

SENIOR YEAR

COLLEGE PREP PACKET

**ETS students**, welcome to your senior year! You have made it to that pivotal time where the steps you take now matter more than ever toward achieving your goals. This packet will help you answer many of the questions you might have during your senior year, so you can be confident you are doing all the right things. **As always, please connect with you ETS advisor if you have any questions or need help with anything.**

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**DATES & DEADLINES:**

* August 1 – ApplyTexas opens
* August 20 – LAST first day of high school
* September 18 – Gates Scholarship application deadline
* **October 1 – FAFSA opens** (submit ASAP)
* **November 1 – UT Austin priority deadline**
* November 19-23 – Thanksgiving Break
* **December 1 –** **UT Austin and Texas A&M application deadlines**
* December 1 – Dell Scholarship application deadline
* December 21-January 7 – Winter Break
* **March 1 –** **Texas State application deadline**
* **March 15 – FAFSA deadline**
* March 18-22 – Spring Break
* May 24 – Last day of school



**ESSENTIAL ITEMS FOR ANY COLLEGE APP:**

* **ApplyTexas application** (or other online application portal)
* **SAT/ACT scores**
* **Essays**
* **High school transcript** (college transcript if applicable)
* **Application fee waiver**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Usernames & Passwords………………………...…………………………........3

Senior Year Checklist……………………...……...………………………….......4

SAT & ACT…………….……………….……………………………………………5

ApplyTexas Essays……………..….…………………………………………....6-9

FAFSA/TASFA Checklist…………………………………………………………10

Scholarships …..………………………………………………………………….11

Important College Deadlines…………………………………………………12

College Application Checklist………………………………………………..13

**HIGH SCHOOL CODES**

Travis HS: 440-325

Crockett HS: 440-298

LBJ HS: 440-306

USERNAMES & PASSWORDS

**ApplyTexas**

Username:

Password:

**SAT/CollegeBoard/Khan Academy**

Username:

Password:

**ACT**

Username:

Password:

**FAFSA**

Student FSA ID:

Password:

Parent FSA ID:

Password:

**Other:**

Username:

Password:

SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

□ **ApplyTexas application** (or other online application portal such as Common App)

* Be sure to check your schools’ application AND scholarship deadlines.

□ **SAT/ACT scores**

* You must register BEFORE the registration deadline.
* When registering, sign-up to have your scores automatically sent to the universities.
* Be sure to send your scores to each school you are applying to.

□ **Essays**

* Check pages 5-8 for ApplyTexas essay prompts and outlines.
* Be sure to check which essays are required for the schools you are applying to.
* You are highly recommended to complete optional essays!

□ **High School Transcript**

* Official transcripts can be requested at the registrar’s office or through Naviance.
* Mail an official sealed transcript to each school you are applying to.

□ **Fee waiver**

* Because you are an ETS participant, you should automatically receive college application fee waivers from College Board and/or ACT.
* See your ETS advisor for help with college application fee waivers.

□ **School specific items**

* Some schools require additional documents such as *letters of recommendation*, *résumé*, *residency affidavit*, *additional student information*, *etc*. Be sure to check your schools admission requirements to see what additional items they might need.

□ **Financial aid application**

* The FAFSA application opens October 1st of every year. This financial aid application needs to be submitted ASAP, so you can be sure to get the most financial aid possible.
* Go to fafsa.gov to begin your FAFSA application.

SAT & ACT

**ACT Dates**

* September 8 (register by Aug. 10)
* October 27 (register by Sept. 28)
* December 8 (register by Nov. 2)

**SAT Dates**

* October 6 (register by Sept. 7)
* November 3 (register by Oct. 5)
* December 1 (register by Nov. 2)

**Study Tips**

* **Take several practice tests.** This will help you become more familiar with the test and know what to expect.
* **Know the main sections for each test.**
  + SAT: Reading, writing & language, math, essay
  + Act: Reading, English, math, science, essay
* **Use resources to help you study.** For SAT, log into www.khanacademy.com for free test prep. For ACT, you will receive an email for free Kaplan Online Prep. You can also make flash cards
* **Download a test prep app on your smartphone.** There are several FREE apps you can download that will help you study
  + *ACT: Practice, Prep, Flashcards*
  + *ACT Up*
  + *Ready4 SAT*
  + *Daily Practice for the New SAT*

**Registering to Test**

* To register for both the SAT and ACT, you will first need to sign into your account.
  + For **SAT** log into www.collegeboard.org
  + For **ACT**, log into www.act.org
* Decide which test date to sign up for. Your test date will be a Saturday. Be sure you don’t have anything else going on that day.
* Choose where you want to test. Remember that you will have to be at the testing center by 7:45 AM, so pick the place that is easiest for you to get to in the morning.
* If you have not yet uploaded a photo of yourself, do that now.
* Use your fee waiver when you check out. If you do not have a fee waiver with you, see your ETS Advisor
  + You are allowed two free fee waivers for both the SAT and ACT. If you have already both fee waivers, you will have to pay to test.
* Select what schools you want to send your score to.
* Print out your admission ticket and set a reminder on your phone so you do not forget when you are scheduled to test.
* **Save your username and password! You will need to log back in to check your scores.**
* GOOD LUCK!!

APPLYTEXAS ESSAYS

**ESSAY A**:

What was the environment in which you were raised? Describe your family, home neighborhood, or community, and explain, how it has shaped you as a person.

**ESSAY B**:

Most students have an identity, an interest, or a talent that defines them in an essential way. Tell us about yourself.

**ESSAY C**:

You’ve got a ticket in your hand—Where will you go? What will you do? What will happen when you get there?

Tips for writing a great essay:

* **Stay organized and on topic.** Be sure to plan out what you are going to write about before you start. Brainstorm, create an outline, and figure out what you want to talk about. The last thing you want is to have to start over because your essay is confusing or doesn’t relate back to the prompt.
* **Analyze the prompt.** Ask yourself why colleges would be asking you these questions. What do you think they want to know?
* **Show me don’t tell me.** When writing about your life, your personality, your interests, your values, your goals, your family, etc. pick a vivid story to tell and explain why that example relates to what you are trying to say.
* **Revise. Revise! REVISE!** Find people who have written and edited college application before and have them read yours. They can be teachers, peers, parents, counselors, etc. You should have 2-4 people edit your essay before you submit it.
* **Your essay should be NO LONGER than 2 double spaced pages!**

**Essay A**: What was the environment in which you were raised? Describe your family, home, neighborhood, or community, and explain how it has shaped you as a person.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Introduction:** | **Set the scene!** |
| Describe your world in general terms. |  |
| Start to name influences in your life |  |
| Talk about how those people/things influenced you |  |
| How did those influences shape who you are? |  |
| **Thesis**: These influences from my world made me who in am, which is \_\_\_\_\_ in these ways. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Body #1:** | **Go into detail! Show don’t tell!** |
| Describe an influence |  |
| Describe how that influence impacted you |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Body #2:** | **Go into MORE detail! Show don’t tell!** |
| Greater describe an influence |  |
| Greater describe how that influence impacted you |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conclusion:** | **Sum it up! Show growth!** |
| Tie the influences back to who you are today. |  |

**Essay B**: Most students have an identity, an interest, or a talent that defines them in an essential way. Tell us about yourself.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Introduction:** | **Set the scene!** |
| First discuss what elements in your life caused your interests |  |
| Talk about interests at an early age that might have led to your interest today |  |
| **Thesis**: Name this interest/hobby/talent that defines you and give general reasons why |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Body #1:** | **Go into detail! Show don’t tell!** |
| Start to explain a reason behind your passion in this certain interest/hobby/talent |  |
| Explain why this reason is important to you |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Body #2:** | **Go into MORE detail! Show don’t tell!** |
| Start to explain another reason behind your passion in this certain interest/hobby/talent |  |
| Explain why this reason is important to you |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conclusion:** | **Sum it up! Show growth!** |
| Describe where you want to take this interest/hobby/talent in the future. State whether or not you will still be practicing it in several years. |  |

**Essay C**: You’ve got a ticket in your hand – Where will you go? What will you do? What will happen when you get there?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Introduction:** | **Set the scene!** |
| Describe the awesomeness of having this possibility of going wherever you want |  |
| Describe how this prospect makes you feel |  |
| Describe how you thought about this question? Did you think destination? Time period? Political/scholastic destination? |  |
| **Thesis**: State your destination and give general reasons why and what will happen when you get there. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Body #1:** | **Go into detail! Show don’t tell!** |
| Elaborate on a reason for choosing your destination |  |
| Why is this reason important to you? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Body #2:** | **Go into MORE detail! Show don’t tell!** |
| Elaborate on what you will do and what will happen when you reach your destination |  |
| Explain why you will do this and why it will yield those results |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conclusion:** | **Sum it up! Show growth!** |
| Describe how taking this trip will make you feel and how it will make you grow as a person |  |

FAFSA/TASFA CHECKLIST

**Are you a US citizen or permanent resident?**

**YES** – Fill out the FAFSA online at **www.fafsa.gov**

**NO** – Fill out the TASFA (form can be found on collegeforalltexans.com or just google TASFA.) Requires Tax Transcript—available at www.irs.gov or 1-800-908-9946.

BEFORE: Information or documents needed **BEFORE** starting your FAFSA/TASFA

1. FSA ID for **both student and parent** – Needs to be obtained and verified before starting the FAFSA (could take a few days.) Can be obtained at www.fsaid.ed.gov

Student username: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student password: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent username: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent password: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Parents’ Birthdates:

Mother : \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_ (MM/DD/YYYY)

Father : \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\_ (MM/DD/YYYY)

1. Parents’ Social Security Numbers:

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Father: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Parents’ Date of Marriage/Divorce or Separation/Widow (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (MM/YYYY)

1. Dollar Amount of parent’s assets (total amount in checking/ savings and any other accounts) including any extra real estate other than homestead and any stocks or bonds: $
2. Parent’s Income Tax Forms (Form 1040, 1040EZ, 1040A, W-2) from prior year:

Mother’s income \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Father’s income \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Student SSN Number, driver’s license number (if applicable) and W-2 Income Form (if student worked )

AFTER: Steps to follow **AFTER** FAFSA/TASFA application is done

1. Print out confirmation page and turn in to the College & Career Center
2. Notify us if you are “VEREFIED”, look out for an email from FAFSA

SCHOLARSHIPS

(Yes…you should start now.)

**Essential Scholarship/Financial Aid Resources**

* Your high school’s Naviance website
* www.fastweb.com
* www.scholarships.com
* www.finaid.org/scholarships
* www.fafsa.ed.gov
* www.collegegreenlight.com
* www.finaid.org/scholarshipscams

**Common Scholarship App Mistakes**

* Missing deadlines
* Failing to follow directions, especially regarding essay length and the number of recommendations.
* Omitting required information
* Applying for an award when you don’t qualify
* Not applying for an award that you are eligible for
* Omitting required information
* Exaggerating or lying on your application or essay.

**Beware of Scholarship Scams!**

* If you have to pay money, it’s probably a scam.
* Nobody can GUARANTEE you that you’ll win a scholarship.
* NEVER give our personal information like bank account info, credit card info, or Social Security numbers.

**Tips for Applying for and Managing the Scholarship Search**

* Start searching for scholarships now! Don’t wait until spring of your senior year. Continue searching for scholarships even after you are admitted and enrolled in college.
* Apply for school specific scholarships on **ApplyTexas**. Be sure to check the school’s deadline and apply before!
* Use a **free scholarship matching site** like fastweb.com or scholarships.com. Most sites are updated daily and will **email notifications** of new scholarships that match your profile.
* Be on the lookout for **local scholarships**. Talk to your ETS advisor, College & Career Counselor, teachers, etc.
* To win more scholarships, **apply to all that you are eligible for**. It will get much easier after several applications because **essays you have written can be reused**.
* Personalize your essay and tailor it to the sponsor’s goals. **Make your application stand out**, talk about your impact on other people and give examples.
* **Revise and edit** your scholarship applications and essays and ask other to help you do this as well.
* **USE A PROFESSIONAL LOOKING EMAIL ADDRESS!** Firstname.lastname@gmail.com is a great place to start.



IMPORTANT COLLEGE DEADLINES

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **University** | **Scholarship** | **Application** | **FAFSA** | **Essays Required** |
| **Angelo State** | March 1 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **Concordia** | February 1 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **Prairie View A&M** | February 1 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **Sam Houston State** | November 1 (priority date) | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **Southwestern** | March 1 | February 1 | June 1 | Choose A, B, C, or D |
| **St. Edward’s** | February 1 | May 1 | February 1 | Choose A, B, or C |
| **St. Mary’s** | December 15 | March 1 | March 1 | A, B, C (all optional) |
| **Texas A&M–College Station** | December 1 | December 1 | March 15 | Topic A |
| **Texas A&M–Galveston** | December 1 | March 1 | March 15 | Topic A |
| **Texas A&M–Corpus Christi** | March 1 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **Texas A&M–Kingsville** | November 15 (priority date) | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **Texas Christian University** | February 1 | February 1 | May 1 (w/ CSS Profile) |  |
| **Texas State** | December 15 | March 1 | March 15 | A, B, C (all optional) |
| **Texas Tech** | December 1 (priority date) | June 1 | March 15 | A, B (both optional) |
| **University of Houston** | November 15 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **University of Houston–Victoria** | March 15 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **University of North Texas** | February 1 | March 1 | March 15 | B (optional) |
| **UT Arlington** | February 15 | June 1 | March 15 | NONE |
| **UT Austin** | December 1 | December 1; Nov. 1 (priority) | March 15 | Topic A + 3 short answer |
| **UT San Antonio** | February 15 | June 1 | March 15 | A (optional) |

Happy September!!

Now, almost time for

**FAFSA!!**

REMEMBER: you can file your FAFSA beginning

**OCTOBER 1ST**

of your senior year. Just use your previous year’s tax information.

**Priority Deadline: MARCH 15TH**

(check *your school’s* specific deadline!)

Finish ALL your college applications by

**DECEMBER 1ST**

for a stress free Winter Break

(Thanksgiving Break = APPLICATIONS week!! ☺)