Common App updates

Meredith Lombardi, *Outreach and Education*
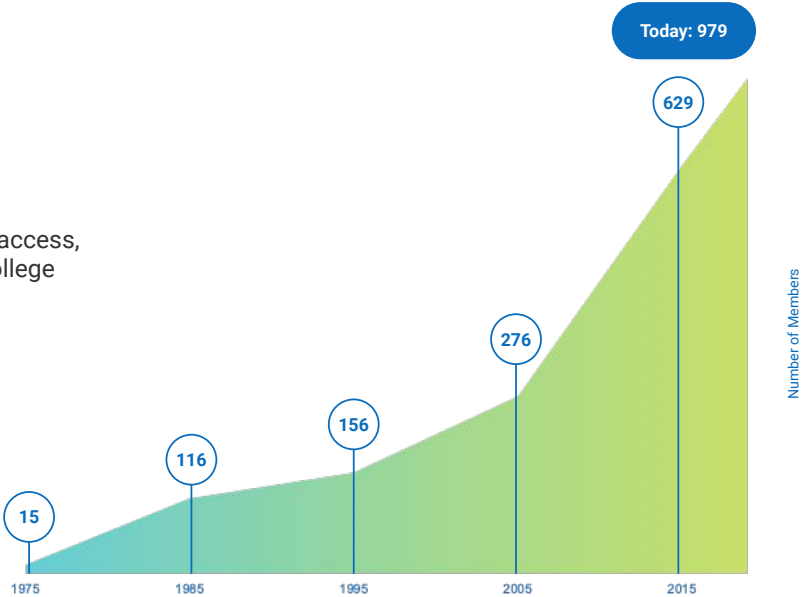
September 30, 2021

Agenda

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

Common App community

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Who we are

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

Today: 979

629

276

156

116

15

1975   1985   1995   2005   2015

Growth in membership 1975 – 2021

Number of Members

979 Members

50 US States, DC, & PR

63 International Members

19 Countries outside the US

common app

Your future starts here

More than one million students each year trust Common App to explore and apply to nearly 900 member colleges and universities worldwide.
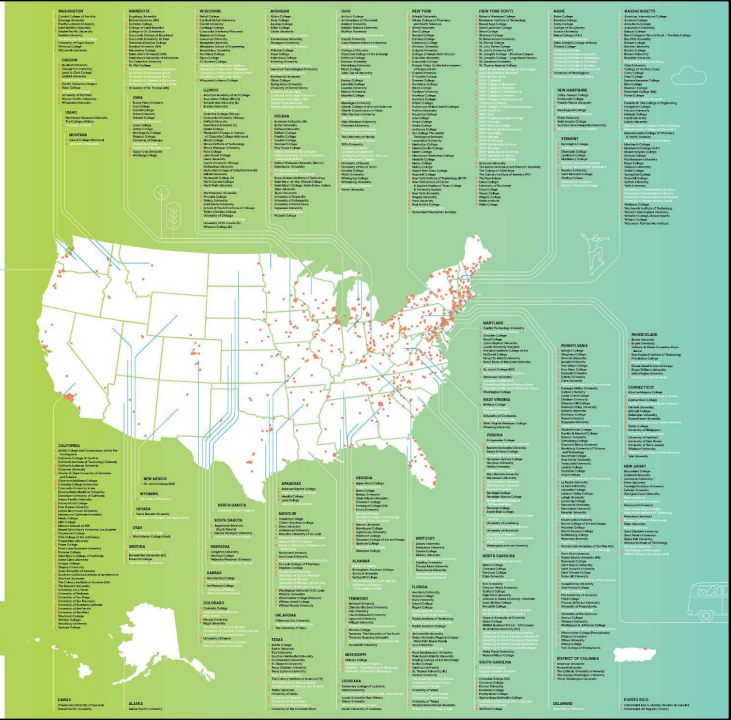
INTERNATIONAL

2020–2021 MEMBERS
Find up-to-date information about each member institution at commonapp.org

INDEX
Private colleges and universities
Public colleges and universities

2021-2022 new members

65 New members and counting

23 US states

Common App's newest members include all of the public universities in Illinois

32 public institutions

- The University of Alabama (AL)
- Colorado Mesa University (CO)
- Fort Lewis College (CO)
- Colorado School of Mines (CO)
- Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FL)
- University of North Georgia (GA)
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale (IL)
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (IL)
- University of Illinois Springfield (IL)
- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (IL)
- Western Illinois University (IL)
- Greenville University (IL)
- Illinois State University (IL)
- Eastern Illinois University (IL)
- Governors State University (IL)
- Northeastern Illinois University (IL)
- Grace College (IN)
- Indiana State University (IN)
- Westfield State University (MA)
- Worcester State University (MA)
- Towson University (MD)
- Saginaw Valley State University (MI)
- Western Carolina University (NC)
- Oregon Institute of Technology (OR)
- Portland State University (OR)
- Clarion University of Pennsylvania (PA)
- East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania (PA)
- Lincoln University (PA)
- South Carolina State University (SC)
- Austin Peay State University (TN)
- Texas A&M University-Commerce (TX)
- James Madison University (VA)

Common App in California

46 members

- 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
- Marymount California University
- Menlo College
- Mills College
- Minerva Schools at KGI
- 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 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

commonapp.org/explore

The applicants

2020-2021

Top 15 states

- New York (11.2%)
- **California (9.2%)**
- New Jersey (6.7%)
- Florida (5.7%)
- Illinois (5.6%)
- Massachusetts (5.2%)
- Pennsylvania (4.9%)
- Ohio (4.9%)
- Texas (4.1%)
- Virginia (4.1%)
- North Carolina (3.9%)
- Georgia (3.4%)
- Maryland (3.2%)
- Connecticut (3.0%)
- Michigan (2.5%)

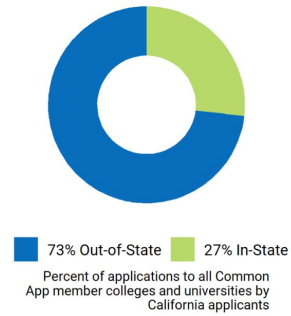**1M** applicants

6.6M applications submitted

Common App in California
(2020-21)

511,457 Applications submitted

94,587 Unique applicants

910 Unique colleges and universities applied to (out of 919)

Destination of Applications

■ 73% Out-of-State ■ 27% In-State

Percent of applications to all Common App member colleges and universities by California applicants

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Common App in California
(2020-21)

Total comparisons, inclusive of all applicants and all countries

+11% State annual change in applications

+17% Total annual change in applications

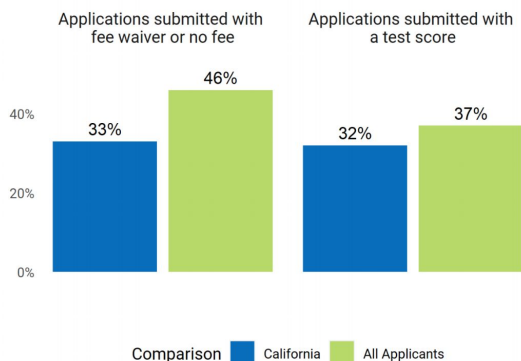**+6%** State annual change in applicants

+9% Total annual change in applicants

Common App in California
(2020-21)

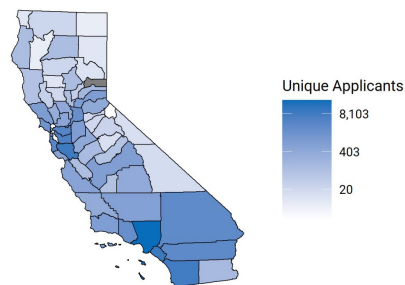|	Applications submitted with fee waiver or no fee	Applications submitted with a test score

33%
Applications submitted with fee waiver or no fee

32%
Applications submitted with a test score

Applications submitted with fee waiver or no fee: 33% (California), 46% (All Applicants)

Applications submitted with a test score: 32% (California), 37% (All Applicants)

Comparison: California | All Applicants

Common App in California
(2020-21)

Top receiving institutions (descending)

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

Unique Applicants
8,103
403
20

Top applying counties (descending)

- Los Angeles County
- Orange County
- Santa Clara County
- San Diego County
- Alameda County
- Contra Costa County
- San Mateo County
- **Riverside County**

- San Bernardino County
- San Francisco County
- Ventura County
- Sacramento County
- Marin County
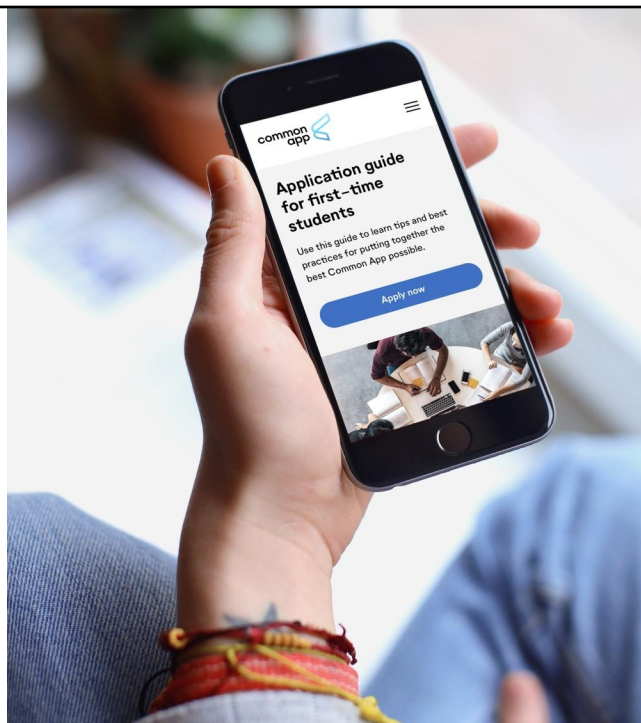- Sonoma County
- Placer County

Application updates

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Mobile app
now available

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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.

Evolving the Application

Summary of changes

Evolving the App is an initiative that examines categories within the common portion of the application, as part of Common App's ongoing effort to create an inclusive application for all students.

The inaugural project ran from March 2020 - February 2021.

We will repeat this process on an annual basis.

commonapp.org/evolvingtheapp

Sex and gender
- Revised questions that deal with gender identity
- Added pronouns and preferred first name
- Changed "Sex" to "Legal sex" and moved to demographics section

Family
- Revised, made optional, or removed questions that may create barriers for undocumented/ DACA students

Military discharge
- Removed the question

Citizenship
- Combined the Geography and Citizenship sections
- Revised, made optional, or removed questions that may create barriers for undocumented/ DACA students

Religious affiliation
- Removed the question

School discipline
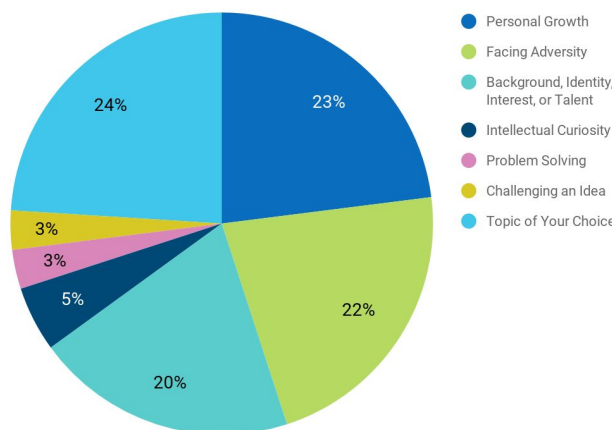- Removed the question

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Personal essay

Choose from 7 different prompts.

Students can use content from Google Drive in their application. 🗂️

Beginning August 1, the Problem Solving prompt was replaced with a new prompt on Gratitude:

Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?

- Personal Growth — 23%
- Facing Adversity — 22%
- Background, Identity, Interest, or Talent — 20%
- Intellectual Curiosity — 5%
- Problem Solving — 3%
- Challenging an Idea — 3%
- Topic of Your Choice — 24%

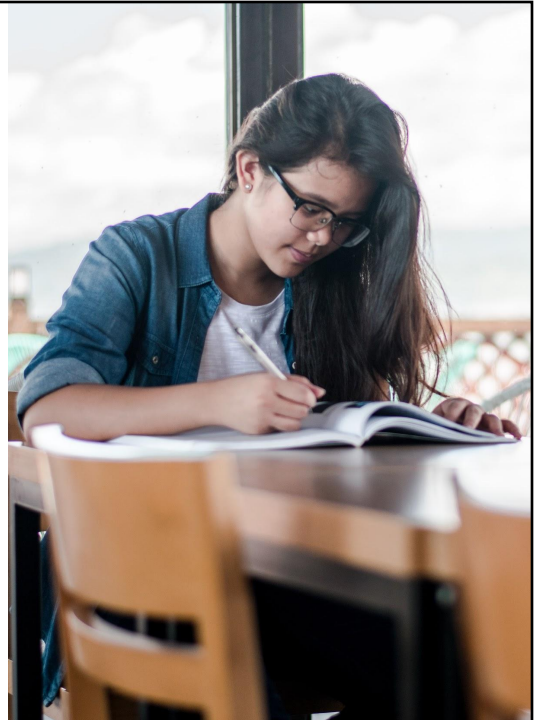**www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts**

Community disruptions

Question located in the Additional Information 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 of these events on the school community in their forms**
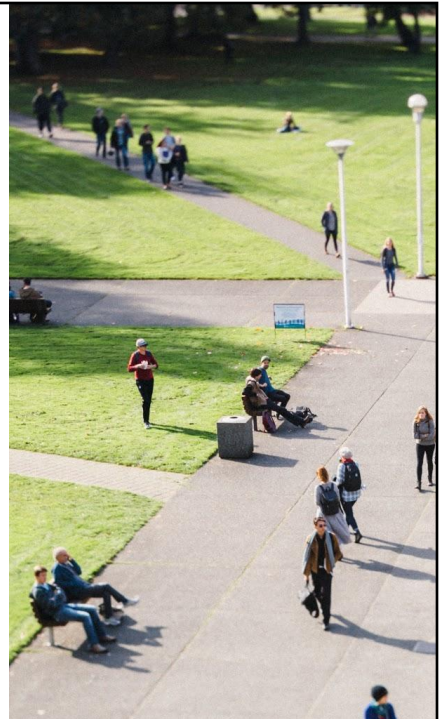
commonapp.org/blog

Additional application updates

First-year

- Testing: Addition of Cambridge and Duolingo English Test
- Testing: Removal of pre-2016 SATs
- Current Year Courses: aligned language and data points with Courses & Grades
- Courses & Grades: updated introductory language

Recommender updates

Recommender updates

Counselors

- Improved ability to identify reason and content of updates on Optional Report
- Ability to submit an additional Optional Report
- Removal of School Discipline question from School Report
- Addition of Cambridge courses to School Profile

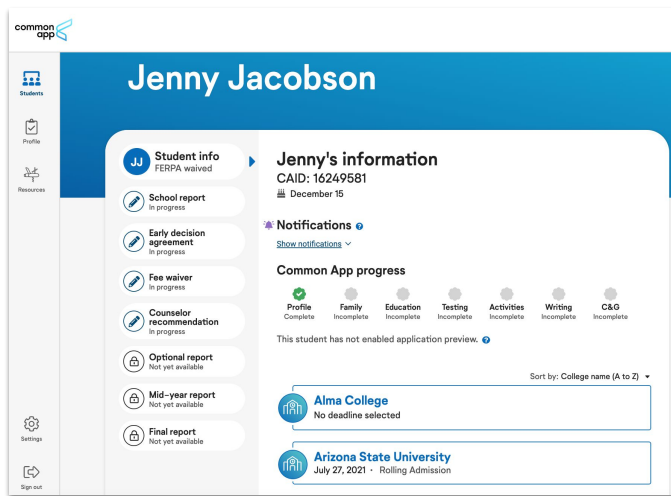**June 2021 What's New [webinar recording](#) and [slides](#)**

First-year recommender system

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

- 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

commonapp.org/advisors

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 (35% require)
- Optional report 1 and 2
- Mid-year report (25% require)
- Final report
- Teacher evaluation (30% require)
- Other evaluation

www.commonapp.org/counselors-and-recommenders/recommender-guide

Expanded integration partners

Existing partners

2021-2022 New partners

BridgeU

maialearning

parchment

CIALFO

NAVIANCE BY POWERSCHOOL

SchooLinks

FolderWave

OVERGRAD

xello

kuder®

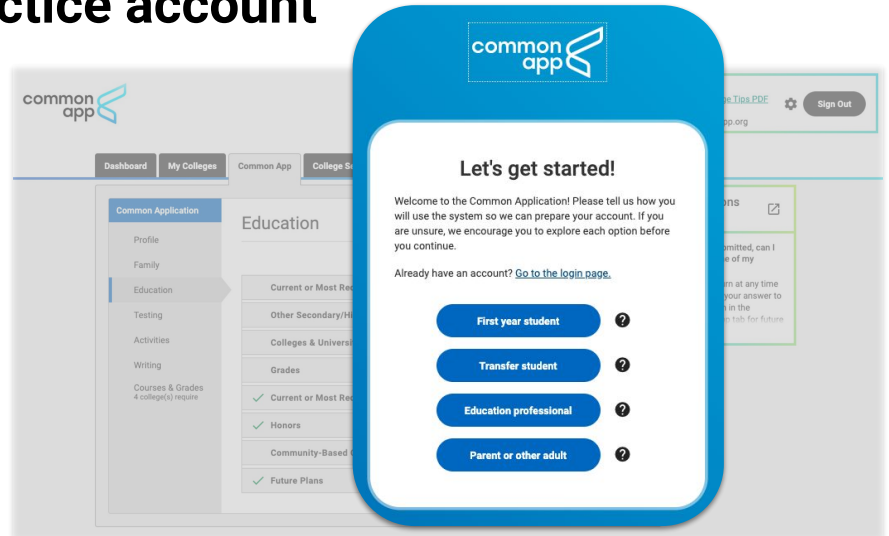Major Clarity

unifrog

XAP

Advising tools and resources

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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Account rollover

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

Username & 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
- Activites
- Writing
- Courses & Grades

What does NOT roll over?

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

commonapp.org

Explore colleges

- Expanded filter options
  - Public / private
  - Enrollment size
  - Campus setting
  - Merit / need-based aid
  - Test-optional
  - Accepts self-reported test scores

- Map and list views of colleges

- PDF export of college lists

commonapp.org/explore

Visit **fairtest.org** for full list
of test-optional schools

College details

- Details on application requirements
- Virtual tours and image galleries
- Ability for colleges to showcase specialized programs

commonapp.org/explore

Academic Programs

- Design
- Engineering
- Research
- Science
- Technology
- Liberal Arts
- Business
- Education
- Communication
- Music
- Art & Design
- Economics

- Finance/Accounting
- Government/Political Science
- Health Science
- Performing Arts
- Social Science
- Visual Arts
- Entrepreneurship
- Ethnic Studies
- History
- Humanities
- Journalism

Student experience

- Athletics
- Co-op/Internship Opportunities
- Disability Services
- Greek Life
- Intramural/Club Sports
- LGBTQIA Services
- Military/Veteran Services
- On-Campus Housing

- ROTC Program
- Study Abroad
- Undergraduate Research
- Cultural organizations
- Political Organizations
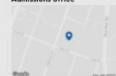- Speech & debate
- Student publications

N

Apply for first-year | Apply for transfer

Admissions office

Address
1801 Hinman Ave
Evanston, IL 60208, United States of America
Email
ug-admission@northwestern.edu
Phone number
(847) 491-7271

For first-year students
Admissions website
admissions.northwestern.edu/
Financial aid website
undergradaid.northwestern.edu/

Academic Programs

Plan for college

- College roadmaps for middle school, high school, community college, and military students
- Application and Recommender guides
- Learn about paying for college
- Parent resources

commonapp.org/plan

Plan your future

Get connected with everything you need to apply to college, research financial aid and scholarships, and get advice from counselors, advisors and mentors.

WHY COLLEGE MATTERS

College is an investment in yourself. It's worth it because you're worth it.

Learn more >

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

You have more options than you know. We can help you find them.

Learn more >

YOUR COLLEGE ROADMAP

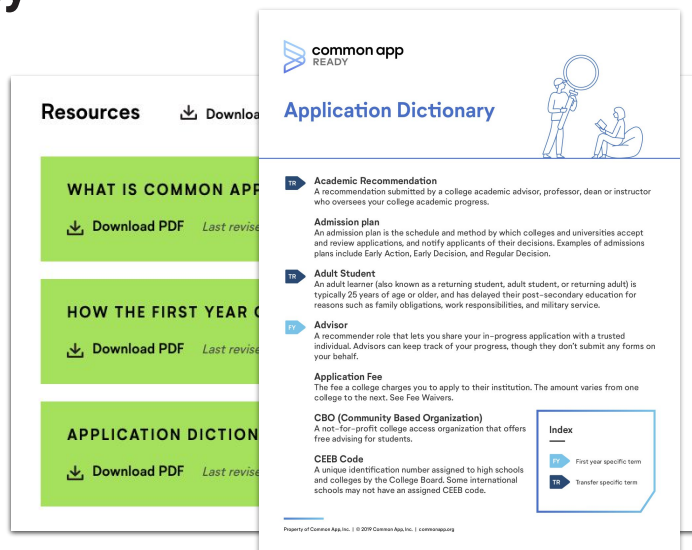The path may seem unclear. Luckily we know the way, including all the shortcuts.

Learn more >

Common App Ready

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

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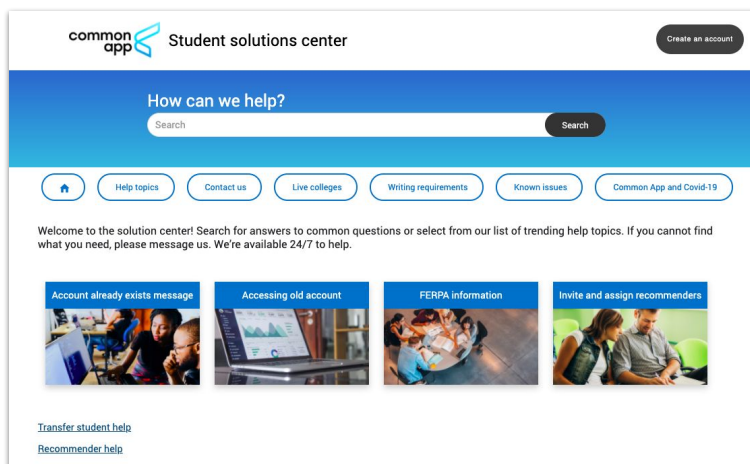- Paying for college

commonapp.org/ready

24/7 support

Help when you need it!

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Known issues
- Contact support
- Live member schools
- Writing requirements resource

appsupport.commonapp.org
recsupport.commonapp.org

Reach Higher initiatives

Reach Higher seeks to empower underrepresented youth to chart their own post-secondary pathways by equipping them with information, inspiration, and guidance.

Common App and Reach Higher have united to help millions more students live their college dreams.

Supporting Gen Z

Connecting via text

Celebrating counselors

Honoring commitments to higher education

Combating summer melt

BCPSCounseling/BRACE
@Counselor_BRACE

This @MiramarHigh2021 senior is doing BIG things ✨ She will be attending the prestigious Howard University in Washington D.C. where she plans to work towards becoming a lawyer 💼 Off you go to change the world Lynn 🎓 @HowardU @HBCUBuzz @ReachHigher @BetterMakeRoom #BrowardDecides

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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

Your 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*)