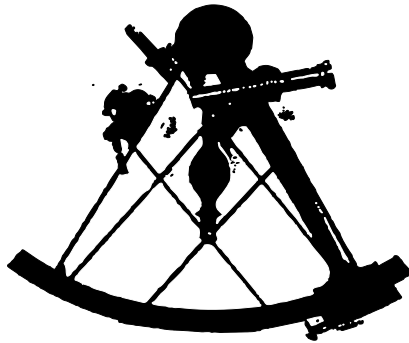


# **Charting Your Course**



**Class of 2012**

**Sturgis Charter Public School  
Guidebook  
for  
Post-Secondary Planning**

# SAT and ACT Test Dates and more...

## SAT Registration Deadlines

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

Test Date	Registration Deadline Fee: \$47.00	Late Registration Deadline Fee: \$47.00 + late fee: \$24.00
May 7	April 8	April 22
June 4	May 6	May 20

## ACT Registration Deadlines

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

Test Date	Registration Deadline Fees: \$33 (without writing) \$48 with writing test (recommended)	Late Registration Deadline (late fee: add \$21.00)
April 9	March 4	March 18
June 11	May 6	May 20

- ❖ Sturgis **CEEB** (College Entrance Examination Board) SAT code and ACT code is: **221-082**
- ❖ Sturgis is not a testing center. Students will be directed to a testing center near their homes. The earlier one registers for testing, the more likely to find a test center close to home.
- ❖ When registering, students can choose to ignore the questionnaire on both websites. Students need only fill in the required fields.

### Information you will need for applications:

School phone: 508-778-1782

School fax: 508-771-6785

School Address:

Sturgis Charter Public School  
427 Main Street  
Hyannis, MA 02601

Mrs. Fogg x 230

[bfogg@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:bfogg@sturgischarterschool.org)

Mrs. Vari x 234

[cvari@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:cvari@sturgischarterschool.org)

Mrs. Whalley x 231

[swhalley@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:swhalley@sturgischarterschool.org)

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## Preface

**T**his booklet is updated and reprinted annually by the Sturgis Charter Public School Guidance Department. It is given each year to parents and students in order to provide important information for post-secondary education planning.

The booklet includes specific information on college entrance testing, financial aid, and college application procedures. Some sections are designed to raise questions about individual priorities. Other parts provide information about resources available for further research. Finally, the concluding section suggests a variety of alternatives for the student who chooses not to continue on to college at the conclusion of her or his high school career.

Some students and families enjoy researching colleges before junior year, visiting schools during their travels and learning about colleges from friends and relatives that have gone before them. Most start looking seriously into college materials during junior year and do the most focused research in the spring of that year and the fall of senior year.

The most important factor in making up a list of colleges for serious investigation is the student's own self-understanding and finding a good "match" in terms of academic fit, college location, setting, course offerings and size of the student body. On the next page of this booklet, take a look at the variables to consider when choosing a college.

Students and parents are encouraged to contact the guidance counselor for assistance with post-secondary planning. All students will have a chance to discuss the issues surrounding post-secondary planning one-to-one with their guidance counselor during the second semester of junior year, and again in the fall of senior year. Parents are welcome to join us.

We hope you will find this resource useful as you plan your educational opportunities for after high school. As always, we look forward to assisting you in any way possible.

Sturgis Charter Public School Guidance Department

# Variables to Consider When Choosing a College

## Consider the following:

### Self - Exploration:

What are your interests, abilities, goals, and expectations? What is your “learning style”? Do you learn better in a small group or listening to a lecturer? Would you rather do a long-term project with opportunities for fieldwork or do research in a library and have frequent exams on the material learned? Do you value the availability of professors for individual discussion or would you rather work with your peers on group assignments? Students should consider these questions and think about the course work, extra-curricular activities, and/or community service that they have found most interesting throughout their lives. Academic interests and feedback from teachers, coaches, club advisors, your CAS advisor and other adults can help students reflect upon how their activities have influenced them. Career interest inventories and consultation with your guidance counselor may be useful in considering personal and career goals. Students are encouraged to meet with their counselor to explore all these factors.

### WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN THE COLLEGE YOU CHOOSE?

- . **Type of institution** (two or four year, coed or non-coed)
- . **Geographic location** (region, state, distance from home)
- . **Majors offered/curriculum** (liberal arts, technical, business)
- . **Setting** (urban, rural, suburban)
- . **Size of institution** (small, medium, large, very large)
- . **Selectivity** (very difficult, moderately difficult, open)
- . **Cost** (tuition, room and board, books fees, travel, financial aid)
- . **Diversity** (race, religion, national, international, age)
- . **Extracurricular activities** (sports, entertainment, culture, religious, educational)
- . **Housing** (on/off campus, coed, single sex, special interest, size of room, food, meal plans, rules, roommates)
- . **Facilities** (buildings, architecture, libraries, student unions, classrooms, lecture halls, labs, recreational/athletic offerings, stores, laundry, handicapped access)
- . **Specialized Programs** (programs and services for students who are learning disabled, physically challenged, or for whom English is a second language.)

# College Admissions Policies

Explained below are the most common application plans students may encounter during the college admissions process. Given the variety of plans and the subtle differences between them, read each college's admissions policies carefully.

## **Regular Application Deadline and the Candidate's Reply Date**

Many colleges establish an application deadline by which all applications must be received. All students are then notified of the college's decisions at a uniform response date, typically on or before April 1st.

At most colleges, **May 1st** is the date by which accepted applicants must indicate their intention to enroll. By use of a **Universal Reply Date**, students may evaluate all notices of admission and financial aid awards before deciding on any one college.

## **Early Decision-(Binding Agreement)**

Many colleges offer this plan to applicants who are absolutely certain they want to attend the college. This college should clearly be the applicant's first choice. Traditionally, the deadline for early decision applications has been November 1st or 15th. Colleges then render a decision by mid-December. Some colleges also have a second round of early decision (usually in January or February). These later plans have the advantage of giving students more time to think through their decision. **If accepted under this plan, the student must withdraw applications to all other colleges, immediately upon admission.** **Note: Early decision applications require both parent and guidance counselor approval.**

## **Early Action or Early Admission (Non-binding)**

This program is similar to early decision in terms of timelines. The important distinction is that, if admitted, the applicant is not bound to attend and is not ethically obligated to withdraw other applications and has until May 1st to decide. Variations: Some schools offer single-choice early admission. Read the policies carefully.

## **Rolling Admissions**

Under this program a college considers a student's application as soon as all the required credentials have been received. Notification of acceptance or rejection is mailed as soon as a decision is made. Colleges that follow this practice may make their admissions decisions continuously over several months, in contrast to the practice of other colleges who accumulate their applications until a deadline date and then announce all their decisions at the same time.

## **Deferred or Delayed Admission**

Most colleges allow an accepted candidate to postpone enrollment in a college, generally for one semester or one year.

## **Open Admissions**

An open admissions policy grants acceptance to all high school graduates without regard to additional qualifications. Some majors at open admissions schools can be very competitive (i.e. CCC nursing program).

## College Representatives at Sturgis

**Sturgis Charter Public School typically** hosts between 40-50 college admissions representatives who meet with students and staff.

Beginning in late September, visiting college representatives will be available to meet with students in pre-arranged small group interviews. This is an opportunity for the visiting representative to "sell" their school's programs, and should allow students the opportunity to gain a general impression of a college, ask specific questions about programs, activities or admissions at that college, and gather literature about the institution.

Suggestions for students:

- ◆ Develop a few specific questions to ask the representative. Questions might include: special academic interests, particular sports, support services available or financial aid procedures. Students may use this opportunity to ask about the impact one's IB coursework may have on the admissions process.
- ◆ Sign a card provided by the college. That will put your name on a mailing list to receive more information from the school. If you have already visited a college or had an interview, a quick hello to the admissions person visiting us provides a good way to be remembered. Colleges monitor contact with prospective students and use this information to gauge interest, which can be a determining factor in the admission process.
- ◆ Ask about the off-campus interview opportunities, if interested.
- ◆ Be open to schools that might not have been on your original investigating list but which seem interesting.

As representatives contact us throughout the fall, students are encouraged to check Managebac and sign up to meet with the representative.



## Visiting a College Campus

A personal visit to a post-secondary institution is often the most useful step in helping students and their parents decide whether or not to apply to a particular school. Students are encouraged to make use of group tours, open house events and group information sessions as a way of obtaining first-hand impressions of schools they have previously researched. We also encourage independent exploration of a campus. Eat in the cafeteria, spend time in the library, and pick up a copy of the student newspaper. Make it a point to speak with students other than your official tour guide. Your guidance counselor can provide you with names of Sturgis graduates attending the school if you'd like to have a more personal connection on campus.

Visits during the regular academic year provide a more accurate view of the academic and social life of a campus, but families often make use of summer vacation to visit several schools that are at a distance. Where possible, it is a good idea to avoid the distortions of registration, final exams and special campus events such as homecomings or festivals. Several high school holidays such as Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, and February and April vacations, allow students who visit colleges to minimize the disruption to their own academic program.

### What Are Some Questions to Ask a College Admissions Representative?

1. What constitutes a typical freshman program?
2. Who teaches freshman courses - graduate assistants or permanent staff?
3. What is the average class size for freshman and introductory courses?
4. Which departments are strongest?
5. To what extent is there interaction between faculty and students?
6. How good are the library facilities? What are the library hours?
7. What cultural opportunities are available in the community?
8. For what reasons did the students you see on campus choose that particular college?  
In their opinions, are these reasons being borne out?
9. What is the makeup of the student body? Are there a number of foreign students and students from all over the U.S. and from all types of home environments? Does one region or class predominate?
10. Is there a professional counseling service available for career planning and personal concerns? Faculty advisor?
11. How active is student government? What are some of the "hot" issues this year?
12. What are the opportunities for participating in intercollegiate or intramural sports?
13. Is campus security an area of concern to students or faculty?

## **When Is a Good Time To Visit a College?**

Students should begin planning college visits after they have given considerable thought to their abilities, interests, and career plans. They should also consult with their guidance counselor and utilize on-line search instruments such as the College Board ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) or Your Plan for College ([yourplanforcollege.org](http://yourplanforcollege.org)). Your counselor may be able to provide you with names of Sturgis graduates attending the school.

Some students begin visiting colleges during the spring of their junior year. Others visit campuses during the summer between the junior and senior year. By starting early, the process will feel less stressful. We strongly encourage Sturgis students to visit schools during the spring of junior year because of the demands of IB in the fall of senior year.

## **How Do You Make Arrangements For a Campus Visit?**

Students should sign up on-line or call admissions offices at least two or three weeks in advance and make arrangements for a personal interview and a tour of campus facilities. Many colleges now enable students to register for visits on their websites. Open houses can fill up quickly, students are encouraged to register early. Some colleges, usually large universities will grant only group interviews. Most schools offer tours and group information sessions while others may offer personal interviews. If you are interested in a particular major and have questions, you might wish to request to sit in on a class and/or meet with a faculty member. At a few colleges, typically the most competitive schools, you may need to schedule an interview several months in advance. Some Ivy League schools will not be able to grant a personal interview; they rely on alumnae/alumni interviews which are arranged after an application is on file.

Take advantage of the campus tour often provided by the admissions office. The library, student union, freshmen housing, music, drama, and athletic facilities are areas to consider in addition to the academic classes and labs. Sit in on classes if you are given the opportunity. Talk to students in the dorms, in the student union, at the bookstore, or wherever they congregate.



## Interview Tips

While the trend at colleges and universities is away from the once all-important personal interview and toward a more relaxed, general information meeting, some colleges still require an interview, some recommend it (which is an offer students should not refuse), and still others leave it up to the applicant. We strongly recommend that you schedule an interview if it is an option. College interviews are a great opportunity for the college to learn more about you and for you to learn more about the college. An interview can prove crucial when the decision hangs in the balance. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

Arrive promptly, dressed in a manner which you feel represents your "best foot forward."

Conduct yourself in a friendly, inquisitive, and interested manner.

While it is not necessary, feel free to bring your parents. They probably won't sit in on the interview but they too, may have questions and concerns which may be answered on campus.



Avoid being overly impressed by a "super salesperson" in the admissions office. On the other hand, don't be "turned off" by an unimpressive admissions officer. Try to gain information and don't be unduly influenced by a personality.

Be sure to prepare in advance a list of questions to ask about the school. Bring a written list to be sure you don't forget your questions due to nervousness or excitement in the interview.

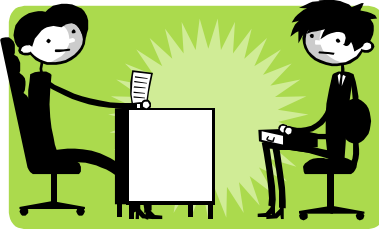
Take this opportunity to discuss IB! While there is a growing awareness of the IB, not all admissions counselors are IB savvy.

**Avoid asking questions that can be readily answered by reading the catalog.**

This approach enables you to make the most effective use of your limited interview time and may show a knowledge of the catalog and a thoroughness of planning on your part.

## What Questions Might You Be Asked During An Interview?

1. Why have you selected this particular college?
2. In what academic areas are you interested? Why?
3. What kind of things are you most interested in outside of school? Why?
4. What type of reading matter do you enjoy? How has a certain book influenced you?
5. What, in your opinion, is a college education? What do you hope to gain from college?
6. Is there a certain current event you are following? Why is this event important to you?



## What Is An Alumni Admissions Interview?

Some colleges do not give personal interviews to students, but do offer the option of an alumni interview. Colleges are increasingly utilizing alumni in the college admissions process. In some cases on campus interviews are not granted, but once an application is filed, the student may arrange for an alumni interview. Many Ivy League schools utilize this system. Please be aware that alumni interviews for highly selective schools are offered as a courtesy to all applicants and usually have little bearing on admissions decisions.

In other cases, on campus interviews are encouraged, but a student may be unable to arrange a visit. In such cases, the alumni interview may be requested, and is a good alternative. These interviews are arranged through the admissions office or through the alum and are often conducted locally.

## Sample Thank You Letter to an Interviewer

Date

Name of college visited

Address

Dear (Name of interviewer):

I was very pleased to meet with you on (date of interview) and would like to thank you for the time and consideration you gave to me during my admission interview to (name of college).

I particularly enjoyed (add point(s) which impressed you).

Sincerely,

(Your signature)



## Summer Planning Activities for College Bound Students

Although summertime is a welcome break for most students from their high school education, it is a good time to make progress in planning for education beyond high school. During the summer before the senior year, there are several things students can do to help prepare for college applications in the fall. Listed below are some suggested activities related to college selection and the application process:

- ◆ Try writing drafts of the types of essay questions most commonly found on applications. It helps to begin thinking of how you might respond to questions concerning books, career goals, influential people in an applicant's life, special interests, achievements and events of particular importance.
- ◆ Begin a rough-draft list of activities and interests. Students might want to include extra-curricular activities, honors and awards, volunteer or work experience, travel or special interests. This information will eventually be sent to colleges and is often asked about during interviews.
- ◆ If you have not scored as well on previous entrance exams as you would like, consider individual preparation or take an SAT review course.
- ◆ Email colleges in which you have an interest, requesting a catalog and any other desired information such as financial aid. Current applications may not be available on-line until early fall.
- ◆ Talk with older students who are home from colleges about which you want to learn more. They should have first hand knowledge to share.
- ◆ Using on-line resources as well as those available in the public library and the suggestions of family and friends, develop and expand your current list of schools to investigate. Summer is a good time to do the research you may not have found the time to do in the spring. Explore the selectivity of the different colleges, the entrance requirements and the curriculum requirements.
- ◆ Review college entrance exam dates for the fall and mark them on a calendar with registration deadlines. (Deadline for registration for the first exam is soon after school starts in September.)
- ◆ Try to visit colleges that are difficult to reach during the school year. Even though the regular students may not be present, you can still gain much information about the college environment that will help you make final selections about the schools to which you want to apply.

## **IB & College Admissions**

Students and parents are often curious about how colleges view the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme. The good news is that the vast majority recognize the rigor of the curriculum. The bad news is that there is no uniformity in how colleges factor the IB into their admissions decisions, nor is there uniformity in the way that colleges award credit for IB courses. We encourage you to research the answers to these questions for each of the colleges you are interested in.

Begin with a college's web site. Search the site for references to the IB. If you do not find the answer to your question, set up an appointment for an interview or an information session and pose your question. Should you have an interview remember to advocate for yourself. Explain that your courses require much more than the successful completion of an exam. Bring samples of your work, and discuss the various assessments, both internal and external, that you are required to complete.

The IB Programme is designed to provide students with critical thinking, communication and other skills that enable them to be successful in college. It does not offer students a guarantee of admission to their colleges of choice. However, as was mentioned earlier, the rigor of the program is broadly recognized, and more colleges in the US are beginning to court IB students with special scholarship opportunities and well articulated offers of credit. A few examples follow: Suffolk University, St. Lawrence University, The University of Rochester, SUNY Geneseo, Savannah College of Art and Design, Bennington College. For additional information visit the [IBO website](#).

## Information for Students with Learning Differences

Students with identified learning differences may want to investigate the programs and services that are specifically designed to meet their post-secondary educational needs. Within a four-year college there are often special support services necessary for the student to succeed in regular classes. These programs also frequently provide non-credit courses which help the student identify her or his learning style and develop appropriate compensatory skills. Students with documented learning differences may request appropriate modifications such as extended time testing and taping of lectures and may take advantage of advances in technology to assist with reading, writing and taking notes.

There is often a separate admissions process to enter a Learning Differences program. As students explore post-secondary options, they should raise questions about the availability of support services, the presence of trained learning specialists, and the provision for classroom modifications, if necessary. Support services provided on the college level do not necessarily mirror those provided by the high school.

A student must *self-identify* as an individual needing assistance due to a disability and supply the appropriate documentation from a qualified evaluator. In most instances, students should indicate in the application process the nature of the learning services they have received in high school, and the nature of accommodations that will be necessary in college, if any. *Sturgis cannot request assistance for you.* There may be a formal application and the college's Office of Disability Services will request a copy of the most recent psychoeducational testing or other formal diagnostic information. We are happy to provide students information from their files, if requested. If the school has a special learning support program, the student should also be in contact with the director of that program during the admissions process. Colleges that have a program for students with learning differences frequently require professional assessments that document and identify the specific learning disability of the student who is applying.

Useful website: [www.ahead.org](http://www.ahead.org)

## Information for the Student Athlete

Athletics is an area of special talent that can make a difference in the college admissions and financial aid process. At most colleges, athletics are regulated by the rules established by the **NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association)**. These guidelines are available on-line. The NCAA has instituted several rule changes in the last several years. We suggest that student athletes do the following:

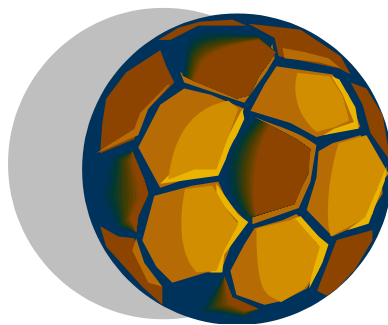
- ◆ Let your counselor know that you are interested in competing in athletics at the Division I or II level. **This is an extremely competitive process.** In almost all cases, students are recruited by colleges for the level of sport.
- ◆ Inform your high school coach that you are interested in playing that sport in college. Work with the coach and ask if he or she will contact college coaches on your behalf. Give them a copy of your athletic resume.
- ◆ When visiting colleges be sure that you have read the NCAA Guidelines which will inform you of the rules regarding contacting college coaches.

To be eligible to participate at the Division I or II level, students must be certified as eligible by the NCAA via the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse.

### Website:

<http://www.ncaa.org/cbsa/>

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)  
NCAA information for college-bound students. Academic eligibility, recruiting, etc.



## Computer Searches

Internet searches enable students to perform a college search, get information about specific colleges, explore occupations, and explore additional sources of financial assistance, such as scholarships, much more quickly and efficiently than by any other means.

Many students who want to develop a list of colleges or look for specific information about individual colleges can use the [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) website at school or home. Sturgis students are introduced to this useful tool in a classroom format during the early spring of junior year.

The collegeboard.com site contains information on approximately 4000 two-year and four year colleges. It enables students to explore colleges that match certain factors selected by students, such as degree desired, geographic location, school size, and more. Once a list is obtained, students can explore individual colleges to and learn about degree offerings, entrance requirements, student life on campus, and extracurricular activities.

Other useful **Internet** resources are listed below:

<http://www.yourplanforcollege.org>

Comprehensive site for academic, career, college search and financial planning (see counselor for your access code)

<http://www.commonapp.org>

Download The Common Application, accepted over 400 colleges and universities

<http://www.fairtest.org>

Learn about SAT/ACT optional schools (that don't require tests for admission)

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>

Information on retention rates, net price, campus security. Objective statistics gathered by the federal government.

<http://www.petersons.com>

Peterson's Education Center

A wide range of information and resources.

<http://www.mefa.org>

Information on loans and financial aid



## SAT: College Board Testing

Students planning to attend college after graduation should take the College Board Entrance Examinations and/or the ACT Examinations. Both tests are universally accepted. Students should plan to take the **SAT Reasoning Tests** and, if appropriate, the **SAT Subject Tests** in the spring of the junior year and probably again in the fall of their senior year.

**The SAT Reasoning Test** is a three hour and forty-five minute exam that measures ability to reason verbally and mathematically and to write. The **SAT** is required by most four-year colleges and some two year colleges. Registration and practice tests are available on-line, however paper forms are also available from your counselor, along with a booklet entitled **Taking the SAT Reasoning Test**. We strongly encourage all of our students to sign up on the collegeboard.com website for the SAT question of the day.

**SAT Subject Tests** are required by many private colleges, usually the more competitive institutions. Those colleges that require the SAT Subject Tests often require two. It is a good idea to speak with your teachers before deciding which tests to take. If not specified by the college, students may select the subject tests they wish to take.

Tests are given in Literature, American History and Social Studies, World History, Mathematics Level I Mathematics Level II, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Chinese with Listening, French and French with Listening, German and German with Listening, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese with Listening, Latin, Spanish and Spanish with Listening.

**All SAT Subject Tests take one hour**, and a student can take a **maximum of three** on a given test date. Students should confer with their guidance counselor to determine if and when to take a specific test.

**Because last minute cramming is not likely to be of much use, a student who decides to take an SAT Subject Test in a subject he or she has not studied recently should review the course material over several weeks.** Sample questions are available on-line and are also contained in **Taking the SAT Subject Tests**, a booklet that students can obtain from their counselor. In addition, preparation books for the SAT Reasoning Test and SAT Subject Tests are commercially available in many bookstores.

**Sturgis' College Examination Board (CEEB) High School number is 221-082. Please note that Sturgis is not a Test Center. Test Centers are listed in the back of the registration bulletin and on the websites. Students are reminded to bring a picture I.D. with them to the test.**

### Fee waivers

The College Board and the ACT companies provide fee waivers for students with demonstrated financial need. Students that are granted fee waivers are also eligible for some free college applications. If the cost of making application to college will be an obstacle, it is important to ask for the SAT or ACT fee waiver to ensure this benefit. Fee waivers are also available for the SAT Subject Tests. See your counselor for details concerning eligibility.

## Test Scores and Score Reports

Scores can be obtained approximately three weeks after testing at the collegeboard.com and act.org websites. Students' score reports will be mailed to their home address **about five weeks** after the test. If students request that their scores be sent to colleges or scholarship programs, a report will be sent to each, usually within four weeks after the test. Sturgis will also receive a score report if students provide our high school code number, **221-082, at registration.**

SAT score report requirements differ from college to college.

### Fast Facts from the College Board website:

- Students can select which scores they send to colleges by test date for the SAT and by individual test for SAT Subject Tests, through "Score Choice".
- If students need scores "Rushed" to colleges, this service is available from the [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) website for an extra fee.
- Scores from an entire SAT test are sent—scores of individual sections from different test dates cannot be selected independently for sending.
- Students can send any or all scores to a college on a single report—it does not cost more to send one, multiple or all test scores.
- Students are instructed to follow the different score-use practice for each college to which they apply.
- "Score Choice" is optional—if students do not use it, all scores will be sent automatically.

**For the ACT**, all test scores from all test dates are NOT sent together in one file. Students request specific score reports be sent for each test date, to college.

**Requests for scores to be sent from test companies should be made at least four weeks before the date colleges and scholarship programs need to receive a report. This can be done on-line. It is the student's responsibility to release scores to colleges.**

## What is the ACT?

The ACT is an alternative to the SAT for students who would like to take a "content-based" test rather than the SAT "reasoning" test. It is administered by the American College Testing Service located in Iowa City, Iowa.

The ACT is composed of four 35 to 50 minute sections in English usage, mathematics usage, social studies reading, and natural science reading. There is an optional Writing test (we recommend you take this). The main difference between the ACT and the SAT is that the ACT is a yardstick of both reasoning ability and knowledge of specific subject matter covered in classes. The ACT can sometimes replace the need to take SAT Subject Tests. If students need more information about the ACT, they should seek out an ACT guide, check with their counselor and go to the website [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

# Managing the College Application Process

## Your Transcript Package: Putting it Together

It is the student's responsibility to see that their application is complete by calling the college two weeks after materials have been sent. Many colleges now provide an electronic PIN for on-line status checks.

In addition to the student's portion of the application, colleges and universities require a number of supplemental pieces of information which, taken together, form a student's "transcript package". This transcript package is sent electronically and/or on paper from the Guidance Office directly to each college to which a student is applying. A student's transcript package includes:

1. A transcript of high school courses
2. If a candidate for the full IB Diploma, a special notation appears on transcript.
3. GPA as of end of Junior year.
4. Report card noting senior year classes and grades to-date
5. A counselor recommendation
6. Secondary School Report Form (if requested)
7. Sturgis profile and mission statement
8. Description of IB Diploma Programme
9. Mid-year report after first semester
10. Final transcript in June
11. *Transcript package from Sturgis does not include SAT/ACT scores.*

## Sending Test Scores

It is important to note that your SAT and/or ACT test scores are not a part of your transcript. You are responsible for requesting that the College Board or ACT forward official scores to the colleges/universities to which you are applying.

Official standardized test scores need to be sent directly from the SAT company and/or from the ACT company, as applicable.



## Test Optional Colleges and Universities

According to The National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest), as of the fall of 2010 over 800 four-year colleges and universities across the United States have de-emphasized the use of the SAT or ACT when making admissions decisions about a substantial number of their incoming freshmen. While these colleges and universities range widely in size, selectivity and culture, and have moved away from using standardized tests to make admissions decisions for a variety of reasons, they share concerns about the impact of over reliance on the tests.

A test-optional admissions policy means certain applicants can choose not to submit SAT or ACT scores. However, it is important to note that the rules governing these policies vary from college to college. Some test-optional schools will not accept or consider your test scores at all; others require test scores under certain conditions; some colleges/universities require test scores only for certain types of students, such as out-of-state students, students in certain majors, or those applying for college-based scholarships; while still others have created alternative test policies that allow students to submit scores from Advanced Placement tests, SAT Subject Tests, or International Baccalaureate (IB) results.

For many students, hearing that some colleges are "test optional" is great news. However, this does not mean students can avoid taking the SAT or ACT. The vast majority of colleges (there are over 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States alone) still require standardized test scores. Nonetheless, if you are a student who has difficulty with standardized testing, test-optional colleges may be well worth considering, and you should consider discussing an appropriate strategy with your guidance counselor.

FairTest (<http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>) maintains a searchable list of colleges and universities that de-emphasize the use of standardized tests by making admissions decisions about substantial numbers of applicants who recently graduated from U.S. high schools without using the SAT or ACT. You can search for schools alphabetically or by state. After reviewing the list, students should check with each prospective school's admissions office to learn more about specific admissions requirements. You can usually find this information on the college's website. If you are considering applying to a test-optional college, carefully review the school's test-optional admissions information before you decide not to submit test scores.

## Teacher Recommendations and Teacher Recommendation Forms

Be sure to give your teacher advance notice and allow your teacher a minimum of three to four weeks to complete your recommendation.

Many colleges/universities require two teacher recommendations. If you have not yet done so, please make an appointment to meet with each teacher you intend to ask for a recommendation. In addition to requesting the teacher's support, plan to spend a few minutes familiarizing the teacher with your college plans. Please keep in mind that the best recommendation letters come from teachers who know you well, often those who have seen you struggle with, yet succeed in mastering a subject.

We strongly recommend that you waive your right to view the letters of recommendation. College and university admissions personnel feel such letters are more open and candid and, as a result, tend to give them more weight in the admissions process.

Ask your teacher to return the letter directly to the college admissions office, or upload to the Common Application as directed by an email they will receive from the Common Application website. If a paper version will be mailed, provide the teacher with a **stamped** business sized envelope, addressed to the college, and jot the school's deadline and your name on the **inside** flap of the envelope. Include the Sturgis return address on each envelope.



If a college application you are completing contains its own Teacher Recommendation Form(s), we suggest the following:

1. Complete the steps as outlined above.
2. Fill out the personal information section on the college's teacher form, and then give it to the teacher with the materials listed. If you request the letter before you are sure of which colleges you are applying to, provide those materials to the teacher as soon as possible.

## **Application Forms**

While traditional paper applications are still available, many colleges/universities are now encouraging students to apply on-line. Most Sturgis students apply on-line. Regardless of the format that you choose, keep in mind that neatness, grammar and effort count. First impressions are important, and often your application is the first contact the reader has with you. Make sure that you have a “second set of eyes” review your application before submission.

Take the time to personalize your responses to each individual school. Like you, colleges are exploring fit, and they are interested in knowing if you have done your research. Do not short-change your application by offering a “one size fits all” response when asked why you want to attend a particular school.

Finally, print a copy of your completed application form. From time to time applications and supporting materials do not find their way to the correct location. To avoid the hassle of having to fill out the application for a second time, have a back-up on hand.

## **Essays**

The college essay is one part of the application process that gives students the opportunity to inform admissions officials about their special abilities, interests, and qualities, or about any significant factors that might set them apart from a large number of qualified applicants. As many colleges begin to doubt the usefulness of standardized test scores, college essays are being given more weight than ever in the admissions process. While a superb essay will not cancel out a poor high school record, a well-written essay can make a student with a good record stand out from the other applicants.

When it comes to essays, avoid the obvious. Do not repeat information that the college admissions counselor will be able to glean from your transcript, a resume of activities and awards, or from a short answer response on the application. Your essay should add “dimension” to your application. Share an experience that gives the reader insight into you as a person. To make sure that your “authentic voice” comes through, share your essay with a trusted friend and a teacher. Ask them if it sounds like you.

Colleges that ask students to write essays really do want to know the person behind the numbers. A good essay can present the student as an interesting and valuable person who is worth knowing, who is genuine, thoughtful, engaging, and able to handle what he or she has set out to do. An essay can also comment on any setbacks the student has suffered or explain any gaps in the academic record.

In general, essays are evaluated on three basic criteria:

- **The student's ability to use standard written English** that is correctly written, punctuated, and contains correct grammar, usage, and syntax.
- **The content, substance, and depth of insight** which reflects the student's ability to think about him/her self and to convey authentic feelings or opinions about a topic.
- **Creativity and originality** which shows an individual who would bring qualities such as intellect, initiative, energy, and a fresh viewpoint to the college community.

Students writing college essays would do well to avoid the following:

- Beware of inflating experiences, trying too hard to impress, or adopting a pompous or overly intellectual tone.
- Omit expressions of anger or hostility toward others.
- Avoid mere repetition of information that is available elsewhere in the application.
- Undue influence by parents or other adults in the writing of the essay. The voice of an adult can easily come through an essay too strongly and drown out the authentic voice of the student writer.
- General statements and clichés that make the essay unremarkable from hundreds of similar essays which are read by admissions officials. Telling details and specifics make the essay "live".
- Being overcautious or too eager to please the admissions committee. A mediocre essay won't hurt the applicant much, but a truly good one can help immensely.

## **Examples of College Essay Questions**

The questions below are typical examples of those which frequently appear in college applications:

1. Describe your most significant personal experience. Why was it significant and how has it influenced you?
2. Identify and discuss a significant problem facing your generation.
3. What have you read that has a special significance for you? Explain why.
4. Describe a person or experience of particular importance to you.
5. Please describe the reasons that influenced you in selecting your intended field of study.
6. If you could travel through time and interview a prominent figure in the arts, politics, religion, or science, for example, whom would you choose and why?
7. Describe your experience in living in a racially, culturally, or ethnically diverse environment; what do you expect to need to know to live successfully in the multicultural society in the future?
8. Make up a question, state it clearly, and answer it. Feel free to use your imagination, recognizing that those who read it will not mind being entertained.
9. Please use the space provided to indicate what you consider your best qualities to be, and describe how your college education will be of assistance to you in sharing these qualities and accomplishments with others.

## **Tips for Working With The Common Application**

Save the e-mail you receive when you initially register, you may want the link information.

Save your work often. Logout after each session.

Be aware that most colleges will also have a supplement for you to fill out, and these supplements might include additional essays.

Please keep in mind that the “search” tool is limited in scope to member schools (400+). It does not offer the range of schools that you would find using other search vehicles such as College Board (3,800+).

Note: the Future Plans section of the application is specific to each school. All other sections are common to all schools. Do not tailor your responses to questions OR your Common Application essay to a specific school!

Mandatory fields are marked in gold and bold. All other information is optional, although you are encouraged to respond.

Students applying to colleges/universities that are “test optional” should refrain from self-reporting test scores.

Enter all course information for Semester 1, and again for Semester 2. Spell out all course titles (TOK should be Theory of Knowledge) and remember to indicate number of credits (generally .5 or 1).

Use a word processor to type your writing samples before cutting and pasting or uploading them into the online forms.

Use Print Previews to view each application/supplement before submitting it!!! Consider having a “second pair of eyes” review with you.

Once you hit send your application is gone: you can no longer edit it.

Even though you self-report test scores, you must submit official results through the College Board and/or ACT.

When requesting recommendations and supporting documents, remember to authorize the release of your transcript, and acknowledge the Privacy Notice responding to the waiver regarding access to teacher/counselor recommendations.

Please Note: we will not submit our Secondary School Report until you submit your first application (we have access to this information).

### **Helpful information to keep handy:**

Sturgis' School Code (CEEB): **221082**

Sturgis' Phone #: 508-778-1782

Sturgis' Fax #: 508-771-6785

#### **Guidance Counselor E-mail Addresses:**

Beverly Fogg Ext. 230 [bfogg@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:bfogg@sturgischarterschool.org)

Carol Vari Ext. 234 [cvari@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:cvari@sturgischarterschool.org)

Susan Whalley Ext. 231 [swhalley@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:swhalley@sturgischarterschool.org)

## Deadlines!

At least three weeks before your first deadline you need to provide your guidance counselor and any teachers you have asked to write recommendations with the following:

- (1) Completed transcript request form to guidance counselor.
- (2) Teacher envelopes should be addressed to schools and include postage.
- (3) If a college application contains a Secondary School Report Form, complete the personal information section on the form and submit it to your counselor, with your Transcript Request Form (see next page).

Every college bound senior needs to review their college application deadlines with her/his counselor by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Please remember, due to other work commitments your guidance counselor and teachers may not be in a position to accommodate a last minute request for a letter of recommendation. You need to plan ahead!



## Once Your Applications Have Been Submitted

**Be aware, it may take two or three weeks for colleges to receive, sort and file materials sent from Sturgis on your behalf (letters, transcripts, etc.) Once you click “submit” on an electronic application, you may receive a notice that items from your high school are “missing”. Check back in two weeks with the college, that should give them enough time to register your paperwork from Sturgis.**

Once your applications for admission have been submitted, it's important to take steps to finance your college education: file for financial aid; look into and apply for scholarships; and look into loan and other financing options. This part of the process involves some serious family discussions, as well as some substantial paperwork. Now it's time to manage this end of the process. Begin by researching the paperwork required by the schools you are applying to (the FAFSA, and the CSS profile (if required) and/or any school forms) as well as their recommended filing dates.

## Financial Aid: Sources and Programs

Sturgis hosts an annual Financial Aid Information Night in late fall for Senior parents. The Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) presents an overview of the financial aid process for parents and students in late fall. Also, [www.mefa.org](http://www.mefa.org) is a great source of information.

Financial aid programs are designed to assist those who, without such assistance, would be unable to meet the costs of a post secondary education. Financial aid comes from several different sources: The federal and state government, colleges and universities, local private organizations and scholarship programs and banks.

In general, eligibility for financial aid is based on need. Some financial assistance is awarded not on the basis of need, but for scholastic excellence, athletics, or other specialized talents. Much of the financial aid awarded, however, is need-based. Need will vary from college to college according to the cost of attending the school and how much the student/family is expected to contribute to the student's education. Need is not one set dollar amount.

The student/family expected contribution for one year (**EFC**) is an amount determined by a formula established by Congress that indicates how much of a student's family's financial resources should be available to pay for school. Student/family financial information is collected in three ways:

1. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (**FAFSA**)
2. The CSS (College Scholarship Service) Financial Aid **PROFILE** form
3. Colleges' own financial forms

While the **FAFSA** is used to apply for most federal and state aid, the **PROFILE** is the form used by many private institutions to determine how to allocate their own funds. Colleges may also require completion of financial aid forms specific to their institution.

The **FAFSA** should be filed on-line as soon **after** January 1st as possible (but not before). One may register for the **PROFILE** service early in the fall. This is especially important for students applying early decision or early admission. The organizations and colleges that are to receive the results must be identified on the FAFSA and Profile. **The PROFILE form can only be filed on-line. The FAFSA may be filed on-line; there is a paper form as well. On-line filing of the FAFSA is the preferred method.** (Personal Identification Numbers) PINs are required for on-line filing. The FAFSA form requires that BOTH parent and student have their own individual PINs.

**FAFSA:** [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)

**PROFILE:** [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

**Because the FAFSA cannot be filed until January 1<sup>st</sup> of the student's senior year, the fafsa4caster is a helpful tool to learn how much aid a student might expect if applying early.**

**<http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/>**

## **Financial Aid (Continued)**

A student eligible for aid will likely be offered a financial aid package composed of the following components: self aid (loans and work study), and gift aid (grants and scholarships which do not have to be repaid). Some schools vary the proportion of each kind of aid based on the student's academic performance or other factors.

Some common financial aid programs are listed in the glossary that follows. The amounts of each program may vary from year to year depending on federal funding for financial aid.

## **Financial Assistance Glossary**

### **Stafford Loan (Formerly called the Guaranteed Student Loan)**

Loans are insured by State and Federal governments. Eligible students can borrow up to \$3500 in their freshman year (subsidized) with an additional \$2000 (unsubsidized) , \$4500 in their sophomore year with an additional \$2000 (unsubsidized), and \$5500 in their junior and senior years to a maximum of \$31,000. Subsidized loans will have their interest paid by the government while a student is in school full time.

### **Perkins Loan**

This federal loan program, administered by the individual colleges, provides low-interest educational loans for qualified students who are enrolled at least half-time.

### **Pell Grants**

These federal grants, awarded to eligible full and part-time undergraduate students, are based on financial need. The amounts range from \$400 to \$4700 a year.

### **Massachusetts State Scholarship**

Eligible students can receive from 200 to \$3800 in grants from the state. No application is required. This offering is a result of filing the FAFSA.

### **Need Blind**

Need Blind admissions guarantees equal opportunities for admission into a college or university regardless of the student's ability to pay for the costs at that college. There are only a handful of colleges in the country that actually have need blind policies. These include Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Stanford. These schools have very substantial endowments and do not need to be concerned about revenue from students.

### **Need Sensitive**

Need Sensitive admissions will sometimes take into consideration a student's ability to pay for the college costs when deciding to admit the student. In actuality, the vast majority of colleges and universities are need sensitive in one way or the other.

### **Plus Loan (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students)**

Through a local bank, parent may borrow up to the full cost of education minus any financial aid received. Interest is one-year T-bill rate plus 3.1% adjusted yearly, not to exceed 10%. Repayment usually begins 30-45 days after loan disbursement.

### **Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program (SEOG)**

These federal grants, ranging from \$100- \$4,800 yearly, are offered to students with exceptional need.

## **Federal Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS)**

This loan is now part of the unsubsidized portion of the Stafford Loan program. SLS applicants must be independent undergraduate students. They may borrow amounts similar to those offered under the Stafford Loan provisions except that the government does not pay the insert on these loans while a student is in school.

## **Additional Resources**

### **Your Plan for College**

Each year there are over 50 local scholarships listed in Your Plan for College. The website is [www.yourplanforcollege.org](http://www.yourplanforcollege.org). Students need to register with their own code supplied by their counselors.

### **National Search Vehicles**

Students should use national scholarship search vehicles  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)  
<http://fastweb.com>

### **College's Institutional Scholarships**

College merit scholarship websites

Beware of any scholarship sites charging you a fee! Stay away! There are lots of free services out there!

## **Senior Year: Academic Concerns and Follow Through**

### **Academic Performance**

Sturgis follows the National Association of College Admissions Counselors Statement of Principles and Good Practices pertaining to responsibilities in the college counseling and advising process. As such, we agree to report any significant changes in a candidate's academic status or qualifications, including the personal conduct record, between the time of recommendation and graduation. Accordingly, we will notify a college or university of a change in IB diploma status or a change in course level.

Admissions decisions are also contingent on the successful completion of all course work, and admissions officers reserve the right to reverse an admissions decision should there be a shift in academic status including personal conduct.

## **The Wait List: Questions and Answers**

### **Should I ask to remain active on the wait list?**

Yes, only if you are seriously interested in attending that college. Notify the college in writing or by returning the postcards many colleges provide for that purpose as soon as possible. If you definitely will attend if admitted, let the college know your intentions.

### **Should I continue to communicate with the college admissions office?**

Yes! Students that have been successful at getting off of the Wait List have kept the admissions office informed about any new academic accomplishments, award, achievements, and projected IB scores (if strong).

### **When will I learn if I will be admitted from the wait list?**

The earliest you can expect to hear from colleges is late April, but typically not until after the first week of May. Most colleges will finalize the status of students by June 1st. Occasionally colleges will extend the opportunity to remain on a wait list throughout the summer.

### **Should I call the college?**

No. Colleges will only ask you to indicate your position in writing. Until the first week or so of May, colleges rarely have any information that will be helpful to you in your planning and decision process.

### **What are my chances?**

Until early May this is an impossible question for even the colleges to answer. Quite simply, they do not know. Colleges must wait to hear from all of the students to whom they have extended an offer of admission. Those students have until May 1st to respond. Often times those responses, mailed on April 30, do not arrive until May 3rd or 4th. Wait list practices vary from year to year. Therefore, past practice has no bearing on the current wait list.

### **How many applicants usually end up on a wait list?**

Usually quite a few. For even a small school 300-500 is not unusual. Remember, not everyone who is offered a position on a wait list will choose to remain on the list. The initial number placed on a wait list usually "melts down" quite significantly.

### **What can I do to improve my chances?**

If your transcript since mid-year is good, sending it along to the colleges may help. If you've taken on responsibilities or in any other way distinguished yourself since you applied, don't hesitate to let the colleges know. Remember, though, despite your continued accomplishments, college may not be in a position to offer admission to wait listed students.

### **Should I try to set up another interview?**

Colleges rarely permit second interviews, particularly before May 1st. If you happen to be in the area it doesn't hurt to stop by "just to check on things", and to say hello. A major investment of time and money to visit a college where you have been placed on a wait list is probably not worth the effort. Consult with your counselor regarding this matter. It will vary from case to case.

### **What should I do while I wait?**

Assume you are not going to get in off the wait list. Statistics clearly indicate the chances are quite a bit less than 50/50. The most important thing for you to do at this time is to focus on the options you do have and make an informed, rational decision regarding those options.

### **Should I make an enrollment deposit at my second choice college?**

YES! You should make a deposit at the college that you feel is the next "best fit" option. Unfortunately this fee is normally not refundable after May 1<sup>st</sup>, but it is important for you to guarantee that you have a place in a college next year.

### **What should I do if I have been placed on several wait lists?**

There is nothing wrong with remaining on more than one wait list as long as each one of them is a school that you are more interested in than the options you currently have. Obviously you can only indicate to one of them that they are your first choice.

### **Who should I keep informed about my wait list status?**

Your parents and your counselor should be kept advised of your status. There should be no miscommunication or lack of communication during this time.

## Career Decision Making

Students who are unsure of their future educational and/or occupational plans, unable to decide whether or not to continue with their education, or confused by the number of educational and/or occupational possibilities, can meet with their guidance counselor to:

- ✎ Obtain information about career or educational options,
- ✎ Identify those options that have possibilities,
- ✎ Evaluate the possible outcomes of different options, and
- ✎ Choose one or several options to pursue.

Through the use of interest surveys, computer-aided educational and occupational searches, and by exploring the available materials, students can either narrow or increase their options, depending on their objective. Students who are having some difficulty putting together their post-secondary plans or would like to discuss questions about their future plans are encouraged to see their counselor.

## Deferring College Acceptance The Gap Year

Many students are not yet ready or prefer not to go directly to college or to some other degree granting educational programs immediately after completing high school. Some choose to work full time before enrolling at a college, others are seeking alternatives for a single transition year.

In a process called deferred admissions, students can apply to college in the fall of their senior year and in the spring ask permission of the college they wish to attend to defer their enrollment for one year. Enrollment can also be deferred until the following January. In other words, students wanting to pursue this option can maintain their acceptance to a college but not begin until a year or six months later. A student and a family who are thinking about this option should discuss the idea with their school counselor as well as consider the following:

### 1. Why do students take gap years?

*Some of the reasons students take gap years are rejuvenation, discovering interests, growing up and establishing independence, gaining skills, transitioning from high school to the world of work, and gaining information regarding college majors or course of studies.*

### 2. How do I research gap year programs?

*Talk with your school counselor, search the internet, [www.teenlife.com/2011GapYearGuide](http://www.teenlife.com/2011GapYearGuide), read books and guides, and talk to friends who have taken a gap year.*

### 3. What type of gap year programs are available?

Students can create their own Gap Year plans.  
*Academic, adventure/trips; arts; community service, environmental, work experience, travel/culture.*

### 4. Should I attend a gap year fair to learn more about options available?

*To find a USA Gap Year Fair location near you, go to [www.usagapyears.org](http://www.usagapyears.org)*

## College Vocabulary

**Associate's Degree:** granted after satisfactory completion of a two-year program.

**Bachelor's Degree:** granted after satisfactory completion of a four-year program.

**Candidates Reply Date:** May 1, the deposit deadline for most schools using the regular admission system.

**Common Application:** A uniform college application accepted by almost 400 colleges which simplifies the process of applying to those colleges. See [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).

**Community College:** a two-year college established by a state government; generally the tuition is low and the education of good quality.

**Deferred Admission:** permits an accepted student to postpone enrollment for a year or more.

**Early Decision:** A binding decision. Student applies early to first choice school. If accepted, the student must withdraw all applications from other schools and is ethically bound to attend this school. Students not accepted under Early Decision are often added to the regular pool of applicants.

**Early Action:** student applies early, if accepted, is not bound to attend and need not accept the admission offer prior to May 1.

**Expected Family Contribution (EFC):** the amount that your family is expected to contribute toward your education. The amount is similar for different colleges, even though the colleges' costs vary.

**Fee Waiver:** provided by the testing agency, this permits eligible students to submit college applications or test registration forms without the fee. A limited number are available through counselors.

**Financial Aid Package/Award:** a combination of grants/scholarships, loans and work study that the college is able to offer you to meet your financial need.

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** the primary form used to determine your eligibility for financial aid.

**Group Interview:** an interview including several or many applicants with a representative from the college's admissions office. During these interviews, students hear about the school and ask questions.

**Liberal Arts:** a degree program consisting of study in the area of arts, natural sciences and humanities.

**Open Admissions:** all students who meet a college's minimum grade and test score requirements are accepted. Decisions are made continually throughout the year.

**CSS Profile:** used by colleges, universities, and scholarships to award their own private funds.

**Regular Admissions:** colleges using this plan generally have a January, February or March application deadline and notify all of the applicants at the same time (usually around April 15).

**Rolling Admissions:** the process in which a candidate's file is reviewed once complete and a decision is rendered shortly thereafter with notification following.

**SAT:** A three-hour and forty-five minute test of verbal, mathematical reasoning and writing ability.

**SAT Subject Test (formerly SAT II):** Standardized tests given by the College Board which measure knowledge in specific subject areas. Students can take up to three one-hour tests in one sitting. College that require SAT Subject Tests generally require two.

**Student Aid Report (SAR):** reports aid eligibility information from the FAFSA.

**Waitlist:** A possible admissions decision, in which students are notified only after the admitted candidates have accepted admission, with space permitting.

Appendix of  
Helpful Forms,  
Sample Essays  
and  
Additional  
Information

# The Campus Visit

Don't let your campus visits blend together! Write your thoughts down while the visit experience is still fresh in your mind. Take pictures.

School \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Visit Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Planning:** Location of Admissions Office \_\_\_\_\_

Tour Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## On-Campus Impressions

The Campus Tour (Guide's Name)

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The Interview: Is there something left to mention in your thank you note, something you may have forgotten to say? (Interviewer's name and title)

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Other discoveries while on campus (facilities, student center, resources)

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## Overall Assessment

Worth remembering (extracurricular activities, politics, arts, ecology, music, new construction, social life or lack of social life)

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What I like most about this school: \_\_\_\_\_

What I like least about this school: \_\_\_\_\_

Off Campus Resources: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students? \_\_\_\_\_

Athletic facilities \_\_\_\_\_

Housing \_\_\_\_\_

Does the school have what I am looking for? \_\_\_\_\_

Would I feel comfortable here? \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent “Brag Sheet”

*Your responses will be helpful in writing a recommendation for your child.  
Feel free to elaborate on additional sheet of paper.*

**Name of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you consider to be your child’s major accomplishments during the past three years?
2. In what areas has your child shown the most development and growth during high school?
3. If you had to describe your child in five adjectives, what would they be? Please elaborate.
4. What has been one of your child’s most positive or most disappointing experiences during the past several years?
5. Are there any special circumstances that have had an effect on your child’s educational or personal experiences?

**Parent/Guardian’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Please return to your child’s Guidance Counselor prior to Monday, May 9, 2011**

*Students with last names beginning with A – He to Mrs. Fogg  
Students with last names beginning with Hi – Ma to Mrs. Whalley  
Students with last names beginning with Mc – Z to Mrs. Vari*

## Student's Self-Description

*Please think carefully about these questions. Your responses will be helpful in writing a recommendation.  
Feel free to use more than one sheet of paper.*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

1. What distinguishes you from (makes you stand out among) your peers?
2. What activities are most meaningful to you?
3. What three adjectives describe you best? Provide examples.
4. What accomplishment are you especially proud of?
5. Is there any special circumstance or additional information you feel is important for the purpose of preparing your recommendation?

Please feel free to attach a resume of your school and community activities (indicating the years in which you participated, as well as any leadership positions you may have held). The resume should also include any awards or honors you may have received, any jobs you may have held, and any special programs (academic, leadership, etc.) you may have participated in.

***Return to your Guidance Counselor no later than Monday, May 9, 2011***

*Students with last names beginning with A – He to Mrs. Fogg  
Students with last names beginning with Hi – Ma to Mrs. Whalley  
Students with last names beginning with Mc – Z to Mrs. Vari*

## Peer Perspective Form

Submitting this form provides your guidance counselor with an opportunity to see a side of you that we might not see through other sources including teachers, parents/guardians, and you. Your peer can be a friend, classmate, teammate, or sibling – someone who knows you well and can offer some perspective on you as a person.

**Name of**

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **TO THE PEER COMPLETING THIS FORM:**

Other forms also supply the counselor with valuable information, but as a friend, you can offer a unique perspective. We invite your comments to help us supplement other perspectives with more personal insights. *As you respond to the questions below, we encourage you to cite examples that support your insights about your friend.* Thank you for your help in this process.

**Name of Peer completing form:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you feel are this person's strengths (ie. leadership, sense of humor, inclusiveness, warmth, enthusiasm)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Why do you value knowing this person?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Does this person possess any special talents or abilities?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What qualities do you feel this person will bring to a college community?

**Please return to your friend's Guidance Counselor prior to Monday, May 9, 2011**

Students with last names beginning with A-He to Mrs. Fogg  
Students with last names beginning with Hi-Ma to Mrs. Whalley  
Students with last names beginning with Mc-Z to Mrs. Vari

## Apply Strategically!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

While it is impossible to know whether you will be accepted to any given school, you can manage the process by preparing yourself for likely outcomes. Apply strategically. Once you've narrowed your list of schools, sort your choices into four tiers according to your chances of acceptance. Applying to at least one school in each category can help maximize your options. This worksheet is designed to help you categorize your schools. *The number of recommended applications per category represents general guidelines and may vary according to individual applicant circumstances.*

CATEGORY	COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
<p><b>REALISTIC “REACH” SCHOOL</b></p> <p>The toughest challenge in terms of admissions selectivity, a reach school is one where the applicant falls slightly below the school’s average <i>enrolled student profile</i>. Regardless of a student’s profile, all highly selective schools fall into this category.</p> <p><i>Consider applying to one or two “reach” schools</i></p>	
<p><b>“MATCH” SCHOOL</b></p> <p>There is strong compatibility between an applicant’s grades/test scores and the school’s <i>enrolled student profile</i>, as a result the applicant stands a good chance of getting in.</p> <p><i>Consider applying to three “match” schools</i></p>	
<p><b>“LIKELY” SCHOOL</b></p> <p>The applicant’s grades and test scores are at the high end, or well within the mix, of the <i>enrolled student profile</i>, as a result the applicant’s chance of getting in is very high.</p> <p><i>Consider applying to one or two “Likely” schools</i></p>	
<p><b>“FISCALLY FEASIBLE” SCHOOL</b></p> <p>In addition to the applicant having a very good chance of getting in, this option is also affordable should the financial aid packages at other schools prove disappointing.</p> <p><i>Apply to at least one “fiscally feasible” school</i></p>	

**Enrolled Student Profile:** many schools publish an enrolled student (“class of”) profile. The profile is often available on the college’s website (check here for the most up-to-date information). If it is not, statistical information pertaining to a college or university is usually readily available through guide books and college search websites such as Peterson’s and the College Board (however, the information available at these sites may not be as current).

*Juniors, your guidance counselor will meet with you on an individual basis once again next fall (as a senior). Please indicate the colleges/universities you are considering applying to on this form, and bring it with you when you meet with Ms. Fogg, Ms. Vari or Ms. Whalley. Thanks!*

## Transcript Request Form

These forms are available from your counselor. When you provide your counselor with this form, supporting documents will be forwarded to your schools.

**BF CV SW**  
**Date Forwarded** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**DH**  
**Date Sent**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Transcript Request Form

Plan ahead! Allow at least two weeks for your counselor to process this request.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date given to counselor: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Please note: a fee of \$3.00 per transcript must accompany this form. Make check payable to Sturgis Charter Public School.

Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State of College: \_\_\_\_\_

Common Application School?     Yes     No

Admission Process:     Early Action     Early Decision     Regular     Rolling Admission

Application Deadline: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**To be completed with guidance counselor:**

Item	Status	Notes
Applications and necessary supplements sent?		
Application fees paid?		
Essay shared with guidance counselor?		
Test scores sent via College Board or ACT?		
Transcript reviewed for accuracy?		
Fee of \$3 per transcript paid (paper apps only)?		
Teacher recommendations?		

# Activities Record Worksheet or Resume

You may include a sheet outlining your extra-curricular activities. You may elect to provide a resume as part of the application process.

## Sample Resume

Name

Address

Address

Phone

Email address

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### EDUCATION

Sturgis Charter Public School  
(Extended Essay topic can be listed here)

September 200\_\_ -

### EMPLOYMENT

Example:

**General Market Anytown, MA**

month/year-month/year

Cashier and short order cook  
Customer relations

**Anytown Recreation**

Arts and Crafts Counselor

month/year-month/year

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**Group**

month/year-month/year

**Group**

month/year-month/year

**Group**

month/year-month/year

### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

**Organization**

month/year

### CLUBS

month/year

### SPORT

month/year

