

**New Milford High School**  
School Counseling Department

# Senior College Packet



## New Milford High School

School Counseling Department

Message to students: Welcome to the post-secondary application process! Our goal as a school counseling department is to help support you in navigating your options after high school. This packet will be a guide to walk you through your applications and requirements.

We ask you, the student, to drive this process forward – it is your post-secondary experience! Keep us informed with any questions or concerns that you may have. Our advice: Be proactive and break this process into small steps. It is a personal process, and we look forward to celebrating your hard work!

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### Senior Application Checklist

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Ask only two teachers to please write a letter of recommendation on your behalf.         |
|  | Complete Resume via student Naviance account.  |
|  | Complete Student Brag Sheet via student Naviance account, under Surveys from your School |
|  | Parent/guardian completes Parent Brag Sheet via parent Naviance account.                 |
|  | Create a Common Application account.   |
|  | Sign off on FERPA release via your Common Application account.                           |
|  | 'Match' Common Application and Naviance Accounts.  |
|  | Add schools to your Naviance 'Colleges I'm Applying To' list.                            |
|  | Request initial transcripts via your counselors google form.                             |
|  | Request teacher letters of recommendation via Naviance.                                  |
|  | Schedule an appointment with your counselor to review your list.                         |
|  | Student will send SAT/ACT scores.  |
|  | Submit applications (application fee, personal statement, supplemental essays).          |
|  | File financial aid forms (FAFSA); FAFSA applications open December 1 <sup>st</sup> .     |
|  | Fill out scholarship information.  |

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**Components of Your Application**

1. **Online Application** – Once you create your list of colleges, go to each college’s admissions website to find which application portal you need to apply through. Applications will ask for demographic information, academic history, and co-curricular activities/involvement.

Examples of application portals:

*Common Application* – the on-line application portal for over 900 colleges nationally. This portal allows students to fill out the on-line application once and submit the application to all schools that the student chooses to apply to. Once the application is submitted for each specific college, it cannot be changed for that particular college. [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

*Coalition Application* – the on-line application portal for over 150 colleges nationally. This portal allows students to fill out the on-line application once and submit the application to all schools that the student chooses to apply to. (Examples of Coalition-only schools: UFlorida, Virginia Tech, Clemson University) [www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org)

*School-Specific Application* – some colleges require students to fill out an on-line application via a school-specific portal. Information for creating your own student ID and application account will be on the college’s admissions page. (Examples of schools with their own application portal: Rutgers University, James Madison University, University of Illinois)

2. **Personal Statement Essay** – a 250-650 word essay that shows the college representative who you are as a young adult outside of your transcript and test scores. This is where your personality can shine through! You choose from one of the seven prompts – this essay goes to every college to which you apply.
3. **Supplemental Essays** – some colleges might require you to complete school- or program-specific essays for a full application review, ranging anywhere from 50-250 words.
4. **Application Fee** –each college may have a fee in order to submit your application. Fees range anywhere from \$45-\$70 per application.
5. **Official Transcript** (see ‘Transcripts’ page in Senior College Packet)
6. **Teacher Letters of Recommendation** (see ‘Letters of Recommendation’ page in Senior College Packet)
7. **Counselor Letter of Recommendation** – your school counselor writes a letter of recommendation on your behalf speaking to your holistic experience and growth throughout your high school tenure. Unlike your teacher recommendations, the counselor letter of recommendation goes to every college to which you apply.
8. **Standardized Test Scores** (see ‘Standardized Testing Information’ page in Senior College Packet)

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## **Admissions Terminology**

Early Decision (ED): early decision applications **are binding**; you must enroll in the college immediately if you are accepted and offered a financial aid package that meets your needs. The option to submit your application to your first-choice college prior to the regular decision deadline, meaning that you will also receive the admissions decision from one college earlier than usual.

Early Action (EA): Early action applications **are not binding**, meaning that if you are offered admission, you do not have to enroll at this college. The option to submit your applications prior to the regular decision deadline, meaning that you will also receive the admissions decisions from colleges earlier than usual.

Restrictive Early Action (REA): the option to submit your application prior to the regular decision deadline, meaning that you will also receive the admissions decision earlier than usual. REA applications are **not binding**, meaning that if you are offered admission, you do not have to enroll at this college. You may only apply to **one** private school REA, but can apply early action to other public schools.

Rolling: the option for a full application review as soon as all the required materials have been received by the college. This option extends throughout the school year.

Priority: the date by which your application must be received to be given the strongest consideration, whether it be for college admission, student housing, or financial aid.

Regular Decision: a firm deadline with the promise that students will receive an admissions decision no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of their senior year.

## **Special Circumstances/Talents**

If you are applying to a specific program, please consider the following:

Art – prepare an art portfolio. Consult an art teacher for guidance. Be as professional as possible in your development of materials. Put your name and title on each item. Be sure to consult the college website in case the college has specific slides or photos they are expecting. If you can, try to submit your work for local contests and art shows to build your resume. Consider National Portfolio Review Day, <http://www.nationalportfolioday.org>

Music – send original sheet music or send a CD, carefully labeled and containing only your work. If you are part of a group, enclose a letter explaining the CD and directing the listener to your specific instrument/voice. Contact the admissions departments of the music programs/colleges. If at all possible, try to arrange for a performance or an audition.

Drama/Dance – each college has its own specific requirements; you may have to audition or send a video application component. Please be aware that certain prestigious drama programs weigh GPA and SAT/ACT scores above/prior to the auditions. Try to gather a “clipping” collection and send these “reviews” in a professional folder. Consult the music and/or theater teachers.

## **Student-Athletes**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was formed in 1906 and is the agency that oversees and governs athletic matters for over 1,200 colleges, universities, conferences, and organizations. For the most part, schools are members of one of three divisions, typically denoted as Division I, Division II, or Division III.

### *Differences Between Divisions:*

- Division I and Division II programs may offer athletic scholarships
- Division III programs do not award athletic scholarships, but can award academic scholarships or need-based financial aid
- There are approximately 347 Division I programs
- There are approximately 312 Division II programs
- There are approximately 442 Division III programs

### *Student-Athlete Checklist:*

- Visit [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3>
- Log in to your account or create a new account; register as soon as possible, even if you are not positive that you will be pursuing post-secondary varsity athletics
- Send your ACT/SAT scores to the Eligibility Center (**code: 9999**), just as you would enter the code for a college/university
- Check to see that the courses you have taken match your school's list of approved core courses
- Have your official transcript sent to the Eligibility Center at the end of your junior year
- Confirm your "Amateur" status your senior year
- Request Final Amateurism Certification on or right after April 1<sup>st</sup> of your senior year
- Visit the NHRHS School Counseling webpage's NCAA section for all NCAA links

### *Eligibility Center:*

The NCAA "Eligibility Center" will certify the ACADEMIC and AMATEUR credentials of all college-bound student athletes for Division I and Division II programs; Division III programs do not utilize the Eligibility Center. This website provides key information regarding your high school's list of NCAA-approved courses, Division I and Division II core course requirements, the Core GPA & Test Score Sliding Scale, rule changes and relevant updates, and steps to register with the Eligibility Center. For more information, download the NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete at [http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility\\_center/Student\\_Resources/CBSA.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Student_Resources/CBSA.pdf)

### **Standardized Testing Information**

- It is the **student's** responsibility to send SAT and ACT scores to colleges/universities. NMHS **does not** report your scores.
- You do not need to send both your SAT and ACT scores to colleges who require scores; they will accept either standardized test.

### *SAT Information:*

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

- Scores are expected to be available 10 days after the test date.

### *ACT Information:*

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

- Scores are expected to be available 2-8 weeks after the test date.

### *Test-Optional Schools:*

- Over 1,000 four-year colleges and universities do not require SAT or ACT scores for a full application review. For a full list of SAT and ACT optional schools, visit <http://fairtest.org/university/optional>

### *SAT Subject Testing:*

- There are 20 SAT Subject Tests in five general subject areas, testing your knowledge of the subject on a high school level. You can take 1-3 subject tests on test dates; you cannot take the SAT and Subject Tests on the same test date.

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### Transcripts

- Your transcript includes all four year of classes taken in high school, your final grades earned, your credits earned, and your cumulative grade point average.
  - Your **counselor** sends your official initial, mid-year, and final transcripts through Naviance. Transcripts will be sent by your application deadline, so no need to remind your counselor.
  - Transcripts do **not** include class rank nor standardized test scores.
  - Senior Privileges do not show up on your transcript.
- *IF* a school reaches out saying that they have not yet received your transcript, please **call the school directly** before reaching out to your counselor. Most times, the school has not yet downloaded your transcript into their student-specific files.

### Transcript Information

Initial Transcripts: your counselor sends out official initial transcripts prior to your earliest application deadline. Initial transcripts include your senior year courses.

Mid-Year Transcripts: your counselor sends out official mid-year transcripts after first semester when first semester grades are completed. Your mid-year transcript includes your senior year courses and first semester grades. Mid-year transcripts get sent to all schools in which you applied (Note: Mid-year transcripts do not get sent to schools in which you have already been accepted, denied, or have withdrawn from).

Final Transcripts: your counselor automatically sends your official final transcript to the school you will be attending.

### Special Circumstances

First-quarter grades: some schools might individually request your grades from the first quarter of your senior year. They will contact you directly via your application portal or via email. If your first quarter grades are requested, please give your counselor a **stamped and addressed business-sized envelope** to the admissions department of that particular school.

Self-reporting schools: some schools require that **students** self-report your transcript. (Examples of self reporting schools: Rutgers University, UPitt, UDelaware, UCal schools, ASU)

### How to Request Initial Transcripts

Requests must be submitted via your counselors google form at least **10-days prior** to your application deadline.

### Letters of Recommendation

- Ask **only two** teachers to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf that could be sent out to colleges you apply to, depending on the application requirements for each college
- Strong letters of recommendation come from teachers in which you have a relationship with outside of your letter grade in the classroom

*How to 'Add' Teachers for Letters of Recommendation:*

- Make sure 'Colleges I Am Applying To' is up to date
- Colleges → Apply To College → Letters of Recommendation
- Add Request → Drop down to Teacher #1 → Individually select colleges Teacher #1 will send to - Submit Request
- Repeat for Teacher #2