The

College Quest

A GUIDE FOR COLLEGE PLANNING
For the Class of 2016

Lee Middle and High School
Counseling Department
300 Greylock Street
Lee, MA 01238
(413)243-2781
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The admissions standards for the state universities and UMass emphasize a strong academic high school background so that students enter college ready to learn. These standards represent minimum requirements; meeting them does not guarantee admission, since campus officials consider a wide range of factors in admissions decisions. Students shall have fulfilled all requirements for the high school diploma or its equivalent upon enrollment. It is important to note that admissions standards for the state’s community colleges differ. Community colleges may admit any high school graduate or GED recipient.

Freshman Applicants
The admissions standards for freshmen applicants have two main parts:
1. 16 required academic courses.
2. A minimum required grade point average (GPA) earned in college preparatory courses completed at the time of application.

Applicants must also submit an SAT or ACT score.

Academic Course Requirement
Sixteen* college preparatory courses distributed as follows are required. (A course is equivalent to one full school year of study. Courses count toward the distribution only if passed.)

* Effective with the college freshman class entering fall 2016, the number of required courses will increase to 17 with the additional year of math.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2017 and beyond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3 courses (Algebra I &amp; II and Geometry or Trigonometry or comparable coursework)</td>
<td>4 courses (Algebra I &amp; II and Geometry or Trigonometry, or comparable coursework) including mathematics during the final year of high school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>3 courses (drawn from Natural Science and/or Physical Science and/or Technology/ Engineering; including 2 courses with laboratory work); Technology/engineering courses must be designated as science courses (taken for science credit) by the high school</td>
<td>3 courses (drawn from Natural Science and/or Physical Science and/or Technology/ Engineering), including 3 courses with laboratory work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>2 courses (including 1 course in U.S. History)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>2 courses (in a single language)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>2 courses (from the above subjects or from the Arts &amp; Humanities or Computer Sciences)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Minimum Required Grade Point Average (GPA)**

The GPA must be achieved based on all college preparatory courses completed at the time of application and should be weighted for accelerated (Honors or Advanced Placement) courses. The required minimum weighted high school GPA is 3.0 for the four-year public campuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State University GPA</th>
<th>University of Massachusetts GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SAT Scores**

Applicants who meet the GPA requirement do not have to use the sliding scale for admission, but still must submit SAT or ACT test scores for consideration if they are applying to a state university or UMass within three years of high school graduation.

**Sliding Scale (used when GPA is lower than the minimum required GPA)**

If an applicant’s GPA falls below the required minimum, a sliding scale will apply. *This scale should be used only when an applicant’s GPA falls below the required 3.0 minimum for admission to the state universities or UMass.*

Scores on the new writing section of the SAT will not affect the sliding scale for freshman applicants to the Massachusetts state universities and to the University of Massachusetts at this time. The sliding scale, used in making admissions decisions for students with high school grade point averages falling below the required minimum, will continue to be based upon the combined critical reading (verbal) and math sections of the SAT.

**Sliding Scale for Freshman Applicants to UMass**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted High School GPA</th>
<th>Combined SAT-I V&amp;M Must Equal or Exceed (ACT Equivalent in Italics)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.51-2.99</td>
<td>950 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.41-2.50</td>
<td>990 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.31-2.40</td>
<td>1030 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.21-2.30</td>
<td>1070 (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11-2.20</td>
<td>1110 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00-2.10</td>
<td>1150 (25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NO APPLICANT WITH A HIGH SCHOOL GPA BELOW 2.00 MAY BE ADMITTED TO A STATE UNIVERSITY OR UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS CAMPUS.**

**Sliding Scale for Freshman Applicants to a State University**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted High School GPA</th>
<th>Combined SAT-I V&amp;M Must Equal or Exceed (ACT Equivalent in Italics)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.51-2.99</td>
<td>920 (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.41-2.50</td>
<td>960 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.31-2.40</td>
<td>1000 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.21-2.30</td>
<td>1040 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11-2.20</td>
<td>1080 (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00-2.10</td>
<td>1120 (24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXCEPTION ALLOWANCES

**English as a Second Language (ESL) Applicants**

English as a Second Language (ESL) applicants must complete the 16 required college preparatory courses with two exceptions:

1. ESL applicants may substitute up to two college preparatory electives for the two required foreign language courses and,

2. ESL applicants may substitute up to two years of college preparatory ESL English courses for college preparatory English courses.

**Learning Disabled Applicants**

Applicants with professionally diagnosed and documented learning disabilities (documentation must include diagnostic test results) are exempt from taking standardized tests for admission to any public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth. Such students, however, must complete 16** required academic courses with a minimum required GPA of 3.00 or present other evidence of the potential for academic success.

**An applicant may substitute two college preparatory electives for the two required foreign language courses only if the applicant has on file with the high school results of a psycho-educational evaluation completed within the past three years that provides a specific diagnosis of a learning disability and an inability to succeed in a foreign language.

*Eligibility for admission is not an entitlement of admission for any applicant, including learning disabled students.*

This policy frames minimum standards for admission to Massachusetts state universities and UMass. Institutions are free to set higher standards and/or to impose additional requirements. In any case, meeting minimum standards for admissibility does not guarantee admission for any applicant. The final decision on accepting an applicant rests with the individual campus.
College Planning Timeline

Spring of Junior Year
✓ College visits- try to visit while the college is in session
✓ Sign up for initial interviews and tours
✓ Sign up for and take standardized tests – SAT, ACT, SAT II, subject tests
✓ Senior course selection
  o Sign up for academic classes in you senior year that will challenge you
  o The 3 primary criteria most colleges look at when making admissions decisions are GPA, SAT/ACT scores, and the rigor of the courses you have taken
✓ Ask teachers for letters of recommendation

End of Junior Year
✓ Begin to narrow down you list of colleges
  o Use the information you have gathered through research and visits to refine your list
  o Enter prospective colleges into Naviance
✓ Review ACT /SAT results and GPA
  o College list should be refined to reflect estimates of the student’s admissibility to each school
  o Information about each college admissions requirements can be forum in Naviance.
✓ A good number of colleges to have on your list is 6-10
✓ Complete the Student Self-Assessment, Game Plan Survey, and Parent Questionnaire

Summer of Junior Year
✓ Visit Those Colleges!
✓ Determine the application procedure for each school on your list
✓ Read, search the internet, and ask questions!
✓ Start applications
✓ Begin working on you essay
✓ Do something interesting:
  o Get a job
  o Attend a summer program
  o Volunteer

Senior Year
✓ Early decision/ Early Action applicants meet early with their college counselors to make certain everything can be ready by the deadlines.
✓ First Deadline: November 1st

Senior Year Continues
✓ Meetings with college counselor
✓ Request teacher recommendation (if you haven’t already)
✓ Complete applications - Be sure to give your and counselor enough lead time to complete his / her work!
✓ ACT and SAT testing
✓ Financial Aid Paperwork
  o FASFA
  o CSS Profile
  o Individual School Forms
  o Scholarships
The Common Application (Common App) is one college admissions application that students may use to apply to many different colleges and universities. Many colleges require students to send their application in through the Common Application although some colleges require other forms of electronic submission. The Common Application can also be linked to Naviance to simplify the submission of forms like transcripts and letters of recommendation.

Naviance Family Connection is a school wide, web-based platform that allows students and their families to perform college searches and keep all their college application information in one place. There are many features that both students and families can utilize throughout the students high school career. In the college application process Naviance is used to search for colleges, maintain and manage a college list, send and track transcripts and letters of recommendation, facilitate communication between students and counselors, and more.

As a parent and guardian you can activate and access your own Naviance Family Connection account by going to http://connection.naviance.com/leemhs and enter a personalized registration code you can obtain from your child’s counselor. To set up your Naviance account as a new user you will need to create a password and provide an email address.

**College Application Components**

- Application and fee (submitted by the student)
- Essay/Personal Statement (submitted by the student)
- Transcript (submitted by the counselor at the student’s request)
- Standardized test scores (sent directly from College Board or ACT at the student’s request - fee = $11.25 for SAT, $12 for ACT per report)
  - SAT - 4 free reports available up to 9 days after the test date
  - ACT - 4 free reports requested before exam (can be updated until the Thursday following the exam)
- Counselor recommendation (submitted by the counselor at the student’s request - please give at least two weeks notice)
- Teacher Recommendation (uploaded to Naviance by the teacher, submitted to colleges by the counselor at the student’s request)
- Personal Interview (arranged by student/family)

The best way to request that transcripts or letters of recommendation be sent to a college(s) is to email dkorte@leepublicschools.net.
Admissions Plans

Early Decision
✓ A formal understanding between the student and the college that, if admitted, the student plans to enroll.
  • Only one ED application
  • College responds early
  • College responds to financial aid at the same time
  • If accepted, student will enroll unless aid award is inadequate
  • Upon acceptance, student will withdraw all other applications
  • Colleges may offer more than one ED plan, each with a different deadline

Early Action
✓ Students may submit an application and receive a decision before the spring of senior year. The student is NOT committed to enroll.
  • College will respond early to the application
  • College may request a deposit before May 1, but must indicate that this is fully refundable until May 1
  • Student may apply to more than one college under Early Action
  • Student may apply to other colleges, including one Early Decision application

Early Action Single Choice
✓ Again, an early application with an early decision.
  • Only one Early Action application of any sort can be filed by the student
  • No early decision applications may be filed

Regular Decision
✓ Students complete their applications prior to a deadline and are notified of decisions within a time frame specified by the college.
  • College will state the deadline and response dates
  • College may request a deposit prior to May 1, but must indicate that this is fully refundable until May 1
  • Student may apply to other colleges

Rolling Admissions
✓ Colleges review applications as they are received and offer decisions to students when review is complete.
  • College may indicate that the application will be reviewed only until the class is filled
  • College will notify candidates of decisions within a reasonable time frame
  • Colleges may request a deposit, but must indicate that this is fully refundable until May 1
  • Student may apply to other colleges
Process for Requesting Letters of Recommendation

When requesting a letter of recommendation for college admission from a teacher or counselor at Lee Middle and High School, you must follow these guidelines.

1. Initial requests should be made in person, and then followed up with a formal request through Naviance.
   a. Click the colleges tab, select colleges I’m applying to, and scroll to the bottom of the page to Teacher Recommendations and select add/drop requests.

2. Before requesting a letter you should complete your student self-assessment
   a. Click the about me tab and select student self-assessment under surveys to take on the left-hand side.

3. The following documents could also be helpful to your teacher or counselor
   a. A copy of your resume
   b. Your personal essay
   c. Any other specific information you would like included in your letter

4. Requests for letters of recommendation that are received by teachers before the start of school will be completed by October 1st.

5. All other requests will be completed 3 weeks from the date they are received.
   a. Pay attention to your deadlines and make sure to give your recommenders plenty of time.
   b. The earlier you ask, the better. If you apply under early decision or early action plans, you'll definitely need to ask for recommendations by the start of your senior year or before. Remember that some teachers will be writing whole stacks of letters, which takes time. Your teachers will be able to be more thoughtful in writing your letter if they don’t have to rush.

6. If a teacher is unable to complete a recommendation for you within this timeline or they do not feel comfortable writing a letter for you for any other reason they will let you know within 2 days of the request.

7. Teachers will upload letters and complete Common App forms through Naviance. Letters are confidential and teachers are not required to provide you with a copy.

8. Once letters are uploaded to Naviance by teachers, they have not been sent to colleges until you ask your counselor to do so. It is the student’s responsibility to tell your counselor when you want them sent and which letters you want sent to which colleges.
How to Get a Great Letter of Recommendation
Colleges often ask for two or three recommendation letters from people who know you well. These letters should be written by someone who can describe your skills, accomplishments and personality.

Colleges value recommendations because they:
- Reveal things about you that grades and test scores can’t
- Provide personal opinions of your character
- Show who is willing to speak on your behalf

Letters of recommendation work for you when they present you in the best possible light, showcasing your skills and abilities.

Whom to Ask
It’s your job to find people to write letters of recommendation for you. Follow these steps to start the process:
- Read each of your college applications carefully. Schools often ask for letters of recommendation from an academic teacher — sometimes in a specific subject — or a school counselor or both.
- Ask a counselor, teachers and your family who they think would make good references.
- Choose one of your teachers from junior year or a current teacher who has known you for a while. Colleges want a current perspective on you, so a teacher from several years ago isn’t the best choice.
- Consider asking a teacher who also knows you outside the classroom. For example, a teacher who directed you in a play or advised your debate club can make a great reference.
- Perhaps most important, pick someone who will be enthusiastic about writing the letter for you.
- If you’re unsure about asking someone in particular, politely ask if he or she feels comfortable recommending you. That’s a good way to avoid weak letters.

How to Get the Best Recommendations
Some teachers write many recommendation letters each year. Even if they know you well, it’s a good idea to take some time to speak with them. Make it easy for them to give positive, detailed information about your achievements and your potential by refreshing their memory.

Here’s how:
- Complete your student self-assessment through Naviance.
- Talk to them about your class participation.
- Remind them of specific work or projects you’re proud of.
- Tell them what you learned in class.
- Mention any challenges you overcame.
- Give them the information they need to provide specific examples of your work.
- If you need to discuss part of your transcript (particularly for your counselor letter) — low grades during your sophomore year, for example — do so. Explain why you had difficulty and discuss how you’ve changed and improved since then.

Whether approaching teachers, a counselor or another reference, you may want to provide them with a resume that briefly outlines your activities, both in and outside the classroom, and your goals.

Final Tips
The following advice is easy to follow and can really pay off:
- Waive your right to view recommendation letters on your application forms. Admission officers will trust them more if you haven’t seen them.
- Make sure your references know the deadlines for each college.
- Follow up with your references a week or so before recommendations are due to make sure your letters have been sent.
- Once you’ve decided which college to attend, write thank-you notes. Tell your references where you’re going and let them know how much you appreciate their support.
Your students’ college essay is their opportunity to **reveal their best qualities and to show an admission committee what makes them stand out** from other applicants.

**How important is the essay?**
The National Association for College Admission Counseling’s 2011 *State of College Admission* report found that while grades, strength of curriculum and admission test scores are the top factors in the college admission decision, a majority of colleges and universities **believe the essay to be of considerable or moderate importance** in determining which academically qualified students they would choose.

In other words, when all else is equal between competing applicants, a compelling essay can make the difference. A powerful, well-written essay can also tip the balance for a marginal applicant.

**What are colleges looking for in an essay?**
College admission officers look to the essay for evidence that a student can write well and support ideas with logical arguments. They also want to know something about the personality of the student.

Sarah Myers McGinty, author of *The College Application Essay*, shares the following tip for both counselors and students: "If you get a chance, ask college representatives about the role of the essay at their colleges. At some colleges the essay is used to determine fit, and at others it may be used to assure the college that the student can do the work. At any rate, find out from the rep how essays are weighted and used in the admissions process."

**What are the different types of essays?**
There are typically three types of essay questions: the "**you**" question, the "**why us**" question and the "**creative**" question. The following descriptions and tips are based on information found in McGinty's book.

**The "**you**" question**
This question boils down to "**Tell us about yourself.**" The college wants to know students better and see how students introduce themselves.

- **Example:** "The University of Vermont values a diverse student body. What contributions might you make to our campus community outside of academic achievement?"

- **Plus:** This type of direct question offers students a chance to reveal something about themselves other than grades and test scores.

- **Danger:** The open-ended nature of these questions can lead to an essay that's all over the place.
The "why us" question
Some institutions ask for an essay about a student's choice of a college or career. They're looking for information about the applicant's goals, and about how serious the student’s commitment is to this particular college.

Example: "How did you become interested in American University?"

Plus: This type of question provides a focus for the essay; that is, why the student chose this particular college or path — and the answer to that will (hopefully) be clear.

Danger: Any factual errors in the essay will reveal that the student really hasn't thought deeply about the choice. For example, writing about attending Carleton College to major in agriculture would be a blunder, because Carleton doesn't have an agriculture major. An upside to this type of question is that while working on the essay, the student might realize that the college is not a good match — and it's better to know that sooner than later.

The "creative" question
The goals of the "creative" question are to evaluate a candidate's ability to think and write creatively and to assess the breadth of the student’s knowledge and education.

Example: "Sharing intellectual interests is an important aspect of university life. Describe an experience or idea that you find intellectually exciting, and explain why."

Plus: This kind of question gives students an opportunity to convey their personalities and views.

Danger: Some students may take the "creative" aspect of the question as license to be obscure, pretentious or undisciplined in their writing.

How much help is too much help?
According to the College Board report Admissions Decision-Making Models, admission officers have expressed concern about how much assistance students receive in preparing an essay. Many institutions now ask applicants to sign a statement avowing that the essay submitted is their own work.
8 Tips for Crafting Your Best College Essay

1. **Get started by brainstorming**
   Starting the essay can be the hardest part. Brainstorming about your personality traits and defining your strengths is a good place to begin.

2. **Let your first draft flow**
   After you've gathered your notes, create an outline to organize your essay and decide where you want examples to appear. Now you're ready to write your first draft. Don't worry about making it perfect. Just get your ideas flowing and your thoughts down on paper. You'll fix mistakes and improve the writing in later drafts.

3. **Develop three essay parts**
   - Introduction: One paragraph that introduces your essay.
   - Body: Several paragraphs explaining the main idea with examples.
   - Conclusion: One paragraph that summarizes and ends the essay.

4. **Be specific**
   Give your essay focus by figuring out how the question relates to your personal qualities and then taking a specific angle. Make sure everything you write supports that viewpoint.

5. **Find a creative angle**
   Katherine, a college freshman, had to describe why she would make a good Reed College student for that school's essay. "I am a huge fan of Beat Generation writers, and many of the West Coast Beat writers attended Reed," she says. "So I related my love for writing and the Beats to why I would be a great fit for the school."

6. **Be honest**
   The essay question might ask you about your best quality, an experience that shaped you or the reason you want to attend a certain college. Don't be tempted to write what you think the admission officers want to hear; answer the question honestly.

7. **Get feedback**
   Show your draft to family, friends or teachers. Ask if it makes sense and sounds like you. Consider their feedback and make changes, but keep your voice. High school senior Dana warns, "Make sure the essay is in your own voice. If at some point you read over your essay and you hear your mother's voice, something is wrong."

8. **Proofread and make corrections**
   Read your essay over carefully to check for typos and spelling and grammar errors. It's best to ask someone who hasn't seen it yet to take a look as well. They're likely to see mistakes you won't catch.
College Interviews: The Basics
https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/interviews/college-interviews-the-basics

The interview is a great chance to show your interest in a college.

The college interview is a part of the college application process at many colleges — but not all of them. You may meet in person to talk with someone from the admission office, a current student or a graduate of the college. Or you may be able to take part in a video interview, often via Skype.

Why Interview?
The interview is rarely the deciding factor in whether the college will accept you, but it can give a representative from the college a chance to get to know you better. And the interview gives you a chance to:

✓ Show your interest in the college.
✓ Share information about yourself beyond what’s listed on your transcript.
✓ Bring up anything in your record that you’d like to explain, like a temporary drop in your grades.
✓ Discuss your goals and the reasons you want to attend the college.
✓ Ask questions about the college.

What to Expect
You’ll talk one-on-one with the interviewer. If your parent comes with you, he or she probably won’t be in the room during the interview but may get a chance to talk to the interviewer afterward.

An interviewer may ask questions like “Why do you want to go college?” and “Why do you want to attend this college?” He or she may also ask about your high school experiences, your hobbies and your accomplishments.

The interviewer will also ask if you have any questions. Asking questions shows the interviewer that you’re interested in the college, and it allows you to get information you can’t find on a website or in a brochure. If you’re interested in a certain major, ask what the program is like. If you’re planning to live on campus, ask about campus life. Just try to avoid asking questions that you can easily find answers to on the college’s website.

How to Prepare
First, find out whether interviews are required, optional or not offered at all. If the college requires or offers interviews, look on the college’s website or contact its admission office to find out what you have to do to set one up. If you have to travel to the college to interview, you may want to schedule a campus tour for the same trip.

After you’ve scheduled an interview, you can do several things to prepare. One important step is to research the college so you feel ready to talk about why the college is a good fit for you. Another good idea is to do practice interviews with family members and friends.

Just remember that while it’s smart to get ready in advance, you shouldn’t memorize answers to common interview questions or compose a speech — the interview should be a conversation.
More Interview Tips
You can’t pass or fail an interview, but you can make a good impression by doing the following:
✓ Dress nicely, not in jeans and a T-shirt.
✓ Arrive early.
✓ Be polite.
✓ Avoid using slang or other inappropriate language.
✓ Be confident but not arrogant.
✓ Answer questions honestly.
✓ Send a thank-you note to your interviewer after the interview.

What to Do Before and After Your College Interview
Use this checklist to prepare for your college interviews and to take care of details afterward. Being prepared will help you stay calm and confident. It's also important to be honest about who you are and what you've done. You'll be more convincing — and appealing — if you stick to what's real.

**Before**
- Make an interview appointment with one of the colleges I want to attend.
- Mark the date and time on my calendar.
- Research the college by checking out its website, brochure and course catalog.
- Make notes about why I want to attend this college.
- Make notes about my academic background and high school experiences.
- Make notes about my life outside the classroom, including activities, community service and hobbies.
- Get familiar with common interview questions and do some **practice interviews** with a friend or family member. Take turns being the interviewee and the interviewer.
- Prepare questions about the school to ask the interviewer.
- Get directions to the interview.
- Choose appropriate clothes to wear for the interview.
- Gather documents I might need, such as test scores and my high school transcript.

**After**
- Make notes about the interview.
- File away any business cards with contact information that the interviewer and other admission staff offer.
- Send a thank-you note to the interviewer. Thank the person for his or her time and refer to something specific we discussed.
Financial Aid and Scholarships

Types of Aid
1. The financial aid package you receive directly from your college or university – which can include grants, loans or work study from the college or the federal government
2. Local Scholarships
3. National Scholarships
4. Private Loans

Financial Aid Packages
You will receive a financial aid package from each college you are accepted to typically in late March or early April. This package is based on the information you provide on your FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and can include grants, loans, and work student opportunities provided by the college or the federal government.

Local Scholarships
A list of local scholarships will be kept up to date on the LMHS website. Some are dependent on your grades, or your residence, where you, your parents, or your grandparents work or organizations to which they or you belong. Others require a certain major in college, family income considerations, or some other specific criteria. Most take several weeks to amass the information needed. Many require a personal statement as to your future goals and why you feel you should receive this scholarship. Students should check the list regularly and are encouraged to apply for any scholarships for which they meet the criteria.

National Scholarships
There are an abundance of scholarships available nationally beyond those in our local list. These can be found in various ways including scholarship search websites like the examples listed below.

- My College Dollars - https://apps.facebook.com/mycollegedollars/

Financial Aid Forms
Find out what types of forms are required and make note of the filing deadlines. (They are different from admission deadlines.) These deadlines are not flexible. Early decision candidates usually need to complete a CSS Profile or Institutional form.

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - https://fafsa.ed.gov/ – Anyone who wants financial aid needs to fill out this form. It determines the dollar amount that you and your family will be expected to contribute towards college. The FAFSA must be filed after January 1st and before your earliest financial aid deadline.

- CSS PROFILE - http://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile – Many colleges require the PROFILE and there is a fee. (The PROFILE can be filed before January 1st. Make sure you know the PROFILE filing deadlines for each of the colleges on your list.) You need to check with colleges to which you are applying to see if they require the PROFILE.

- Institutional Forms – Some colleges have their own aid forms in addition to the ones above. Check with each college and follow their instructions.