



ROAD TO COLLEGE

SEP 28, 2025

Newsletter

Dear Students & Families,

Early Action and Early Decision deadlines are almost here! Many colleges close applications on **Nov. 1** or **Nov. 15**. This week, we'll go over what applying early means, your final checklist, and tips to polish your essays before hitting submit.



TO DO LIST

Aim for straight A's. GPA starts now and top colleges want to see consistent academic strength. Pay attention to HW deadlines.

Choose 1-2 clubs/sports to commit to deeply (**quality over quantity**).

Brainstorm passion project ideas

Talk to your counselor about the application process. Ask about if you can get application fee waivers.



REMINDERS and DEADLINES

SAT: Oct. 4, 2025.

Registration deadline: Sept. 19, 2025

Early Action & Early Decision deadlines begin as soon as Nov 1. Draft essays early. Start drafting your Common App essay

Talk to your teachers about the letters of recommendation.



College Prep Tip: Before submitting your early applications, **triple-check** your portals and deadlines. Staying organized now avoids last-minute panic and ensures nothing gets lost before the Nov. 1 deadline!

Apply Application:

- Higher acceptance rates at many selective schools
- Earlier decisions (you'll hear back by December instead of spring)
- Access to more scholarships at some colleges
- Shows colleges you are serious and committed

Remember: Early Decision (ED) is binding. If accepted, you must attend.

Early Action (EA) is non-binding. You can apply early but still compare offers later.

Final Application Checklist for Early Deadlines

- Common App/Coalition/ApplyTexas account complete
- Personal essay finalized & proofread
- All supplemental essays written & reviewed
- Teacher recommendations requested & submitted
- Counselor recommendation & transcript submitted
- SAT/ACT/AP scores sent (if required)
- FAFSA opened (Oct 1) & CSS Profile submitted (if required)
- Double-check each college portal for missing items

College Essays

Common App Essay Prompts (2025–26)

- Identity, interest, or talent story
- Challenge, setback, or failure
- Time you questioned a belief/idea
- Gratitude experience
- Accomplishment or realization that sparked growth
- Topic or idea that fascinates you
- Essay on a topic of your choice

Real Supplemental Essay Prompts by College

Why Us?

- **NYU:** "What motivated you to apply to NYU, and specifically to the school or program you have applied for?"
- **Michigan:** "Describe the unique qualities that attract you to the specific undergraduate College or School..."
- **Duke:** "What is your sense of Duke as a university and a community, and why do you consider it a good match?"

Community & Identity

- **MIT:** "Describe one way in which you have contributed to your community."
- **Stanford:** "Write a note to your future roommate that reveals something about you."
- **Brown:** "Tell us about a place or community you call home."

Academic Interests

- **Cornell:** "Describe two or three of your intellectual interests and why you are excited to pursue them."
- **USC:** "Describe how you plan to pursue your academic interests at USC."
- **Carnegie Mellon:** "What passion or inspiration led you to choose this area of study?"

Creative & Quirky

- **UChicago:** "What advice would a wisdom tooth have?"
- **Wake Forest:** "If you could create a new course at Wake Forest, what would it be and why?"
- **Tufts:** "'Let your life speak.' Describe the environment in which you were raised..."

PSAT Reminder (Sophomores & Juniors)

Test Date: Mid-October (confirm with your school)

Why it matters:

- Prepares you for the SAT
- Juniors may qualify for the National Merit Scholarship
- Highlights strengths & weaknesses

How to prepare:

- Use the **Bluebook** App for practice tests
- Link results to **Khan Academy** for a personalized plan

Resource of the Week

- **PSAT Info:** <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt>
- **Common App Essay Guide:** <https://www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts>
- **College Essay Guy (Free Tools):** <https://www.collegeessayguy.com>