

Now begins the great adventure of applying to college! Here is a list of guidelines to help you through the application process.

If you are applying to a four-year college or university:

Make sure you take your SAT or ACT tests starting in the Spring of your junior year. The last time will be in October, November, or December of your senior year. Some colleges want tests taken by November! If you are applying to any of the Universities of California or other very selective colleges, you also need to take two SAT Subject Tests in subjects of your choice.

If you have been in the United States for less than three years of school, you may also need to take the TOEFL test. Check the catalog of the colleges to which you are applying to see if you need to take the TOEFL. Applications are available in the College Center.

Most colleges prefer that you apply online on the internet. Our school's website, www.polyhigh.org has many links to college websites and search engines to help you in your college quest. The internet is the fastest, most efficient way to explore college options and apply to college.

UC 's and CSU's want you to apply online. You can reach their websites through our school's website. From www.polyhigh.org if you are applying to any other private or out-of-state colleges, you must contact those colleges (online is the easiest way) and ask for an application for admission.

When you get your applications for admission to private colleges, look for a page entitled **SCHOOL REPORT** or **SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT**. This is the page that you give to Mrs. Warman right away to fill out for you. Read it carefully to see what it requests. If it asks for an official transcript, ask Mrs. Warman to send your transcript to the college. Fill out the top line of the School Report with your name, social security number, and any other information that they request, sign the waiver, then give it to Ms. Warman along with a **BRAG SHEET** and 2 or 3 **TEACHER RECOMMENDATION** forms, and a copy of your personal essay for that college or an autobiography. Remember that the more complete your packet and Brag Sheet are, the better your letters of recommendation will be.

Private College applications will probably also ask you for teacher recommendations. Be sure to give your teachers plenty of time to write these recommendations for you and also give them a stamped envelope addressed to the college to which it is to be sent. Do not ask teachers to write letters for Cal State or UC or community college admissions, although you may need them later to apply for specific scholarships to those schools.

Pay very close attention to application and scholarship deadlines. Make sure that you have completed all the forms and have mailed them at least a week before they are due. To have proof that you have mailed them on time, get a **CERTIFICATE OF MAILING** from the post office when you mail them.

If you need an official transcript sent to the college, ask Mrs Warman to send one for you by filling out a REQUEST FOR TRANSCRIPT form. If the college wants an unofficial transcript, Mrs. Warman can give you one.

Please have all requests for letters of recommendation and School Report forms into Ms. Warman and your teachers before Thanksgiving.

The time to apply to CSU's is during October and November, and to UC's in the month of November. Most UC's are very strict about their November 30 deadline and will not accept applications after that date. Most private colleges have either December, January, or February deadlines. Read your applications very carefully to make sure that you meet their application deadlines. Some private colleges have "rolling admissions"—that means that as long as they have space in their freshman class, they will keep accepting applications.

If you are applying to Community Colleges, you do not need to take SAT's or ACT's, or have letters of recommendation. If you are graduating in June, you apply to community colleges in March, April, or May or sooner. If you are graduating sooner, check with Mrs. Warman about application deadlines for community colleges.

Especially during the Fall, there will be frequent visits from college representatives. Be sure to read the bulletins, visit our website, listen to PA announcements, and notice the signs posted in the quad to keep abreast of college rep visits to the College Center. The representatives that visit our campus are the ones who read your application, so come in and meet them and make a good impression by asking them questions that you have about their respective campuses.

Be sure to keep a folder or some sort of filing system for all your college correspondence. It is a good idea to make copies of all the important applications that you send. Use Certificates of Mailing (95 cents at the post office) to prove that you mailed test registrations, college applications and scholarship applications on time.

Be wary of mail from companies that may come to your house offering to help you find scholarships for a fee. You never have to pay anyone to get information about scholarships or financial aid. If you get anything suspicious, bring it to Ms. Warman to look over.