Common Application Tips 2020-2021

Please keep in mind, some colleges offer more than one way to apply; there is no specific preference on a type of application and students should only submit one type.

General FAQs:

- Always use your legal name as it appears on official documents (i.e., birth certificate, passport, etc.)
- Only questions with an asterisk (*) next to them are required.
- Green checkmark ✔ indicates you have completed the section. If the section does not apply to you, it may just require a "0" for green checkmark.
- Test scores should be sent officially (from act.org or collegeboard.org), ***if the college requires it.***
- On the right side of every page are the instructions that detail specific directions. There are also video tutorials on the top of each section.
- There is no phone number for support – students will request assistance through the "Instructions and Help" section on the right-hand side.

> I recommend completing these sections as soon as possible, in order to assist teachers/counselor with deadlines:
> - Add College(s)
> - Select Admission Plan
> - Invite (*and Assign*) counselor/teachers early (only after asking your counselor/teachers in person to serve as your recommender)
> - If your teacher reports they are not receiving the "invite," be sure you "assigned" a college to them.

Education Section

Current or Most Recent Secondary School

- CEEB BHS Code: 140240
- Date of Entry: August 2017 (unless you transferred in)
- Graduation Date: May 2021
- Counselor Title: School Counselor (Stephen Sarsany, email: ssarsany@beecher200u.org)

Colleges and Universities

- If you have taken a dual enrollment course, you can indicate this within this section.

Grades

- Class size: 85
- Class Rank: Ask Mr. Sarsany just to be on the safe side
- Cumulative GPA: use your weighted GPA
- **Weighted GPA Scale: 5.333 (really, it is because an A+ is 5.33 in a AP class)**
- **Non Weighted Scale: 4.33**

Current or most recent year courses

- Our scheduling system is by semesters. Be sure to indicate the level

Honors

- Common App limits you to 5 honors.
- Sample honors include: AP Scholar, Illinois State Scholar, Honor Roll, etc.

Testing

Students can choose to self-report ACT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests, AP Scores, etc. Please remember, even if you self-report, *many* schools will want you to send official test scores directly from ACT/College Board.

Activities

- Common App limits you to 10 activities. List them in order of importance to you.
- Students can report any activity in, or outside, BHS from 9th – 12th grade.

- You may want to include a brief description of the activity and the role you had within it.
- If you have volunteered at a few different organizations, you can group it together under one activity called "volunteering" and then highlight a few places.
- You will be asked to estimate how many hours per week and how may weeks per year you were involved in the activity.

General Essay Tips
- For the general essay located in the Common App Section, the writing should be general and not college-specific.
- Adhere to the word limit. If you go over, your sentence will be cut off.
- Be sure to *answer* the prompt.
- Consider writing in Google, and then use the "⛁" icon to upload.
- In writing supplements, be specific to the college when answering:
  "Why _____ university/college?" (research schools using Naviance and their websites)
Additional Information:
  - Optional responses: relevant circumstances or qualifications not reflected elsewhere in the application (i.e. if your academics were impacted by life situations, learning challenges, disclosing an IEP or 504, etc.).

Courses and Grading
- Schools that require you to self-report your grades are: Arizona State, Chapman, Loyola Marymount, Purdue, Ohio State, Arizona, University of Minnesota, U of Southern California
- Utilize the walk-through video that will assist you in completing this section.
- Our Grading Scale is A+ – F, you may want to get a transcript from Sarsany.
- You will not need to include a "final" grade for the year (only semester grades).
- List summer school courses, if you did any, under "other courses." Please note it will only allow you to select one academic year for all "other courses." Still list all of them (regardless of year taken).
- Your counselor, Sarsany, will still need to upload and send your official transcript through eDocs.

Recommenders and FERPA
FERPA Release Authorization:
- The FERPA agreement must be completed prior to requesting recommender's. Once requested, the response to this question cannot be changed. We ***highly recommend waiving your right to see your letters.*** Waiving your right tells the college you aren't afraid of what your recommender (counselor/teachers) may write, and the recommender is being honest.
Advisor:
- *Please note this is not your counselor.* Most students will leave this section blank. You may want to fill it out if you are working with a Community Based Organization (CBO) or a consultant.
Counselor and Teacher:
- Remember to speak or email your counselor and teacher(s) prior to sending them an invite to write on your behalf. Also, follow-up with an email to confirm they received the link.
- Your counselor will upload your initial transcript either through Naviance eDocs or into Common App after they receive the invite.

Midyear Reports
- Many colleges will require mid-year reports (transcripts with 7th semester grades); Sarsany will submit these reports/transcripts in January 2021 on your behalf.
Final Transcripts
- You are required to submit your final transcripts after graduation to your college choice; you must tell Sarsany where you are going so he can send final transcripts Naviance eDocs.