

## **College Application Process**

Applying to college, though exciting, can be overwhelming and stressful at times. For the majority of colleges and universities, there are many components to the application. Once you break down each item, the process becomes much more manageable. Note: not all items listed below are required for all colleges. Check your colleges' websites or the application website for specific requirements.

Be sure to know and adhere to your deadlines for each college you are applying to as application deadlines must be strictly met. Watch for the phrases "Postmarked by" and "Received by". "Postmarked by" means the envelope must be stamped with the college's deadline date but may arrive in the admissions office after that date. "Received by" means the envelope and contents must usually be in the admissions office by 5:00 pm of the date listed.

### **College Application**

The majority of colleges and universities that LASA students typically apply to use one of the following applications in the admissions process: (a) the ApplyTexas Application, (b) the Common Application, or (c) of their own design. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to determine which application is required.

Apply Texas ([www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)) is used for application to all public colleges and universities in Texas. There are also a number of private colleges in Texas that accept the Apply Texas application. See the website for more details on participating institutions.

Common Application ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)) is used for application to colleges and universities who share a commitment of promoting access through holistic admission. There are now over 700 Common Application members. See the website for a complete listing of member institutions. Common App Member schools require these important forms in the application process: Secondary School Report, Mid-Year Report, and the Teacher Evaluation.

College's own application is available on the college's website or might be sent directly to the student as a "VIP" or "choice" application.

For many colleges and universities, students must also decide if they are applying through an early application plan, like early decision (binding) or early action (non-binding). See Ms. Kocian, LASA College Counselor, or check file below for more information about the differences between Early Decision, Early Action, Regular Decision, and Rolling Admissions plans.

### **Application Fee**

The application fee is paid through the electronic application via credit card. Students on free/reduced lunch may qualify for college application fee waivers. See Ms. Kocian for waiver forms.

### **Essay(s)**

The college application essay is often referred to as the most stressful component of the college application. It provides the opportunity to present your view of yourself. Admissions officers want to learn about you; they are looking for a sense of who you are and how you think. Try to give them a positive impression of you, write well (a clear thesis and conclusion should be apparent even in the most imaginative piece), and carefully edit for proper grammar. Don't be afraid to ask your English teacher, parents or anyone else to proofread your essay. Answer the question the school asks and stick to any other restrictions such as length.

Essays are submitted at the same time as the electronic application. When applying to a Common Application member school, be sure to check the Supplement, as additional personal

statements or short-answer essays are often also required. Seniors will work on one of their college application essays as an assignment in their English class during the fall semester.

### **Official Transcript**

This is the official record of your coursework, grades, GPA, and rank. Seniors must request transcripts for ALL colleges and universities through their personal Naviance site: <http://connection.naviance.com/lasa>. Go to the Colleges tab and click on 'colleges I'm applying to'. After students have submitted transcript requests through Naviance (for ALL schools), they must pay Ms. Dwinells, LASA Registrar, in Room 281. **Transcripts will NOT be sent until the processing fees are paid.** The first **ten** transcripts are processed free of charge as well as the final transcript (sent after graduation to the college the student decides to attend); after that, each transcript processed will cost \$3.00. Remember to submit transcript requests and make payment in plenty of time (at least 3 weeks) before the application deadline to ensure receipt by the college. \*If requesting a transcript for a Common Application member school, your transcript will be sent via Naviance at the same time your counselor sends his/her recommendation letter and the secondary school report.

### **Standardized Test Scores**

SAT/ACT scores are not listed on the transcript. Students must request that these score reports be sent to your colleges via the official testing site: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for SAT and/or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) for ACT. Though most colleges receive these scores electronically via the testing sites, be sure to request your scores 2-3 weeks before your application deadline to ensure that the college receives them on time. See the "Standardized Testing" page for more details.

### **Letters of Recommendation**

Students are responsible for knowing which of their schools require recommendation letters and how many.

Common Application member schools **do** require letters of recommendation.

Apply Texas public universities **do not** require letters of recommendation, though they may be encouraged in some cases.

Students need to complete a resume and brag sheet and ask parent(s) to complete a parent brag sheet (see file below for brag sheet questions) to give to their recommendation writers along with a folder (see file below for folder system instructions) for each person listing colleges and deadlines and including recommendation forms and stamped, addressed envelopes (if necessary). Students: please give your teacher, counselor, or college advisor a minimum of 2-3 working weeks (not calendar weeks) before the deadline to complete and submit their letters of recommendation on your behalf. This is especially true for December 1st deadlines (Thanksgiving holidays fall before this due date) and January 1st deadlines (Christmas Holiday break falls before this due date).

**FAILURE TO PROVIDE ALL DOCUMENTS IN THE SPECIFIED TIME WILL RESULT IN A DELAY IN THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS. DEADLINES MEAN DEADLINES!**

### **Resume**

For most applications, you will be asked to list your activities, organizations, community service, work experience, etc. as well as hours per week/weeks per year of involvement, but many students find the space provided somewhat restrictive. If you find that you are not able to fully explain a particular activity, consider sending an expanded resume. Try to keep it to one to two pages.

### **Interview**

Most schools do not require or even offer interviews as part of their application process. Check your colleges' websites to see if interviews are part of the process. Whenever you travel to a

college or meet with a college representative on the LASA campus, remember that your manner, knowledge about and interest in the college, maturity and thoughtfulness are being noted. So, even if the interviewer announces, "We do not count interviews in our consideration of candidates; this is strictly an opportunity for you to ask whatever questions you may have," treat the conversation as an interview. They will note with pleasure a well-informed, thoughtful student who asks alert, engaging questions; they will also note those who do not.