want students to challenge themselves in this process and we want to avoid too many rejections in the spring of senior year. And this tool will help with that. Students will be given access to College Kickstart after the second semester of junior year through the first semester of senior year (one year) to get a more realistic evaluation of the list. EC College Counselors would like to see all lists above a "B" grade. The algorithm used is based on historical EC data and real-time college acceptance data. Working closely with your EC college counselor and our resources will help create the most appropriate list grounded in realistic expectations.

Other Helpful Websites:

- businessweek.com/bschools
- collegedata.com
- collegeprowler.com
- nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator
- unigo.com
- campusstarter.com
- catholiccollegesonline.org
- ctcl.org
- collegeboard.com
- collegeanswer.com
- collegenet.com
- collegeview.com
- collegesofdistinction.com
- forbes.com
- kiplinger.com
- iie.org/programs/global-3/institutions/us/usa.htm
- gocollege.com
- ucan-network.org
- niche.com
- nsee.com
- petersons.com
- princetonreview.com
- studentsreview.com
- templeton.org
- youuniversitytv.com

Responsibilities by Application Component

The below table shows application items submitted to colleges and universities during the admissions process, broken down by student versus counselor responsibility.

Item	Student Responsibility	EC College Counselor Responsibility
Application		
College Applications, including Common App Supplemental Apps	X	
College Essays	X	
Standardized Test Scores		
ACT or SAT Score Reports	X	
AP Exam Test Scores	X	
Transcripts		
EC High School Transcript		X
UWHS and/or Seattle U Transcripts	X	
Outside Transcripts (APEX, BYU, other high school transcripts)	Student must determine if colleges will accept any outside transcripts from EC. If not, student is responsible for submitting.	Counselor will submit "outside" transcripts on file

Item	Student Responsibility	EC College Counselor Responsibility
Letters of Recommendation		
Teacher Letters of Recommendation	Student must request and complete Teacher Recommendation Survey	Counselor submits via Naviance
Counselor Letter of Recommendation	Student must meet with counselor and complete the Counselor Survey	X (for students who have completed the survey and met with the college counselor)
Outside Letter of Recommendation	X	
School Report and Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Courses • School Profile • Secondary School Report 		X
Scholarships/Financial Aid		
Submit FAFSA	X	
Submit CSS Profile	X	
Student Athletes		
Register at NCAA Clearinghouse	X	
Upload transcript to NCAA Clearinghouse		X

Counselors will be in contact with seniors throughout the application process. Students are responsible for letting their counselor know which colleges and universities to submit transcripts and supporting documents to (all listed in Naviance). It is recommended that students either tell counselors in person or through email. If a student has “requested” transcripts in Naviance, they will be able to confirm that each of the transcripts was submitted (initial, mid-year and final).

Counselors will be in contact with seniors throughout the application process. Students are responsible for letting their counselor know which colleges and universities to submit transcripts and supporting documents to. We recommend that students either tell counselors in person or through email. Formal transcript requests can be made through Naviance, but counselors are not sent notifications about these requests.

Students can confirm if EC submitted documents under the “Office Status” in Naviance. Students can also view their applications’ status through individual portals/accounts that colleges request students to set up. Schools notify students if they are missing documents that will potentially hold up the admission decision. They do this

through portals, email or physical letters. If a student is notified that they are missing an item to complete their file or application for admission by a school, it is important for them the student to identify the item and submit it as soon as possible. If it is an item that Eastside Catholic is responsible for sending, we encourage students to contact their counselor so that the missing item can be submitted in a timely manner.

Higher education institutions receive record numbers of applications and documents sent electronically, and at times errors can occur. Since Eastside Catholic keeps track of when all documents are submitted to schools and submits all information within the application deadline, if an error does occur, we will be able to verify that the documents were submitted on time and in full on our end.

Application Options: ED, EA, REA, RD and Rolling

College application deadlines have been occurring earlier over time, so much so that students are often admitted to schools based on their academic performance from freshman, sophomore and junior years only. Seniors typically apply to colleges and universities during the fall, before first semester grades have been issued. Students who apply later or apply to schools with later application deadlines may have to submit their first semester grades of senior year for admission.

Students have different options regarding the timeframe for applying to colleges. Many schools allow students to apply early, have different options for early applicants and have separate application deadlines for regular applicants that do not apply early. A description of each application plan is listed below.

Early Application Options/Plans

- ED (Early Decision) – A binding agreement is made with the college/university that the student will attend the school they applied to with early decision if admitted. Students who apply to schools as ED applicants have a clear, first-choice school.
- REA (Restrictive Early Action) – A non-binding agreement that prevents applicants from applying to other schools early (with ED or EA). Stanford allows students to apply REA, prohibiting students from applying to Ivy League schools or private colleges/universities early. Under REA, students can apply to public colleges and universities early, but not private colleges and universities. However, students can apply regular decision (RD) to private colleges and universities.
- EA (Early Action) – A non-binding agreement, an early application is submitted to a school within an earlier

Pros of Applying Early	Cons of Applying Early
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher acceptance rate of applicants (depends on the college) • More scholarships awarded to early applicants • Demonstrating a high level of interest in a specific school or a few schools • Earlier notification of admission decision, usually by mid-December • Earlier notification of financial aid package • Peace of mind earlier in senior year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More competitive applicant pool • More work to be done during the beginning of senior year • FAFSA and CSS Profile completed earlier • No ability to compare financial offers

Regular Application Options/Plans

- RD (Regular Decision) – A non-binding agreement, an application is submitted within the regular timeframe designated by an institution, which could be anywhere from November to July, most of which are due around January.
- Rolling – A non-binding agreement, applications are typically accepted throughout the year and are reviewed upon being received.

Making the Final Decision

Colleges will either Accept, Deny or Waitlist a student, which will be communicated via their portal or a postal envelope. If a student is waitlisted, here are some thoughts to keep in mind:

- Colleges use waitlists as their insurance. If a college ends up with open spaces in the freshman class (fewer students accept their offers than expected), colleges may accept students from the waitlist. The number of students taken o a waitlist varies from year to year.
- Students may not receive an offer from the waitlist until the summer before college starts. Most students want to decide by the end of senior year to prepare for college.
- Because the waitlist is unpredictable, it's unwise to count on eventually getting an offer.
- If a student hasn't heard from a waitlist college by the May 1 deposit deadline, they should make a deposit at their second-choice college to ensure a place in the freshman class. Students will lose this deposit if they are offered a spot on the waitlist and decide not to attend their second-choice college.

Except for students applying Early Decision, seniors are required to make a final decision by May 1. Students can make a deposit to only one college by this date. Tools to help students make their final decision are in Naviance.

Please Note: It is unethical and unfair to double deposit. College counselors are not allowed to send more than one final official transcript. If colleges learn about a student making a deposit to more than one college, they can rescind their offer to the student. In the end, a student who double deposits can lose all their college options.

May 1 is the deposit deadline, so plan to make this final decision.

Learning Differences in College Admissions

Colleges must provide learning support resources for any student who has an up-to-date doctor's neuropsychologist evaluation. While some candidates choose to disclose this information in the application, students are not mandated to reveal any personal information. The application process for students with diagnosed disabilities is the same. However, students who need extended time, note-taking support and/or executive functioning resources should spend more time asking about academic support on prospective college campuses. Students with diagnosed learning disabilities can take longer to graduate and have a lower college graduation rate. Take the time to assess whether the academic resources and support at prospective colleges will meet your needs. Not all colleges provide similar levels of support (regardless of what they say).

While on a campus tour, students should make it a priority to visit the academic support center and learn how the college intentionally supports students. Some colleges provide assistance throughout the year, but a student must come in and advocate for it. On the other hand, some colleges are more proactive about meeting with students and regularly checking in.

Questions to ask about each college's academic support centers:

1. Is there a point person in the academic support program/office that will help the student with a plan to achieve academic success or does the student themselves do this?
2. What support services does the college provide? Students should share their specific accommodations, so they fully understand if these are easily accessible.
3. How does a student "request" accommodation from each of their classes? Does the academic support center communicate this or does the student need to discuss this with every professor?
4. How recent does the neuropsychic/physician evaluation need to be? When does a student submit this to the academic support office—the summer before school starts or when the student is on campus in the fall?
5. Does the school have academic requirements that might be difficult, such as a foreign language or math course?
6. How does peer tutoring work at each school? Is it open 24/7 or do students need to make an appointment?
7. Is there a summer transition program for students with diagnosed learning disabilities to help prepare them for college academics?

Standardized Test Accommodations

The EC Academic Resource Department manages all the extended time or other test-taking modifications for the SAT, PSAT, AP and the ACT. Students are encouraged to apply for testing accommodations after using their EC SAP (Student Academic Plan) for at least six months. The EC Academic Resources department handles the request and delivery of all testing modifications. We recommend that a student submit the testing accommodation request in the spring of sophomore year to use the accommodations for the fall PSAT.

College Board and ACT require current documentation and proof that students are using the accommodations in their high school setting. The Academic Resource Department will work with students and families to complete the application for accommodations for those institutions. If an application is denied, students can resubmit. Because the time needed for College Board and the ACT to respond can be several weeks, students are encouraged to start this process at the end of their freshman year so all testing during the sophomore, junior and senior years can be approved in time for accommodations. Colleges do not know if students received any modifications on their tests.

Colleges Designed with Academic Support Programs

- Adelphi University (NY)
- American University (DC)
- Beacon College (FL)
- Curry College (MA)
- DePaul University (IL)
- Hofstra University (NY)
- Landmark College (VT)
- Lynn University (FL)
- Marshall University (WV)

- McDaniel College (MD)
- Mitchell College (MA)
- Northeastern University (MA)
- Southern Oregon University (OR)
- University of Arizona (AZ)
- University of Connecticut (CT)
- University of Denver (CO)
- University of the Ozarks (AR)

Landmark College

Landmark College in Vermont offers a fabulous summer program for high school students and students entering their first year of college, which is designed to prepare them for academic success. For students who still need to master the executive functioning skills required for academic success, summer programs are the best resources grounded in research and experience.

Athletics and NCAA

The NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) regulates and organizes colleges and universities' athletic programs in the United States and Canada. Additionally, it supports student-athletes who compete in college sports.

All students who desire to play a sport at Division I or Division II level in college must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org. The Guide to the College-Bound Athlete is available online and in the Student Services Office (handed out at any college athletic presentations). For information about the Clearinghouse (transcript, test scores, qualification, etc.), students can call 877-861-3003. A PIN and social security number will be requested on the call.

The NCAA Eligibility Center reviews the academics and amateurism of all prospective student-athletes. There is a fee to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center; \$75 for students from the United States and \$130 for international students. Students that received a waiver fee for either the ACT or SAT exam will be able to receive a waiver fee for registration. To qualify for a waiver fee, students must meet the same criteria as listed for ACT or SAT fee waivers. It is recommended that students register with the NCAA Eligibility Center by the end of their junior year in high school.

There are different eligibility requirements for Division I, Division II and Division III athletics. Division I athletics have the strictest requirements of the three divisions and Division III does not have any requirements of athletes. Students should check the NCAA website for more details about the different requirements.

- Division I schools generally have more students, larger athletic budgets and more athletic department support than schools in Division II or III.
- Schools in Division II emphasize a life balance in which academically and athletically gifted students can compete at a high level while maintaining a traditional collegiate experience.
- Academics are the primary focus for Division III student-athletes. They experience shorter sports seasons which reduces their time away from academic studies and other campus activities. No athletic aid is granted to students who play for a Division III school, but the institutions can offer merit and need-based aid.

NCAA academic eligibility relies on GPA in core courses, such as English, math (Algebra I or higher), natural/physical science, social science, foreign language and/or comparative religion or philosophy. Not all high school courses are NCAA core courses, including courses in non-core areas and fine arts or vocations such as driver education, typing, art, music, physical education or welding.

Core Courses GPA

All EC students have access to CoreCourseGPA.com, online software for student-athletes to track their progress towards meeting NCAA initial eligibility requirements. CoreCourseGPA.com calculates core course GPA for Division I and II, provides corresponding minimum SAT/ACT scores, and a detailed report of core course credits earned and needed. All student-athletes are encouraged to activate their FREE membership to track their core-course GPA and learn more about important recruiting topics.

To create an account, follow these steps:

1. Go to corecoursegpa.com.
2. Click “Free New Member Account”
3. Enter School ID: 480067
4. Enter School Code: 726985225
5. Complete Registration Form

Student-athletes in specific sports can be recruited as early as sophomore year. It is not recommended for students to commit to playing for a specific college or university this early in high school, but for students to keep an open dialogue with schools that may be looking at them. The table below gives an idea of the frequency and timeline in which recruiters may contact student-athletes.

College Checklist for Student-Athletes

- What is the level of competition?
- What is the coach’s philosophy toward the sport, players and/or school?
- How long has the coach been at the college?
- Does the coach have a reputation for success? What is the reputation?
- What is the graduation rate of the athletes?
- Do athletes have mandatory study halls?
- Are tutors available for all courses?
- How much time per week is required for practice?
- What training facilities are available?
- Does the college have a history of NCAA rules violation?
- If a student needs a fifth year, will the college finance it?
- How many other students is the coach recruiting for the same position?
- Are injuries covered by the team insurance policy?
- Can the scholarship be affected by an injury?
- What do current team members say about the college, the team and the coach?
- Are the players and coaches honest? Do they answer student questions in a straight-forward and candid way?
- Are the coaches interested in academics? Did they ask about education and career interests?

Financial Aid Information

Financial aid is monetary assistance students receive to help pay for college. While most people think of loans as the main form of financial aid, financial aid consists of grants, scholarships and loans. There are two main types of financial aid— need-based aid and merit-based aid.

- **Need-based Aid:** Financial aid is awarded to students that demonstrate financial need. This need is determined through information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- **Merit-based Aid:** Scholarships awarded by colleges and universities and/or outside organizations that give money based on academic achievement, high scores on college entrance exams (ACT and SAT) or exceptional performance in activities.

FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Applying for financial aid is often the most misunderstood part of the college application process and is also the most important.

- Students and their families can file for financial aid on October 1.
- Applicants use prior-prior year (PPY) tax information when reporting person and family income.

Completing the FAFSA is essential for securing most types of financial aid for college. In addition to federal grants and loans, many colleges, states and scholarship programs use the form to assess eligibility for their financial aid programs.

We encourage all families to complete the FAFSA even if they do not think they will qualify for aid because students and families can always decline all awarded assistance. Still, it is difficult to get assistance if needed when the FAFSA is not completed or after the application has closed. Also, most colleges and universities award need-based grants and scholarships based on information from the FAFSA. The FAFSA can be completed at studentaid.gov.

While the federal deadline for completing the FAFSA is June 30, colleges and universities may have earlier deadlines. It is best to consult the websites of the individual schools a student is applying to and verify the school's financial aid forms and deadlines.

College Scholarship Services (CSS) Profile

In addition to the FAFSA, some colleges and universities also require applicants to complete a College Scholarship Services (CSS) profile. The CSS profile is an online form through College Board that examines a family's income, but it goes into more detail than the FAFSA. This form is also used to determine financial aid eligibility. Private colleges and universities that cannot rely on state funding to assist with financial aid often require the CSS profile to be completed to understand more about the amount of aid a student needs.

Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded to students through a few different means. Students automatically qualify for some scholarships by completing a college application, FAFSA, CSS profile, receiving a high score on the PSAT/NMSQT or receiving high scores on college entrance exams (ACT and SAT). These scholarships are the easiest for students to apply for because they don't require an additional application, essay or supplemental work to be completed to qualify for them. Students are notified of these scholarships by the institution or organization that collects the information mentioned above.

Other scholarships offered by institutions may require a separate application. While most colleges and universities have tried to make it easy for students to qualify for scholarships by including them in the main application, some schools still have separate applications for scholarships at their schools. It is important to consult all websites of the individual schools a student applies to know if a school has a separate application required for scholarships.

Specific Scholarships

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) is a Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Through WUE, students in western states may enroll in many two-year and four-year college programs at reduced tuition. This program offers full or partial in-state tuition for students from Washington who enroll in coursework not usually provided in Washington State. It's essential to check the website to verify any restrictions with the WUE discount.

Grand Canyon Christian College Consortium. As a participant in this unique scholarship, EC students can receive \$4,000 worth of scholarships for Christian school attendance every year. For example, students who have attended EC for all four years of high school will qualify (automatically) for \$16,000 worth of scholarships annually that is stackable.

Aside from scholarships offered by individual institutions and organizations like ACT and College Board, many scholarships available to students from outside organizations. All students at Eastside Catholic have access to a list of scholarships in Naviance. Student Services notifies students of scholarship opportunities via the Naviance Newsletter. Additionally, Eastside Catholic offers a financial aid information session each year and can provide financial aid college consultants for families who want more specific guidance and advice about scholarships and college costs.

Tips for Financial Aid Applicants

Do not eliminate a college because you think it costs too much. Apply for admission and financial aid and see what aid package is offered. Most colleges can meet demonstrated need.

Glossary of Financial Aid Terms

- **Cost of Attendance:** (COA) is the price of attending a specific school. COA is more than just tuition. COA includes tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, etc. The COA is different at every school to which you apply.
- **CSS Profile:** The application required by many schools to apply for institutional aid. Not all colleges require the CSS profile, so students need to check each college's website.

- **Demonstrated Need:** EFC is subtracted from the COA, resulting in demonstrated financial need.
- **Expected Family Contribution (EFC):** The amount of money the federal government expects students and families to pay toward college costs each year.
- **FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid, used to apply for US government grants and loans, federal work-study, many state grants and institutional financial aid. Every financial aid applicant must complete this form.
- **Financial Aid:** Money that is given, lent or paid to you so you can pay for college.
- **Gapping:** The practice of meeting less than a student's full aid eligibility.
- **Merit-Based Aid:** Scholarships, grants and other aid awarded based on academic strength, artistic ability, leadership or other special talents.
- **Need Aware:** An admissions policy that considers student's financial need before making admissions decisions.
- **Need-Based Aid:** Financial aid that is awarded based on demonstrated financial need.
- **SAR:** Student Aid Report is generated when the FAFSA is processed. It includes all the data entered in the FAFSA and indicates the amount of the EFC.
- **Work-Study:** A federally subsidized college program where students hold part-time campus jobs as part of their financial aid package. Students can work up to a certain number of hours each week to earn work-study funds.

College Visits

Visiting college campuses is a great way for students to determine the best "fit." While books and websites can provide all sorts of information, students get the best sense of whether a college will be a good fit for them when they can walk around campus and talk with current students in person.

What to do during a visit

- Take a tour led by a current student. Use this opportunity to ask this student any of your concerns or questions. They are only one voice so don't be discouraged if you are not impressed with their personality.
- Attend a group information session (if they offer one).
- Schedule a formal interview. An interview is usually timed to coincide with a tour. You might prefer to have the interview before the tour depending on how nervous you might be. When you schedule the interview, take this into account.
- Pick up all the application materials and any other viewbooks about the college.
- Pick up a school newspaper to see what issues are being talked about on campus.
- Visit the academic support center to see what kind of assistance is available. If you will need accommodations in college, make an appointment to visit with the director of the academic support center to explain modifications you will need.
- Have lunch with a student at the student union without your parents/guardians. This is a great chance to gain another perspective on the college. See what activities are advertised on the bulletin boards.
- Sit in on a class, preferably one that interests you. These requests need to happen in advance through the admissions office. In addition to seeing the teaching style and content in a class, you can learn about the intellectual curiosity of these college students.
- If time allows, stay overnight with a student on campus. This is the ideal way to see the campus in action.
- Meet with a coach (if this pertains to you) and visit the campus recreational facilities.
- Don't be afraid to ask students about the college – things they like and do not like. All colleges have downsides, and you need to know the full picture of each college.
- Check out the community and nearby town. Consider if this is a place you could easily get to (do students

drive or walk?). And ask about transportation to and from the airport. You might do this multiple times throughout your college career.

- While on a campus tour, students should be observing any aspect of importance to them. Some questions that students might ask of themselves, or others include:

Tour of Campus

- Appearance of campus
- Does it look like a place that could make you happy?
- Would you have fun learning here?

Classroom Settings

- Can you envision yourself listening and learning to a professor in these different settings?
- Is it the right teacher-to-student ratio for you?
- What do other students say about these relationships and the availability of professors?

Technology

- Do the dorms, student centers, libraries and classrooms have wireless hotspots?
- Do students come with their computers? Laptops?
- Can the computers on campus be accessed easily?

Freshman Dorms

- Are there particular dorms that you would like to reside?
- How are freshmen assigned to dorms?
- Are there any special-interest floors or houses available to freshmen?
- What about study hours? Overnight guests?
- Is housing provided beyond freshman year?

Student Union

- What is the student union like? Is it conveniently located?
- Can you see yourself studying there and hanging out?
- What types of information are posted on the bulletin boards?

Students

- What do students do for fun during the week? On the weekends? Are all students invited or does the college have a “selective” social scene?
- Do students appear harried? Having fun? Absorbed?
- Can you envision yourself on this campus with these students?

Transportation

- Do students need to have a car to get around? Are cars allowed freshman year?
- What type of transportation system does the college offer?

Other

- How does the meal system work? Do students prepare their meals or eat primarily in the dining halls or student union buildings?
- What about sports facilities? Can you find activities that will make you happy? Is there a workout center for students? What hours are they open? Is this workout center easy to access?
- How do students get around the campus after-hours? Is it safe? Is there a security guard who can escort you? What is their process for allowing strangers into the dorm? Is the campus well-lit?
- What do other students have to say about the campus? Are there any concerns they have about being

- there? Feel free to talk with your tour guide or any other students around campus.
- For more details about arranging, attending and reflecting on college visits, check out the resources in Naviance. Document Resources maintain valuable information about this important part of the college research process.

College Representatives Visiting Eastside Catholic

Student Services hosts over 150 college representatives each fall who meet with Eastside Catholic students and explain more about their unique programs. Beginning in September, these college representatives will be available to meet with students. This is an opportunity for the visiting representative to “sell” their school’s programs. The meetings with college admissions personnel are not intended to replace a personal interview or campus visit but allow students the opportunity to gain a general impression of a college, ask specific questions about programs, activities or admissions at that college or gather written information about the institution.

All high school students in grades 9-12 are invited to attend these college rep visits at our Eastside Catholic campus. Students are expected to RSVP in Naviance so we have the appropriate space reserved and can communicate the visit location.

Recommendations about these college rep visits at EC:

- These visits are a critical time for seniors to ask urgent questions, make final decisions and show interest. For juniors who are trying to identify colleges of interest, they might have more general questions about academics, social life, athletics, research, etc. Sophomores and freshmen may not know what questions to ask, but they are also invited to attend and listen. All questions are appropriate if they are asked politely and respectfully.
- Your behavior during a college visit represents Eastside Catholic. Please be respectful during the visits by shaking the college rep’s hand, introducing yourself, asking questions when appropriate, listening to their presentation and telling them thank you before you leave. It is a privilege for students to attend these important info sessions.
- Develop a few specific questions to ask the representative. Questions might include special academic interests, particular sports, support services available or financial aid procedures. Collect written materials if you are interested in that school.
- Sign the college’s prospective student card during their visit (all colleges collect the names of those in attendance). This will add your name to a mailing list to receive more information from the school. If you have already visited a college or had an interview, a quick hello to the admissions person visiting EC provides an effective way to be remembered.

Visiting a College Campus

A personal visit to a post-secondary institution is often the most useful step in helping students and their parents decide whether to apply to a particular school. Students are encouraged to make use of group tours, open house events and group information sessions as a way of obtaining first-hand impressions of schools they have previously researched.

Visits during the regular academic year provide a more accurate view of the academic and social life of a campus, and families often use of summer vacation to visit several schools at a distance. Where possible, it is best to avoid visiting schools during times of registration, final exams and special campus events such as homecomings or festivals as it may distort the experience. Several high school holidays such as Columbus Day, Veteran’s Day and February and April vacations allow students who visit colleges to minimize disruptions to their own academic program.

Naviance has helpful information about the college visit, including questions to ask the college representative, good times to visit a college, things to see/do, timing of visits, planning for a visit and much more.

Appendix

Detailed Timelines by Grade Level

Freshman Year

Fall:

- Create a 4-year academic plan based on your interests and aspirations (use the EC Course Planning Guide)
- Understand your learning style. Take the Learning Style Inventory and read through the full report. The extended results will provide strategies for learning, studying and maximizing your potential.
- Become aware of subject preferences. Consider extracurricular activities in these areas of interest.
- Explore and participate in activities (sports, clubs, associations, organizations). Consider which one or two you want to pursue throughout high school
- Take the PSAT 8/9 offered at EC in the fall
- Attend college visits and college workshops that interest you, including college representative visits on campus at Eastside Catholic

Spring:

- Attend College Planning Day in January
- Become aware of your strengths and weaknesses by taking several personality assessments in Naviance
- Consider how you want to spend your summer and how you will use your time

Summer (before sophomore year):

- Participate in activities, get a job, volunteer, take some courses, participate in workshops, explore different activities that interest you

Sophomore Year

Fall:

- Work hard to keep your grades up
- Evaluate your courses and plan ahead
- Take practice PSAT and PreACT college entrance exams at EC
- Attend NACAC Fall College Fair in October
- Attend college visits at Eastside Catholic
- Explore and participate in extracurricular activities

Spring:

- Attend College Planning Day in January
- Attend PNACAC Spring College Fair in April
- Finish the sophomore year strong academically

Summer (before junior year):

- Participate in activities, get a job, volunteer, take some courses, participate in workshops, explore different activities that interest you

Junior Year

Fall:

- Take PSAT/NMSQT exam
- Take ACT or SAT exam officially (sometime during junior year)
- Attend Junior College Planning Night at EC
- Attend college information sessions from colleges and universities that visit EC
- Based on college visits to EC, as well as any on-site college visits, start making a list of colleges of interest
- Attend NACAC Fall College Fair
- Think about college entrance exams and test prep if necessary

Spring:

- Attend Junior College Planning Meeting in January/February (check ECTW and Naviance for exact date)
- Attend school-wide college planning events
- Attend College Planning Day in January
- Take ACT or SAT exam officially (sometime during junior year)
- Meet with your college counselor to discuss your post high school plans and start creating a list
- Utilize College Kickstart to determine the balance of your college list (you can run as many times as you'd like)
- Approach teachers to request Letters of Recommendation for senior year
- Write the first draft of "main" college essay (topics announced in spring, EC English classes discuss)
- Attend PNACAC Spring College Fair
- Visit college campuses

Summer (before senior year):

- Create a Common Application Account after August 1 and look at essay questions
- Create a detailed schedule to complete all applications and essays
- Work on college application essays
- Visit colleges
- Participate in activities, get a job, volunteer, take some courses, participate in workshops, explore different activities that interest you

Senior Year

Fall:

- Meet with your college counselor
- Ask teachers for recommendations if you haven't done so already
- Finalize college application essays and applications
- Make sure you are familiar with all application requirements of the schools you are applying to
- Sync the Common Application with Naviance making sure that all colleges to which you are applying are listed in the "Colleges I'm Applying To" section
- Ensure that correct deadlines are listed in Naviance
- Attend college information sessions from colleges and universities that visit EC
- Send ACT and SAT scores to all colleges and universities on your list that require them
- Be aware of application deadlines
- Start applying for financial aid; FAFSA opens in October

Spring:

- Wait for decisions from colleges and universities – early applicants tend to hear back from schools in December and regular applicants tend to hear back from schools in March
- Check application portals regularly for communication about missing application pieces and/or decision updates
- Visit colleges that you have been accepted to (if you have not visited them already)
- Take AP exams and request final AP score reports for matriculating college
- Make final decision on future plans after EC
- May 1 is the deadline to commit to a college or university