



Applications

What is the MCDS School Code? 502-396.

What is the difference between “postmarked by” and “received by” deadlines?

When your stamp is cancelled, the postmark provides the date the letter was sent. “Received by” means the date your letter arrived at its destination. If you are working with a “received by” deadline, you should mail your materials at least a week in advance. **MCDS will assume any deadline you give is a postmark deadline, unless you tell us otherwise in writing.** Being mistaken about what kind of deadline you have is a very bad error to make; check and double-check.

What name should I use? Using your full name will help keep your application from getting mixed up with anyone else’s. (So does using your Social Security number, which is optional.) Whatever you do, make sure that your name appears exactly the same way on your standardized tests, transcripts, and all application-related paperwork. Decide now how you will list your name, and be consistent.

How many colleges should I apply to? Generally, ten is too many; two is too few. MCDS recommends that you aim for six: two “reaches,” two right in the middle, and two “safeties.” Your safety schools should be places you really would be quite happy to attend, should it work out that way.

What kinds of applications are there? Many of the private colleges and some public colleges/universities use the Common Application. Many public universities and colleges have their own applications. On any application, you will be asked for information about your coursework, cumulative GPA, standardized test scores if required, extracurricular activities, and fields of interest. You are also usually asked to write one or more essays.

What is the Common Application? A large number of colleges now use the Common Application, which saves you a great deal of time because you only have to supply basic information once. You can file the Common Application online or in paper form. **MCDS strongly recommends that you file online.**

Where can I get the Common Application? Go to www.commonapp.org to set up a Common Application account and get started with your applications. Even before you know exactly where you will apply, you can begin working on this. Be sure you are using the Common Application for the appropriate year (admission for Fall 2010, if you are in the MCDS Class of 2010, for example).

What if I have trouble using the Common Application? Go to <https://www.commonapp.org/CommonApp/FAQ.aspx> for help.

How do I find out which colleges use the Common Application? There is a map listing all the Common Application colleges on the bulletin board in Room 127.

If I am filing the Common Application, can letters of recommendation and transcripts be filed online, too? If you are applying to a Common Application school, your transcript and letters of recommendation can also be submitted online.

What are Supplements? Many colleges ask for information or essays not included in the Common Application. Be sure you know what each of your colleges requires and that you file any supplements according to the directions.

What about schools that do not use the Common Application? Find out from the college whether you can apply online or not. **MCDS strongly recommends that you apply online, if possible.** Keep in mind that information you supplied on the Common Application will not be accessible to schools that do not use the Common Application!

What is Early Decision? Early Decision applications must be submitted early (October or November). You may only apply to one school, and you agree that you will attend if offered admission. Admissions offers go out before the deadline for Regular Admission, so if you are not accepted, there is still time to submit applications to other colleges. Early Decision is a good option if you are quite certain about where you want to go, and it makes a powerful statement of your interest in the college.

What is Early Action? Early Action applications must be submitted early (October or November, usually), but you may apply to more than one school and you are not committed to enroll if admitted. Early Action is appropriate if a college is high on your priority list, but you want to keep other options open. Early Action demonstrates a strong level of interest in a college.

What is a Priority Deadline? Some of the state universities have two deadlines, one in early December and one in January. If you submit your application by the priority deadline, it will be considered in the first batch of applications. Applications received by the regular deadline are considered in the second batch. To maximize your chances of admission, submit your application by the priority deadline.

What is deferral? Applications filed for Early Decision, Early Action, and Priority consideration can have one of three outcomes: Acceptance, Rejection, or Deferral. Deferral means that you were not chosen from the first batch of applicants, but that you still have a chance to be chosen from the second batch. Often, candidates who have been deferred are asked if they wish to maintain their application on active status. Be sure you answer by whatever deadline is set by the college.