

# College Application Timeline

This lesson is designed to help high school students create an action plan for college applications.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Learn about the different steps of applying to college
2. Hear other students' experiences applying to college

## ACTIVITIES

### PART 1

#### Content Knowledge

1. Students should review MEFA's timeline, [Senior Year College Planning Checklist](#), to learn about the different steps of applying to college. Students should take notes and identify things they need to decide on or learn more about, such as their college deadlines, essay topic ideas, and letters of recommendation writers.
2. Have students log in to [mefapathway.org](http://mefapathway.org) and encourage students to view the *Journey to College* videos series (the link to the videos is found on the right-hand side of their Dashboard) to learn about the college application experiences of peers.
3. Have students identify steps applicable to their college application process.

### PART 2

#### Applying Information

In [mefapathway.org](http://mefapathway.org), students should navigate to *My College Applications* under the *Manage Applications* tab to add colleges they will be applying to. They should provide the following information for each school:

- Application Type (Early Action, Early Decision, etc.)
- Application Deadline
- Application Term (season and year)
- Application Status (not started, started, or submitted)
- Application Form

Students can request letters of recommendation and transcripts for each college on their list. Please note that for affiliate schools not integrated with Common Application and Parchment, these requests do not generate official documents but serve as an alert for the recipients.

Grade Level: 12

#### MEFA PATHWAY SECTIONS WITHIN THIS LESSON:

- My College Applications

#### SUBJECT AREAS:

- College Applications

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- College Timeline/Checklist (included)
- Internet connection to work with the MEFA Pathway website

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)



### PART 3

#### Evaluating Information

1. Students should establish an organizational system, such as a calendar, that shows important college application dates and deadlines.
2. Students should make certain that they are managing deadlines.
3. Have students mark their calendar with time they will use for college prep.
4. Students can use the *Goals & Strategies* page in [mefapathway.org](http://mefapathway.org) under the *Build Career Plan* tab to create short and long-term aspirations related to completing their college applications.

### PART 4

#### Critical Thinking/Creative Application

1. After students have viewed the *Journey to College* videos series, encourage them to write a reflection about what they hope to learn about the college application process.
2. Class discussion: Ask students what they have learned about the college application process that they did not know prior to this lesson. How do they feel about this? Confident? Scared?

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)

# College Timeline/Checklist

## September - October

- Make a list of (and visit if possible) all the colleges to which you want to apply.
- Create a Common App account at [CommonApp.org](https://CommonApp.org).
- If needed, register for the SAT® or ACT® for a test date this fall.
- Create an FSA ID (for the FAFSA) online at [studentaid.gov/fsaid](https://studentaid.gov/fsaid).
- Begin to fill out your college applications.
- If you haven't yet, request recommendation letters from teachers. Provide your recommenders with enough time (at least 6-8 weeks) to write your recommendation.
- Begin to work on your essay. Do not procrastinate! Let your personality stand out and individuality shine. Ask your English teacher to help you edit and proofread it. Essays should be around 500 words. (The Common app does not allow more than 650 words).
- If you are applying through Early Decision or Early Action, complete and submit your application(s) now.
- Submit the FAFSA as soon after October 1st as you can at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov).

## November - December

- If you registered for one, take your standardized test and have your test scores sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Complete and submit your applications before Thanksgiving for schools with a December or later deadline.
- Start researching scholarships and grants. Check with your school counselor on local scholarship opportunities.

## January - February

- Keep doing your best in your classes! Grades will continue to count throughout senior year.
- Have your mid-year grades sent to the colleges that have requested them.
- Complete as many scholarship applications as possible and submit them.

## March - April

- Once colleges inform you of your acceptance, inform your school counselor of your acceptances and scholarships.
- Do not take Rolling Admissions for granted. Colleges with no application deadline may reach their maximum class size quickly. Apply as early as possible.
- Carefully review your college acceptances and financial aid offers.

## May

- **DECISION TIME!** As soon as you make your final college choice, return the acceptance form (with the deposit) to secure your spot and notify your school counselor of your choice.
- Take AP tests and arrange for your scores to be sent to the college you will attend.

## June

- Request from the main office that your final transcript be sent to the college you will attend.
- Look for information from your chosen college about housing, roommate(s), orientation, course selection, health records, and placement tests.
- Enjoy your last day of school. **CONGRATULATIONS!** You have made it through high school. Enjoy your graduation and look forward to college.

# College Application Timeline Grading Rubric

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)

CATEGORY	EXCELLENT 4	GOOD 3	SATISFACTORY 2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 1
Content Accuracy	All content on the reflection is accurate. There are no factual errors.	Most of the content is accurate but there is one piece of information that seems inaccurate.	The content is generally accurate, but one piece of information is clearly inaccurate.	The content is confusing or contains more than one factual error.
Sequencing of Information	The information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Some information is logically sequenced.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Effectiveness	The reflection includes all material needed to give a good understanding of the student.	The reflection is lacking one or two key elements.	The reflection is missing more than two key elements.	The reflection is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies.
Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (size, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formats have been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Conventions. Student uses proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The reflection has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	The reflection has 1- 2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	The reflection has 1- 2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	The reflection has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors.