



OVERLEA HIGH SCHOOL  
COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE

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## COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

Welcome to your senior year! This booklet provides you with important instructions to complete the college application process. Please share it with your parents and keep it as a resource to use throughout the year. The booklet includes current and useful information for choosing and applying to college and financing the cost of college. Please pay close attention to deadlines. The colleges, school counseling office, and other organizations to which you may be submitting documents expect you to meet designated deadlines.

It is critical that you thoroughly discuss your post-graduate plans with your parents, teachers, school counselor, and others whose opinions you value. Communicate with your counselor on a regular basis so he/she can be of assistance with the process.

Your senior year of high school is important to the college admissions staffs. They expect you to continue challenging yourself with rigorous courses and to continue participating in extra curricular activities and contributing to your community. Most of all, your grades should be as strong as possible. The admissions staff will review your mid-year and final transcript to ascertain your continued eligibility for admission to college.



### College Planning Calendar

#### September

- Discuss your classes, college plans, & test scores with your school counselor.
- Obtain college applications.
- Keep your ConnectEDU account up-to-date and track important dates and deadlines.
- Stay organized. Set up a filing system.
- Arrange campus visits.
- Register to take the SAT/ACT.
- Search for scholarships & grants (an all-year process). Use free online search websites. See the list in this booklet.

## **October**

- Send transcripts to colleges.
- Ask for letters of recommendation from school counselor, teachers, coaches, etc.  
Write college application essays.  
Complete early decision/early action applications.  
Take SAT/ACT if needed.

## **November**

- Continue completion of applications.
- Determine which financial aid forms the colleges to which you are applying require & complete as soon as they are available.
- Attend Financial Aid Nights and search for additional sources of financial aid.
- Take SAT/ACT if needed.

## **December**

- Complete college applications ideally by the winter break.
- Collect information needed to complete the FAFSA.
- Take SAT/ACT, if needed.
- Stay organized. Keep copies of all forms submitted by mail or online.
- Continue to track important dates and deadlines on your calendar.

## **January**

- Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Aid is often on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Fill out and submit colleges' required financial aid forms.
- When you have financial aid questions, contact the appropriate college FAO (financial aid office).

## **February–March**

- College decision and financial award letters start rolling in. If you are denied admission or are wait listed, you can send a letter of appeal and offer additional achievement information.
- Arrange to have mid-year transcripts sent to colleges as needed.
- Make sure FAFSA has been submitted by 3/1 (Maryland Higher Education Commission deadline).
- Check online for your Student Aid Report (SAR) from the FAFSA.
- Be sure to discuss any special circumstances affecting your family's financial situation with the FAO at the college you are planning to attend.
- Track important financial aid deadlines.
- Respond quickly to college requests for additional documentation

## **April**

- Carefully analyze your letters of acceptance and financial aid documents.
- Make a decision & send your deposit (most colleges ask for response by 5/1).
- Send a thank you letter to the colleges that you have been accepted to but have decided not to attend so they will be able to give your spot to someone on their waiting list.
- Carefully follow the directions in your acceptance letter (esp. important deadlines, instructions on housing, financial aid, orientation, etc.).

## **May**

- Fill out the form provided by the school counseling office to specify which college should receive your final official transcript.  
Respond quickly to requests and return necessary forms—when in doubt contact the financial aid office (FAO).
- Notify your FAO of any additional funding you'll be receiving to pay for college (scholarships and loans, etc.).
- Evaluate student loan lenders and take time to understand student loans.  
Learn about borrowing responsibly.

## **RESEARCHING COLLEGES**

### **Keep an open mind to the possibilities:**

Use college search websites available in the booklet to narrow the list to a manageable number of colleges.

Colleges offer open house programs in the fall for seniors and their parents. Physically placing yourself on the campus and talking to staff and students gives you a better sense of yourself in that environment. You may also be able to schedule an interview to speak to an admissions representative. Make the appointment prior to the open house visit. Take a copy of your transcript with you to the interview. Take a copy of the “Questions To Ask On A College Visit”, that is included in the booklet, with you to the open house program.

There are also virtual tours and interactive communication sites with current students on the internet that can help in your search for the college that is the best fit for you.

The National College Fair in Baltimore and evening college fairs at some of the high schools in the County provide opportunities to speak with college representatives in person.

Representatives from many colleges schedule visits to our school throughout the first semester. You must sign up ahead of time in the school counseling office to attend a presentation. Information about the visits will be published on a regular basis through the school counseling office.

The **Academic Common Market** is a consortium of 16 southern states including Maryland. This program allows a student to enroll in certain out-of-state programs that are not offered at a public college/university in an individual's home state at a reduced tuition rate. Information about this program can be accessed at: [www.mhec.state.md.us](http://www.mhec.state.md.us).

For many students, a community college provides the best fit for the transition from high school to college. Also, difficult economic times have required students and parents to explore alternatives to entering four-year college programs as freshmen. Community Colleges provide many opportunities for students. Financially, they are much less expensive than four-year colleges. Students are accepted regardless of their educational experience. The State four-year public university system has transfer agreements with the community colleges in Maryland to accept specified credits toward bachelor degree programs.

Students considering application to military academies and ROTC programs must start the process prior to senior year. Seek the assistance of your counselor with this application process.

## **Athletes**

If you are planning to participate in Division I or II sports in college, you must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse ASAP at [www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.org](http://www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.org).

## **Things to Consider When Choosing a College**

- Academic program
- Location (urban, suburban, rural)
- Size (small, medium, large)
- Extra curricular activities
- Housing accommodations
- Dining provisions
- Health and counseling services
- Safety
- Actual cost of attending
- Diversity
- Technology resources
- Religious affiliation
- Job placement services for graduates



## “Applying Early” Definitions

Many students like the idea of applying to colleges early, having the process completed by winter break, and relaxing during the second semester. Applying early might, in fact, be a good idea for some students, but it is not the recommended route for most. Below is an explanation of some of the terms used to describe the various ways of applying early:

### *Early Admission*

Some colleges and universities accept students before they have finished high school, usually at the end of the student’s junior year. Admission is rare under this plan, and is only appropriate for the student, who has taken an accelerated high school academic program, has an exemplary high school record, and who is mature enough to make the early move to college.

### *Early Decision*

Several schools offer an admission plan for those students who are certain of their college choice during the first semester of their senior year. Application deadlines for early decision plans are usually in October or November. A student who applies to a school under an early decision plan must sign a contract (as do the student’s parents and college counselor) which states that the student will attend that school if accepted. The student also states that he/she will withdraw any and all other applications submitted to other schools and that he/she will not submit any others. **Applying to a school early decision is a serious and binding commitment.**

Students applying early are reviewed primarily on the basis of their performance through junior year, so the early decision option is usually advisable only for students with outstanding academic records. Responses for early decision applicants are usually received before winter break of the senior year. A student may apply to only one school as an early decision candidate, so if you decide to do this, you should be sure that it is the school you would like to attend.

### *Early Action*

This is a decision plan similar to that described above, but the important difference is that your acceptance is not binding. Most early action deadlines are in November and December, and you will usually receive a decision before winter break. You will have until the May 1<sup>st</sup> Candidate’s Reply Date, however, to decide whether or not you will attend that school. You may still apply to other schools even if accepted under this plan. Decisions under this plan are made primarily on the basis of your performance through junior year. It is usually more difficult to get accepted under an early action plan than it is through the regular admission process.

### ***Single Choice Early Action***

This is a new form of Early Action – adopted by Harvard, Stanford and Yale. Single Choice Early Action is a non-binding early application program that allows you to apply to ONLY ONE College early. Deadlines are in November and you will usually receive a decision before winter break. You will have until the May 1<sup>st</sup> Candidate's Reply Date, however, to decide whether or not you will attend that school. You may still apply to other schools even if accepted under this plan.

## **Helpful Hints in Choosing a College**

You want to select the college that will best satisfy your needs, interests, lifestyle, and personal and professional goals. A good "match" between you and your college will be the key to your success and happiness over the next four years. Establish with your parents the budget for application fees and only apply to colleges that you really would attend if accepted. To help you make that difficult final decision, the following "helpful hints" may assist you in determining which college is right for you.

### **1. Visit The Colleges**

Visit the colleges you are considering during a week when classes are in session. We recommend that you tour the campus, attend one or two classes, meet with the faculty in the department which interests you, eat in the dining hall, and, perhaps most importantly, talk with current students. Students are the best sources of information about the college; they will talk honestly and knowledgeably about the social life, academic program, and atmosphere on campus, dorm life, and other topics that are important to you. If possible, plan to spend one night in a college dormitory. It will enable you to communicate informally with students, get the "feel" of the campus, and "sample" life as a student. The Admissions Office at most colleges will arrange an overnight visit for you, either before or after acceptance. Remember that you are not just choosing a place to go to school; you are also choosing a home for the next four years. It should be a place where you feel comfortable, relaxed, involved, and challenged.

### **2. Consider Actual Cost Rather Than "Sticker Price."**

Unfortunately, some students base their college choice on the "sticker price" - the full cost for tuition, fees, room and board - rather than on the actual cost of attending. Most colleges offer significant amounts of financial aid, including non-repayable grants, to students with demonstrated need. In addition, colleges frequently offer installment payment plans, low interest loans, academic scholarships, jobs on campus, and other forms of aid to students, irrespective of need. When all forms of aid are considered, a college education, either private or public, can be surprisingly affordable. Apply for aid (even if you don't think you qualify) and consider actual cost when making your final decision.

## COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTING

Most four-year colleges require the SAT Reasoning Test/ACT and some also require SAT Subject Tests. If you were not happy with your SAT/ACT score from last spring or have not taken an SAT/ACT test yet, we recommend that you take an SAT prep course at school if it is offered, at CCBC, online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com), or through private companies such as Kaplan, Huntington, or Sylvan, etc. Register online for the October, November, or December tests at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). If you are applying to a college early decision, take the test in October so your scores will be available at the time you submit your application.

At the time of registration for your SAT/ACT tests, you may request your scores be sent to up to four colleges of your choice at no additional cost. Students who qualify for free/reduced lunch may qualify for a fee waiver for the cost of the SAT/ACT. See your counselor to get the form. Additional requests for score reports can also be made at a later time for a fee. Determine if the colleges to which you want to apply will require SAT/ACT scores, and/or SAT Subject Test scores. It is the **student's responsibility** to request his/her official scores be sent directly from the College Board or the ACT to each college. It is to the student's benefit to have his/her appropriate test scores available when submitting your application to the college.

**SAT Score Reports**  
866-756-7346  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

**ACT Score Reports**  
319-337-1313  
[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

## RELEASE OF SCHOOL RECORDS

### Official Transcript Permission Form

An essential step in the college application process is to have your high school transcript sent to the colleges to which you are applying. Have your parent/guardian, **if you are under 18 years old**, sign the **Official Transcript Permission Form**, (provided in this booklet) which allows our staff to send your official high school record of classes, grades, class rank and GPA to colleges in your senior year. This is a federal law. Designate on your ConnectEDU account the colleges to which you want your transcript to be sent. The form is also available in the School Counseling Office. Complete the required information and return the form to the counseling office at the beginning of senior year if you have not already done it during your junior year.

At mid-year, your transcript will be sent only to the colleges that require one.

After you graduate, one final transcript will be sent to the college of your choice. Your counselor will obtain the above information in the spring by requesting that you fill out a form indicating which college you will attend.

Please observe all deadline dates. We process a very high volume of applications. Allow at least several days for transcript requests to be processed.

## Completing the College Application

Each application has the directions for completion on the website or on the document if you are completing a paper application. The application fee is non-refundable. Set up a realistic schedule for the completion of your applications. Prepare your part of the application **completely, accurately, and neatly** online, if possible (some colleges require it to be done online). Complete all required signatures and registration payments. Students who use a fee waiver for the SAT/ACT test may also be able to get a fee waiver for some college applications. Submit your application packet in sufficient time so that it is received before the application deadline date.

### How to Obtain a College Application

1. Apply online: [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) (you can use this one application for multiple colleges to save you time), go directly to the university's website, or [www.eduinonline.com](http://www.eduinonline.com) (if applicable). Be sure to print any supplemental forms and provide them to teachers and/or the counseling office at the appropriate time. Make a copy of your completed application before you submit it. Also, print your confirmation page/email when you submit application.
2. Download the application or contact the college by phone for an application as soon as possible. Websites, addresses, and telephone numbers are available from directories, catalogs, and School Counseling office resource books.

### Application Essay

The application essay is a perfect opportunity for you to directly address the college's admission committee to introduce them to you from a personal perspective. You can share your reasons for applying to a particular college, career goals, insights, and opinions as well as your accomplishments. Through your essay, the committee will be able to assess your communication skills, while acquiring a broader understanding of your attitudes, feelings, imagination and creativity. The essay should help them to distinguish you as an individual from the other applicants.

Arrange with your English teacher to have him/her read the rough draft of your essay and assist you with changes, as needed. Remember, this is a process that takes time. Start in September to afford yourself the time to create a well written essay that you will be proud to submit to the admission committee.

## Follow-up after Completion of the Application

Contact the college about two weeks after the application has been submitted online or mailed to make sure it has been received. You will receive communication from the college at varying times regarding additional information that may be needed as well as the admission decisions. It is beneficial to develop a speaking relationship with the admission staff member who is reviewing your application if possible, but don't overdo it. Send a thank you note to each college that you have chosen not to attend. In the event that you decide to change colleges, it can be helpful to have a specific contact person with whom you have communicated in the past. This is also a good time to continue to apply for scholarships, and most importantly, to maintain high standards academically. A second visit to your top choice colleges can assist you in making the final decision as to where you will attend college.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

### Counselor Recommendation:

In the event that your application has a portion which is addressed to the principal or secondary school counselor, it is **Your Responsibility** to bring that portion to the School Counseling Office for completion along with the forms indicated below:

- a. Download and print the recommendation form if you are completing the application online. If you are completing a paper application and the recommendation form is attached to the application, a photocopy will be made for the counselor to complete and the application will be returned to you.
- b. Bring your completed student assessment form, activity summary/resume, and your parent reflection form (optional) to the school counseling office. They will be kept on file in the school counseling office; however, it may be wise to make copies for your own records. The forms are located in this booklet.

Parent Reflection Form (Optional): Parents are invited to add their own thoughts to the information the counselor will use for the letter of recommendation. Although counselors may not use all of the information provided, the broader perspective is useful as we seek a thorough understanding of the students we recommend.

- a) Examples of information that would be helpful:
  - Significant childhood experiences
  - Critical events that had either a positive or negative impact
  - Family events that impacted your child (marriage, divorce, adoption, death of a loved one, etc.)
- b) We would appreciate you limiting your comments to one page. You may use a separate sheet of paper if you prefer; however, please make sure the student's full name is included.

The counselor will need at least **TEN (10) school days** to complete the package before it is submitted to the college to which you are applying. Please watch your deadline date to assure that your paperwork will be completed by the date designated.

**Teacher Recommendation:**

Some colleges accept teacher recommendations. Carefully consider one or two teachers, preferably ones who you have worked closely with and that you feel confident will write a complimentary recommendation for you. It may be a teacher from a previous year. Complete a teacher recommendation request form and include a copy of your student activity summary/resume. Deliver the forms to the teacher at least three weeks prior to your deadline date.

## **Types of Financial Aid**

**Grants** – This type of aid does not have to be repaid, but there may be an obligation regarding grades while in college, selection of major, or employment upon graduation. Grants are awards that may be based on financial need or other eligibility criteria.

**Scholarships** – Scholarship recipients may have to meet criteria such as academic achievement, extra curricular activities, community involvement, etc. They may also require certain criteria to be met while in college.

**Loans** – These usually have lower interest rates than commercial loans and must be repaid generally after you have graduated or left college.

**Student employment or work aid** – This may mean a job that the college located for you or employment you found on your own.

## **How to Apply For Financial Aid**

Contact the colleges to which you are applying, either online or by mail, to request information about scholarships and financial aid. Complete the applications neatly and accurately (first impressions are important). Meet your deadlines! Be careful of scams from unscrupulous people.

Use free websites to do scholarships searches (list available in this packet). Start your search for scholarships in September of your senior year. Scholarships are available throughout the year. Criteria for scholarships vary widely: academic merit, leadership, service to school and community, talent, financial need, etc.

The FAFSA is the U.S. Dept. of Education’s free application for federal student aide. In December go to <http://pin.ed.gov> to request a pin number that you will need to be able to complete the FAFSA. Complete the FAFSA as early as possible in January. The form should be done online at: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) (this is the only free website). Most colleges

award financial need monies based on the determination of need on the FAFSA report. You will need your pin number to access the student aid report (SAR) online.

The State of Maryland requires that you complete the FAFSA to be considered for any State financial aid programs. The State deadline is March 1 of your senior year. Information about scholarships available through the Maryland Higher Education Commission can be accessed at: [www.MDgo4it.org/FinancialAid/descriptions.asp](http://www.MDgo4it.org/FinancialAid/descriptions.asp).

The CSS/PROFILE is a financial aid application used by a number of private colleges and universities. There is a fee for this application. Apply early.

There are many local scholarships available for students. Contact civic organizations for applications. The school counseling office publishes lists of scholarships throughout the year. It is your responsibility to complete applications and meet the submission deadlines.

Attend the financial aid evening presentation with your parents here at our school (date to be announced).

## HELPFUL WEBSITES

### GENERAL COLLEGE INFORMATION

**The College Board:** [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

**The National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC)** - a good resource to an array of links: [www.nacac.com](http://www.nacac.com)

**ACT** - includes test registration and test-prep information: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

**Peterson's** -links to the companies many resources: [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

**US News and World Report** - be wary of the rankings, but there is much to learn at this site. The "school comparison" feature is great:  
[www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/eduhome.htm](http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/eduhome.htm)

**Colleges That Change Lives** - site based on best-selling, highly regarded college advisor, Loren Pope. Insights about some wonderful and sometimes overlooked places:  
[www.ctclonline.com](http://www.ctclonline.com)

**College View** - a good source for information on all colleges: [www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)

**Student Gateway to the Government** - a multi-purpose site with info. On college, careers and the government: <http://www.students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/index.jsp>

**CollegeNET** - an all-purpose site with a host of useful links and programs:  
<http://www.students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/index.jsp>

**FASTWEB** – easy-to-use college and scholarship search site: [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

**Fiske Guide Books** – from the author of the reliable and popular guidebook comes a full array of college admission-related resources: <http://www.fiskeguide.com/index.html>

**Peterson's Guide** - College search, test prep and specialty schools information based on Peterson's Guides: <http://www.petersons.com/ugchannel/>

**Princeton Review** - Test prep, college search and other college-related info: <http://www.princetonreview.com/college-rankings.aspx?uidbadge>

**Don't have your school's application-** Check one of these sites; you're bound to find both hard copy and on-line applications.

**The Common Application** - 200+ schools accept it and you should use it. We have the paper copy as well. : [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

**Historically Black Colleges Common Application** - find applications for 29 different institutions: [www.eduinonline.com](http://www.eduinonline.com)

## **FINANCIAL AID**

**Compare Financial Aid Packages** – part of College Board site that allows you to compare financial aid packages: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/scholarships-and-aid/index.html>

**The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** - A must for anyone applying for need-based aid. You can apply on line: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

**FAFSA Pin Registration** – You must have a pin number to complete the FAFSA application online. You can apply for the pin number at: [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)

**Completing the FAFSA** - detailed, step-by-step guidance on completing the form: [studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/completing\\_fafsa/index.html](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/completing_fafsa/index.html)

**FAFSA4caster** – provides an early estimate of your eligibility for federal student aid: [www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov)

**CSS Profile** - If applying to private schools, check to see if they require this form. You can apply online: <http://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp>

**FINAID** - general site for anything having to do with aid: [www.finaid.org/](http://www.finaid.org/)

**FastWeb** - general financial aid site with great scholarship search engine as well as an EFC calculator function: [www.fastweb.com/](http://www.fastweb.com/)

**Sallie Mae** - information about loans and payment options: [www.salliemae.com/](http://www.salliemae.com/)

**How Stuff Works** - Interesting and comprehensive site with loads of details and helpful tools: <http://money.howstuffworks.com/college-financial-aid.htm>

**Comparing Financial Aid Awards** - A US News and World Report product that provides helpful charts enabling you to line up and compare awards:  
[http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/tools/brief/awards\\_brief.php](http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/tools/brief/awards_brief.php)

**Mach 25 Scholarship Search** - CollegeNet's search tool  
<http://www.collegenet.com/mach25/>

**Student Guide on Financial Aid** - Government site, a comprehensive site with info available in both Spanish and English:  
[http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student\\_guide/index.html](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html)

**Peterson's** - Comprehensive guide for financing your education:  
[www.petersons.com/finaid/](http://www.petersons.com/finaid/)

**Scholarships** - A free resources for finding scholarships and other information about aid:  
[www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)

**Savings Plans** - Though by the time you are in your junior year, this information might be too late, finding out about 529 Plans may offer some help: [www.savingforcollege.com](http://www.savingforcollege.com) & [www.collegesavings.org](http://www.collegesavings.org)

**Broke Scholar** - Free search engine with links to more than 900,000 college scholarships: [www.brokescholar.com](http://www.brokescholar.com)

**Scholarship Scams** - A Federal Trade Commission-run site. It is always good to check on what you learn about on the web: [www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/scholarship](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/scholarship)

## **SPECIAL INTEREST**

**The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)** - [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

**The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)** - [www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org)

**Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life** - [www.hillel.org](http://www.hillel.org)

**Black Excel: The College Help Network** - designed to help African-American students navigate the college admission process: [www.blackexcel.org/](http://www.blackexcel.org/)

**Historically Black Colleges** - [www.blackhighereducation.com](http://www.blackhighereducation.com)

**Jesuit Colleges** - [www.ajcunet.edu](http://www.ajcunet.edu)

**Macleans** - For those looking into Canadian schools, this is an invaluable resource:  
[www.macleans.ca/universities/](http://www.macleans.ca/universities/)

**Canadian Colleges** - A general and very helpful site: <http://uwaterloo.ca/canu> and  
[www.canadianembassy.org/studyincanada](http://www.canadianembassy.org/studyincanada)

**Association on Higher Education and Disability** - host of information posted by international, multicultural organization of professionals committed to full participation in higher education for persons with disabilities: <http://www.ahead.org/>

**Children and Adults with ADD** - [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)

**Mindplay** - Special education resources "learning from the RIGHT side of the brain."  
<http://www.mindplay.com/resource.html>

**American Association of University Women** - [www.aauw.org/](http://www.aauw.org/)

**LD Online** - Interactive learning guide on disabilities for parents, children and educators:  
[www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)

**Attention Deficit Disorder Association** - Resource on huge array of ADD/ADHD-related issues: [www.add.org](http://www.add.org)

**Security on Campus** – [www.securityoncampus.org](http://www.securityoncampus.org)

**Peace Corp** - main resource on the ultimate service learning project:  
<http://www.peacecorps.gov/>

## **CAREER INFORMATION**

**ASVAB Career Exploration Program** - Developed by Department of Defense; free, comprehensive career site: [www.asvabprogram.com](http://www.asvabprogram.com)

**US Department of Labor** - All the numbers one could possibly hope for in career planning: <http://stat.bls.gov/>

**Department of Commerce** - gov. site with host of info on government jobs and other data: <http://www.fedworld.gov/>

**Mapping Your Future** - multi-lingual tool kit on career planning: <http://mapping-your-future.org/planning/>

**Occupational Outlook Handbook** – provides job descriptions, required education, future opportunities. [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)

## ALTERNATIVE AND YEAR-OFF PROGRAMS

**Internship Programs** – Listings of +7800 programs and 200,000 positions: <http://www.internshipprograms.com/SearchInternships.asp>

**Time Out** - are you looking for options for taking some time off before heading off to school? [www.timeoutassociates.com](http://www.timeoutassociates.com)

**Study Abroad** - [www.studyabroad.com](http://www.studyabroad.com)

**Americorps** - National Service Program: [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

**City Year - National Youth Service Organization-** [www.cityyear.org](http://www.cityyear.org)

**Dynamy** - An urban experiential education program in Worcester, MA: [www.dynamy.org](http://www.dynamy.org)

**Gap Year** - A host of travel and work ideas for students prior to heading off to college: [www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)

**Earthwatch Institute** - Info on this research, conservation and education organization: <http://earthwatch.org/>

**Eurolingua Institute** - info on language immersion study abroad programs: <http://www.eurolingua.com/>

**Global Quest Programs** - innovative study abroad program in Thailand: <http://gquest.org/>

**Outward Bound** - link for adventure-based environmental program: <http://www.outwardbound.org/>

**Taking Off** - resources for gap year programs all over world: <http://www.takingoff.net/>

**World-Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms** - dedicated to helping those who would like to volunteer on organic farms internationally: <http://wwwoof.org/>

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Personality Tests** -Have fun with this quirky site. Interesting way to find out more about YOU. [www.2h.com/Tests/personality.phtml](http://www.2h.com/Tests/personality.phtml)

**Greek Life** - Site dedicated to fraternity and sororities: <http://greekpages.com>

# Baltimore County Public School COLLEGE TRANSCRIPT PERMISSION FORM

I authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of High School

To release the transcript for:

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Student (Print Full Legal Name)

**Four transcripts are FREE for each additional transcript there is a \$3**

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and privacy Act (FERPA) Public Law 93-380, release of a student's school records requires the written signature of the parent if the student has not reached the age of 18. A student who has attained the age of 18 may declare his/her majority and sign for release of his/her records. By signing this release you are granting permission for the electronic release of school records to the college or organization that you have selected on you ConnectEDU account.

*After submitting this form you must log onto ConnectEDU to request a transcript be sent to the college of your choice.*

Log onto: [www.ConnectEDU.com](http://www.ConnectEDU.com).

- click on the Guidance page,
- click on College Planning,
- using your password log onto your ConnectEDU account.
- Should you need to reset your password, see your Counselor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name (print) Parent Signature Date

I am 18 years of age and assume full responsibility for requesting my high school transcript be sent to designated colleges listed on my ConnectEDU account.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature Date

**NOTE:** All material contained in the student's record is accessible to the student and/or parent(s) subject to applicable policies of the Board of Education of Baltimore County.

## RETAIN IN SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE

**FOR OFFICE USE:**

Date received	Computer	Fee Paid	Notice	Counselor



## **School Counseling Office** **Student Self-Assessment Form**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions completely and give it to your counselor. Your specific comments will not be sent to colleges but may be incorporated in your Counselor's recommendation, as appropriate.

1. What kind of a learner are you? Which academic setting or assignments make you thrive? What interests you academically?
2. Identify the extracurricular activity (school-related, community, employment, etc.) that has been the most rewarding for you. Please explain.
3. Describe your strengths/attributes/skills/talents. Be accurate, not modest!
4. Identify areas that you would like to strengthen. Please explain.
5. List three adjectives that you would use to describe yourself?
6. If you could start high school again, what would you do differently? Please explain.
7. Tell a story about a time you displayed leadership.
8. Identify and explain any circumstances (personal or family) that have impacted, positively or negatively, on your academic performance or your extracurricular involvement in high school.
9. What is your intended college major/program of study and what is your career goal?
10. What three values are most important to you? Give examples of why or how they play out in your life.
11. Who is your idol or personal hero, and why?
12. Imagine that an admission counselor is interviewing you and asks: "Why should we accept you? What will you bring to our campus?" Give specific examples of ways you will contribute to their campus. Think about your "life experiences" that set you apart from others. Please include things such as your family background, work, travel, summer programs, hobbies, talents, completed projects, experiences living somewhere else in the U.S. and/or abroad.
13. Is there anything else you would like the college to know about you? Please explain.
14. Do you believe your transcript is an accurate reflection of your ability? Why or why not? What factors have influenced your school performance, either negatively or positively?



## **QUESTIONS TO ASK ON A COLLEGE OPEN HOUSE VISIT**

You have only a short time on campus for the open house visit. Prioritize the questions that are most important for you to have answered.

What percent of students receive financial aid?

What is the faculty like? Caring? Friendly? Aloof? Rigid?

Do professors or graduate students teach freshman courses?

What is the typical class size, and how much individual attention will I receive?

Does the college have an active Career Center to help me prepare for a successful transition to the world of work after graduation?

What is the atmosphere on campus? Friendly? Relaxed? Competitive? Pressured?

What tutorial assistance is available to students?

What part do fraternities and sororities play in the social and extra curricular life of the college?

Does the college provide study abroad and internship opportunities?

Does the college support an active visiting speaker's program as well as a diverse mixture of entertainment?

What are the percentages of graduates accepted to graduate, medical, and law schools?

How flexible are dormitory living spaces?

Are there medical and counseling services available on campus?

Are there part time employment opportunities on campus and in the surrounding community?

Is there public transportation to shopping, airports, train stations, and the bus depot?

## **School Counseling Office Parent's Reflection Page (Optional)**

As a parent, you have a truly unique and complex viewpoint regarding your child's personality and development. Please share your insights on this form, providing as many details as possible. Feel free to incorporate your responses into an informal letter or essay, please limit it to one page. Your specific comments will not be sent to the college but may be incorporated in your student's counselor recommendation letter, as appropriate.

Please return your Parent's Reflection Page to the School Counseling Office

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. In which areas have you witnessed the most development and growth in your child during his/her high school years? Please give specific examples.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are your child's significant personality traits? Give at least one example and relate a personal anecdote to illustrate these traits.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are some of the outstanding accomplishments of your child during the past three or four years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Have there been any unusual personal circumstances that have affected your child's educational experiences or personal development? Please explain.

**SAMPLE LETTER**  
**(Can also be modified to an e-mail format)**

Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Date

Director of Admissions  
Name of College  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

To the Director of Admissions:

I am a senior at \_\_\_\_\_ High School, in Baltimore, Maryland, and I am interested in knowing more about your school. I would appreciate it if you would send me the following information:

- ◆ a general bulletin explaining entrance requirements, college costs, course offerings, and facilities available
- ◆ an application for admission
- ◆ financial aid information
- ◆ information related to (your special interests such as academic majors and extra curricular activities)

Sincerely,

(Your signature)  
(Your name typed or printed)

## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION REQUEST FORM

Complete the information on the request form and submit it to the teacher at least 3 weeks prior to your deadline. If the recommendation is to be mailed by the teacher, provide an envelope with postage and addressed to the college. If you are using ConnectEDU, update this information on your account.

TO: \_\_\_\_\_ FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Student  
Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date request submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a letter of recommendation for me to be sent to the following colleges (activity log/resume included for your use). Thank you very much for your assistance.

Name of College \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street number & name) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Mail (stamped self-addressed envelope enclosed)

\_\_\_\_ Return to me in a sealed envelope with your signature across the back opening  
Of the envelope

Name of College \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street number & name) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Mail (stamped self-addressed envelope enclosed)

\_\_\_\_ Return to me in a sealed envelope with your signature across the back opening  
Of the envelope

Name of College \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street number & name) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Mail (stamped self-addressed envelope enclosed)

\_\_\_\_ Return to me in a sealed envelope with your signature across the back opening  
Of the envelope