

The College Admissions Process

2017-2018



Exploration
Application
Financial Aid



Babylon Junior-Senior High School
The Counseling Center
50 Railroad Avenue
Babylon, New York 11702

Counseling Center

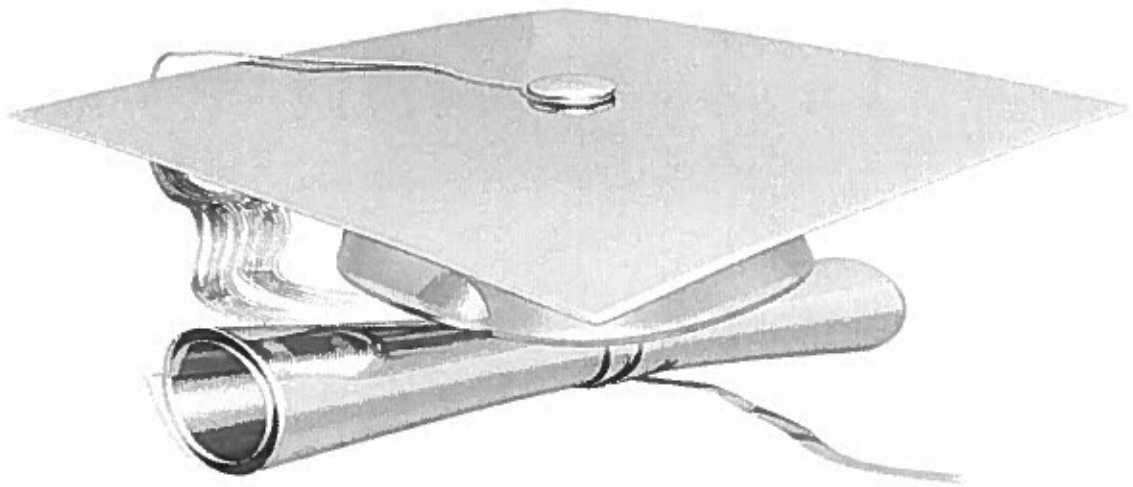
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District Director of Guidance

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School Counselor
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School Counselor
School Counselor

JUNIOR YEAR



ACT and SAT

Both the ACT and the SAT are nationally administered standardized tests that help colleges evaluate candidates. Most colleges and universities accept either test. It is in your best interest to take an ACT and an SAT in the spring of your junior year. Keep in mind that there are differences in test structure and the type of content assessed. The chart below highlights some of the differences.

	ACT	Redesigned SAT
Length	3 hours (without essay) 3 hours, 30 minutes (with essay)	3 hours (without essay) 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)
Scoring	1 to 36 for each test, averaged together for a composite score of 1 to 36 Starting in 2015: * STEM score based on Math and Science Reasoning * English language score * "Progress Toward Career Readiness" score * "Text Complexity Progress Indicator"	* Composite score (400 – 1600) * 2 test scores for Math and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (200- 800 each) * 3 sub-test scores (10 – 40) * 7 sub-scores (1 – 15) * 2 cross-test scores
Tests	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English 2. Math 3. Reading 4. Science 5. Optional Writing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Math 2. Evidence-Based Reading and Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing and Language 3. Optional Essay
Wrong Answer Penalty	None	None
Format	* Paper and pencil * ACT is testing a computer-based option for district-wide in-school testing	* Paper and pencil * College Board is developing a computer-based option
Reading Content	The Reading Test measures reading comprehension. You'll read several passages and answer questions that show your understanding of: * What is directly stated * Statements implied meanings	Reading Test: * No more sentence completions * Passages drawn from historical or scientific documents * May include informational graphics
Grammar Content	* Punctuation * Parts of speech * Conventional usage of English * 10-15 grammar rules tested on passages	* Punctuation * Parts of speech * Conventional usage of English * 10-15 grammar rules tested on passages * Some questions will involve graphics
Math Content	* Arithmetic * Algebra I * Geometry * Algebra II * Trigonometry	* Application-based, multi-step questions * Higher-level math, including trigonometry * One "extended-thinking" grid-in question (worth 4 points) * Core math competencies (translating math into English and English into math)
The Essay	The essay is optional (30 minutes, timed) Write about perspectives on an issue relevant to high school students. Starting in 2015: * Evaluate and analyze multiple perspectives on a complex issue. * Scores in four areas: ideas and analysis, development and support, organization and language use.	The essay is optional (50 minutes, timed) Analyze how an author of a substantial passage (600-700 words) builds and argument
Sending Score History	You decide which score is sent	You decide which score is sent

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CALENDAR

The college admissions process can seem overwhelming at first glance. What needs to be done and when? Use this calendar to get a birds-eye view of the college application process. The following time line is recommended. This calendar is only a general guide and will not apply to all colleges. Consult application materials, admission offices and institution websites for the specific requirements and deadlines for each of your colleges.

SPRING OF JUNIOR YEAR AND SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

- Take the SAT and ACT exams at least once in the spring.
- Take two/three SAT subject tests **if needed**.
- Use Naviance.com to make a list of colleges. Be sure your list includes safe, target and reach schools.
- Visit colleges that interest you. Visit the school website and schedule a campus tour.
- Create an Activity Resume.
- Be sure that your community service hours are documented with the school.
- Ask 2 teachers to write letters of recommendation. Recommendation Request forms and Teacher Questionnaire forms are in the Counseling Center.
- Organize your college mail and check your e-mail regularly.
- Keep a calendar of all college admission deadlines.
- Register early for Fall SAT and ACT tests.
- If you are interested in applying to a Military Academy, see your counselor; **papers need to be filed prior to the end of your junior year.**

PLANNING FOR COLLEGE

During the college planning process you will want to gather information about different colleges and start to find a college for you. This planning guide has been prepared to help you gather information and organize it systematically.

Your chances for getting into the college of your choice will depend upon a combination of several factors. Among these factors are:

1. The strength of your course work.
2. Your entire high school record (grades, extra-curricular activities and school citizenship).
3. Your GPA.
4. Scores on standardized tests: SAT, SAT Subject Tests, ACT, AP
5. Whether you have completed the high school courses required by the college of your choice.
6. The recommendation of your high school counselor and teachers.
7. The type of college and the location of the college you choose.
8. The financial resources you have in order to see you through school.
9. The amount of planning you have done in selecting the proper college for you.

Planning for college is a complex task: IT DOES TAKE TIME AND EFFORT. If you work diligently at this task, you will find that this will greatly enhance your chances of being happy and successful in the college you ultimately choose to attend.

Make use of the resources available to you. Know what is going on; ask questions; read bulletin boards and notices; listen to daily announcements. Make an appointment to see your guidance counselor.

FINDING THE RIGHT COLLEGE

Understanding Types of Schools

- **Colleges:** Generally smaller in size. They offer 4 year degree programs (BA and BS), graduate programs (MA and MS) and many 2 year Associate degrees.
- **Universities:** Larger institutions with specialized degrees in Business, Engineering, Pre-Med, etc. They offer 2 year, 4 year and many graduate and professional degrees.
- **Community/Junior Colleges:** A small college offering 2 year Associate degrees. Many students attend local community colleges with the intent to transfer to a larger institution to further their education.
- **Vocational/Career Schools:** Specialized schools of training for specialized trade jobs such as mechanics, computer technicians, medical assistants, etc. Programs may vary, some requiring only a few weeks to complete while others may require a year or more. Upon completion, graduates will receive a license, certificate or an Associate's Degree.

Once you make the decision to go to college, analyze yourself: your potential as a student, your reasons for wanting to go to college, your idea of what college is. Then compare colleges with your requirements and ideas.

The right match for you is a college where you will be stimulated but not overwhelmed; challenged to do your best, but not pressured to the point of nervous collapse; surrounded by fellow students with whom you have things in common and from whom you can learn about other viewpoints and values.

Once you begin your work of gathering material on colleges, you will find that through systematic organization the job can become one that is not overbearing. Use the tools available to you to the fullest. Your post high school education represents a huge investment of time, money and effort. **LEAVE YOURSELF ENOUGH TIME TO PLAN WISELY!!!!**

VISITING A COLLEGE CAMPUS

- Visit the colleges you are interested in. Plan your visit ahead of time. Look for atmosphere; try to visit when college classes are in session. Weekday visits are best but weekend and summer visits are also beneficial. Remember, you can't tell everything from one visit.
- Make an appointment by calling the admissions office or registering online.
- Take your parents with you to help survey the school and to have someone to compare notes with after your visit.
- How far is the campus from town? How are the housing facilities, etc?
- Sit in on a class. What is the size of the class? Attitude of students?
- Laboratory facilities – are they large enough? Do they have modern equipment?
- Do full-time professors teach freshman classes or do graduate students?
- Which departments are the strongest on campus?
- Dorms – location in relation to classes? Room size – how are roommates matched? What are the different dorm styles – individual, two person, suite, and/or apartment?
- Dining – plan to eat on campus during your visit. Discuss available food plans. Are there places for snacks and coffee?
- Social Life – How do students spend their weekends? What does the college newspaper seem to emphasize – sports, social or politics? Check school posters for upcoming events.
- Fraternity & Sorority Life – How important are they on campus? What percentage joins? What other clubs or organizations do they have on campus that interest you?
- Sports – What place do sports have in the life of the college? What facilities are available?
- Library – Is the technology up to date? Are there quiet areas to study?
- Career Center – visit the campus job placement office for internships and future career placement. Ask what percentage of students are employed upon graduation.
- Interview – Investigate if interviews are mandatory, recommended or available.
 - Prepare for the interview – the school is investing time in you and you should do the same for them. Research information about the college available to you via the internet or general college reference material. Don't ask questions that could be answered from your research. Ask genuine questions that are of interest to you and will also demonstrate your interest to the college.
 - Why are you interested in this college? – Be prepared to tell why you are interested in this college. It may be asked of you. What does it offer you? What kinds of contributions do you think you can make to the college? Why?
- Write a summary of your visit – as soon as you can while the information is still fresh in your head. Notes will help you compare two or three colleges that you visit. Be sure to include names of people with whom you spoke at the college. Bring a camera to help refresh your memory.
- WRITE THANK YOU NOTES – write a letter or send an e-mail to thank the people who assisted you during your visit. Be brief.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS at BABYLON HIGH SCHOOL

Before you know it, the time will be here for you to apply to college. We recommend that college applications be submitted by the holiday break, even earlier if applying Early Action or Early Decision. In order to process applications in a complete and timely fashion, the following paperwork needs to be completed. All forms and templates can be found in the counseling center and on our website.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

In addition to a counselor recommendation, you will need to choose teachers to write letters of recommendation. Choose wisely and give them plenty of time to prepare. Do not wait until the last minute. Remember that writing even just one good Letter of Recommendation is no easy task. The more care a recommender puts into his or her letter, the more that this will come through to admissions officers and the better that it will reflect on you. So, make sure that your recommendation writers know how much their efforts are appreciated!

- Recommendation forms (see next page) can be found in the Counseling Center. You need one for each person you are asking to write a letter.
- It is recommended that you ask two core teachers from 11th or 12th grade for recommendations.
- Fill out the top portion and sign the bottom waiving your right to read the letter.
- Ask the writer if they would be willing to write a Letter of Recommendation for you. If they agree, give them the form. If the application does not allow the teacher to submit the letter electronically, then also attach a pre-addressed, stamped envelope for each college the student would like a letter sent to.
- The teacher may also request a copy of your activity resume.
- **Thank them in advance for writing the letter.**

TEACHER RECOMMENDATION QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR TEACHERS ONLY

Please fill out the information below for each teacher you are requesting a letter from. Your responses will be different for each class and teacher.

Student Name _____

Teacher Name _____

Names of course(s) with this teacher: _____

School year that courses were completed _____

If you are applying to college, what is your intended major? _____

If you are applying for a job, what position are you applying for? _____

What was your favorite or most meaningful assignment or project you completed for this teacher?

What personal contributions did you make to this class? How did your presence make a difference in this class?

What was your biggest challenge in this class and how did you address it?

Was there any contact with this teacher outside of the class? (For example, sports, clubs, community service, fine arts performances, etc.)

How will your experience in this class help you in college/employer?

What are 2 or 3 words that capture you as a person outside of this class?

Is there any additional information about you in this class that you would like a teacher to highlight in a letter?

ACTIVITY RESUME

Colleges are interested in what you have accomplished in addition to what they see on your transcript. An Activity Resume is a list of your accomplishments, honors, awards, community service and work experiences. It is an excellent way to communicate this information in a clear and concise manner. A typed activity resume needs to be submitted to your counselor before college applications can be sent out. Be sure that it is typed and that your personal information is on each sheet.

EXAMPLE # 1

Category	Activity	Years Active	Hrs / Week	Description / Position
Athletics	Volleyball	10-12	20-24 Hours (Fall)	JV (10th), Varsity (11th-12th) – Setter and substitute server. I plan to continue with either Varsity or Club competition in college. <u>Attended Gettysburg College Individual Volleyball Camp (July 16-20, 2006)</u>
	Softball	9-10	12-18 Hours (Spring)	JV Softball – Third Base and Lead-off Batter. In 10 th grade, I contracted Mononucleosis and spent most of the season assisting the Coach as I couldn't play. Missing this year prevented me from continuing on with softball.
Honors	Outstanding Student Award – Business Education	10	N/A	Received Outstanding Student Award from Business Education Department for Enthusiasm and Accomplishment in Computer Applications, 4 th Quarter
	National Honor Society / Junior Honor Society	9-12	Intermittent	Member, participate in meetings, coordination of school activities and events.
	French Honor Society	11-12	Intermittent	Inducted into French Honor Society in recognition of outstanding achievement in French Language studies.
Community Service	YMCA	11-12	2-4 Hrs Per Week (School Year) 8-10 Hrs Per Week (Summer)	Volunteering in aquatic sessions at the YMCA. Teaching swim lessons with the kids is really fun because I love kids and in the future I would love to work with them.
	School Sponsored Community Activities	11-12	2-4 Hours	<u>Roots and Shoots</u> - New school-sponsored organization dedicated to community clean-up and recycling <u>DECA Cabana</u> - New school-sponsored organization. Sell various products during lunch period. Proceeds go to breast cancer research and support.
Employment	Waitress, Continental Diner	11-12	10-12 Hours (School Year)	Youngest waitress at a local diner. Work two nights a week for six hours each.

EXAMPLE #2

NAME: _____

DOB: _____

<u>Activity</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Office or Position</u>
Culture Club				*	Treasurer & Member
Breakfast Club		*	*		Member
Basketball	*	*	*	*	Varsity & Junior Varsity
Cross Country Track	*	*	*	*	Varsity
Volleyball	*	*			Junior Varsity
Track			*	*	Varsity
<u>Honors / Awards</u>					
National Art Honor Society		*	*	*	Member
National Business Honor Society			*	*	Member
<u>Work Experience</u>					
Babylon Beach House	*	*	*	*	Food Server, Hostess
Town Of Babylon			*	*	Pool Attendant
<u>Community Service</u>					
St. Jude's Bake Sale		*	*	*	Baker and Seller
Children's Books		*	*	*	Illustrator
Crafts with Senior Citizens	*	*	*	*	Helper
Easter Baskets	*	*	*	*	Assembler
Holiday Cards		*	*	*	Creator
Food Drive	*	*	*	*	Organized and collected.



BRAG SHEETS

The Parent and Student Brag Sheets give counselors more information about you and allow them to write a more detailed letter of recommendation. The brag sheets must be returned to the counselor before a letter of recommendation will be written. You can find the brag sheets in the Counseling Center.

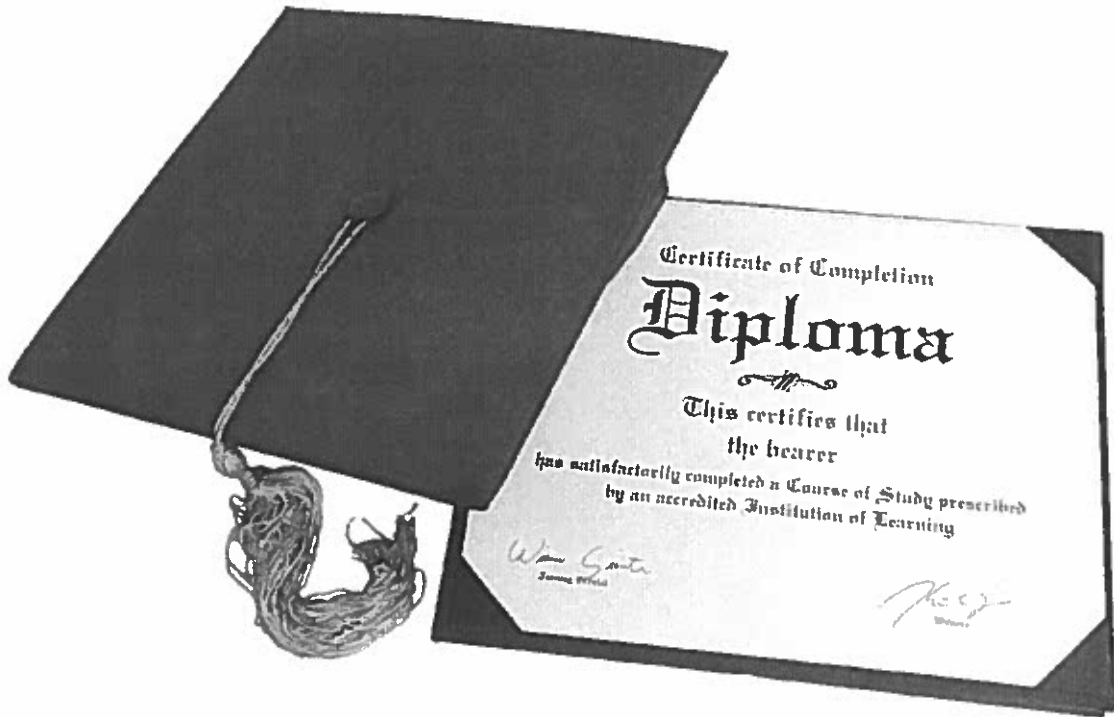
PERSONAL STATEMENT/ESSAY

Producing a memorable, striking, and effective personal statement and/or admissions essay has helped thousands of students get into the schools of their choice. Colleges and universities all over the country believe that the ability to write and communicate effectively is essential for academic success; it is the cornerstone of most academic work. Not only does the essay give the admissions staff insight into your academic potential, it also helps them to judge your character and personality. Content and substance are crucial. Therefore, you should devote your time and effort to producing a piece of work that conveys your strengths and entices the reader to want to know who you are. Take the time to go beyond the obvious. Think about what most students might write in response to the question and then try something a little different.

Here are some suggestions:

- Strive for quality NOT quantity.
- Answer the question – be very specific.
- Be original; be yourself; and be honest.
- Use clear prose – check your style and content.
- Ask someone to edit/review your draft.
- Seek objective help.
- REVISE, EDIT, REVISE

SENIOR YEAR



SENIOR YEAR COLLEGE CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- Attend senior interview with your counselor.
- Return student brag sheet and parent brag sheet to your counselor.
- Request letters of recommendation from teachers.
- Submit your typed activity resume to your counselor.
- Start thinking of ideas for your college essay.
- Be aware of the college testing schedule (SAT, SAT Subject Test, ACT).
- Notify your counselor if you plan to apply EARLY ACTION or EARLY DECISION.
- Logon to www.collegeboard.com &/or www.Naviance.com (links also available on school website) to conduct college searches and obtain resources.
- Continue to visit colleges and narrow down the list of colleges to which you will be applying. Make sure that you have a range of safety, target, and reach schools. Students can use “Compare Me” on Naviance to compare themselves to other students from Babylon who have been accepted to each school.
- Check college admissions criteria to see if you need to take SAT Subject tests.
- Visit individual college websites to preview college applications.
- You can apply online to SUNY and Suffolk Community College at www.suny.edu/applysuny and www.sunysuffolk.edu/admissions/application. SUNY schools also accept the common application.
- If applicable, begin filling out the Common Application. This can be found at www.commonapp.org.
- If you are a prospective Division I or Division II athlete, register online at www.eligibilitycenter.org and submit a transcript request form to your counselor. Send standardized test scores to www.eligibilitycenter.org using code 9999.
- Start scholarship searches via the internet. Register at www.FASTWEB.com.
- Work hard this year and take challenging courses – senior grades count.

OCTOBER

- File FAFSA and other required financial aid forms. FAFSA applications are available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- Finish working on your college essay.
- Pay attention to college testing calendar (SAT, SAT Subject Tests, ACT).
- Attend college fairs and sign up to meet with college representatives that visit BHS.
- Be aware of college application deadlines especially Early Action and Early Decision.
- Submit college applications to the counseling center 15 school days prior to the deadline.
- Register for CSS Profile financial aid form if required - available at www.collegeboard.com.

NOVEMBER

- For schools with rolling admissions, it is to your advantage to apply early.
- If you haven't done so already, turn in your brag sheets and typed activity sheet to your counselor.
- Pay attention to application deadlines.
- Finish writing admissions essays; have them proofread by parent and/or teacher.

- Be sure to research whether the college has a separate application for scholarships or honors programs.
- Submit completed applications online to colleges and notify your counselor.
- Arrange for campus visits and interviews if recommended. Send your official test scores (AP, SAT, ACT) to each college.

DECEMBER

- December 1 – deadline for college applications to be submitted to Counseling Center in order to be processed by the holiday break.
- Begin to gather financial information that will be useful in completing FAFSA form.
- Check with colleges for financial aid deadlines and to verify if FAFSA and CSS profile are required.
- Visit Counseling Center regularly to review and pick up scholarship applications.

JANUARY

- Submit mid-year report requests to the Counseling Center. Form is available in the Counseling Center.
- Continue to submit college and scholarship applications.
- Don't give in to "senioritis" – your college admission is contingent upon your final grades.

FEBRUARY/MARCH

- Check with schools to make sure they have all required application materials.
- Ensure that your financial aid applications are completed and submitted.
- Visit college campus prior to making your final choice. Consider scheduling an overnight visit if you are undecided.

APRIL

- Congratulations! You are almost finished. By now you should have most of your decision letters.
- If you have been wait listed, contact the admissions office to show interest and send any additional documents.
- Notify your counselor of your college acceptances, wait listings, denials and scholarship offerings.

MAY

- Finalize college choice and inform counselor.
- Send in tuition and housing deposit before May 1st.

SUMMER BEFORE COLLEGE

- Make travel plans. Have your parents book a hotel for Parent's Weekend.
- Finalize your housing plans.
- Shop for items you will need in college.
- Make sure to sign up for your first year orientation program.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION RECEIPT FORM: For every school that a student applies to, an APPLICATION RECEIPT FORM must be completed, signed by the student and parent, and returned to their counselor. APPLICATION RECEIPT FORMS can be found in the Counseling Center.

BABYLON JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
APPLICATION RECEIPT

(Student Name)

(School Counselor Name)

****This form must be submitted to Counselor BY THE STUDENT with any applicable application paperwork 15 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR to college deadline****

Name of College/University: _____

Mailing address: _____

Major: _____ Minor: _____

Type of application:

- Common App. Online SUNY App. Online Coalition
 CUNY App. Online Send EDU Other: _____

App Deadline:

- Early Decision Early Action Rolling Admissions Regular Decision Single Choice EA

Deadline Date: _____

Check list: Must be completed PRIOR to submitting application receipt to Counselor:

- _____ Application submitted electronically
- _____ Completed Activity Sheet submitted to Counselor
- _____ Official SAT/ACT scores have been sent to each college so that they arrive **prior** to deadline
 - from student's Collegeboard AND/OR actstudent.org account
- _____ "Assigned" Teacher(s) to each individual school on the common application
- _____ Invited Counselor to upload Transcript/Letter via the Coalition application (if using coalition)
- _____ If unable to assign Recommender's electronically: give teacher stamped/addressed envelope
 - BHS is to be used as the return address
- _____ If school requires a Counselor form: Print and bring to your Counselor
- _____ If playing Division I or II sport: registered w/ NCAA & sent test scores to eligibility center

Other Requirements, please list here: _____

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

Date received by Counselor: _____

Date transcript mailed/uploaded: _____

Date Counselor letter mailed/uploaded: _____

Date School Profile mailed/uploaded: _____

Date logged into Naviance: _____

For Students Who Complete An Online College Application

1. Complete the student portion of the application online. Pay for your application with a credit card. Print a copy of the receipt for your records.
2. Send your SAT/ACT scores directly from the College Board and/or ACT organization. Go to www.collegeboard.com and/or www.actstudent.org to send your scores. You will need your login and password to do this.
3. Print the teacher and counselor recommendation forms from your computer if applicable.
4. If the application does not allow teachers to submit letters of recommendation electronically, personally give the forms to the teacher(s) with an addressed, stamped envelope for each college that you are applying to. (example on back)
5. Complete an APPLICATION RECEIPT FORM. Make sure your parent signs the form.
6. Give the APPLICATION RECEIPT FORM and the SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT (Counselor Section), if applicable, to your counselor to complete. The counselor will send the report, your transcript and school profile to the college/university.
7. Allow at least three weeks for your paperwork to be on file at the college.

For Students Who Use the Common Application

The purpose of the Common Application is to make the application process easier for you. The application can be used for all schools that subscribe to the Common Application. The names of the schools, the application deadlines, and the cost of the application can be found online at www.commonapp.org. There are certain procedures that must be followed.

1. An APPLICATION RECEIPT FORM must be completed for each college that you apply to. Be sure to have your parent/guardian sign the bottom of the form.
2. When you use this ONLINE application, go to the “Recommenders and FERPA” section to add your counselor and teachers to the list of School Officials. By “assigning” a teacher or counselor to the individual school, an email will be sent to the teacher or counselor with information about how to log into the Online School Forms system.

College Envelope Procedure

(To be done for each school)

Babylon High School
Counseling Center
50 Railroad Avenue
Babylon, NY 11702



ABC University
Undergraduate Admissions
New York, NY 11010

9 X 12 - Self Sealing Envelope



Include with this envelope:

- Babylon's Application Receipt Form
- Other supporting materials not uploaded to application, i.e., Activity Sheet

Teacher Recommendation Letters

Each recommending teacher should be given a folder that contains smaller business-sized stamped envelopes for each applied college.

Babylon High School
Counseling Center
50 Railroad Avenue
Babylon, NY 11702



ABC University
Undergraduate Admissions Office
New York, NY 11010

Babylon High School
Counseling Center
50 Railroad Avenue
Babylon, NY 11702



ABC University
Undergraduate Admissions Office
New York, NY 11010

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid for college comes in all shapes and sizes: need-based and non need-based; federal and state aid; aid from colleges, merit based aid, scholarships and loans. Faced with rising tuition process, complicated financial aid forms and hundreds of scholarship possibilities, it is difficult to know where to begin. As you contemplate the process you may find the following resources helpful.

The US Department of Education – <http://studentaid.ed.gov>

NACAC's Steps to College Series on Financial Aid – www.nacacnet.org

TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

- **SCHOLARSHIPS:** Money awarded for academics or athletics that **DOES NOT** have to be repaid. You want all the **FREE** money you can get your hands on. Most scholarships are for athletic and academic merit but there are other scholarships for talents and affiliations. Use a national database like www.fastweb.com to begin your search.
- **GRANTS:** Federal Student Aid – an amount of money given to a student that **DOES NOT** need to be repaid.
- **WORK STUDY:** Federal Student Aid – students work either on or off campus while attending school. Money is earned and **DOES NOT** need to be paid back.
- **LOANS:** Money borrowed that must be paid back.
 - **FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS:** The most popular form of financial aid. Most loans are generally processed through your college. You don't have to repay these loans until after you leave or graduate from school.
 - **FEDERAL PLUS LOANS:** Federal loans for parents of undergraduate students. Parents can borrow up to the full cost of college attendance minus any federal aid awarded to the student.
 - **PRIVATE STUDENT LOANS:** Sometimes loans, scholarships, grants and other college aid do not cover the full cost of college, including personal expenses such as a computer. Many students are using private student loans to cover the gap.
 - **HOME EQUITY LOANS:** Using the security of your home, you can finance college without restrictions. Parent can check out www.YourEquity.com for more information.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- **CSS PROFILE:** is an application required by some private colleges and universities to determine eligibility for non-federal student aid. It is primarily designed to give private member institutions of the College Board a closer look into the finances of a student and family. It is much more detailed than the FAFSA.
- **The FAFSA (FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID)** The FAFSA may be filed any time after October 1 of the year prior to the year that the student plans to enter college, and the form asks questions based on prior year's income figures. Go to www.FAFSA.ed.gov to begin your application. **Be sure to check the deadline required for each school.**

- TAP is the New York State Tuition Assistance Program. TAP is grant money given to families who qualify based upon a specific income basis. Students must fill out a TAP application and will be notified if they receive any aid. Information on TAP can be found at www.hcsc.ny.gov.
- Begin to gather income information needed to complete the FAFSA. You will be asked for taxable and non-taxable income information for you and the student as well as information about your assets.
- What is the purpose of the FAFSA or Profile? The needs analysis forms, whether FAFSA or CSS PROFILE, are designed to show college financial aid administrators how much your family can reasonably be expected to contribute toward your student's college expenses. The forms ask detailed questions about your financial resources and obligations. Based on the information you provide, documented by verification of your tax returns, your family income and financial net worth are determined, and a federally-mandated formula is used to figure your expected family contribution. The FAFSA is recommended for most students entering college and qualifies students for: Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans, Federal Perkins Loans, Federal Work-Study, Title VII and Public Health Act Programs, and Institutional and Private Grants/Scholarships
- Important to File: The number one error in the financial aid process is failing to complete the FAFSA or CSS PROFILE. Even if you make what you consider to be comfortable income and you're convinced that you won't qualify to need-based financial aid, there are several reasons to complete the forms.
 - "Comfortable income" is a relative term, and the experience of your neighbor or colleague who didn't qualify last year may not be valid for your situation.
 - Students who don't qualify for financial aid at one college may very well qualify at another college that costs more.
 - Even if you don't qualify, the figures you provide on the FAFSA or CSS PROFILE can be used to apply for loans, need-based or not, through the college, local banks, the state or the federal government.
 - Always file for financial aid by completing the FAFSA and CSS PROFILE by the college deadline as soon as possible after October 1st of the student's senior year.
 - If there are significant changes, you should contact the college financial aid office directly.
- **BE WARY OF SERVICES THAT PROMISE YOU FINANCIAL AID FOR A FEE. THERE IS NO NEED TO PAY AN INDIVIDUAL TO COMPLETE THIS FREE FORM FOR YOU**