

Life After York Q & A: Parent to Parent Advice

Applications

Application Timing

Early Applications - October/November

Early Decision (ED) (binding and limited to 1 college) -

- Admissions decision in December.
- Be sure this is the very first choice-you must accept admission.
- Consider financial ramifications before applying ED.

Restrictive Early Action (non-binding; rules vary)

- Admissions decision in December or January.
- Can apply to other colleges but there are restrictions.
- Allows comparison of financial aid packages.
- Cannot apply Restrictive Early Action if ED is planned.

Early Action (EA) (non-binding)

- Admissions decision in December or January.
- EA may be required for eligibility for certain scholarships and programs at some schools.
- Can apply to other colleges.
- Allows comparison of financial aid packages.
- May also apply to one school ED.
- (Note: U of I offers early action).

Other Timing and Regular

Rolling Admission (non-binding)

- Colleges admit throughout the fall, winter and spring until desired class size attained.
- Allows comparison of financial aid packages.

Early Decision II (binding and limited to 1 college)

- Slightly later ED application date (typically January).
- Admissions decision a bit earlier than Regular Decision timing.
- Be sure this is the very first choice-you must accept admission.
- Consider financial ramifications before applying ED.

Regular Decision (non-binding)

- Apply typically in early January.
- Admissions decision in mid- to late-March/early April.
- In some cases, apply early/before the regular decision date, to be eligible for certain scholarships and programs. Check dates carefully!
- Allows comparison of financial aid packages.

Typical Application Requirements

- ▶ Application - School specific (i.e., U of I), Common App, Coalition App.
- ▶ Personal Statement and/or Essay - Some schools require school specific essays. Some schools post samples on websites. (See slides on Essays!)
- ▶ Letter(s) of Recommendation - See next slide.
- ▶ ACT or SAT scores - These are sent by ACT or SAT to colleges once student requests. Check if writing portion is needed. You can send scores for free to a certain number of colleges when your student tests. Otherwise, you pay extra.
- ▶ Fees - Range \$0-\$70+. Paid through Common App or Coalition App.
- ▶ Transcript (official, unofficial or self report) - York CCRC form used as needed.
- ▶ Supplementary materials - Major or program specific:
 - ▶ Art and architecture: may require portfolios.
 - ▶ Music and Drama: audition tapes, in person auditions, etc. may be required.
 - ▶ Sports: may have specific recruiting procedures, need for videos, tryouts, etc.

Letters of Recommendation

- ▶ Need for them varies. Most schools ask for two (teacher and counselor), but some schools do not accept any and some allow up to three.
- ▶ When teacher letters are required the colleges typically want to hear from classroom teachers, not coaches and club sponsors.
 - ▶ Other individuals (coaches, sponsors, employers, church leaders) might be able to provide letters as “extras” or “other recommenders” if the colleges accept.
 - ▶ Your student should ask the people who know him/her the best.
- ▶ Please have your student ask early, during late spring of junior year in person or by writing. An activity resume should be included with the request. Teachers often draft these letters during the summer months.
- ▶ It is completely acceptable to follow up and ask if the letter has been sent. Naviance aids in this process.
- ▶ Your student should always send a thank you letter or email.

Parent to Parent Tips

- ▶ Activity resume - Serves as foundation for college applications. Begin preparing no later than sophomore year. Reflect in-school and out-of-school activities, awards, leadership, work experiences, etc.
- ▶ Start application process in the summer of senior year. Open applications, draft essays, request letters of recommendation if still needed.
- ▶ Aim to submit applications at least one to two weeks before the stated deadline. Avoid tragedy of last minute glitches, spelling errors, etc.
- ▶ Hitting 'submit' on that first application can feel scary! Don't apply to your favorite college first.

Logistics of Making the Decision

- ▶ Some decision notification is on-line with follow-up in the mail, others arrive only by mail.
- ▶ If your student does not hear from a college, first check spam email, then have them contact the admissions department directly. Busy process and mistakes are rare but they can happen.
- ▶ If accepted to more than one college, re-evaluate the various factors for each. For instance:
 - ▶ Financial aid and scholarships offered. Does the scholarship, grant or loan continue all 4 years?
 - ▶ Acceptance in certain programs (i.e., Major, Learning Community, Honors College, etc.)
- ▶ Deferrals and wait lists:
 - ▶ If a student applies early, the college may decide to defer their decision until the regular decision announcement date.
 - ▶ If wait listed (after regular decision), determine the college's wait list process to see if additional information - updates, additional letter of recommendation, etc. - is allowed.
 - ▶ Keep these colleges informed with updates between initial application date and final decision.
- ▶ Decide!
 - ▶ Accept at one college.
 - ▶ Notify other colleges of non-acceptance (recall other students are waiting to hear about wait list status).
 - ▶ If wait listed, be sure to commit and pay deposit to one college by May 1, even if you are⁶ still waiting to hear about an offer.