How to apply to colleges using the Common App:

common app

Schools include: Millersville University, Franklin & Marshall College, Penn State University & Temple University!

1. **Go to www.commonapp.org**
2. **Create an account**
   - Choose your registration type - if you are applying to college for the first time you'll select the "First Year Student" button.
   - Create your login credentials.
   Make sure you use an email address you check often. This is the email the Common App and colleges will use to get in touch with you
   - Complete your registration information.
   - Be sure to use your legal name as it appears on official school documents and standardized tests. This will make sure colleges can match documents to the correct person.
   - At the end, you will adjust your communication preferences and accept the Common App privacy policy.
   - Select "Create Account" to complete your account!

3. **Add Colleges!**
   - The College Search tab is where you will search for and add the colleges you want to apply to. If you have a school in mind you can search by name. If you want to keep exploring, you can use the more filters button. Some filters include:

     o State or country   Application fees*
     o Distance from a zip code   Writing requirements
     o Enrollment term   Standardized testing policy
     o Application deadline   Recommendation requirement

   Adding a college is easy! You may add a college using the add button in the search results list. You can also select a college and add them using the "Add to My Colleges" button from their info screen.

   Once you've added colleges, you can see them on your Dashboard and in your My Colleges tab. Keep in mind you may only add up to 20 colleges. You may adjust your list of colleges at any time.

   While some colleges may charge an application fee, others have no fee to apply. And, many will offer fee waivers under certain circumstances, including financial need, veteran status, and more.

   Fee Waiver: A request to the college to remove the application fee. Using either the Common App fee waiver, which your counselor must confirm, or a college-specific fee waiver, you will not be required to pay the fee to submit your application. Coed: Coed is a term used to describe a college or university that offers the integrated education of male and female students in same environment.

4. **Engage supporters: collaborate with counselors, teachers and more.**
   - Counselors, teachers, and recommenders will submit different forms on your behalf.
     o Counselors - share their perspective using the context of your entire class. They also submit the School Report and your transcripts.
     o Parents - only need to submit a form if you apply using a college's early decision deadline. They will fill out part of your early decision agreement.

   * Need help? Visit the Future Ready Center (JP 147 & East A126)*

- *Early decision is a binding application. If you are admitted under early decision you have already committed to enrolling at that school – regardless of financial aid.*
  - Teachers - give a firsthand account of your intellectual curiosity and creative thought.
  - Other Recommenders - usually nonacademic recommenders like coaches, employers, and peers. They give insight into your interests and activities outside of the classroom.
  - Advisors – do not submit any forms. They track and check in on your application progress.

* When asking for recommendation letters be sure to ask the person before you assign them on the Common App and give them enough time before your deadline (i.e. 3 weeks before it's due)!

- Inviting and Assigning Recommenders:
  1. From the My Colleges tab select a college and open their "Recommenders and FERPA" section.
  2. If you have not done so already, you will need to complete the <u>FERPA Release Authorization</u>. This means you will not read the letters written on your behalf.
  3. Invite recommenders using the invite button from each section.
  4. Select the type of invitation you would like to send. For each invitation you will need information like their name and email address.
  5. **Note that teachers, parents, and other recommenders will not receive an email invitation until you assign them to a college. To assign these recommenders, go to their section within this screen. Select their name from the dropdown and use the assign button.**

   * Every college gets to choose their own recommendation requirements. You can find more details on each college's "College Information" page.

5. Plan Essays: Organize and plan for your writing prompts
- Sometimes writing essays can feel like the biggest part of your application. With a little bit of planning, organizing, and drafting, we can help you make this task more manageable.
  - As you work on your applications you can find essays or short answer questions in three sections
    - Common App Personal Essay - Colleges can either make the personal essay optional or required. In the writing section of your Common App tab, you will see a table that lists each college's requirements
    - College-Specific Questions - Many colleges include short answer questions or essay prompts within this section. Most colleges ask "Why us?" because they are trying to gage your interest in their school and see if you're a good match!
    - Writing Supplements - Some colleges use a separate writing supplement. Not all colleges have a writing supplement. Some colleges only request this supplement based on how you answer other questions. You can find more information about writing supplements on the Dashboard or your My Colleges tab.

6. Submit your application
- Submission is three-step process:
  - Review your application
  - Pay the application fee (unless you indicated you qualify for a waiver)
  - Submit your application!!

* Need help? Visit the Future Ready Center (JP 147 & East A126)*