

DGS COMMON APPLICATION TIP SHEET

1. Go to commonapp.org and select “Apply Now” to create your account
 - Use your personal email address
 - Write down your password or save it in your phone!

2. Click on “College Search” to select the universities/colleges you want to apply to. Click the box next to the college name and select “add.”
 - **Once added, you can view the college’s deadlines, application fees, required recommendations, required essay/other writing supplements.**
 - **It is YOUR responsibility to have all sections submitted by the college’s deadline!**
 - NOTE: You can add and delete colleges at any time, but application requirements and sections change for each school. Please add at least a few before you start working on your application.

3. Once logged on, select the “Common App” tab and complete the following sections: Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities, Writing (there are MANY questions within each section!)

4. Once you’ve completed these sections, you will see a green check mark next to each. You must complete these sections prior to finishing the rest of the application.

Here are some tips for each section:

Profile:

- Anything with a red asterisk is required to complete (not required to answer questions regarding religion, armed forces status, race)

- Common App Fee Waiver – must be approved by your counselor. Choose this option if you receive Free/Reduced Lunch

Family:

- You need to know your parents' occupations, name of employer, level of education, names of the universities/colleges they attended, name of degree, and year they earned that degree

Education:

- Choose the correct **“South High” in Downers Grove, IL, CEEB Code: 141631**
 - If you type in “South High” we are 4th from the bottom of the list
 - Or, you can search by city, “Downers Grove”
 - Or, by CEEB code 141631
- Date of Entry: August 2017
- Graduation Date: May 2021
- Counselor’s Info: See [website](#)
- Only enter in college/university level courses if you’re earning college credit from a course you took at a college, including College of DuPage (do NOT count AP courses)
- All dual enrollment courses should be listed in high school courses
- Class Rank Reporting: we do not rank
- Graduating Class Size – 672
- GPA Scale: 4
- GPA: See HAC for your cumulative unweighted and weighted GPA’s
- List all senior year courses and do NOT abbreviate their titles
- Choose AP if taking an AP level course
- Choose honors if taking an honors level course
- May list up to 5 honors (awards) earned within 9-12 grade, such as AP Scholar, Honor Roll, current NHS candidate, or any other specific awards you have earned. Start with your top honor. You can include awards such as “best essay in English class award” if you have room.

Testing:

[CLASS OF 2021: SEE TEST-OPTIONAL Q&A](#)

- If you are sending test scores, you MAY need to send your official ACT and/or SAT Test scores to your university/college directly from the testing company – visit actstudent.org or collegeboard.org
 - SAT scores are listed on your transcript. Some colleges will accept this as official and not require scores sent directly from the testing

agency. It is your responsibility to check each college's website to see what they require.

- You can choose to self-report any of your test scores on Common App OR you can opt-out and not report any since you will send them via the testing company
 - Note: Even if you self-report, official scores must be sent as soon as possible. This includes: ACT, SAT, SAT Subject, and AP scores
 - You'll select the tests, number of scores you want to report from that test, number of future sittings for that test, composite score, and each section score (ACT/SAT) with the date that you earned that score

Activities:

- You have the option of reporting 10 activities
- Be ready to report the activity type, leadership position (if held), years of participation, timing of participation, hours spent per week, weeks spent per year, and if you intent to participate in a similar activity in college
- This includes work and community service
- If you have had family responsibilities (pick siblings up from school, watch siblings after school, cook dinner, etc.) this counts!

Personal Essay:

- Some colleges require submission of the personal essay, but not all. You may submit a personal essay to any college, even if it is not required by that college. If not required by a college, you will be given the option during submission to include your essay or not for that college.
- The essay must be pasted in or typed directly in the box
- You have 250-650 words and must select a prompt to answer

Disciplinary History:

- Be honest – if answering “yes” emphasize what you've learned from the situation.

Additional Information:

- This is a place to explain or clarify potential struggles or challenges you had. This may include shifts in your education, personal struggles that impacted your education, or difficulties with the law. Be authentic, but focus on remorse or the positive consequences. Don't feel you need to fill the 650 words.
- NEW FOR CLASS OF 2021: There is also a box to explain COVID-19-related obstacles.

COURSES & GRADES - this section will only appear once you have added a college that requires it

- See your HAC or obtain a copy of your unofficial transcript from Mrs. Lichaj
- Proceed to the 9th grade tab and follow the Course Assistant for the first time.
 - School years: 9th (17-18); 10th (18-19); 11th (19-20); 12th (20-21)
- Enter the first course name from 9th grade exactly as the transcript says.
- Choose the most appropriate subject for that course
 - Math 1 = Algebra
 - Math 2 = Geometry
 - Math 3 = Algebra II/Trigonometry
- Course Level:
 - “Regular/Standard” – all DGS courses without honors or AP
 - “Honors” – DGS courses with the “Honors” distinction
 - “AP” – AP courses
 - “Dual Enrollment” – classes taken at DGS, but where you also earn college credit, including:
 - Introduction to Teaching, AP Computer Science, Architectural Drawing I, Architectural Drawing I Honors, Personal Training Certification, Personal Safety and Wellness, and Architectural Drawing II Honors
- Report Course Grades – only enter semester letter grades as they appear on your transcript. Enter the semester grade in the semester in which you took the course.
- Report Course Credits – enter credits as they appear on your transcript (0.5). Enter the semester credit in the semester in which you took the course.
- Once you have used the Course Assistant the first time, you can continue to use it or enter straight into the course grid for each grade level. Do NOT enter 10th grade courses in the 9th grade grid!
- Continue to report courses for each grade level.
- “Other Courses” – Enter middle school grades here.
 - Use “P” for pass
- Finally, you may preview your entries to check your self-report. It probably will not be perfect. Do your best, and remember, the “official” transcript will be sent directly to the college when you request it in Naviance.

5. From “Dashboard” you can click on the school name and answer each college’s questions, and Review & Submit your entire Common App

Recommenders and FERPA

- **DO NOT assign recommenders in Common App**
- Please only use Naviance for requesting recommenders:
 - [Recommenders and FERPA](#) - watch quick informational video
- To make letter of recommendation requests using Naviance, [watch how-to videos](#)
- You must give your teachers, counselors, and Mrs. Lichaj 3 weeks to complete a letter of recommendation/send a transcript. Note this as you submit requests.

FERPA – You have an option to sign a release, waiving your right to view your recommendations and supporting documents submitted on your behalf. While you do not have to waive your right, many recommenders will not submit information if you do not (much like a sealed envelope with a recommendation inside should not be opened by the student). *Thus you should waive your right to view your letters.*

6. Notice all deadlines for each school – it is YOUR responsibility to make sure all parts of your application are in by this deadline (this includes the counselor portion and letters of rec submitted by teachers).
 - Your application is NOT complete until you have previewed the entire application, signed electronically, and paid the application fee/submitted the fee waiver request.
 - Your application is NOT complete until you have [requested transcripts](#)
 - Your application is NOT complete until you have [requested letters of recommendation](#)
 - Make sure to adhere to DGS deadlines when requesting your transcripts and letters of recommendation from Naviance to be sent to colleges - 15 school days are required for letters of recommendation and 5 school days for transcripts.
 - It's your responsibility to SUBMIT your Common Application.