



COACHING FOR COLLEGE e-Tip Sheet for parents who have a student preparing for college

Why Do an Early Decision Application? - November

Is your son or daughter starting to work or continue on the college applications? This is a good time to get going as **Early Decision and Early Action** deadlines usually occur from **November 1- 15**.

What's the Difference?

Early Decision means you have made a binding commitment to attend a college or university, if you are admitted. The advantage is that you can apply early, and, if you're accepted, your college search process is over by mid December or January 1. Pretty smooth... Please note: A student may only apply to one college or university under a binding early decision plan.

So, if you do an Early Decision to Northwestern University, you agree to withdraw all applications at other colleges and enroll at Northwestern, if admitted. In other words, Northwestern is your 1st Choice and they want you! Students can file for Early Action or Regular Decision to other colleges. The rate of admission for Early Decision is higher than the overall admit rate.

Early Action means that you will get early notification, but you are not required to attend and have until May 1 to respond. Generally, your notification is around April 1.

The final application plan is **Regular Decision**. Here the applicant has a little more time with application deadlines ranging from January 1 to February 1 and notification again around April 1. (Check your university website for critical dates.) And if your application was denied for Early Decision or Early Action, you will probably be reviewed for Regular Decision.

In many cases, a few hundred colleges will accept the Common Application via paper or electronic. That's good news.

For seniors, the checklist for a complete application should mean that you are or have pulled together the following essentials:

- Biographical Data
- Extracurricular, Personal & Volunteer Activities
- Transcripts
- Test Scores
- Personal Statements or Essays
- Letters of Recommendation
- Some colleges will require or give you the option of an Interview.

Feel your teen could use a jumpstart for the college planning process? Perhaps as the parent, you realize you could use a tune-up on your career path as well or want to prepare to become an *Empty Nester*®. Contact Beckon Call and let's talk!

Coaching for College e-Tip Sheet© is written by Barbara Wulf. Send questions, comments, and article ideas to: Barbara.wulf@me.com or call 920-725-2030.



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Most seniors will not make more than 5 college applications. It's a time consuming project as they juggle high school, sports, clubs, drama, jobs, etc.

Parents can help keep their senior focused on the process with:

- **Small Goals to Complete the Application.** Perhaps an hour or two on certain weeknights would provide some structure. The students usually know when a project is due or a test is announced. Spending more time on the weekends is more likely when a block of time can be devoted to the process.

- **Weekend Work Sessions** can be a good time to lay out the plan of action for the upcoming week. For example, asking a teacher for a recommendation and dropping off the needed form with an addressed & stamped envelope. Make a note of the date you gave the form to the teacher and remember the deadline. Have the student do a friendly reminder or check-in with the teacher.

- **Organization.** Try using a labeled, colored folder for each application and check off the progress in completing the application. Keep the computer area as their work area.

- **Write It Down/Communicate.** Make notes of your progress. With 3-5 applications going, it's easy to get confused. Talk to each other and see how the progress is going. What support does your student need?

- **Call the Counselor Office or Stop In.** If you need clarification or verification on test scores or counselor recommendations, make the contact and find out.

- **Check the Counselor or Guidance Bulletin Board.** College Admission Counselors are visiting the high schools at this time, so *juniors*, check it out. SAT and ACT test applications are being printed in newsletters, are on the high school website, or the bulletin board by the guidance office. Keep your eyes open!

Happy Thanksgiving! Remember, that turkey and dressing will taste better if some applications are completed. Take the guilt out of watching a football game on Thanksgiving Day. It's about "do it now."

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