

Lakeland Central School District School Counseling Department



College and Career Planning Guide

CEEB Code: 335187

Meredith Klatsky

mklatsky@lakelandschools.org

Kaitlyn Marshall

kmarshall@lakelandschools.org

Greg Millings (ACE)

gmillings@lakelandschools.org

Bianca Raniolo

braniolo@lakelandschools.org

Julie Ruxton

jruxton@lakelandschools.org

Dennine Smith

dsmith@lakelandschools.org

CEEB Code: 334468

Chelsea Aversano

caversano@lakelandschools.org

Dale Chappelle

dchappelle@lakelandschools.org

Laurainne Mosca

lmosca@lakelandschools.org

Sonia Recuppio

srecuppio@lakelandschools.org

Brandon Thomas

bthomas@lakelandschools.org

Lakeland HS Counseling Department

(P) 914.528-0600 x. 39156

(F) 914.528-3693

Walter Panas HS Counseling Department

(P) 914.739-2823 x. 39222

(F) 914.739-3545

<https://lakelandschools.org/departments/guidance/index.php>

Table of Contents

❖ Junior Year Checklist.....	3
❖ Senior Year Checklist.....	5
❖ College Application Terms.....	7
❖ Standardized Testing Information.....	8
❖ Comparing the ACT with the SAT.....	9
❖ SAT/ACT Concordance Tables.....	11
❖ Exploring Colleges.....	12
❖ Scoir.....	14
❖ College Applications To Do's.....	15
❖ SUNY Admissions Information Summary.....	16
❖ Common Application Essay Prompts.....	17
❖ College Essay Advice.....	18
❖ Financial Aid Basics.....	20
❖ Helpful Financial Aid and Scholarship Links.....	21
❖ Students with Disabilities.....	22
❖ NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association).....	23
❖ Sample Resume Template.....	25
❖ Websites for College and Career Information.....	26
❖ Senior Questionnaire.....	27
❖ Student Activity and Accomplishment Form.....	29
❖ Parent Brag Sheet.....	30
❖ Transcript Request Form.....	32

Junior Year Checklist

August / September

- Check your class schedule for correct course selections. If you have any questions or concerns, contact your counselor
- Sign up for sports, extracurricular activities or clubs
- Register for the PSAT and become familiar with the exam (in-house registration)
- Attend Financial Aid Night Presentation

October / November

- Take the PSAT/NMSQT
- Meet with your counselor to plan your junior year testing calendar
- Attend local college fairs (if available)

December

- Review your PSAT score report (emailed to student by College Board) and use the results to prepare for the SAT

January

- Prepare for spring SAT and/or ACT when available
- Discuss with your teachers appropriate course selections for senior year
- Attend College Presentation for Juniors

February

- Schedule a Junior-Parent planning conference (February - April)
- Register for March SAT if planning to test on this date
- Meet with your counselor to select your senior year courses and review your credits for graduation
- Register for April ACT if planning to test on this date
- Begin visiting (in-person or virtual) colleges
- Visit college campuses over mid-winter recess

March

- Look for Junior College Newsletter from the College and Career Center
- Ask two teachers if they would be willing to write college letters of recommendation on your behalf

April

- Register for May SAT if planning to test on this date
- Visit college campuses during spring break
- Sign up and attend the College Fair (day session) for juniors; parents attend the evening session
- Reminder - Ask two teachers if they would be willing to write college letters of recommendation on your behalf

May

- Begin to work on your college essay
- If interested, apply for college summer programs or volunteer!
- Reminder - Ask two teachers if they would be willing to write college letters of recommendation on your behalf
- Register for June SAT and/or ACT if you plan to test on this date

June

- Review your academic record and ensure progress toward graduation. Be sure you know what requirements must be met for graduation and what is needed for your personal goals
- Register for NCAA Clearinghouse if you intend on playing a Division I or II sport in college
- Reminder - Ask two teachers if they would be willing to write college letters of recommendation on your behalf

July/August

- Continue to research colleges and universities
- Visit college campuses
- Continue to work on your college essay
- Check and verify your transcript on Home Access Center (HAC)
- Begin scholarship searches

Senior Year Checklist

August

- Check your class schedule for correct course selections
- Check your high school transcript to ensure being on track for graduation

September

- Register for October and/or November SAT and/or ACT, if needed
- Register for NCAA Clearinghouse if you intend on playing a Division I or II sport in college
- Meet with your counselor to review post high school plans
- Continue to research and visit colleges
- Check list of colleges visiting the School Counseling Office through Scoir and message board
- Create a Common Application account
- Request teacher letters of recommendation through Scoir
- Attend Senior College Night
- Complete your college essay and show draft of your essay to your English teacher and counselor for feedback
- Attend Financial Aid Night Presentation
- Read Senior Newsletter for important information

October

- Sign up for your FSA ID and start working on your FAFSA financial aid application. The FAFSA should be completed as soon as possible after it becomes available to submit
IMPORTANT - Keep copies of all tax forms, records and financial aid forms you send
- Complete TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) application. You will automatically be directed to the TAP application if you listed a New York college on your FAFSA application
- Complete CSS Profile (financial aid form through College Board) if required by colleges applying to
- Make appointment to meet with your counselor regarding applying to colleges
- Attend college fairs and college rep visits to LHS/WPHS
- Submit your college application worksheets to your counselor **at least 15 school days** before your first deadline. **Please note the transcript request form is required to send school documents to colleges**
- Complete your college applications online including supplements. **Take note of application deadlines and requirements**
- Apply to colleges through EOP/HEOP, if economically and academically challenged (speak to your counselor for more information regarding EOP/HEOP)
- Send official SAT/ACT scores to colleges, if required

November

- Continue completing applications per college deadlines
- Check emails regularly from the colleges. Create and check the respective colleges' portals for application status

December

- Advise your counselor by December 1st if you want supporting school documents to be sent to your colleges before winter recess
- Contact admissions offices or check college portals to ensure college application completion

January

- Continue completing applications per college deadlines

February

- Notify your counselor of college acceptances as you receive them
- Continue to pursue scholarship opportunities

March

- Revisit colleges to which you have been accepted in preparation for making your final decision
- Continue to pursue scholarship opportunities
- If you are not attending college, meet with your counselor to discuss post high school plans

April

- Review financial aid packages in preparing for making your final decision
- Notify the college you do not plan to attend

May

- Make your deposit. May 1st is the universal deposit deadline for notifying colleges

June

- Graduation! Congratulations, you did it!

College Application Terms

Associate's Degree	A two-year degree (students may apply credits from a two-year program to a four-year program).
Bachelor's Degree	A four-year degree.
The Common Application	An application platform that many colleges subscribe to which is filled out once and may be used to apply to multiple colleges.
Deferral	An Early Action or Early Decision application deferred (moved) for review in the regular decision applicant pool.
Deposit	Non-refundable fee that is paid to a college by May 1st to acknowledge commitment of attendance.
Early Action (EA)	An application deadline as early as October 15, which provides a non-binding decision from the college. Students may apply to multiple EA colleges.
Early Action Single Choice	Similar stipulations as Early Action except this plan restricts students to a single, non-binding EA application.
Early Decision (ED)	An application deadline as early as October 15 which provides a binding decision from the college. Students may only apply to one college ED. Binding Decision - if you are accepted, you must attend that college.
Early Decision II	A later round of Early Decision, generally with late December to February deadlines. This plan is also binding.
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid, to be filed when available at www.fafsa.gov . Be aware and avoid sites that charge fees.
NCAA Clearinghouse	Organization that determines student-athlete eligibility for Division I and II programs (www.eligibilitycenter.org). Application should be made by June of junior year.
Regular Decision	This application will typically have deadlines between January and March with a decision notification in the first week of April.
Rolling Admissions	Applications are reviewed according to the date by which materials are received. Submitting a rolling application first is advisable, as some rolling programs become filled as soon as December. Students may apply to a rolling program in conjunction with any and all other plans (EA, ED, EASC, or Regular).
Standardized Testing	National examinations (SAT/ACT) which students must request to be sent directly from The College Board or ACT to the college or university.
Waitlist	When a college has completed reviewing the applicant's file and has not been accepted. However, if enough students that were accepted choose not to attend, the applicant could be considered. Being offered an acceptance usually occurs after May 1st.

Standardized Testing Information

Q:	Is the SAT now digital?
A:	Yes, the SAT has been in digital format since March 2024.
Q:	What tests should I be taking this year?
A:	No one testing schedule fits every student, but juniors can consider taking the PSAT, SAT and ACT. Seniors can consider taking the SAT and ACT.
Q:	What does test optional mean?
A:	When colleges allow all or some applicants to decide whether to submit SAT or ACT scores as part of their application. If a student doesn't submit their scores, it won't be considered in the application review.
Q:	Which test is for me?
A:	You may consider taking an ACT or SAT practice test and compare your scores. If you score much higher on one test than the other, we recommend you study for and take the test you did better on. If your scores are close and you're still not sure which exam to take, consider taking them both. See page 9 for the difference between the SAT and ACT.
Q:	The ACT offers an optional essay, do I need to take it?
A:	The majority of colleges do not require the essay portion, but some colleges may recommend or require it. Students should review application requirements of their prospective colleges to determine if the essay is needed.
Q:	How do the tests I take get delivered to the colleges to which I decide to apply?
A:	Students are responsible to send ACT or SAT scores to colleges. Sending all available scores from ACT or College Board (SAT) allows colleges to utilize your highest scores (superscoring). Students will need to indicate to ACT or College Board the scores that need to be sent to the colleges.
Q:	Is there a deadline for sending test scores?
A:	Test scores need to be received by the college's application deadline. It is important to order the scores to be sent in advance of the deadline to allow for processing time.
Q:	Should I practice before taking the SAT or ACT?
A:	The more prepared you are, the more confident you will feel. Set aside study time and utilize practice resources to familiarize yourself with the test format.
Q:	When should you take the SAT or ACT?
A:	It is typical to take your first SAT/ACT in the spring of your junior year. This is the most logical time to take a test because it gives you time to make a study plan. Once you get your scores back you can use them as a guide to help you prepare for the next time.
Q:	Should I take the SAT or ACT more than once?
A:	It is recommended to take standardized tests more than once. This will give you enough time to prepare and work toward the score you want. Most students improve their scores the second time around. It is advisable to complete standardized testing by November because of early admission application deadlines.

Comparing the SAT with the ACT

SAT	vs.	ACT
Content-Based	Type of Test	Content-Based
Reading & Writing: Two modules, 32 min. each Break: 10 min. Math: Two modules, 35 min. each (both with calculator)	Test Format	Reading: One 35-min. section Math: One 60-min. section Break: 15 min. Science: One 35-min. section English: One 45-min. section Writing: One 40-min. essay (optional)
Reading, grammar & usage, math, and relevant words in context	Content Covered	Reading, grammar & usage, math, science reasoning, and writing (optional)
Questions are evidence and context-based in an effort to focus on real-world situations and multi-step problem-solving.	Test Style	Straightforward – questions may be long but are usually less difficult to decipher.
Math and Evidence-Based Reading & Writing are each scored on a scale of 200-800. Composite SAT score is the sum of the two section scores and ranges from 400-1600.	Scoring	English, Math, Reading, and Science scores will each range from 1-36. Composite ACT score is the average of your scores on the four sections, and also ranges from 1-36.
No – you do not lose points for incorrect answers.	Penalty for Wrong Answers	No – you do not lose points for incorrect answers.

<p>Yes – you can choose which set(s) of SAT scores to submit to colleges. However, some colleges require or recommend that students submit all scores. Students should review the score reporting policy of each college to which they plan to apply.</p>	<p>Score Choice</p>	<p>Yes – you can choose which set(s) of ACT scores to submit to colleges. However, some colleges require or recommend that students submit all scores. Students should review the score reporting policy of each college to which they plan to apply.</p>
<p>Reading & Writing Module 1 has prompts of three difficulty levels: easy, medium, and hard. Your performance decides if you progress to an easier or more challenging Module 2. This concept applies to Math as well, with Math Module 1 having three difficulty levels, and Module 2's version chosen based on your first Math stage performance.</p>	<p>Difficulty Levels</p>	<p>For the English and Reading sections, the difficulty level of the questions is random. For the Math section, questions generally increase in difficulty as you progress through the section. For the Science section, passages generally increase in difficulty as you progress through the test, and questions generally become more difficult as you progress through a passage.</p>
<p>Algebra, advanced math, problem-solving and data analysis, geometry and trigonometry (formulas provided)</p>	<p>Math Levels</p>	<p>Arithmetic, algebra I and II, functions, geometry, statistics & probability, and trigonometry (no formulas provided)</p>
<p>www.collegeboard.org</p>	<p>More Info</p>	<p>www.act.org</p>

SAT/ACT Concordance Table



Table A1: SAT Total to ACT Composite.

SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT	SAT	ACT
1600	36	1250	26	910	16
*1590	36	*1240	26	900	16
1580	36	1230	26	*890	16
1570	36	1220	25	880	16
1560	35	*1210	25	870	15
1550	35	1200	25	860	15
*1540	35	1190	24	*850	15
1530	35	*1180	24	840	15
1520	34	1170	24	830	15
1510	34	1160	24	820	14
*1500	34	1150	23	810	14
1490	34	*1140	23	*800	14
1480	33	1130	23	790	14
1470	33	1120	22	780	14
*1460	33	*1110	22	770	13
1450	33	1100	22	*760	13
1440	32	1090	21	750	13
*1430	32	*1080	21	740	13
1420	32	1070	21	730	13
1410	31	1060	21	720	12
*1400	31	1050	20	*710	12
1390	31	*1040	20	700	12
1380	30	1030	20	690	12
*1370	30	1020	19	680	11
1360	30	*1010	19	*670	11
1350	29	1000	19	660	11
*1340	29	990	19	650	11
1330	29	980	18	640	10
1320	28	*970	18	*630	10
*1310	28	960	18	620	10
1300	28	950	17	610	9
1290	27	940	17	600	9
*1280	27	*930	17	*590	9
1270	27	920	17		
1260	27				

Table A2: ACT Composite to SAT Total.

ACT	SAT	SAT Range
36	1590	1570-1600
35	1540	1530-1560
34	1500	1490-1520
33	1460	1450-1480
32	1430	1420-1440
31	1400	1390-1410
30	1370	1360-1380
29	1340	1330-1350
28	1310	1300-1320
27	1280	1260-1290
26	1240	1230-1250
25	1210	1200-1220
24	1180	1160-1190
23	1140	1130-1150
22	1110	1100-1120
21	1080	1060-1090
20	1040	1030-1050
19	1010	990-1020
18	970	960-980
17	930	920-950
16	890	880-910
15	850	830-870
14	800	780-820
13	760	730-770
12	710	690-720
11	670	650-680
10	630	620-640
9	590	590-610

*Use this SAT score when a single score point comparison is needed.

Note: Concordance tables for the ACT Composite were derived from concordances of the ACT sum score.



Exploring Colleges

Just like colleges reviewing your application, it is even more important for each student to review and explore all aspects of the colleges they are considering. The following questions are designed to help you organize your college exploration. As you explore the many opportunities, ask yourself some of the following questions to assist you in narrowing down some of your choices.

ACADEMICS

- What majors are most popular on the campus? Are they majors that fit your areas of interest? What majors proclaim to be the strongest? How many students are in these programs of study?
- If you change your educational goals, are there other programs available that you may be interested in? How easy is it to change your proposed major?
- Are there required courses for freshman or specific programs? Are there General Education requirements that need to be met before graduation?
- What are the average class sizes? What about the sizes in your major or area of interest?
- What percentage of students return after the freshman year (student retention)? What percentage graduate in four years? In five years?
- How intense is the academic rigor on campus? How many hours do students spend studying each week? Where do students study? The library? Computer labs?
- Are members of the faculty easily accessible? Are their office hours sufficient for students to meet with faculty members?
- Can you tell me about your study abroad program?
- Is my academic advisor the same person that I will work with or does it change according to academic interest?
- What percentage of students goes on to graduate school?
- Are Advanced Placement courses transferred as college credit? What AP scores need to be obtained?

STUDENT BODY

- What do students enjoy most or least about the college campus?
- Are there activities/programs to help freshmen as they transition/assimilate to campus life?
- What extracurricular activities are available to the students?
- What is the diversity of the student body like (geographic, ethnic)?
- Are there fraternities and sororities on campus? What percentage of students participate in Greek Life?
- What is the overall campus vibe?

HOUSING

- What percentage of students live on campus? What types/themes of residence halls are available?
- Are freshmen required to live on campus? Is housing available/required for all four years?
- What percentage of students go home on weekends or are commuter students?
- What activities are available on the weekends? Do dorms sponsor activities?

CAMPUS SETTING

- Where is the campus located (urban, suburban, rural)?
- What method of transportation is needed to spend four years on the campus? Can you walk, need to drive, bike or ride buses to class and to activities?
- Can you describe the campus safety and security?
- What are the pluses and minuses of the college's location?
- What is the campus setting?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- Are athletics available to only recruited athletes or are there intramural programs that you can participate in?
- Are there activities that match my interests or educational goals? Newspaper, yearbook, drama, music, art, etc.
- What extra help resources are available?

Scoir

What is Scoir?

Scoir is our new web-based college and career platform that is replacing Naviance.

What features will Scoir have?

Scoir allows students to explore and research colleges and careers, take career and character assessments, and manage aspects of the college process in 12th grade.

How will I learn to use Scoir?

The school counselors will be using Scoir in their classroom guidance lessons for post-secondary research. Once the counselors help you register with Scoir, you will also have unlimited access to its features.

The logo for Scoir is rendered in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. The letters 'S', 'C', and 'O' are connected, with the 'O' having a unique, rounded, and slightly irregular shape. The 'I' and 'R' are separate and also in the same blue color and font style.

COLLEGE APPLICATION TO DO'S

Getting Started:

- Go to cloud.lakelandschools.org to see your Classlink icons
- Click the Scoir icon.
- You will need to agree to the terms to prove you are not a robot.

Creating a Common App account

- Go to www.commonapp.org
- Click on **Apply Now**.
- Click on **Create an Account**.
- Click on the **Common App** tab on the top and then on the left side click on the **Education** box.
- Click on the **search** feature and then add Lakeland Senior High School and press continue.
- Click on the **College search** tab and then type in a college name. Click **search** and when the college appears click on the box and “add” it.
- Next click on **Recommenders & FERPA**, then click on the **Release Authorization**.
- You should invite recommenders, but do not put teachers’ email in.
- Say “NO” to “Do you want teacher to complete college evaluation?”
- Decide whether or not to waive your rights and accept the terms.
- Electronically sign the **FERPA**.

Requesting Teacher Letters of Recommendation (Remember to ask them first!)

- Login to Scoir.
- Go to **My Colleges>Application Documents**
- Scroll down to **Recommendation** section
- Select **New Request**
- Begin typing the name of the person and choose from the dropdown.
- Specify the type of recommendation whether it’s for all colleges or a specific one, add a note, and select **Submit**.
- From there, you can check the status of your requests to see if they’ve been accepted or declined.

SCOIR

- Complete FERPA Waiver and Release Authorization.
- While in Scoir, move colleges that are on your Transcript Request Form to “**Applied**” and answer all questions that follow.
- Be sure to **add** your **Common App ID** to Scoir as well.

Lastly...

Submit College Application Worksheets (Transcript Request Form, Senior Questionnaire/About Me and Parent Brag Sheet) at least 15 School Days prior to your first deadline.

Don’t stress 😊 See your counselor with any questions!

State University of New York (SUNY) Admissions Information

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION SUMMARY - 2024

Campus Name	REGULAR ADMISSION				HONORS ADMISSION				EOP ADMISSION			
	Undergraduate Enrollment	2020 SAT Scores	2020 ACT Scores	H.S. GPA	Freshman Enrollment	2020 SAT Scores	2020 ACT Scores	H.S. GPA	Freshman Enrollment	2020 SAT Scores	2020 ACT Scores	H.S. GPA
University Centers and Doctoral Degree Granting Institutions												
Albany	12,190	1130-1300	23-29	89-95	230	1240-1400	26-31	94-98	160	990-1070	18-20	83-89
Binghamton	14,408	1300-1450	29-33	93-98	535	1500-1540	34-35	95-99	180	1080-1170	21-24	90-94
University at Buffalo+	20,465	1150-1330	24-30	92-98	585	1340-1470	29-33	97-100	210	960-1040	14-20	84-88
Stony Brook	17,478	1250-1340	27-33	92-97	380	1380-1520	31-35	95-99	265	1050-1150	20-24	85-89
NYS Ceramics at Alfred University+	418	1000-1160	20-27	83-92	35	1180-1330	25-30	82-99	0	800-900	18-21	77-81
SUNY Polytechnic Institute	1,904	1130-1300	26-32	87-94					25	950-1020		79-82
College of Optometry+	Graduate only											
Cornell University:									29	1140-1250		92-97
Agriculture & Life Sciences+	4,048	1370-1530	31-35									
Human Ecology+	1,312	1445-1540	33-35									
Veterinary Medicine+	Graduate only											
Industrial & Labor Relations+	999	1390-1520	31-34									
Environmental Science & Forestry+	1,731	1120-1310	23-28	89-96	38	1380-1450	31-33	96-99	19	1070-1260		84-90
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences Univ	286											
Upstate Medical University (Syracuse)+	118											
University Colleges												
Brockport	5,429	1080-1200	21-26	86-95	100	1260-1320	26-29	93-97	70	900-980	18-19	80-88
Buffalo State	5,507	920-1130	18-28	79-89	156	1130-1280	22-28	93-97	127	870-1000	15-18	77-81
Cortland+	5,905	1100-1230	24-26	90-95	30	1300-1420	32-35	97-100	24	940-1030	15-19	80-84
Fredonia+	2,877	1030-1220	21-26	81-94	126	1200-1340	26-30	92-97	30	840-980		75-85
Geneseo+	3,868	1170-1320	25-30	90-98					30	970-1080	17-24	78-89
New Paltz+	6,111	1130-1280	24-29	90-97	36	1260-1330	28-33	94-99	150	910-1040		81-88
Old Westbury	4,039	1000-1130	19-23	82-91	32	1180-1300	25-28	93-96	75	820-950	14-17	73-77
Oneonta+	4,847	1070-1220	22-27	88-95					48	890-990	16-20	80-84
Oswego	5,652	1050-1240	21-27	85-96	140	1290-1380	27-30	93-97	120	880-980		78-84
Plattsburgh	3,856	1020-1170	21-26	85-94	78	1200-1320	24-29	92-97	89	880-1000	17-19	75-81
Potsdam	1,961			85-95					30			77-79
Purchase	3,165			87-90					52			78-83
Empire State+	7,789								40			
Alfred State +												
Baccalaureate only	3,525	940-1150	19-25	80-90	10	1080-1300	23-26	86-93	51	880-1070		76-84
Canton+	1,714	990-1220	21-27	85-93					25	810-930		73-76
Baccalaureate only	2,872	920-1130	17-23	81-91	15	1010-1170	19-27	89-95				
Cobleskill	2,190	970-1150	18-23	82-92					40	830-930		73-76
Baccalaureate only	1,765	870-1060	18-22	81-90	50	1220-1450		90-97				
Delhi	1,344	930-1070	21-25	88-92					50	870-940		72-79
Baccalaureate only	2,538	920-1100	19-23	82-90	15			90-93				
Baccalaureate only	733	970-1130	19-25	82-90					50	910-980		75-85
Farmingdale State College	9,508	990-1150	19-24	84-91	21			93-97				75-85
Maritime College+	1,243	1170-1220	22-26	86-93					12	930-1070		79-88
Morrisville State+	1,883	850-1060	18-23	80-88					95	800-950		73-77
Baccalaureate only	935	860-1050	17-22	81-87								

All scores reflect middle 50%. The SAT ranges represent combined evidence-based reading and writing and math scores. (The maximum possible total is 1600.)

2025-26 EOP Income Eligibility

Household Size	Eligible Income
1	\$27,861
2	\$37,814
3	\$47,767
4	\$57,720
5	\$67,673
6	\$77,626
7	\$87,579
8	\$97,532*

*For families/ households with more than 8 persons, add \$9,953 for each additional person.

1.800.342.3811
www.suny.edu /attend
askSUNY@suny.edu

+Contains 2023 Data.

Not Offered

Common Application Essay Prompts

Here is a sample of the Common App's essay prompts to help you get started with drafting your personal essay. The prompts remain fairly consistent from year to year but remember to check back to your Common App account once the new application year begins.

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

**To begin creating your Common App account,
go to www.commonapp.org**

College Essay Advice

The Best Essays Are About Nothing

I want to live my life as a comma. Like the comma, I hate endings. I would rather keep a sentence, or an experience, lasting as long as possible, drawing it out with dependent clauses, adding more information in an insistent, comma-like need to answer as many questions and delve as deeply into a situation as I can before finally reaching the inevitable period.

What To Do

- Be Likable, Not Impressive. Too many essay writers sound like people who introduce themselves by quoting their SAT scores. Your activity list is the place to brag. The essay is the place to be genuine.
- The Best Essays Are About Nothing. That is, they are about nothing but you.
- Recounting a big experience – like how you dove and caught the ball in the bottom of the seventh inning -- shrinks the space available to show what makes you unique.
- Think Metaphorically. If your life seems mundane, make an analogy to bigger things. Is your school career like the travels of Odysseus? Is Instagram a metaphor for your generation? Maybe not, but think about how mundane things in your life could represent larger ones.
- Check Your Verbs. Are they concrete and specific? Do they sparkle? Impressive adjectives make for a static essay. Verbs pack punch.
- Wrestle With Uncertainty. The most interesting issues are often the ones with which you are still grappling, and for which you have no ready answer.

What To Avoid

- A Life-Changing Experience. Did you learn a valuable lesson from losing the big game? Have you been a different person ever since? Probably not - so don't try to convince others that you are.
- Making Everything Perfect. Avoid telling how you encountered a problem, found a solution, and lived happily ever after. It sounds fake and self-serving.
- Social Problem of the Year Bandwagon. There have been plenty of essays about COVID, it is generally better to focus on your own problems than those of the world.
- Melodrama. Straining for the dramatic always ends badly. Your life is important to you, and it can be interesting to others, but it is easy to sound self-important when describing your experiences.
- The Person Whom You Admire. If you write about such a person, make sure the essay is about you and not about him or her.

College Essay Editing Checklist

- Couldn't have been written by anyone else
- Gets into real stuff – how the author thinks and feels
- Has a unifying idea or theme
- Tells a story and/or includes concrete anecdotes
- Is written in a voice that sounds like the author
- Has a well-crafted opening line or paragraph
- Has active, specific verbs
- Avoids awkward repetition of words or phrasing
- Uses varied sentence structure (simple, compound, complex)
- Uses “I” where appropriate
- Avoids cynicism, negativity, and self-congratulation
- Doesn't take itself too seriously

What Is Meant By “Show, Don't Tell”

Instead of just saying something, you describe it.

For example:

Telling: "I am a hard worker."

Showing: "I spent every weekend during my junior year volunteering at the local food bank, often staying late to ensure we packed enough meals for the families who depended on our services."

Financial Aid Basics

- The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) will be available on October 1st of senior year. Applying online is recommended:
<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>
- The prior, prior year's tax information will be utilized to calculate your Student Aid Index (SAI).
- Both student and contributor (e.g.: parent/guardian) must establish an FSA (Federal Student Aid) ID to apply online.
- The CSS Profile is required by many private colleges and deadlines are generally in the fall of senior year. Please check your deadlines.
- Never assume your eligibility/ineligibility for aid.
- The FAFSA must be completed in order to secure a federal student loan.
- Go to <https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/> for an early estimate of your financial aid eligibility. This will also expedite your process for applying in senior year. Also visit any of your prospective colleges' Net Price Calculator to get more specific financial aid estimates.
- Begin scholarship searches prior to the start of senior year such as <https://www.scholarships.com> or <http://www.fastweb.com>.
- Attend the financial aid night in the fall of senior year.
- Ensure that your list of colleges includes varied financial options.
- Beware of scholarship or financial aid scams. Any organization requiring fees for scholarship or financial aid information should be disregarded.
- Missing deadlines could impact your financial aid award letters.
- Read School Counseling Department newsletters for financial aid and scholarship information.

Helpful Financial Aid & Scholarship Links

Visit our Financial Aid & Scholarship page on our District School Counseling Webpage for important links and resources as well as other free financial aid resources:

Lakeland Central School District Financial Aid Informational Links:

- http://www.lakelandschools.org/departments/guidance/scholarships_and_financial_aid.php

Financial Aid/Scholarship Information

Free Application for Federal Student Aid Information

- <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

FAFSA Forecaster

- https://fafsa.ed.gov/spa/fafsa4c/?locale=en_US#/landing

FastWeb

- <https://www.fastweb.com/>

CSS Profile (College Board)

- <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

NYS Higher Education Service Corporation (HESC)

- <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/>

NYS Excelsior Scholarship

- <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/pay-for-college/financial-aid/types-of-financial-aid/nys-grants-scholarships-awards/the-excelsior-scholarship.html>

NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

- <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/pay-for-college/apply-for-financial-aid/nys-tap.html>

City University of New York (CUNY)

- <https://www.cuny.edu/financial-aid/applying-for-financial-aid/>

Scholarships.com

- <https://www.scholarships.com>

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who have either an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) or 504 Plan are reviewed under the same admissions criteria as other applicants. Colleges and universities offer a wide variety of levels of supports for students, with costs that vary as well. Students with disabilities must investigate each individual college for their support services program to determine eligibility and personal fit. Disability office or support services are separate and distinct from admissions unless specifically noted.

Other important points to note:

- A student may not receive the same accommodations in college as he/she received in high school. It is up to the individual college or university to determine a student's accommodations.
- Students with disabilities seeking testing accommodations on standardized tests such as the PSAT, SAT, AP or ACT, must complete the corresponding applications for accommodations through the College Board and/or ACT (separate applications.) Please see your counselor regarding this process.
- The student determines whether to disclose a disability to the college or university to which they are applying.
- A student's disability is not indicated on the student transcript or any standardized testing reports.
- If disclosing a disability, it is advisable that the student be prepared to speak to the nature of their specific disability and learn strategies for success.
- A college or university may not discriminate on the basis of a student's disability.
- A student must disclose their disability in order to receive accommodations.
- Students with disabilities should complete an ACCES-VR (Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation) application in order to determine eligibility for services and supports, including potential financial supports for college. Elaine Benson, Transition Specialist (ebenson@lakelandschools.org), is a resource within the district to assist students in this area.

A resource for information on colleges for students with disabilities is The Princeton Review's: *K&W Guide to Colleges for the Learning Disabled*.

Also visit: <https://nccsd.ici.umn.edu/> (National Center for College Students with Disabilities).

Please see your counselor with questions about students with disabilities.

NCAA Eligibility

As a prospective student-athlete you need to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center to compete at an NCAA Division I or II college/university. While NCAA Division III colleges do not require NCAA eligibility, you can still create an NCAA account to learn more about collegiate athletics.

NCAA Eligibility Center

- NCAA Registration Checklist
 - http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/Student_Resources/Registration_Checklist.pdf
- To create an account and register with the NCAA Clearinghouse
 - <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

Division I Academic Standards

Division I schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:

NCAA DIVISION I

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (Including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

2. Complete your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in eight academic semesters or four consecutive academic years from the start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
3. Complete 10 of your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math or science, before the start of your seventh semester. Once you begin your seventh semester, any course needed to meet the 10/7 requirement cannot be replaced or repeated.
4. Earn a minimum 2.3 **core-course GPA**.
5. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet **specific criteria** after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division I and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

ACADEMIC REDSHIRT

You may practice during your first regular academic term and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment but may **NOT** compete during your first year of full-time enrollment. You must pass either eight quarter or nine semester hours to practice in the next term.

NONQUALIFIER

You will not be able to practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

Division II Academic Standards

Division II schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:

NCAA DIVISION II

MAKE IT *YOURS*

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (Including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

2. Earn a minimum 2.2 **core-course GPA**.
3. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet **specific criteria** after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division II and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

PARTIAL QUALIFIER

You may practice and receive an athletics scholarship but may NOT compete during your first year of full-time enrollment.



(Note: Create a separate, appropriately named email account for all college-related correspondence. Also ensure that your social media accounts have appropriate postings)

Student Name
Address (Street, City, State, Zip Code)
Telephone Number
Email

Lakeland High School/Walter Panas High School

Anticipated Date of Graduation:

Education Objective: To obtain a bachelor's degree in _____

(Note: If unsure, leave the education objective off the resume)

For every category below where you were involved, indicate the grade (9th, 10th, 11th, 12th) that you were in at the time. Exclude those categories that do not apply to you.

Honors and Awards: _____ Grade(s):

List the title of the honor/award and activity/academic area in which it was earned, as well as criteria for the award.

Extracurricular Activities:

List the clubs you participated in. Identify school activities beginning with LHS/WPHS to differentiate from outside activities.

Athletics:

Music:

Community Service:

Include name(s) of organizations and duties performed.

Work Experience:

List any work for which you have been paid on a regular basis. Indicate work responsibilities.

Websites for College and Career Information

<https://app.scoir.com/signin>

<https://www.petersons.com/college-search.aspx>

<https://www.princetonreview.com/>

<https://www.collegefairguide.com/>

<https://mappingyourfuture.org/>

<https://www.collegeboard.org/>

<https://act.org/>

<https://nycolleges.org/>

<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Senior Questionnaire

FOR USE BY YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR ONLY

1. Is there information related to you or your high school record, or other special circumstances, of which your counselor should be aware as he/she writes your recommendation (e.g., family situations, death or family illness/surgery, financial hardships, illness, extended absence, mononucleosis, concussion, injury, surgery)?

2. Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability? Why or why not

3. Describe an academic and/or life experience that has been a highlight to you in your high school years (e.g., a particular teacher, class, paper you wrote, project, travels, service learning, etc.).

4. Do you have specific career goal(s) or major(s) in mind? If so, what and why?

5. What do you consider your greatest strength? Or something your counselor might not know about you?

6. What do you most want a college admissions committee to know about you?
What are the first three words that come to mind to describe you?

1. _____

Why?

2. _____

Why?

3. _____

Why?

Parent/Guardian Brag Sheet

Parental/Guardian insight provides valuable information with which to round-out a comprehensive recommendation for a student. Please take a few minutes to respond to the following questions. Your comments will be appreciated and will assist the school counselor in writing the college letter of recommendation. Please feel free to attach additional pages.

Child's Name:

Counselor:

What do you consider to be the outstanding accomplishments of your son/daughter over the past three years?

In what areas has your son/daughter shown the most development and growth during the high school years?

What do you consider to be your son's/daughter's most outstanding personality traits?

What should the whole world know about him/her? Are there any unique personal or family circumstances or influences which have affected your son's/daughter's educational experience (e.g., unique circumstances, family situations, financial hardships, etc.)?

If you had to describe your son/daughter with five adjectives, what would they be?

What are your expectations for your son's/daughter's future career and/or college choice?

Lakeland Central School District Official Transcript Request Form

STUDENT NAME: _____ Date Form Received: ____ / ____ / ____
School Counseling Staff will enter this date

COUNSELOR NAME: _____

STUDENT DIRECTIONS:

- ❖ Please submit this form to your counselor **at least 15 school days** before any application deadline.

Scoir & College Applications

- ❖ School Counseling staff **will process** your documents in Scoir when this **Transcript Request Form** is received.
 - Note: If you have submitted your **Transcript Request Form** to your counselor, please remember to **update** the form if you apply to another college.
- ❖ School Counseling will send: Official Transcript, HS Profile, School Counselor letter, and other documents in Scoir.
- ❖ Teachers send their letters of recommendations **separately**.
- ❖ SAT & ACT scores need to be sent by the student.
- ❖ Often, all the documents do not arrive at the same time. When this occurs, colleges automatically generate a correspondence with the documents that are missing. Please allow several days after such correspondence before reaching out to the college or the school counseling office.
- ❖ Scholarship Applications: Provide your counselor with any forms required by the specific scholarship and information regarding mailing.

College	Common App	SUNY App	Other	College Deadline	Check Only 1			
					EA	ED	Reg.	Rolling
1:	Y / N	Y / N						
2:	Y / N	Y / N						
3:	Y / N	Y / N						
4:	Y / N	Y / N						
5:	Y / N	Y / N						
6:	Y / N	Y / N						
7:	Y / N	Y / N						
8:	Y / N	Y / N						
9:	Y / N	Y / N						
10:	Y / N	Y / N						

IMPORTANT PRIVACY NOTE
 By signing this form, I authorize all schools that I have attended to release all requested records covered under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) so that my application may be reviewed by all institution(s) to which I'm applying. I further authorize the admissions officers reviewing my application, including seasonal staff employed for the sole purpose of evaluating applications, to contact officials at my current and former schools should they have questions about school forms submitted on my behalf.

___ **Yes**, I *do waive* my right to access, and I understand I will never see this form, or any other recommendations submitted by me or on my behalf.
 ___ **No**, I *do not waive* my right to access, and I may someday choose to see this form or any other recommendations or supporting documents submitted by me or on my behalf to the institution at which I'm enrolling, if that institution saves them after I matriculate.

Student Signature:	Date:
Parent Signature (if student is under 18):	Date: