
How to Use the Common App

Things to Gather

- **Unofficial copy of transcript if asked to self report grades in the Courses and Grades section**
 - [Order Transcripts](#) (also where you will order transcript request if not using common app)
- **Copy of ACT or SAT test scores and dates**
 - log-in to your ACT or CollegeBoard account to retrieve your score reports
 - Test Optional
- **Social Security number for the FAFSA**
- **Parent info: parent's occupation/job title and education level. If your parent attended college, you'll need to know the name and location of the college they attended, as well as what degree they received and when.**
- **List of academic honors (ex. honor roll, all-academic teams, AP scholar awards, Underclassmen department awards, etc.)**
- **List of your activities. These activities might include family responsibilities, jobs, volunteer work, clubs, sports, hobbies, and more.**

Creating a Common App Account

[Explore Common App](#) - Application Guide for First Time Students

Counselor tips: Use a personal email address, do not use your school email account.

Be sure to use your legal name as it appears on official school documents and standardized tests. This will make sure colleges can match documents to the correct person.

High School Details Needed for Common App Tab

BHS does not rank.
The GPA scale is 4.0.

High School Name	Bellbrook High School
High School Address	3737 Upper Bellbrook Rd. Bellbrook, OH 45305
CEEB Code	360385
Graduation Date	5/17/2025
Graduating Class Size	228
Counselor Names	Khris Scohy (A-G), Andy Hartley (H-O), Debra Sanderman (P-Z)
Counselor Email	Khris.Scohy@bss.k12.oh.us Andy.Hartley@bss.k12.oh.us Debra.Sanderman@bss.k12.oh.us
Counselor Phone	937-848-3737

Adding Colleges

Once you've created your account and explored the colleges that accept the Common App, you're ready to start adding colleges.

The College Search tab is where you will search for and add the colleges you want to apply to. If you have a school in mind you can search by name.

Once you've added colleges, you can see them on your Dashboard and in your My Colleges tab. Keep in mind you may only add up to 20 colleges. You may adjust your list of colleges at any time.

**** While some colleges may charge an application fee, others have no fee to apply. And, many will offer fee waivers under certain circumstances, including financial need, veteran status, and more.***

FERPA Release

When it comes time to invite your counselor and recommenders, Common App will prompt you to complete the FERPA Release Authorization. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a law that protects the privacy of your education records.

Completing the FERPA Release Authorization will grant your high school permission to send those records on your behalf. Here's a quick breakdown of how this process works in the Common App:

What is an education record?



Education records are documents related to your attendance and performance in school. For example: grades, transcripts, test scores, school discipline, etc.

The release authorization asks you two questions about your education records under FERPA.

First, you must grant your high school(s) permission to release all requested records. Colleges you apply to may require documents like transcripts or letters of recommendation. Granting your high school(s) this permission allows colleges to receive these records and contact your school with questions.

Second, you will be asked to waive or not to waive your right to review recommendations and other forms.

Waiving your rights lets colleges know that you don't plan to read your recommendations. This helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful. Some recommenders may only write a letter if you have waived your rights. Check with your counselor or teachers to see if any of them follow such a policy.

Inviting and Assigning Recommenders

From the My Colleges tab select a college and open the "Recommenders and FERPA" section.

If you have not done so already, you will need to complete the [FERPA Release Authorization](#).

Each college has their own recommendation requirements. For example, one college may need two teacher recommendations. Some colleges may not want any teacher recommendations.

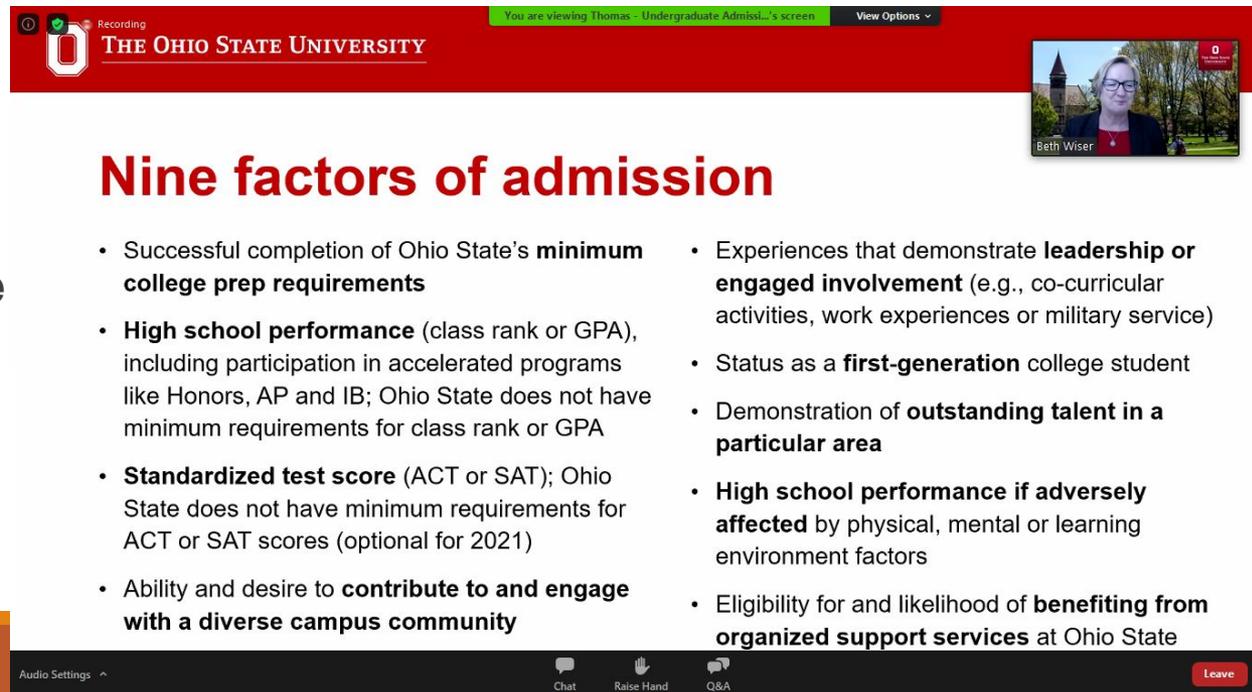
Go to assign recommenders for each college section. Select the teacher name from the dropdown and use the assign button

You MUST assign your counselor 1 time in order for you to be added to the counselor's assigned students.

Should I send my scores or not?

Colleges who are allowing test optional this year will look at your application from a holistic standpoint. For example, here are nine factors OSU will consider for admission. If you have an average ACT or SAT score you may want to include it in your application for consideration. For example, the middle 50% of OSU applicants admitted last year had an ACT score of 27 - 32.

Even though ACT scores are on the transcript, if you mark “do not consider my scores” they will not be taken into account for your application.



Recording

You are viewing Thomas - Undergraduate Admissi...s screen

View Options

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Beth Wiser

Nine factors of admission

- Successful completion of Ohio State's **minimum college prep requirements**
- **High school performance** (class rank or GPA), including participation in accelerated programs like Honors, AP and IB; Ohio State does not have minimum requirements for class rank or GPA
- **Standardized test score** (ACT or SAT); Ohio State does not have minimum requirements for ACT or SAT scores (optional for 2021)
- Ability and desire to **contribute to and engage with a diverse campus community**
- Experiences that demonstrate **leadership or engaged involvement** (e.g., co-curricular activities, work experiences or military service)
- Status as a **first-generation** college student
- Demonstration of **outstanding talent in a particular area**
- **High school performance if adversely affected** by physical, mental or learning environment factors
- Eligibility for and likelihood of **benefiting from organized support services** at Ohio State

Audio Settings

Chat

Raise Hand

Q&A

Leave

Self Reporting Test Scores

Official test scores will need to be sent to colleges directly from the testing agency.

As you begin filling out your Common App, remember that you have some flexibility in the Testing section. You can choose how to complete this section and which colleges receive your test scores. This is especially useful if you are applying to colleges with different testing policies.

To remove test scores all you need to do is go to the Tests Taken section and remove the test(s) you selected. If you don't plan on submitting any scores to a college, answer that "No" you do not want to self report scores. That will complete the section and remove any information you had previously entered from any future submissions.

To add your previously entered test scores, answer "Yes", you would like to report scores. Then, add back the test you had listed before. The sections will reappear, along with your answers.

Essay



Colleges can either make the personal essay optional or required. In the writing section of your Common App tab, you will see a table that lists each college's requirements.

Check out this link for tips on the common app essay. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VfOolmJuqM>. Sometimes writing essays can feel like the biggest part of your application. With a little bit of planning, organizing, and drafting, we can help you make this task more manageable.