THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Obtaining an Application

Once you have completed a thorough college search, you will be ready for the application stage of the college admissions process. The application season begins in the fall of the senior year. The applications for the school year will be available (online or paper form) from most colleges by August/September. If visiting over the summer, check to see if the application is available while at the school—if not, request to be on the mailing list to receive notification once it becomes available.

The online application for the current school year should be available now, so if you’d like to see what the application looks like to get an idea of what will be necessary, students can access that at any time.

Parts of the Application

Most students utilize online applications; however, traditional paper applications may be available upon request from each college. Most college applications consist of the following items:

- a section requesting general demographic information
- a section about your academic history
- request for transcript and standardized test scores
- a section for any honors or leadership roles
- a personal essay
- an area where you can tell the college/university any extracurricular involvement you have had throughout your high school years (athletic, volunteer, part time jobs, educational trips, internships, etc)
- some applications may have a separate form for: Teacher Recommendations, School Counselor Recommendations (sometimes called “School Report”)
- application fee

College applications can either be downloaded in PDF from the college website, or they will have an online version where a student will create an account with username and password information. (TIP: make sure the username and password you create is appropriate—colleges have access to this information and it is a reflection of your character—portraying a mature & serious student will always work in your favor!)
Common Application

Another type of application to call to your attention is the **Common Application**. The Common Application is accepted at a number of schools and is viewed by these schools as *EQUAL* to the school’s application (in some cases, schools are using the Common App exclusively). Students can apply to multiple schools in a relatively quick and easy manner. At this point, there are nearly 500 colleges and universities across the United States who utilize the Common Application.

The Common Application can be found at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

**Role of the Student in the Application Process**

The college application process is detail oriented, and organization is the key component to successful applicants. Your parents are certainly a large part of the process in many aspects (particularly financial). However, it is important that students take the lead role in the college application process.

All students should complete college applications in their own handwriting as it is the student who is applying to college. Applications received by colleges which are written in an adult’s handwriting, may prompt the admission counselor to think twice about a student’s desire, motivation and investment in the college process.

Essays are another way for the student to express themselves to the college admissions counselors. College admission counselors can easily identify an essay which has been “over edited” by an adult and could be a negative in their eyes.

Parents provide wonderful support systems, guiding forces, and continual encouragement in the college search/application process. At the end of the day, it is the student’s college application and process, and it should be driven by the student’s desire to attend college and further his or her education.
Suggested Senior Application Timeline

**All year**
- Continually check into your Naviance account. Here you will be able to keep track of your transcript requests, access a list of all the scholarships we have on file, find out when college reps are going to be visiting our school, find great links to career websites and much more!
- Visit college campuses every chance you get!
- Check your portal for each college application. Make sure that all pieces of your application are complete and have been received.

**September/October**
- Counselors will begin seeing students for college planning conferences after the drop/add period to finalize transcript documentation.
- Meet with college admissions reps who come to visit our school.
- Make sure you have all the applications required for college admission. Know application deadlines for the schools and scholarships you wish to apply to. They may vary and it is essential to meet all deadlines!
- If you have not completed the required tests or if you are not happy with your scores, register for the upcoming SAT’s, ACT’s and SAT II’s. Have official test scores sent to the colleges you are applying to. Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) respectively to make the appropriate arrangements. There will be a fee to have your scores processed.
- If the colleges require teacher recommendations, ask the appropriate people to write on your behalf. Provide them with the necessary documents and a stamped envelope addressed directly to each admissions office.
- Penn State University applications should be submitted mid-September through October for priority consideration.
- Be mindful of Early decision/Early action deadlines (many are November 1st or 15th).
- Students interested in playing for a Division I or Division II team at the collegiate level should register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. For more information, visit www.eligibilitycenter.org.

- If you are planning on applying to a school with a rolling admissions program, be aware that it is to your advantage to apply earlier than later, when spaces are already filled for the incoming class.

- Remember the Counseling Office requires up to 10 school days to process an application.

- Attend the Financial Aid Night hosted in late September at Council Rock North on odd years and South on even years. All students and parents are invited to attend this evening event.

- Start your Financial Aid process. Both you and your parents need to obtain a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov so you can fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require any other financial aid forms.

**November**
- Continue to complete applications—first choice schools, Penn State, University of Pittsburgh and any other rolling admissions applications should be completed prior to Thanksgiving.
- Take SAT/ACT/SAT Subject tests as needed.
- Keep up first quarter grades—many schools, especially those under the early action or early decision timeline, will request your first marking period grades.

**December**
- Continue to complete applications.
- Make a goal to have all of your college applications completed by the December holiday break—this will allow you to relax and enjoy your break!

**January**
- Keep working in your classes! Grades and courses continue to count throughout your senior year.
- Request that the counseling office send mid-year reports if your colleges require them.
It is your responsibility to make sure your counselor receives the appropriate forms to send out midyear grades to the colleges requesting this information.

**February/March**
- The Counseling Office will send out mid-year grades after report cards are distributed.
- Complete applications for local scholarships and submit to the counseling office by the designated deadline. Stay focused and keep studying—only a couple more months to go!
- Register to take AP exams. Checks should be made out to “Guidance Testing Fund.”

**April**
- Review your college acceptances and financial aid awards. If you are positive you will not enroll at one or more of the colleges that accepted you please notify those colleges that you have selected another college. If you know which college you will attend, send your tuition deposit and follow all other instructions.
- If you receive an offer to be on the Waiting List, please make an appointment with your Guidance counselor to discuss your game plan.

**May and June**
- Take Advanced Placement exams, if appropriate and request that your AP scores be sent to the college you will be attending.
- Complete your Senior Survey! This lets the counseling office know where to send your final official transcript.
- Notify the counseling office of any scholarships or grants you will be receiving.
- Know when the payment for tuition, room and board, meal plans, etc., is due. If necessary, ask the financial aid office about a possible payment plan that will allow for you to pay in installments.

**Application Instructions**
- Always use the same identifying information on everything. Be consistent in identifying yourself by your given name on all applications as well as standardized tests.
- Your signature should be consistent on all documents that request it. This is yet another way to identify you from another student who may share the same name.
• Make a copy of everything before you send it out.
• If you apply online, be sure to have someone else proofread your information before you hit “send”. Once you hit “send”, it will not be possible to retract or revise your submission.

• Try to have all applications in by Thanksgiving. Once your applications are finished, you will be able to enjoy your winter break!
• Once you send an application, do not change your schedule! Any changes in schedule will be mailed out to the colleges to which you have already applied.
• Continue to work to the best of your potential in school. Many colleges request mid-year grades, and will review your final grades at the end of the year.

**Important Application Information**
Council Rock High School North
62 Swamp Road
Newtown, PA 18940
Phone: 215-944-1300
Principal: Susan McCarthy
CEEB Code: 392985
**Netiquette**

Netiquette is a term that refers to Internet Etiquette, or the way in which you conduct yourself when corresponding through the Internet. The following are basic guidelines for email and application registration.

- Use proper spelling, grammar and capitalization in all email correspondence you send to a college admissions office. Do not use acronyms (BTW, LOL, gr8)
- Be careful with humor or sarcasm. It is easy to misinterpret the tone of an email, without the benefit of vocal inflection or body language.
- When applying online, create a consistent user ID and password, and keep your access information private.
- Keep in mind that although access information is secure, college officials are able to pull up that information. User IDs and passwords should utilize proper and appropriate language. Rethink passwords like ‘partygirl07’.
- Include your full name and contact information in your email correspondence.
- Do not send blanket emails to several colleges requesting specific information. Do your own research first.
- Do not use all capitals in your message unless you want to emphasize something. Writing in capitals in equivalent to shouting in the email setting.

There are growing concerns from both the high school counselors and college admissions folks about the prolific use of social networking sites such as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter. These sites may be accessed by college admissions staff, police, collegiate athletic departments and prospective employers for concerning content. Please be aware that any information students post on these accounts should be considered public information and can be viewed by anyone.

CR North Counseling cautions the use of such sites as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter by our students. The content of social networking sites is a reflection of the student to college admissions offices—what may seem harmless to you may be interpreted differently by a college admission officer. If you choose to participate in the use of social networking sites, please make every
attempt to ensure that nothing on your site can be interpreted in a negative or questionable way. Parents should have access and monitor social network sites accounts at all times.

**Letters of Recommendation**

Many colleges require letters of recommendation as part of their application packet. This letter may come from a counselor, teacher, coach or other mentor. **Choose your references carefully!** The person you select should be someone who knows you well and can speak favorably of you as a student and as a person. This person is not necessarily the person who has awarded you the highest grade, but rather, someone who has challenged you academically, witnessed your ability to overcome setbacks, observed your growth as a student, as well as someone who can best articulate your strengths, work ethic and achievements.

Some colleges require a specific recommendation form, including a waiver of confidentiality that requires your signature. It is up to you to decide whether or not to sign this waiver. Not waiving confidentiality will not affect the quality of your letter, but it may be an indication to the admissions committee that you are concerned about the ability of the recommender to write you a favorable recommendation.

**Teacher Recommendations:**

- Approach your teacher and ask if they would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation. Preferably, this should be someone you had in 11th grade. Do this early on in the application season. *(N.B.—some teachers accept these requests as early as June of junior year)*

- If a teacher is unable to write a letter of recommendation, he or she will let you know. You can then ask someone else.

- Provide your teacher with a copy of your activities resume. Many teachers like to have this information on hand so they can incorporate it into their letters.

- **Many teachers at North will send out their recommendations via Naviance.** If so, teacher letters of recommendation can be requested through your Naviance account by clicking colleges tab>letters of recommendation, after speaking personally with them first.

- **For teachers not on Naviance, please provide them with a stamped, addressed envelope for each of your colleges.** The teacher letters of recommendation are neither returned to you nor to the counseling office. Teacher recommendations go directly from the teacher to the admissions office, unless otherwise specified in the college application. Teachers also have the option to send their letters of recommendation electronically, in which case envelopes will not be needed.
• Sending a thank you note to your teacher is a nice way to follow up and acknowledge the extra effort and time the teacher has taken on your behalf.

Counselor Recommendations:
• If requesting a letter from your counselor, you must fill out the ‘letter of recommendation’ questionnaire on your Naviance account, so that your counselor will have the most accurate information to include in your letter. This questionnaire asks you to discuss your academic experience at Council Rock North, as well as information about your extracurricular activities, community service, employment, leadership opportunities and awards.
• Take time to stop in and talk with your counselor about positive developments in your life as well as your difficulties and concerns. This is the best way for your counselor to get to know the real you!

Standardized Tests

Most students who are planning to further their education beyond high school begin in their junior year to take examinations related to college admission. It is important that you pay particular attention to tests listed under the college admission requirements and ensure that you register for any necessary testing. In general, you must register at least six weeks prior to most test dates either online or through regular mail. This information can be found in the test registration materials available in the Guidance Office, as well as on websites for each standardized test.

The two main standardized tests that are the most widely used across the nation are the SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT with/without Writing. Most schools accept both tests. There is a preference on the East Coast for the SAT and in the Midwest and West Coast for the ACT. Be sure to check each college’s statistics to see which test is more utilized at that institution.

SAT Reasoning Test: The SAT Reasoning test is a 3 hour and 45 minute test designed to provide a standard measure of the verbal and mathematical abilities of candidates for college admission. It consists of three components: Evidence Based Reading and Writing, Math and an optional Essay. It is recommended that students take this test twice
during junior year, and once again if necessary in the fall of senior year. To register for this test, visit www.collegeboard.com

**SAT Subject Tests:** Unlike the SAT Reasoning test, which measures aptitude, the achievement tests measure the student’s knowledge in specific subject areas, from history to math to foreign language. Some colleges require these tests for placement purposes only while some highly selective schools use results in making their admissions decision. Early decision candidates at highly selective colleges should complete testing by June of their junior year. These tests are one hour each and you can take up to three tests in one sitting. To register for this test, visit www.collegeboard.com.

**American College Test (ACT):** Like the SAT Reasoning Test, this test is used in determining your aptitude for college level work. The ACT is a battery of tests which yields a score of 1-36 in each of four areas—English, Math, Reading and Science and a composite score. It is 3 hours and 40 minutes with the essay. Scores from the ACT are required by many Midwestern and West Coast schools, and are accepted interchangeably with the SAT by many schools across the nation. Students may register for this test at www.actstudent.org.

*Regardless of the standardized test you choose to take, it is your responsibility to ensure that each of your colleges receives the required test score, as standardized test scores are not reported on your official transcript. In order to arrange for this, please visit the appropriate testing website.*

**Essay**

The application essay is a great opportunity for you to express your passions, interests, ambitions and beliefs because it offers the most information about who you really are. Unlike your transcript or SAT scores, which measure your achievement and aptitude, the essay offers you a chance to reveal your personal strengths—how witty, creative, articulate, original or mature you are can be reflected in a good essay. Although there is no one correct way to write an essay, below are a few suggestions that we have found helpful.

- Schedule plenty of time to research questions, brainstorm topics, draft, edit and revise your essay. This is not the time to procrastinate or cram!
- Organize your essay before you begin writing, making sure that you answer the essay question, have a focus or main idea and decide on a writing style.
- Be honest. Your essay should be a reflection of the true you, not the image of what you believe the admissions committee wants.
- Be specific in providing supporting details to your main idea.
• Edit! Edit! Edit! You want to send to the committee your best piece of writing, so take the time to edit and revise your work. It is also a great idea to have someone else look at your essay and give you constructive feedback.
• Pay attention to the required essay length. Many colleges limit the number of words or space allotted for your essay. This gives all students the same opportunity to represent themselves on paper.

Examples of Essay Questions:
• Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.
• Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you and describe that influence.
• How has cultural diversity, or lack of it, impacted your life so far? What is your view or opinion of how diversity fits into your education?
• Have you had an international or travel experience that has affected you? Describe it.
• If you could meet with any figure in time, historical or otherwise, who would it be and why? Describe your conversation. How has this person had an impact on you and your values?
• Choose one of your commitments (activity, interest, or work experience) and provide a short description of its importance to you.
ACTIVITIES RESUME

The activities resume is a tool to help you outline and highlight the skills and experiences to an admissions officer so he or she can envision how you might contribute to that institution. Below is a list of helpful tips when writing your resume, as well as sample resumes for your use.

- Use the ‘my resume’ page on your Naviance account to help keep a running list of all of your extracurricular activities.
- Your resume should include personal data, school/community activities, work experience, awards, community service and other special skills.
- Be specific. Include names of organizations or affiliations, dates and frequency of involvement and brief descriptions of your contributions.
- Include information about achievements and special abilities (e.g. bilingual English and Spanish).
- Choose an organized format to help make your resume “readable.”
- Ask someone to read over your resume before printing out or sending your final copy.
Jennifer Student  
111 Boulder Drive  
Newtown, PA 18940  
(215)555-1234

EDUCATION:
Council Rock High School North, Newtown, PA  
Class Rank: 100 out of 500  
GPA: 3.5 on a 4.0 scale

ACTIVITIES:
National Honor Society: Participated in tutoring program once a week. Attended monthly meetings and required activities throughout the year. (11th and 12th grade)

Kids on the Block: Performed disability education program with puppets to third grade students at ten elementary schools to relay the message of tolerance and understanding. Played lead role for three years, and helped train new troupers. (10th, 11th, and 12th grade)

Symphonic Orchestra: 2nd Chair Clarinet, voted second-best high school orchestra by the PMEA All-State Festival Committee. Auditioned and selected in 12th grade for solo performance. (11th and 12th grade)

Orchestra: 1st Chair Clarinet. (9th and 10th grade)

AWARDS:
National Honor Society: Invited to participate in 11th grade based on academic performance in strong college preparatory program, excellence in leadership, service and character.

Distinguished Honor Roll: Consistently maintained 3.75 GPA every marking period. (9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades)

Principal's Breakfast: Received recognition for academic achievement. (11th grade)

WORK EXPERIENCE:
Rita’s Water Ice, Richboro, PA: Worked approximately 15 hours a week serving water ice from March until September. (10th and 11th grades)

Slack’s Hoagie Shack, Newtown, PA: Worked approximately 15 hours a week as a cashier. (12th grade)

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:
Twining Village Retirement Home, Richboro, PA. Provided companionship to elderly patients. Volunteered approximately 50 hours. (10th grade)

Churchville Nature Center, Churchville, PA. Provided guided tours to visitors. Volunteered approximately 50 hours. (11th and 12th grade)

HOBBIES:
Guitar: Self-taught on electric and acoustic guitar. Enjoy playing various music selections with friends.

Camping: Family enjoys regular camping trips including canoeing and kayaking.

SKILLS:
Bilingual in English and Spanish. Working knowledge of French.
Ed U. Cation

Education

Council Rock High School North, Newtown, PA

Bucks County Community College, Spanish I (summer 2003)

Activities

**Kids on the Block** (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade)

- Performed disability education program with puppets for third grade students. Performed lead role in 10th and 11th grade.

**AIDS Awareness Club** (10th, 11th, and 12th grade)

- Served on board for Philadelphia AIDS Walk
- Participated in New York Rent Workshop

**Spanish Club Member** (11th – 12th grade)

- Participated in monthly cultural experiences.

Athletics

**Junior Varsity Basketball** (9th - 10th grade)

**Varsity Football** (11th - 12th grade)

- Suburban One League Honorable Mention for Defense (12th grade)
- Coach’s award for Dedication (12th grade)

Employment

**Meglio’s Restaurant**, Newtown, PA (10th, 11th, and 12th grade)

- Work approximately 15 hours per week making pizza, pasta, and salads.

Volunteer experience

**Bucks County SPCA** (10th grade)

- Volunteered approximately 55 hours to bathing, feeding, and playing with animals.

Hobbies

Mountain Biking, Skateboarding, Hiking, Swimming.
Attention Athletes!!
National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility

All student-athletes who wish to be considered for the Division I or Division II League in college athletics must register with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse in the fall of the senior year. The following is a list of core courses required at the Division I and Division II level. Courses that are denoted with a (+) symbol in the Council Rock Program Planning Guide are on the list of NCAA approved core courses.

Division I
16 Core courses:
4 years of English
3 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher)
2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school)
1 year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science
2 years of social science
4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or non-doctrinal religion/philosophy).

Division II
16 Core Courses:
3 years of English
2 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher)
2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school)
3 years of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science
2 years of social science
4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or non-doctrinal religion/philosophy).

- Division I uses a sliding scale to match test scores and core grade point averages (GPA).
- Division II requires a minimum SAT score of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.
- For more information regarding these requirements, visit www.eligibilitycenter.org.
- Beginning August 1, 2016, NCAA Division I requires 10 core courses to be completed prior to the seventh semester (seven of the 10 must be a combination of English, Math or Natural/Physical Science that meet the distribution requirements above).
The Council Rock High School North Counselors are committed to assisting students and their families through the college admissions process. We encourage you to contact your counselor with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your individual college search and application. The college application process is lengthy, time consuming and detail oriented. The Counseling staff is here for you every step of the way! Good luck!

**COUNSELORS**

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**Department Coordinator**

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