FHS Seniors: What's new in college admissions and applications this year, 2024-2025

- Over 1,000 colleges and universities, including 35 Virginia colleges and universities, are using the **Common Application**: https://www.commonapp.org/. Some colleges have their own application and do not use the Common Application. The colleges do not have a preference which application you use. Choose whichever one works best for you.
- Some schools will have students **self-report SAT or ACT scores** in the application. This means you do not need to send official SAT/ACT scores until after you have committed to attending that school (after May 1 of senior year).
- Some schools are asking for **self-reported transcripts,** where you need to re-create your transcript (i.e., courses you have taken and the grades within those courses) as part of the application. It is recommended that you have a copy of your unofficial transcript in front of you when completing these parts of the application, or a SRAR, Self-Reported Academic Record.
- **Some schools are using self-reported transcripts AND self-reported test scores.**
- Many colleges and universities are still test optional this year but not all!
- **Bottom Line: Each college is different and may have different requirements. You must read the directions carefully for each school you are applying to!**

Tips for when you are completing the Common Application:
When completing the **Profile** section, if you are eligible for free or reduced lunch, complete the **Common App Fee Waiver** subsection so that your application fees will be waived. If you are not on free/reduced lunch and paying the college application fees poses a hardship for you and your family, please speak to your School Counselor.

When completing the **Education** section:
Fairfax High School Address: 3501 Lion Run, Fairfax, VA 22030
CEEB Code: 470785
Date of entry: If you started at FHS in freshman year, your date of entry: August 2021
Graduation Date: June 2025

-In the **Colleges & Universities** subsection:
Q: If you have ever taken coursework at a college or university, please indicate the number of colleges: Please complete this question only if you have already completed a Dual Enrollment (DE) course at FHS, or taken a summer course at a college with a grade and transcript. Do not count DE courses that you are taking senior year in this section.

-Here is the Fairfax HS info you need in the **Grades** subsection:
- Graduating Class Size: 622
- Class rank reporting: None. (FCPS does not rank students.)
- GPA Scale reporting: 4.00
- Cumulative GPA: You can find your cumulative GPA in SIS or in Naviance, click on your initials in the upper right hand corner. Scroll down to the Academic section - "Weighted GPA."
- GPA weighting: Weighted.

-Here is the Fairfax HS info you need in the **Courses & Grades** section:
- ▪ For 9th-11th Grade Courses: Grading Scale: A-F, Schedule: Yearly
- ▪ For 12th Grade Courses: Grading Scale: A-F, Schedule: Semesters

In the **Testing** section, only report test scores you are proud of!

For **Activities** section, review this great article about creating an effective Activities List in the Common App: https://www.applerouth.com/blog/2017/06/12/how-to-write-your-common-app-activities-list/

Under the **Writing** section, **Additional Information** subsection, there are two OPTIONAL essays:

- ● Community disruptions such as COVID-19 and natural disasters can have deep and long-lasting impacts. If you need it, this space is yours to describe those impacts. Colleges care about the effects on your health and well-being, safety, family circumstances, future plans, and education, including access to reliable technology and quiet study spaces. For more information, check out our COVID-19 FAQ. Max word count: 250

- ● Do you wish to provide details of circumstances or qualifications not reflected in the application? Max word count: 650

For each college you have listed in your "My Colleges" tab, you will need to complete the **Recommenders and FERPA** section.

Before you can Invite Recommenders, you must complete the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) questions. We recommend you authorize your schools and colleges to release and share records. **We HIGHLY recommend you select: "I waive my right to review all recommendations and supporting documents."** Doing so gives the colleges confidence that you trust your recommenders to write honest assessments. Teachers and colleges pay close attention to how you respond to this question.

- ■ After completing the FERPA Release Authorization, **Invite** your School Counselor, Teacher(s) or Other Recommenders. Once you've done this with your first school, do the same for every other school on your "My Colleges" list—*the "Recommenders" part must be completed separately for each college you apply to.*
- ■ School Counselor Information: Be sure to use the **@fcps.edu** email address. See below.

Counselor	Student Last Name	Counselor Email	Counselor Phone
Ms. Mary Bush	A-BR	MBush@fcps.edu	703-219-2219
Ms. Nikki Bender	BU-DO	NSBender@fcps.edu	703-219-2213
Ms. Meg Perepiczka	DR-HER	MKPerepiczk1@fcps.edu	703-219-2374
Ms. Tiffany Haddock	HES-LA	TDHaddock@fcps.edu	703-219-4002
Ms. Dara Markenson	LE-NAS	DMMarkenson@fcps.edu	703-219-2220
Ms. Liz Velazco	NAT-P & AVID	ECVelazco@fcps.edu	703-219-2207
Ms. Bertha Mensah	Q-STO	BNMensah@fcps.edu	703-219-2209
Ms. Tracy Hartley	STR-Z	THartley@fcps.edu	703-219-2212
Ms. Jeanna Squif	ESOL Counselor	JMSquif@fcps.edu	703-219-2290

PLEASE NOTE: It is imperative that you report ALL colleges you are applying to on the FHS Transcript Release Form, including schools with self-reported transcripts. By accurately completing the FHS Transcript Release Form, your Counselor will know if you are requesting a letter of recommendation (or not), and this will ensure FHS can send the mid-year reports and final transcripts to colleges.

Some notes regarding Virginia Tech's
Applications & Admissions:

- You can only use the Common Application when applying to Tech
- Virginia Tech is Test Optional this year
- **No letters of recommendation or resumes will be reviewed**
- Self-reported grades and test scores (if you want to send scores)
- **Major matters** in Tech's decision-making process! Choose indicated major very carefully!!
- **Deadlines:** Early Decision (binding) has been eliminated. The Early Action (non-binding) deadline is Nov. 15. Do NOT wait to apply to Virginia Tech for Regular Decision (Jan. 15) – spots will be filled!
- Virginia Tech will not read the Common App Personal Essay
- There are four **mandatory** short answer questions (120 words max) = "Ut Prosium Profile" in the Common App. Your answers to these questions are VERY important to Tech's Admissions process. Spend significant time preparing and responding to them.

Virginia Tech's motto is "Ut Prosim" which means 'That I May Serve'. Share how you contribute to a community that is important to you. How long have you been involved? What have you learned and how would you like to share that with others at Virginia Tech?

Virginia Tech's Principles of Community support access and inclusion by affirming the dignity and value of every person, respecting differences, promoting mutual understanding and open expression, and strives to eliminate bias and discrimination. Have you had an experience when you or someone you know were not being included? Did you reach out to anyone for assistance, direction, or resources? Were you able to affect change and/or influence others? Did this experience change your perspective and if so, how?*

Share a time when you were most proud of yourself either as a role model or when you displayed your leadership. What specific skills did you contribute to the experience? How did others rely on you for guidance? What did you learn about yourself during this time?

Describe a goal that you have set and the steps you will take to achieve it. What made you set this goal for yourself? What is your timeline to achieve this goal? Who do you seek encouragement or guidance from and how do they support your progress as you work on this goal?

Virginia Tech does not use the Common App Personal Essay, School Report, Final Report, resumes, or letters of recommendation in their process.

- After you submit your Common Application, you will receive an email to set up a student portal and complete a **Self-Reported Academic Record** (which is the same thing as a Self-Reported Transcript).
- The FAFSA is required in order to receive loans, grants, and scholarships. The Virginia Tech General Scholarship Application must also be submitted to be eligible for scholarships. The deadline to complete the Scholarship Application is **January 22, 2025**.

Once you have completed your sections of the Common Application, you do not have to wait for your Teacher and/or Counselor to submit their letters of recommendation.
You can submit your application when you are ready! 😀

If you have questions on this handout, please contact the FHS College & Career Specialist, Ms. Maureen Kim, at MHKim@fcps.edu.