

# COLLEGE APPLICATIONS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Oswego East HS – Lunch and Learn  
Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>

**ALPHAA** – Association of Latino Parents for Higher Academic Achievement

# TOPICS

- College Applications
- College Readiness
- Scholarship Search Engines
- Essay Topic Ideas
- Essay Tips – from ‘Meh to Amazing!
- Workshop Sessions

# COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

The Common Application is a college application shared by its member colleges. This means that instead of filling out an individual application for each college, you just fill out the Common Application once and send it to whichever colleges you want to apply to that accept it.

Many colleges have additional “supplements” you have to fill out.

## **Who Uses the Common Application?**

Over 600 colleges use the Common Application! At least one college in every state accepts it, with the exceptions of North Dakota and Wyoming.

## **When is the Common App due?**

Your application deadline depends on whether you are applying early decision (typically November 1) or regular decision (typically January 1). Deadlines also vary by school, so be sure to check dates for every college you are applying to.

Reference: <http://www.commonapp.org/>



# COLLEGE READINESS

## **Attending College**

Attending college is a full-time job. You will have to work hard, play hard, and lose sleep. Take advantage of the time you have in high school to prepare for college. Do your research and go on college visits to narrow your list of schools. Remember to prepare for the following:

## **The College Search**

You will be spending the next four years of your life in college, so choose wisely. Start your college search during your junior year of high school, and go on frequent campus visits. Consider academics, size, location, and other opportunities when searching for the right college. Do not waste time applying to schools that do not offer your major of interest.

Recommended search engine: [www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)



# COLLEGE READINESS

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## **The Applications**

College applications require your full attention. Look at application requirements for each school in which you have interest in. Do so at the end of your junior year. To avoid complications, submit all materials at least one month before the deadline. Ask for letters of recommendation months in advance so your instructors have ample time to write a good reference.

## **The Standardized Tests**

Standardized tests are unavoidable. To prepare, borrow an ACT or SAT workbook from the library or take a standardized test preparation class. Take the exam during spring semester of your junior year so you can retake the exam to get the highest possible score before college applications deadlines.

## **The Financial Aid**

Financial aid is essential to pay for a college education. **Do not overlook the financial aid process.** Before taking out thousands in loans, submit your FAFSA, found at [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov). Apply to win scholarships and grants.



# SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH ENGINES

**About \$19 Billion in Financial Aid to Help You Pay for College**

<https://www.scholarships.com/scholarship-search>

**Apply for more scholarship money in a snap.**

<https://www.scholarsnapp.org/>

<https://youtu.be/xbHt99E6olc> (Video)

**Access to potential college matches and millions in scholarships**

<https://www.fastweb.com/>

**Connecting students to exceptional opportunities for college.**

<https://peerlift.org/>

More searching on the ALPHAA - <https://oehs-alphaa.weebly.com/scholarships.html>

# ESSAY TOPIC IDEAS

1. Share your story.  
Genuinely meaningful and unique to **you**.
2. Learning from obstacles.  
Overcoming challenges demonstrates courage, grit, and perseverance!
3. Challenging a belief.  
Focus on a time you stood up to others or a time when your own view was challenged.
4. Solving a problem.  
Get at the heart of how you think and what makes you tick.
5. Personal growth.  
Highlight anything from a major milestone to a smaller "aha" moment.
6. What captivates you?  
This prompt is an invitation to write about something you care about.
7. Topic of your choice.  
Pick a dynamo essay from English class or a question from another college's application.  
(Some samples: <https://collegeadmissions.uchicago.edu/apply/essay/past-essay-questions>)
8. Describe a person you admire.  
Avoid the urge to pen an ode to a beloved figure like Gandhi or Abraham Lincoln.
9. Why do you want to attend this school?  
Be honest and specific when you respond to this question.

Reference: <https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/application-essay-topics>

# ESSAY TIPS

## (FROM “MEH” TO AMAZING)

1. Analyze the prompt thoroughly
2. Organize your writing
3. Show instead of telling
4. Know your vocab
5. Write succinctly
6. Combine like ideas into more sophisticated sentence structures
7. Seek qualified second opinions
8. Be GENUINE and make it about YOU

Reference: <https://www.petersons.com/articles/college-admissions/application-essay-tips>

**THANK YOU**  
for Attending!

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