

Class of 2021 – Fall FAQs

As you are preparing and establishing a timeline for submission of college applications, we are aware that you might have process and procedure questions. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions for this fall:

Q: When will Mrs. Prange be meeting with seniors?

A: I typically meet with the entire senior class during the 2nd Ac Lab of the school year. As plans for the upcoming school year are still being developed, I cannot definitely say how things will work. I anticipate that this information will be shared virtually, so stay tuned! I also usually have 2 evening events specifically for senior parents (College application info and Financial Aid). I presume these events will also be delivered virtually this year. Once the school year begins, if you and/or your parents would like to schedule an individual appointment with me (probably virtually), you can simply reach out to me via email to find a time that will work.

Q: If a college accepts multiple applications, should I use their application or the Common Application?

A: The college has absolutely no preference. They provide the various options to make things simpler for you. I would not suggest using the Common App for only 1-2 schools, as you could likely complete those individual applications much faster than filling out the Common App. If 3 or more of your schools accept the Common App (check list [here](#)), however, then it would likely make more sense to use that method. Please note that **if you use the Common App**, you will automatically have to request that a counselor complete a Common App **Secondary School Report** for you, even if no recommendations are required.

Q: How do I submit official transcripts to the colleges to which I am applying?

A: The first step is to sign and return a "Authorization to Release Records" form. The form is also available in the Counseling office or may be printed directly from the "[Senior Class](#)" section on the PCH Counseling website. Once the form has been received by the Counseling office, you will be able to request transcripts in Naviance. First, move your schools from "colleges i'm thinking about" to your application list in "colleges i'm applying to". You may then select to request a transcript to that school and indicate whether you would like test scores sent. Those steps then prompt us to process the request. A step-by-step guide is also available on the Senior Class page.

Q: How soon am I able to submit transcripts? Do I need to apply to the college(s) first?

A: The electronic transcript submission tool used between high schools and colleges is closed between 7/15-8/1 as they transition to the new school year. The colleges will consider "date applied" as the date by which a student's application has been submitted. There is no negative consequence for transcripts arriving later, as they know that the system is not available and that most schools are not yet in session to process requests. A transcript may be sent before or after you submit the application, but should be sent along with all required documents (school report forms, letters of recommendation, etc.) and received prior to the deadline established by the college.

Q: How long does it take to process my transcript request?

A: If the college **does not** require the submission of school forms or letters of recommendation, then the transcript should be processed within the three school days. If the college **does** require additional documents (ie all Common App schools), then the request will not be processed until all forms (including the Common App Secondary School Report which is required by ALL schools on Common App) and the minimum number of required recommendation letters have been uploaded. It is your responsibility to follow up with your recommenders and counselor to ensure they are meeting the appropriate deadlines.

Q: The school to which I am applying has their own transcript release form. May I just use that?

A: Most colleges do have release forms that you may print and sign, but we require that all transcript requests be made directly in Naviance. This allows us to track the request and successful delivery of all documents.

Q: How do I send my test (ACT, SAT, SAT Subject Test) scores to the colleges?

A: Some schools require that the scores be sent to them directly from the testing agency (ACT or Collegeboard). If you would like to send only certain scores, or the school requires from the testing agency, then you must log in to your ACT (www.actstudent.org) or Collegeboard (www.collegeboard.org) account and pay to have the scores sent. This request **could take up to 2-3 weeks** to process, so plan ahead!! If the school indicates that they will accept scores with a high school transcript, then you may check to send the scores with your request. In this situation, your entire high school test card will be sent. Many schools are now also shifting to self-reporting test scores through the application, and then not requiring you to send an official score report unless you are admitted to choose to attend.

Q: When a school requires that I submit teacher letters of recommendation, how does that work?

A: Colleges typically would like to see recommendations from core teachers from junior or senior year. In the "colleges - apply to colleges" section of Naviance, you will see "Letters of Recommendation". Once you have spoken with a teacher and they have agreed to write for you, you will select their name from the list provided and send them a brief message thanking them for writing and reminding them of your timeline. They will upload their letter (and complete a TE (Teacher Evaluation) form for Common App schools) and it will be submitted when we process your transcript request. Your transcript request will remain pending until all requested letters have been completed and uploaded.

Q: When a school requires that I submit a letter of recommendation from a counselor, how does that work?

A: Many colleges require that a school report and/or counselor recommendation accompany your transcript. If you are applying to any schools using the Common App, the school report is required, but the recommendation requirement varies from school to school. Once you have spoken with a counselor about your need for school reports/recommendations, you need to then complete the "**Counselor**

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Recommendation Survey" that is on the About Me - My Surveys section in Naviance. They will complete any required forms and upload their letter, and it will be submitted when we process your transcript request. Your transcript request will remain pending until all required pieces are available to submit.

Q: What should I do if I have a recommendation from someone other than a PCH teacher?

A: For outside recommendations, you should provide the letter writer with stamped, addressed envelopes so they may submit directly to the universities. If the school uses the Common Application, you will need to request that person write for you directly through the Common App website. They will then be provided with a link to upload their recommendation.

Q: The application I am filling out is asking for my high school rank. What should I put?

A: Parkway Central does not rank. Most applications will offer this as an option. If a field is requiring a rank to proceed, you may enter "0" out of "0". This will alert the college to the fact that you are unranked. The colleges will then look to our school profile for additional information regarding our Latin Honors System and the competitiveness of our school.

Q: I am extremely overwhelmed and feel like I am going to need more individual support, are there any resources available?

A: Mrs. Prange is available to answer questions and meet with students and families individually to provide additional support. Unfortunately, since there is only one of her and hundreds of seniors, the wait time for an appointment can be sometimes be challenging during certain windows of time. To support her efforts, Central High partners with the local non-profit organization, [Mentors4College](#). We encourage you to check out the **FREE** resources available on their website. Throughout the year they host webinars, essay-writing and interviewing workshops, and have a pool of trained mentors to assist you and your family.

Q: What are the FAFSA and CSS Profile and when do I fill them out?

A: The FAFSA and CSS Profiles are applications to receive financial assistance for college. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) determines if a student qualifies for grants (free money) from the US government, state government and/or the individual institution. The [FAFSA](#) for the 2021-22 school year (your freshman year of college) **becomes available on October 1**. Both the student and one parent will need to create an [FSA ID](#) prior to submitting the application, so you can apply for those prior to October 1 so you are ready to submit the application as soon as it becomes available. The CSS Profile is generally only used by private colleges/universities (check [here](#) for list) who have institutional grant money to disperse, and also becomes available on October 1. The **FAFSA** is a **free** application which you submit annually. The CSS Profile has a fee, should only be submitted if requested by the colleges to which you are applying, and only needs to be submitted one time.

Q: Where do I find scholarship opportunities?

A: In addition to the automatic scholarships offered by colleges/universities upon acceptance, several will also have competitive applications which require a separate application. Make sure you check the university financial aid websites for those opportunities. [Naviance](#) is where we will post all scholarship opportunities we receive. To access the scholarship list, log into Naviance, go to Colleges, then Scholarship and Money, then **Scholarship List**. Check this regularly as new opportunities arrive frequently and deadlines occur throughout the school year. Naviance also has a National Scholarship Search powered by SallieMae. For a local database, I suggest that you check out [Scholarship Central](#). The local scholarships also become available at various times of the year, so create an account and check what is open throughout the school year. There are also many other national scholarship databases in apps like [Scholly](#) or websites like [FastWeb](#), [Scholarship.com](#), and [Cappex](#). For those sites, I recommend that you create a newly created email address to use for registering and applying so your general mailbox does not receive the floods of mail! Check the PCH Counseling [Financial Aid](#) page for additional information.

Q: Is it too late to sign up for the A+ Scholarship Program?

A: The guidelines suggest that students should be enrolled by February 1 of senior year. I am flexible with this date as long as you can provide a plan for completing your 50 hours of tutoring/mentoring by May. If you are interested in enrolling, you simply need to turn in the signed Participation Agreement and Tutor Training Certificate, both available on the [A+ website](#). If you meet program requirements, you are eligible for **up to full tuition benefits** to cover the cost of attending a MO community college (like St. Louis or St. Charles Community College) for two years (or until you've earned your Associates Degree), and may also be eligible for smaller scholarship opportunities at some other colleges/universities in MO.

Q: Does my senior year schedule even matter? What about my senior year grades?

A: Yes, they both matter. During the application process, colleges will look at your transcript of grades from freshman through junior year, and then view your senior year schedule to see if you are preparing yourself academically for their campus. Some will ask you to send your first semester grades to them in January (a few even ask for your 6-week progress grades during 1st semester!), and the college you choose to attend will receive your final transcript in May. If your level of course rigor or your academic achievement decreases significantly from when you applied/were admitted, the college/university could rescind your admissions decision or you could have a scholarship reduction. Moral of the story - - stay focused!