



Common App updates

October 20, 2022

Meredith Lombardi, Director, Education and Training
Student Success team

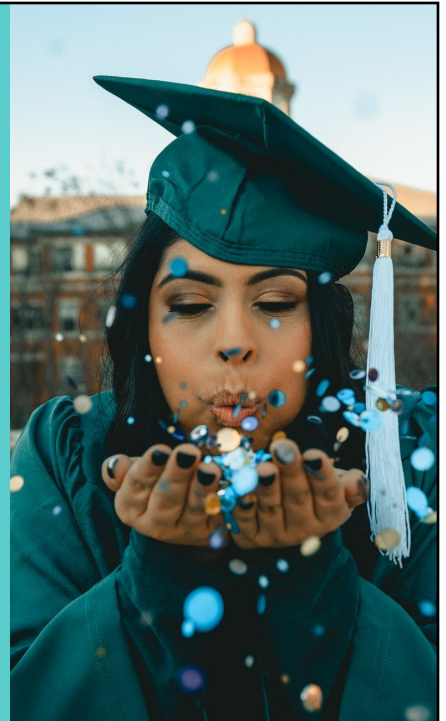
Agenda

- Common App community
- Application updates
- Recommender experience
- Advising tools and resources
- Your questions

Common App community

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Each year, more than one million students – a third of whom are first-generation – apply to college through Common App.



MISSION

Common App is a nonprofit membership organization committed to the pursuit of access, equity, and integrity in the college admission process.

VISION

Be the trusted source to access, afford, and attain opportunity for all.

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Common App membership

2022–2023

1,035

Member institutions

285

Public members

514

Charge no application fee

50

U.S. states, DC, and Puerto Rico

59

International members

18

Countries outside the U.S.

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New members

2022–2023

68

New members and counting

24

U.S. states

31

Public institutions

commonapp.org/blog

Public institutions

- Troy University (AL)
- Florida International University (FL)
- Miami-Dade College (FL)
- Kennesaw State University (GA)
- Savannah State University (GA)
- Ball State University (IN)
- Indiana University-Northwest (IN)
- Murray State University (KY)
- Southern University at New Orleans (LA)
- Fitchburg State University (MA)
- Grand Valley State University (MI)
- Michigan Technological University (MI)
- Elizabeth City State University (NC)
- North Carolina Central University (NC)
- UNC Pembroke (NC)
- Winston-Salem State University (NC)
- Thomas Edison State University (NJ)
- University of New Mexico (NM)
- University of Nevada, Reno (NV)
- Eastern Oregon University (OR)
- The Citadel(SC)
- The University of Memphis (TN)
- Stephen F Austin State University (TX)
- Tarleton State University (TX)
- Texas A&M University (TX)
- Texas State University (TX)
- The University of Texas at Austin (TX)
- Central Washington University (WA)
- Eastern Washington University (WA)
- University of Washington (WA)
- University of Washington - Bothell Campus (WA)
- University of Washington - Tacoma Campus (WA)
- Western Washington University (WA)
- University of Wisconsin - River Falls (WI)
- Concord University (WV)
- West Virginia State University (WV)

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Common App in California



* 32 accept transfer app

- AMDA College and Conserv. of Perf. Arts
- California College of the Arts
- California Institute of Tech (Caltech)
- California Lutheran University
- Chapman University
- Charles R. Drew Univ. of Med. and Science
- Claremont McKenna College
- Columbia College Hollywood
- Concordia University Irvine
- Dharma Realm Buddhist University
- Dominican University of California
- Fresno Pacific University
- Harvey Mudd College
- Holy Names University
- Loyola Marymount University
- Menlo College
- Minerva University
- Mount Saint Mary's Univ., Los Angeles
- Occidental College
- Otis College of Art and Design
- Pepperdine University
- Pitzer College
- Point Loma Nazarene University
- Pomona College
- Saint Mary's College of California
- Santa Clara University
- Scripps College
- Simpson University
- Soka University of America
- Southern CA Institute of Architecture
- Stanford University
- The Culinary Institute of America (CA)
- The Master's University
- University of La Verne
- University of Redlands
- University of Saint Katherine
- University of San Diego
- University of San Francisco
- University of Southern California
- University of the Pacific
- University of the West
- Westmont College
- Whittier College
- Woodbury University
- Zaytuna College

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Request a free map

commonapp.org/map

Your future starts here

More than one million students each year trust Common App to explore and apply to over 1,000 member colleges and universities worldwide.

INTERNATIONAL

2022-2023 MEMBERS
Find up-to-date information about each member institution at commonapp.org

INDEX

Find member institutions by state or country

First-year applicants' home states and countries

2021-2022

Top 15 states

- New York (9%)
- **California (8%)**
- New Jersey (6%)
- Florida (6%)
- Illinois (5%)
- Texas (5%)
- Pennsylvania (5%)
- Massachusetts (4%)
- Ohio (4%)
- Virginia (4%)
- Georgia (3%)
- North Carolina (3%)
- Maryland (3%)
- Michigan (3%)
- Colorado (2%)

1.2M applicants

221 countries & territories

7.6M applications submitted

10% int'l

Top 15 countries (non-US)

- China (15%)
- India (11%)
- Nigeria (4%)
- Canada (4%)
- Pakistan (4%)
- Ghana (3%)
- Ethiopia (3%)
- Nepal (2%)
- United Arab Emirates (2%)
- Korea, Republic Of (2%)
- Brazil (2%)
- United Kingdom (2%)
- Saudi Arabia (2%)
- Bangladesh (2%)
- Vietnam (2%)

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Data, analytics, and research

As an organization serving millions of students and counselors each year, Common App is uniquely positioned to share data and provide insight into the college admissions process.

- Research briefs
- State reports
- Deadline updates

commonapp.org/about/reports-and-insights

Common App in California

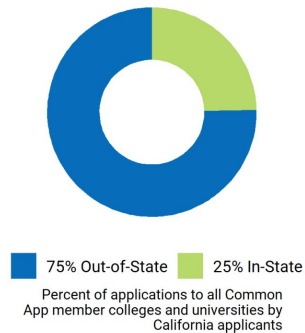
2021-2022

554,743 Applications submitted

95,847 Unique applicants

975 Unique colleges and universities applied to (out of 982)

Destination of Applications

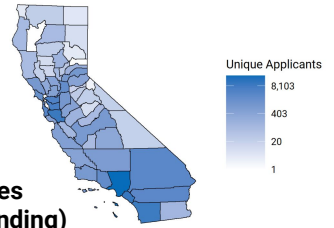


commonapp.org/statereports

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Common App in California

2021–2022



Top receiving institutions from applicants in California (descending)

- University of Southern California
- Stanford University
- University of Oregon
- New York University
- Arizona State University
- Loyola Marymount University
- Northeastern University
- University of Michigan
- University of San Francisco
- Boston University
- University of Colorado Boulder
- Chapman University
- Cornell University
- Santa Clara University
- Harvard University

Top applying counties in California (descending)

- Los Angeles County
- Orange County
- Santa Clara County
- San Diego County
- Alameda County
- Contra Costa County
- San Mateo County
- San Bernardino County
- **Riverside County**
- San Francisco County
- Ventura County
- Sacramento County
- Marin County
- Placer County
- San Joaquin County

commonapp.org/statereports

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Application updates

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Account rollover

The Common App launches on August 1 each year, but students don't have to wait until then.



Username and password

remain the same.



What rolls over?

A student's college list and answers to questions on the Common App tab.

- Profile
- Family
- Education
- Testing
- Activities
- Writing
- Courses & Grades



What does NOT roll over?

Anything on the My Colleges tab, including answers to college-specific questions, the FERPA release authorization, or recommender invitations.

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Application fees should not prevent students from pursuing higher education

Students with financial need can easily request a fee waiver in the application.

Examples of eligibility criteria:

- ACT/SAT fee waiver
- Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program
- Federal, state, or local program
- Family receives public assistance
- Can provide a supporting statement

See colleges that charge no application fee at commonapp.org/explore

514

Colleges with no application fee

\$102M

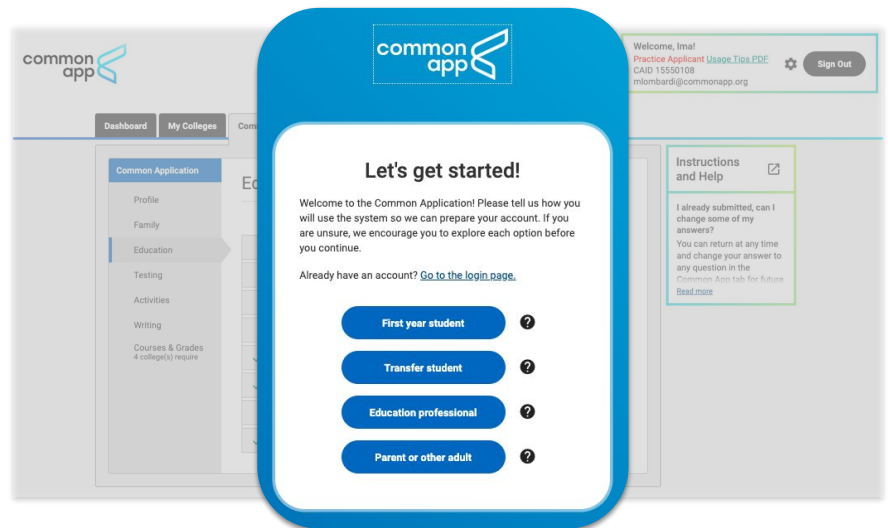
Granted in fee waivers

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Create a practice account

- Visit commonapp.org
- Click **Create an Account**
- Choose your path

Select **Education professional** to explore the student experience

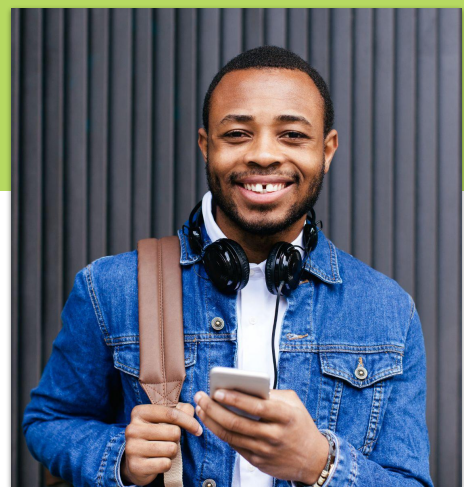


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Mobile app

Common App for mobile provides the same secure, streamlined application experience as the Common App online, all from the convenience of a mobile device.

The mobile app seamlessly integrates with the desktop experience – allowing students to apply to college, research financial aid, and get advice from counselors – virtually anytime, anywhere.



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Removing question barriers

Evolving the Application is an annual process that examines and revises categories within the common portion of the application that may act as barriers for students historically underrepresented in higher education.

Past change highlights

- Removed school discipline question
- Removed military discharge question
- Changed Family section to be more inclusive of undocumented students

commonapp.org/evolvingtheapp

Application updates

Sex and gender

2022–2023 changes

- Add "Mx." and "Other" as prefix options
- Reorder and move gender, pronouns, and "name" questions to better support student experience

2023–2024 changes

- Add "X or another legal sex" as a legal sex option

Common App fee waiver

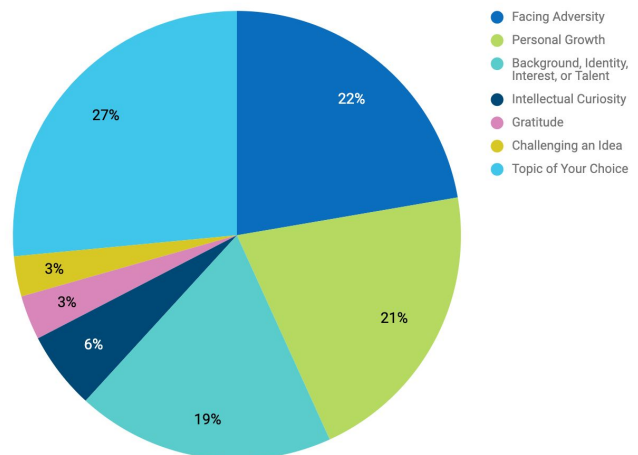
- Add fee waiver criteria to in-line intro text before yes/no question
- Remove checkbox criteria question for both students and counselors; replace with a simply "yes/no" question to affirm student eligibility
- Add space for counselors to provide context about student's financial situation

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Essay prompts remain the same

The personal essay helps students distinguish themselves in their own voice.

- Choose from 7 different essay prompts
- 650 word limit
- Use content from Google Drive in their application 📁



www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts

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Community disruptions

Located in the Writing section

Community disruptions such as COVID-19 and natural disasters can have deep and long-lasting impacts. If you need it, this space is yours to describe those impacts. Colleges care about the effects on your health and well-being, safety, family circumstances, future plans, and education, including access to reliable technology and quiet study spaces. For more information, check out our [COVID-19 FAQ](#).

- Optional
- 250 word limit
- Separate from the existing Additional Information question, which remains (650 word limit)
- Counselors are also asked to discuss the impact on the school community in their forms

commonapp.org/blog



Access to UStrive mentors

[UStrive](#) – formerly Strive for College – was started in 2015 as a way to virtually connect students to trained volunteer mentors in a safe and secure environment.

Since 2016, students who qualify for a Common App fee waiver have been invited to connect with a UStrive mentor in the first-year application.

Beginning in 2022, all first-year and transfer students have the option to connect with a UStrive mentor, regardless of fee waiver eligibility.

UStrive mentors help students:

- Apply to college
- Navigate the financial aid process
- Transition into college
- Get their degree
- Find a job after graduation

Expanded integration partners



appsupport.commonapp.org/applicantsupport/s/recommender-integration-partners

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Recommender experience

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Recommender types

Counselor

- Completes school forms and sends transcript
- Writes letter of recommendation (40% require)
- Can view completion progress and a PDF copy of student's application (with permission)

Teacher

- Completes teacher evaluation and writes letter of recommendation (34% require)
- No school requires more than 2

Other recommender

- **Optional**
- Examples
 - Arts teacher outside of school
 - Clergy
 - Coach
 - College access counselor
 - Employer
 - Family member
 - Peer
 - Other

Advisor

- **Optional**
- Students can invite up to 3 advisors
- Advisors do not submit any forms
- Can view completion progress and a PDF copy of student's application (with permission)

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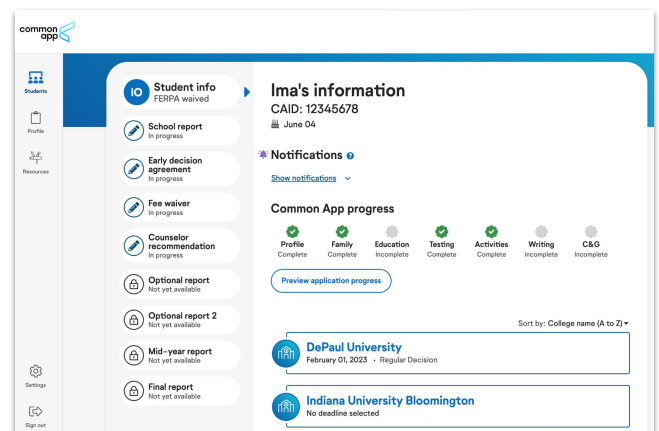
First-year recommendation system

700K+ counselors, teachers, advisors, and other recommenders use the Common App to support students with the application process

Once a student invites and assigns a recommender in their application, an email invitation is sent. Recommenders **activate their account** in Common App's Recommender system.

- Download the Requirements Grid
- Track student progress
- View college-level details for each student
- Access a PDF preview of in-progress applications, with student permission
- Export detailed lists to Excel

recommend.commonapp.org



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First-year recommendation system

Use search filters to find cohorts of students

- Deadlines
- Required forms
- Application progress
- Use of Courses & Grades
- Application preview
- Colleges applying to
- Graduation year

The image shows two mobile app screenshots of the search filters interface. The left screenshot displays the 'Search filters' screen with sections for 'Deadline on or before', 'Deadline on or after', and 'Counselor forms'. The 'Counselor forms' section includes options for 'Required forms' (Any required forms not yet submitted, School report, Early decision agreement 1, Early decision agreement 2, Fee waiver, Counselor recommendation, Optional report, Mid-year report, Submitted, Not Submitted) and 'Final report'. The right screenshot shows the 'Search filters' screen with sections for 'Student progress' (Common application complete, Requires courses & grades, Application preview enabled), 'Colleges' (Choose an option), and 'Graduation year' (Choose an option). Both screens feature a 'Show 1 students' button at the bottom.

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First-year recommendation system

The image shows a screenshot of the Common App Profile page. The page is titled 'Profile' and includes a 'Preview' button and an 'Update' button. The profile information is organized into sections: 'Personal Details', 'School Details', 'School Profile', 'Class Rank', 'GPA', 'GPA Scale', 'GPA weighting', and 'School's passing mark'. The 'GPA' section includes a question 'Do you report GPA (Grade Point Average)?' with 'Yes' selected. The 'GPA Scale' section shows a scale of 4. The 'GPA weighting' section shows 'Weighted' selected. The 'School's passing mark' section shows a mark of 70.

Profile information can be updated for all students prior to completing initial, mid-year, and final reports

- Class rank (start and end dates)
- GPA (start and end dates)
- Transcript (most recent grades included)

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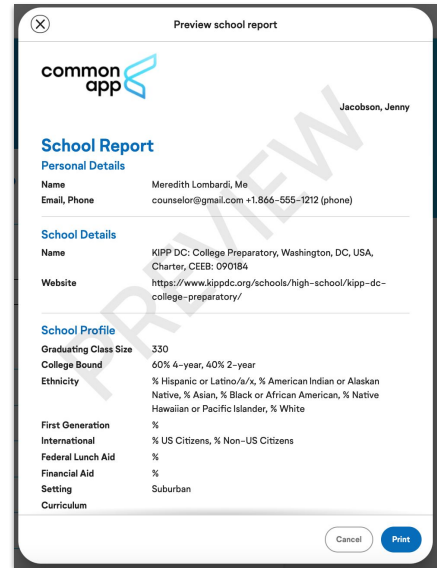
Submitting forms

Common App uses single-submission (“one-and-done”) to streamline the process for counselors, teachers, and other recommenders.

Each college determines which forms they require.

- School profile
- School report
- Early decision agreement
- Fee waiver
- Counselor recommendation
- Optional report 1 and 2
- Mid-year report
- Final report
- Teacher evaluation
- Other evaluation

Transcripts, recommendations, and school forms are only sent to colleges when students submit their Common App.



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Advising tools and resources

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Video tutorials

Check out our new videos!

- First-year application walkthrough
- Transfer application walkthrough
- Breaking down the essay prompts
- Answers to frequently asked questions

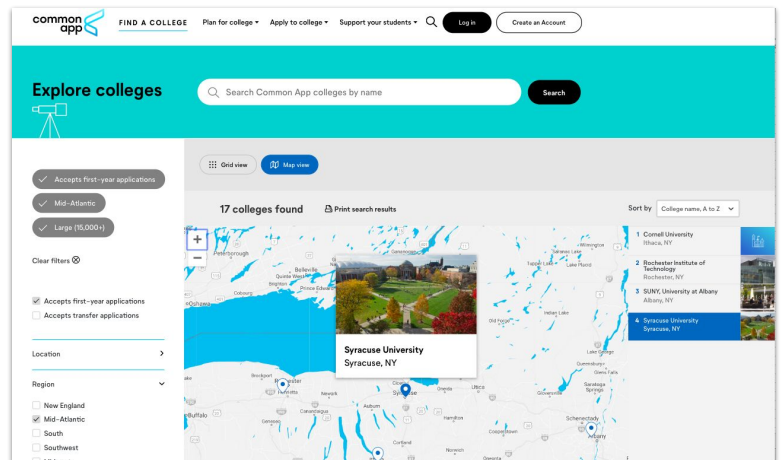
www.youtube.com/commonappmedia/videos



Explore colleges

- Expanded filter options
 - Public / private
 - Enrollment size
 - Campus setting
 - Merit / need-based aid
 - Specialized mission
 - Test-optional
 - Accepts self-reported test scores
- Map views of colleges
- PDF export of college lists
- College profiles
- Virtual tours and image galleries

commonapp.org/explore



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Planning resources

- Why college matters
- Paying for college
- College roadmaps for middle school, high school, community college, and military students
- Family resources
- Application and recommender guides

commonapp.org/plan

Your path to college

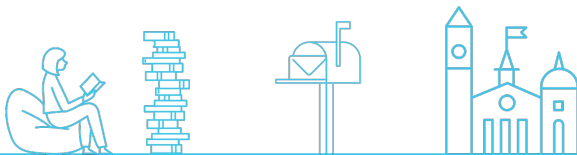
No matter where you are in the process, you're already on the path to college. Take a moment to celebrate that. It means you already have the ability to learn, the desire to explore, the persistence to grow, the determination to focus, and the motivation to apply.

Learn how to get to college

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Letter writing support

Colleges that invite letters of recommendation are looking for stories that will help them better evaluate a student for academic potential and fit within their community.



Access writing resources in the Recommender guide
commonapp.org/counselors-and-recommenders/recommender-guide

Writing guide for counselors and teachers

Colleges that invite letters of recommendation are looking for stories that will help them better evaluate a student for academic potential and fit within their community. Colleges that invite letters of recommendation are looking for stories that will help them better evaluate a student for academic potential and fit within their community. The content that the letters share, support, and highlight is intended to be used by the student.

	Counselors	Teachers
How counselor letters add value	Counselors provide a point of comparison with the student's writing, providing context and insight into the student's academic and extracurricular achievements, and personal interests and goals, without repeating what is in the application.	Teachers provide a point of comparison of the student's writing, using their Personal Knowledge of Academic Achievement (PKAA) to provide insight into the student's writing, class behaviors, and work habits to help the student gain a context.

While both counselors and teacher recommenders capture a student's personality and strengths, these are distinct differences between the two professions. Below are examples of ways they capture the academic achievement commitments are trying to assess and how each writer might address them.

Writing effective letters of recommendation

From resources to teaching preferences to plans, colleges invite recommenders to share how individuals who are students have affected college paths. The insights and application essays get to know a student better by providing a personal perspective, attitudes, personality, and potential. Here are some suggestions to help you to be most effective for your students.

Find out what fits.
By understanding the student's interests — what they love to do, how they spend their time, and how they spend their time — you can write an effective letter that is truly meaningful.

Tell a story that only you can tell.
Colleges want to know about the student's life, not just the student's academic achievements. They want to know about the student's life, not just the student's academic achievements. They want to know about the student's life, not just the student's academic achievements.

Colleges value context, not perfection.
Students — and recommenders in particular — are often tempted to write the most impressive of their students' achievements. However, colleges are looking for stories that showcase your own credibility as a recommender.

Common App Ready

The screenshot shows the 'Telling your story' page from the Common App Ready toolkit. It features a sidebar with 'Resources' and 'Download' links for various guides. The main content area is titled 'How to approach the essay' and includes an introduction, a 'Think about' section with bullet points, an 'Ask yourself' section, and another 'Think about' section with bullet points. The page is clean and professional, with a blue and green color scheme.

A toolkit of tips and best practices to help students with each step of the application process

- Getting started
- Preparing your application
- Telling your story
- Working with recommenders and advisors
- Paying for college

commonapp.org/ready

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24/7 support

Help when you need it!

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Known issues
- Contact support
- Live member colleges
- Writing requirements resource
- School discipline resource
- Application PDFs

appsupport.commonapp.org
recsupport.commonapp.org

The screenshot shows the 'Recommender solutions center' page. It has a blue header with the 'common app' logo and the title 'Recommender solutions center'. Below the header is a search bar with the text 'How can we help?' and a 'Search' button. There are two buttons: 'Home' and 'Contact us'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Popular FAQs' and lists five questions with expandable arrows. The right column is titled 'Helpful resources' and lists six links. At the bottom right, there is a 'Chat with us' button.

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Learn more

1. Sign up for the monthly newsletter
2. Create a practice student account
3. Use Application Preview to support your students
4. Take advantage of our free resources
5. Connect with us
@CommonApp, @ReachHigher, @BetterMakeRoom



commonapp.org/advisors



6/07 What's new webinar: [recording](#) and [slides](#)

9/13 Webinar for new counselors: [recording](#) and [slides](#)

Questions

We're committed to continuous improvement
ideas.commonapp.org

Thank you

Meredith Lombardi

mlombardi@commonapp.org

Contact 24/7/365 support when you need it

appsupport@commonapp.net (*application questions*)

sfsupport@commonapp.net (*recommender questions*)