

POST-SECONDARY FAQ'S

Where do I go for help?

- **Naviance:** Use your school-issued Naviance account to research colleges, careers, and scholarship opportunities. Access your account from your Apps portal or the “Students” drop-down menu on the TFS website. Click “Naviance (Clever),” then “Log in with Active Directory.” If prompted, use your school email address (ID number@students.tfd215.org) and district password to log in. The “SuperMatch College Search,” and “Scholarship Search” tools are great resources to help you in your planning!
- **College representatives and guest speakers** from a variety of careers will host meetings with TFS students during the school day. Sign up using your Naviance account under “What’s New” on the home page. Seats are limited.
- Don’t hesitate to email your counselor to get help with post-secondary planning.

How do I apply to college and send my transcript?

1. Complete an online application through the “Admissions” link on each college/university’s website or through the Common Application. Be sure to match your Common App and Naviance accounts and complete the FERPA section. Submit your application after carefully proofreading and completing all required sections. There is no need to wait for your transcript, test scores, or recommendations to submit your portion of the application.
2. Order your transcript through Naviance:
 - **If applying via the Common Application:** You do NOT need to request an electronic transcript for Common App schools. Your counselor will upload your transcript and application fee waiver.
 - **If applying directly to the college/university:** You DO need to request an electronic transcript through Naviance. Application fee waivers (if applicable) will be uploaded with your transcript order.
 - i. Select “Colleges,” then select “Colleges I’m Applying to” from the top of the screen.
 - ii. Select the blue “+” and enter a college name to add the school to your list. Under the “I’ll submit my application” section, change “Via Common App” to “Direct to the Institution.” For schools you previously added to your list, click on the “+Request Transcripts” link. Click on the “EDIT” link next to the college and change the submission type to “Direct to Institution.”
 - iii. Select the type of transcript you are requesting. Initial transcripts should be requested for all college applications being submitted during Semester 1. Do not wait until Semester 2 to send your transcript if you are applying to a 4-year college and want to be considered for institutional scholarships.
 - iv. Click “Request and Finish” to submit your order.
3. If required, have your test scores sent directly from SAT/ACT using your student accounts at collegeboard.org/act.org. See your counselor for a fee waiver to send your scores and/or retake the exam.

When should I apply to college?

- Apply ASAP, but completing applications by October 31st ensures you will meet early action deadlines, which typically fall between November 1st and November 15th. Applying early also gives you the best chance at being considered for need or merit-based financial aid.

- Applications for many schools are accepted throughout the year, but there are benefits to applying early: merit scholarship consideration, reducing stress, early completion of housing applications, assessing options, and applying elsewhere if not accepted.

How do I register to take the SAT/ACT?

- Taking the SAT is a state requirement. **Many colleges and universities are remaining test optional for admission and scholarship consideration.** This means your grades and the rigor of the courses you have taken are even more important, so work hard to earn the highest grades possible!
- Test scores may be required by some colleges for merit scholarships, participation in Honors programs, or select majors. Strong test scores could also help balance out weaker parts of your application. If you wish to take/retake a college entrance exam, you will need to register online and select your preferred testing date and location from the website. Email your counselor for a fee waiver.
 - **SAT:** View testing dates and register online at www.collegeboard.org.
 - **ACT:** View testing dates and register online at www.act.org.

What is the FAFSA, and how do I complete it?

- All seniors in the state of Illinois are required to either complete the FAFSA or a FAFSA Nonparticipation Form as a graduation requirement.
- **Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** at www.fafsa.gov.
 - The FAFSA typically opens on October 1st, but for the 2024-25 academic year, the FAFSA will open in December.
 - The FAFSA determines whether or not you qualify for grants, loans, and scholarships and must be completed to be considered for financial aid. It may also be required by a college for merit aid consideration, which is not need-based.
 - Your parent/guardian's tax documents are required to complete the application.
 - Both the student and parent will need to create an FSA ID to fill out the FAFSA.
 - Aid money is limited, so complete the application as soon as possible after it opens.
- **Scholarships**
 - The majority of scholarships are merit-based and issued directly from the college/university that accepts you. Some colleges require additional applications for scholarship consideration, so be sure to contact the Financial Aid Office and/or visit any scholarships/aid links on each college's website for information specific to the school.
 - Use Naviance: Click "Colleges" and go to "Scholarships and Money" to find local/national scholarships that match your profile.

What if I want to play sports in college?

- **NCAA Eligibility Center (Score send code: 9999)**
 - NCAA Division I or Division II college athletes must be academically eligible and complete a minimum of 16 credits of NCAA-approved courses in core subjects.
 - DI and DII athletes must register online at www.eligibilitycenter.org (not required for DIII).
 - Once registered online, your transcript will be uploaded to your Eligibility Center account.
- **National Association of Interscholastic Athletics (NAIA) (Score send code: 9876)**
 - NAIA college athletes must be academically eligible.
 - All potential student athletes must register online at <http://www.playnaia.org/index.php>.
 - Entering freshmen must have a 2.3 GPA without qualifying test score or meet two of the three requirements: 2.0+ cumulative GPA, rank in top 50%, 970 SAT/18 ACT.