

Father Lopez Catholic High School

Class of 2018 | College Applications Guide

Order of Events

- Create your college list and make sure your resume is up to date
- As of August 1, you can create your Common Application account
- Request letters of recommendation (ONLY if required for the colleges you are applying to)
- Finish taking your ACT/SAT - If you are taking the SAT or ACT in the fall of your senior year, **you should not wait until you receive new scores to submit college applications.** Go ahead and submit your application. The college will make a decision once they receive all of your information.
- **The Counseling Department strongly recommends that you have all test scores sent directly from the testing agency since many schools will not accept scores from any other source.**
- Complete the Florida Bright Futures scholarship application!
- Complete your applications using Common Application AND/OR college websites
- Request transcripts via Parchment
- Commit to your college no later than May 1 of senior year AND request your FINAL transcripts via Parchment for the college you will be attending. They will be sent to that college no later than June 30.

Please note: Students must have completed ALL graduation requirements, including community service hours, and all tuition and fees must be paid in full to FLCHS in order for FINAL transcripts (which indicate you actually graduated) to be sent to your college.

Applying to College

1. SET UP YOUR COMMON APPLICATION ACCOUNT

Father Lopez Catholic recommends that **ALL** seniors create a Common Application account ON or AFTER August 1 and apply through the Common Application whenever possible. The Common App is available as of August 1 of your senior year at www.commonapp.org.

- a. Go to **APPLICANT LOG IN**, click on **CREATE ACCOUNT**. Follow the steps to register and set up your account.
- b. Search your college(s) by name and click **ADD**. You must add at least one college to proceed.
 - i. If the college does not use the Common Application, you will not find them in the list.

To apply to that particular school you will have to go to their website and use their online application.

- c. Complete the Common App tab.
 - i. The **EDUCATION** section must be complete before you can proceed.
 - ii. The **FEE WAIVER** is not available for most students. Only very low income students are eligible for this option. If you think that is you, please see your guidance counselor.
- d. From your **DASHBOARD**
 - i. Click on one college and complete the QUESTIONS regarding TERM etc.
 1. Choose your major (FYI – if not in PRE-Professional, choose *NOT INTERESTED*)
 2. RELIGION: If you are Catholic, choose ROMAN CATHOLIC
 - ii. Go to the **RECOMMENDERS and FERPA** section. Click *Release Authorization*.
 - iii. Read the information carefully and make an informed choice to complete the FERPA waiver.
- e. If you took DE courses, you should enter them as COLLEGE COURSES taken. AP courses do not need to be entered as college courses taken
- f. *Remember your Common Application “username and password”.*

2. COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FOR EACH COLLEGE

IMPORTANT NOTE

- Some colleges use their own applications; some will use the Common Application; some will offer both options. All options are equally acceptable.

Most colleges only offer on-line applications.

 - When applying on-line you will need to pay the application fee with a credit card.
 - It is a good idea to complete the application, save it, then review it for possible errors and submit it the next day.
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3. REQUEST TRANSCRIPTS AFTER YOU HAVE FULLY SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION

- A. Access your PARCHMENT.com account to request official transcripts.
- B. Many colleges allow you to self-report GPA, course, grades, and ACT/SAT scores. If the colleges you are applying to permit that, you do not need to request transcripts be sent this fall. HOWEVER...You will need this information in May to request FINAL transcripts to be sent to the college you are attending. You will not actually be enrolled without providing them with proof of graduation (which is your FINAL transcript).
- C. Need transcripts for NCAA, a SCHOLARSHIP or PERSONAL USE? Please see your counselor.

**Transcript requests must be made a minimum of 10
school days PRIOR to your application deadline**

Application and/or Scholarship Deadline	Request to Guidance Deadline
Oct. 1	Sept. 18
Nov. 15	Nov. 1
Dec. 1	Nov. 10
Jan. 15	Dec. 15
Feb. 15	Feb. 1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW/WHEN DO I APPLY TO COLLEGE?

- Most colleges begin accepting applications in August/September.
- To apply:
 - Go to the college's website.
 - Click "APPLY NOW" or "Click here to apply". This is usually on the home page.
 - Common Application: <http://www.commonapp.org/> . You will be able to submit one application to multiple schools at the same time. You will have to pay the application fee for EACH school. (Available as of August 1)
 - Only 1 CommonApp account is able to be made per student so make sure you remember your log on information!
- You will need a credit card to pay your application fees online. (or proof of fee waiver using one)
- Application deadlines vary considerably from college to college.
 - Typical deadlines are Nov. 1, Nov. 15, Dec. 1, and Dec. 15.
 - *It is the student's responsibility to know the deadlines of each school to which they apply.*
- Generally speaking all college applications should be completed by mid- November.
- Scholarship applications may have their own deadlines. Please check with the individual colleges to which you are applying. Most colleges will automatically consider you for scholarship with your admission application but there may be other scholarships you will need to apply for separately.

TO HOW MANY COLLEGES SHOULD I APPLY?

- The majority of students apply to 3-5 colleges
 - This is a decision for parents and students to make together.
- Guidance recommends at least 2 but not more than 8 schools.
 - At least 2 of these schools should be institutions you are sure you will be admitted.
 - Having a list of more than 8 becomes cumbersome and chaotic. It can actually make your decision about where to attend more difficult.
 - The cost of simply applying to college can be quite overwhelming. The application fees range from \$0-\$110 each. Be careful! It can get very costly.

HOW DO I REQUEST A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION?

- Only if required by the institutions to which you are applying
- Should you find yourself in need of a letter, please PERSONALLY (face to face) speak to the teacher whom you would like to write the letter for you.
 - Provide them an up to date copy of your resume
 - Your teacher is entitled to at least 10 school days to complete this letter. Please be aware of your deadlines!

"THE COLLEGE SAYS THEY NEED MY FINAL TRANSCRIPT, BUT YOU TOLD ME IT WAS ALREADY SENT."

Please reread your letter carefully. There are 3 possible issues:

1. When you electronically submit your application, some colleges automatically send you a “reminder” to have your 6th semester transcript sent to them.
 - If you requested your transcript to be sent, that means you have already submitted your application. Guidance will send your transcript but it may take 3 weeks for the college to document receipt of it.
2. The letter states they want additional information. That means you need to send them additional test scores and/or your grades from the first semester of senior year. This is also called a 7th semester transcript.
3. The letter you received literally states that they need a final transcript to officially enroll you. The FINAL transcript is sent from guidance AFTER you graduate. The college has received your initial transcript but they are warning you that they need the FINAL transcript to prove you have graduated. This FINAL transcript is sent in June and only to the college you are actually attending.
 - You will be reminded to request your FINAL transcript to the college you are attending in mid-May.
 - *Please note: colleges cannot enroll you without receiving a FINAL transcript from your current high school. This FINAL transcript indicates your graduation date. IN order for guidance to send a final transcript all graduation requirements must be met and all financial obligations must be paid in full.*

I WANT TO PLAY SPORTS IN COLLEGE. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Athletes wishing to play college level sports need to register:

1. NCAA Clearinghouse at www.Eligibilitycenter.org (NCAA Clearinghouse) for Div. I & Div. II schools
2. NAIA Clearinghouse at www.playnaia.org (if you are considering NAIA schools)

MY STATUS SAYS THEY NEED MY OFFICIAL TEST SCORES.

Do they need them sent directly from the test agency?

YES: Did you do that? If you did not send them from the test agency, you will need to go online to ACT and/or SAT and pay to have them sent now.

NO: Check with your counselor to see if we have the scores. We can email them in pdf format if the college will accept them. But it is always best to have them sent directly from the test agency.

- Some competitive universities require students to take the SAT II (subject tests). These tests are given on the same date as the SAT I, but you cannot take both the subject tests and the SAT I on the same day. If you are in doubt as to whether or not the colleges to which you will be applying require these tests, check their website.

THE APPLICATION ASKS FOR ALL SORTS OF INFORMATION ABOUT MY COUNSELOR AND OUR SCHOOL...HELP!

Here is some information you will need to include on most of your college applications.

Mrs. Tina Mathews Guidance Counselor (students A-L)	Mrs. Becky Crowe Director of Guidance and College Planning (students M-Z)
386-253-5213 ext. 324	386-253-5213 ext. 303
tmathews@FatherLopez.org	bcrowe@Fatherlopez.org
Father Lopez Catholic CEEB: 100353	Address: 3918 LPGA Blvd. Daytona Beach, FL 32124

I NEED MY GPA AND CLASS RANK.

- GPA and class rank can be obtained from guidance. Please see your guidance counselor.
 - Father Lopez Catholic's GPA scale is 100 and weighted
- Rank is EXACT and WEIGHTED
- Rank and GPA are updated in mid-June and mid- January.

PLEASE EXPLAIN THE TYPES OF ADMISSION DECISIONS

- **Rolling Admissions:** This is the practice of admitting or rejecting an applicant as soon as all admission materials have been submitted. The usual length of time for notification is roughly three weeks.
 - Most colleges give you the opportunity to check your status online. This means you can quickly see if they have received all of your information and get an idea of when you might expect to receive a letter.
- **Regular Decision** – You are applying by the normal date set by the college and will receive notification of admission based on how that college processes applications.
- **Notification Date:** This is the date that colleges notify all applicants of acceptance or denial.
- **Early Decision:** **This is a binding contract!** (used primarily by selective schools) A student who decides that a particular college is her first choice applies early in the fall of her senior year. Under Early Decision, the applicant signs a statement agreeing to attend that university upon acceptance, regardless of financial aid offered. (*If accepted, the student must then withdraw her applications from all other colleges*). The advantage of this system is that the candidate will receive notification by mid-December.
- **Early Action:** *NON - BINDING* - Allows students to receive an admission decision earlier than most students.

COLLEGE VISITS

- *Each college's Office of Admission can help you set up such a visit.*
- For all college visits to be considered an excused absence, students need to follow the college visit process as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- For complete details refer to your Student Handbook.

I NEED SOME ESSAY TIPS

- Read **every word** of the essay prompt before you begin.
- This should be **your** work. Admission reps can tell if you have had professional help writing the essay.
- Essays are a very important part of your application and should be error-free, thoughtful, logical, and organized. Do not overreach. Use comfortable vocabulary. Be yourself.
- Do not write what you think the admissions office wants to read. The committee reading your application wants to know **you** – whatever you think and do. No matter how “ordinary” you may feel, your application represents a different individual from all the others.
- Use specific examples when describing your interests and achievements. Explain your involvement – why the things you chose to discuss are important to you. It is better to emphasize the degree of involvement in a few activities than to make a long list of superficial interests.
- Proofread. Spelling errors are unacceptable. Edit your work then proofread again!

HOW DO I WRITE A PERSONAL STATEMENT?

- This is a chance to showcase more about you as a student and person.
- An opportunity to provide information that supports the rest of the application.
- Use concrete details and make examples clear, rich and meaningful. Demonstrate your passion!
- Generally they are about 250 words.

WHEN WILL MY FINAL TRANSCRIPT BE SENT TO MY COLLEGE?

Final transcripts will be mailed/sent electronically by mid-June to the college you are attending.

- In order to have your FINAL records released (after graduation), your tuition must be paid in full, as well as have completed all service hours and detention hours.
 - You must also indicate the college you are attending on the Senior Survey via Family Connection in May.

HOW DOES GUIDANCE KNOW WHAT COLLEGE I WILL ATTEND?

- You will complete the Senior Survey in May which will inform guidance where to send your FINAL TRANSCRIPT

WHERE DO I FIND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION?

- Most scholarship monies will come directly from the college and are awarded based on GPA and ACT/SAT scores.
- Florida Bright Futures Scholarships: EACH student must complete the FLBFS application online at <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/bfmain.htm>
- Try these websites, too: www.Fastweb.com; www.Oasfaa.org; www.Tuitionfundingsources.com

FINANCIAL AID

- **Financial Aid:** an umbrella term used for funds available to assist student's in paying for college expenses.
Need based Aid: $Cost\ of\ Attendance - Expected\ Family\ Contribution\ (EFC) = Financial\ Need$
 - a) Cost of Attendance includes tuition, room, board, books, travel, misc. fees
 - b) EFC = the amount the family is expected to pay based on their income, assets, family size and # family members in college; determined by the FAFSA
 - You can use www.finaid.org to calculate your approximate EFC.
 - c) NEED varies based on college costs; EFC remains the same for all colleges
- FAFSA = Free application for federal student aid
- **Financial aid timeline**
 - a. PRIOR to senior year
 - i. Use the net price calculator on each of your prospective college's websites to get an idea of what you will be expected to pay each year.
 - ii. Use www.finaid.org for the loan repayment calculator. This can help you have a little foresight into what a monthly payment may be for total amount of loans you are considering taking to pay for college.
 - iii. Student requests FSA ID at www.fsaaid.gov
 - iv. One parent requests FSA ID at www.fsaaid.gov
 - b. October of senior year
 - i. Submit FAFSA
 1. Oct. 1 of senior year is earliest can submit
 2. Click "SAVE" frequently when working online
 - ii. Print the confirmation page: If you do not have one, your FAFSA may not have been submitted.
 - iii. Submit FAFSA each year you have a student in college to be eligible for aid.
 - c. Dec. to April
 - i. SAR (Student Aid Report) will be mailed to you within a few days stating your EFC (estimated family contribution)
 - ii. It will also be sent to the colleges you indicated on the FAFSA form
 - iii. Each college will send you notification of your financial aid award, incl. federal and school specific aid (which can be different for each college)
- **Special circumstances:** If you have already submitted your FAFSA and your circumstances change (loss of job, divorce, etc.) you should contact each individual institution's financial aid office for a special circumstances form. If parents are divorced: submit information for parent that is responsible for 51% of her financial support (lives with most of the time).
- **Help**
 - b. 1-800-4-FED-AID
 - c. www.FAFSA.gov is the place to go to check your status or make corrections