

# **Chatfield Senior High School**

## **College Planning Handbook**



**Chatfield Senior High  
Counseling Department**

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**High School Code—060926**

**Grading Scale— Weighted and Unweighted reported**

**Class Rank—Weighted and Unweighted reported**

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## **COLLEGE FAIR INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION**

Since 1972, College Fairs of Greater Denver, Inc. has provided high school students and parents an opportunity to meet with college representatives through an annual series of college fair programs and workshops. This organization is comprised of high school counselors and college admissions representatives from the greater Denver area. Each program provides students and parents the opportunity to meet college representatives one-on-one.

These events are FREE for students and parents to attend. However, it is strongly encouraged for students to register at [GoToCollegeFairs.com](https://www.gotocollegefairs.com) and print out a barcode for entrance to the fair. This eliminates the need for students to fill out a contact card at each table.

### **COLORADO FREE APPLICATION DAYS**

**Colorado Free Application Days are  
October 17-19, 2023!**

During the Colorado Free Application Days, students can apply for FREE at Colorado's 32 public colleges and universities and several private institutions.

How does it work? Students must submit a completed admissions application between 12:01 a.m. on 10/17/2023 and 11:59 p.m. on 10/19/23 to apply for FREE. Admissions applications that have been started and not submitted may not be granted a waiver. Each institution has a unique process to waive the admissions application submission fee. Visit <https://cdhe.colorado.gov/cofreeappdays> to find specific information by institution.

To take advantage of Colorado Free Application Days, it's best to have all admissions application materials prepared, double-checked and reviewed by the beginning of October.

## REASONS FOR ATTENDING COLLEGE OR A TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Whether you are uncertain about going to college or you just need some reassurance you're on the right track, here are a few reasons to attend college or a technical school:

- **Education after graduation increases pay as an industry professional.** The earning differences between college graduates and high school degrees is substantial. To learn more, visit: [Education and Lifetime Earnings](#), ssa.gov.
- **There is more job security in higher education.** According to a one time estimate, by the year 2028 there will be 19 million more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them.
- Education beyond high school provides additional benefits, including **meeting new people, taking part in new opportunities to explore interests, and experiencing personal success.**

### Types of Post-Secondary Education:

- **College:** offers courses leading to a four-year Bachelor's degree
- **University:** offers programs thru several colleges on one campus, for example: the College of Fine Arts, Medicine, Business, etc.)
- **Private:** receives no state tax funding
- **Community:** offers courses leading to an Associate's degree (two years) with the ability to transfer to a four-year college or university.
- **Technical:** offers job-related programs lasting from several months to two years

## **THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS**

Colleges and Universities are taking a holistic approach to the College Admissions Process – taking into consideration the whole student and not a single subset of information. The holistic approach includes:

- The rigor of high school courses taken, including college courses taken while in high school, for example: AP and Concurrent Enrollment.
- Grades and grade point average
- Class rank
- Test scores (ACT/SAT):
  - In Colorado and many states nationwide, standardized test scores are optional and not required for admission. However, students can opt in during the application process to allow SAT scores be a consideration in the admissions process and course placement.
- Extracurricular activities
- Letters of Recommendation
- College Essays
- Interviews
  - Some universities will require interviews, especially in some of the distinguished scholarship opportunities.

**FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN**  
**SELECTING A COLLEGE**  
**Consider “Goodness of Fit”**

- Type of college
  - Community college, 4 year college or university, technical school, public, private, Christian, etc....
- Programs offered
- Size of school
  - Student population
  - Class size
- Location
  - Size of town
  - Location in proximity to large cities, home, mountains, beach, etc.
- Housing
- Reputation
  - Ask family and friends who have attended the college of interest
- Cost/Financial Aid
- Athletics, Clubs and Activities
- Support services
- Transportation
- Campus Culture and Environment
- Internships and Work Based Learning Opportunities

Before applying, be sure to create a short list of schools that can be categorized in three categories, and then take the time to tour those schools and make sure those schools meet the priority criteria for selecting a college:

- “Reach” schools
- “Comfort” schools
- “Safety” schools

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES**

- Does your college specialize in a specific industry major?
- Are there opportunities to work as an intern while taking classes within my major?
- How can I arrange a college tour?
- What are the application deadlines for admission and financial aid?
- Is an admissions essay a requirement as part of the application package?
- Do you require letters of recommendation as part of the application package? If so, how many?
- What is the retention rate from freshman year to graduation?
- What is the graduation rate?
- How are roommates selected and what types of housing is available?
- Tell me about your campus safety policies and procedures.
- Are additional support services offered? For example support services in tutoring, mental health and career counseling?
- Is there a GPA requirement for admissions?
- Do you require SAT/ACT test scores as part of the admission package?
- What is the range in cost per semester, per year and over a four year period for attending your college?
- What student activities are available?
- Does your university accept AP classes and Concurrent Enrollment credits?

## **HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF A COLLEGE TOUR**

- Call or write the Admission Office (in advance) to schedule a visit.
- Meet with an admission officer
- Discuss admission requirements
- Obtain information about your intended major
- Obtain a school calendar and a catalog
- Attend a class
- Tour the campus
- Talk with students
- Visit a dorm room
- Eat at campus dining facilities
- Inquire about campus activities (clubs, organizations, sports, etc.)
- Meet with a financial aid officer to discuss costs and possible financial aid

\*Note: Students may take an ‘excused absence’ from school to visit colleges. This may be the most important aspect of the college search. If possible, visit on a weekday while college classes are in session.

## **COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS**

Keep in mind, a good rule of thumb is to apply to colleges by Thanksgiving of your senior year.

**Application deadlines are different for each school.** Be sure to check each college or university website for details.

### **Naviance and Common App**

Naviance is a tool to start the process for searching for the right college by using the Super Match feature, for matching careers to a



student's areas of interests, and searching for scholarships. **It also securely delivers transcripts and letters of recommendation to requested schools for each student.** Students applying to a college **MUST** add colleges to their Naviance account.

### **Matching Common App and Naviance**

If using Common App, make sure to add colleges you are applying to in Common App before matching accounts.

- To match accounts, log into Naviance
  - Go to 'student links' and select 'Naviance'. Connect with your Jeffco login. Select 'Naviance' one more time.
  - Click on 'Colleges' and 'Colleges I'm applying to'
  - Click on the button that says 'Match'. The colleges listed in Common App will now appear in Naviance.
- All transcript and letters of recommendation requests for each school should be made in Naviance and not Common App.

### **Adding Colleges not in Common App to Naviance**

Login to Naviance from Chatfield's homepage:

- Go to 'student links' and select 'Naviance'. Connect with your Jeffco login. Select 'Naviance' one more time.
- Click on the 'Colleges' tab and 'Colleges I'm applying to'.
- Add schools by clicking on the blue plus button.
- Type the name of the school in the search bar. Be sure to select the right school.
- Indicate the application type and how you're applying, then click "Add Application". **Colleges must be added to this list for Chatfield to send a Transcript.**

## **TRANSCRIPT and LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION** **REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS:**

**ALL Transcript and Letters of Recommendation will be requested through Naviance.**

Log into Naviance by following the steps listed on page 9.

**\*\*Note:** If Letters of Recommendation are required, letters must be complete BEFORE requesting a Transcript. Letters of Recommendation and Transcripts are sent as an application package to the requested school. Letters of Recommendation will be uploaded into Naviance by the teacher who receives the request. Be sure to clearly communicate deadlines with teachers and allow 2 weeks for teachers to write a Letter of Recommendation.

### **How to request a transcript in Naviance**

Transcripts can be requested in two ways in Naviance. Be sure to choose one of the two options described below.

**Option 1:** Requesting transcripts while adding schools to the ‘colleges I’m applying to list’.

- From the Naviance home page, click on ‘Colleges’ and ‘Colleges I’m Applying To’.
- Click the red plus button and add the school to your list.
- Select the school from the drop down menu, then select Add and Request Transcript.
- Select Initial, complete the remaining two sections and select ‘Request and Finish’.

Repeat this process for each college listed.

**Option 2:** Requesting transcripts for schools already in the ‘Colleges I’m Applying to’ list.

- Select ‘College’ tab
- Scroll down to the Manage Transcripts link.
- Select the schools and submit the request

### **How to request a letter of recommendation in Naviance**

First, decide who you would like to write a letter on your behalf.

Ask that recommender in person to write you a letter. Additionally, although you’ve asked the recommender in person, the request must also be made through Naviance. Please allow teachers up to 2 weeks to complete a Letter of Recommendation.

### **To send a request through Naviance**

- Log into your Naviance account following the steps on page 9.
- Select ‘Colleges’
- Scroll down and find the Letters of Recommendation link.
- Click on ‘Add Request’ and find the teacher writing the letter.

Answer the questions and then click ‘Submit Request’.

Be sure to pick up a Senior Brag Sheet from the Counseling Office or Career Hub (B112), and provide a Brag Sheet to each teacher who is sent a request.

If you are requesting a Letter of Recommendation from a person outside of Chatfield, be sure to make arrangements to have their letter sent to a counselor or the Career Hub Coordinator via email.

Remember to THANK the person writing your letter!

### **Mid-Year transcript request**

If you're applying to a school that requires a mid-year (7<sup>th</sup> semester grades) transcript, please request a 'Mid-Year' transcript using the above transcript request directions. Mid-Year transcripts will be sent to schools in January.

### **Final transcript request**

Follow the same process as 'Mid-Year' and 'Initial Transcript' requests, only this time select 'Final' for the school you are attending in the Fall.

## **ESSAYS AND/OR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

### **Essays**

If a college requires an essay, topic choices will typically be found in a list. Pick a topic that connects with your story. It's ok to be creative and emphasize strengths. It's always a good idea to ask a teacher to proofread and review a rough draft before submitting.

- Write an essay only if required.
- Relate your story to greater human experience.
- The secret of good writing is rewriting. Have teachers, a counselor or trusted (and skilled) person edit your paper.
- Remember to check for correct formatting, spelling and grammar.
- Read your essay aloud and listen for errors

## **SELECTING A MAJOR**

Examine areas of interest, talents, values, goals, and ambitions. Job shadow and speak with people who work in careers that seem interesting to you. Take profile surveys in Naviance and through Career Coach:

<https://arvadachamber.lightcastcc.com/?radius=&region=Jefferson>

If you cannot determine a major before applying to a college, you are not alone. Approximately 50% of all college freshmen are undecided on a major. Most colleges allow until the end of your second year to declare a major.

## **COST OF ATTENDING A 4-YEAR UNIVERSITY**

The cost of attending a 4-year university depends on multiple factors including the cost of tuition, housing, books, meal plans and more. Be sure to do research and visit University websites to understand the breakdown of cost and determine if it is a good financial fit for you.

### **Ways to save \$\$**

- Concurrent Enrollment courses.
- AP courses.
- Begin your college career by attending a community college.
- Start the scholarship search early! Scan the QR code in the back of the book for scholarship resources.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

The purpose of financial aid is to ensure each student has sufficient financial resources available to pursue higher education.

Be sure to the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) after October 1 of your senior year. Visit <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/> for more information.

**ALL SENIORS WHO ARE ATTENDING COLLEGE SHOULD COMPLETE THE FAFSA!** Even if your financial situation will not allow you to qualify for a federal Pell Grant, *some aid at specific colleges is based on data from this form.* Choosing to not complete the form, might be a missed opportunity for financial support.

## Types of Financial Aid

- **Grants:** Funds provided by the government or a college to assist families. Most grants are “need based” and are not repaid.
- **Scholarships:** “Gift money” based on a student’s merits (academic, athletic, music, etc.).
- **Work Study:** Many colleges offer on-campus jobs where students work around class schedules.
- **Student Loans:** A student loan is borrowed money that is repaid over the time. In addition to repaying the amount borrowed, most borrowers also have to pay a fee, called interest.

## Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF)

The College Opportunity Fund program provides a stipend for new and continuing in-state students going to college in Colorado. The Fund was created by an Act of the Colorado State Legislature in May 2004 to heighten awareness that state tax dollars are used to offset the costs of undergraduate education. To receive the stipend, a student must apply for and authorize the use of the stipend at their respective institution. Without the stipend, a student is responsible for the full amount of tuition which equals in-state tuition plus the stipend amount. To apply, visit <https://cof.college-assist.org/>

## Scholarships

The vast majority of scholarship applications come directly from the college or organization making the offer. Be sure to contact the college to find scholarship opportunities specific to your major and/or university. *Additional scholarship resources can be found by scanning this QR code at the back of this book.*

## **SAT AND ACT DATES**

Many schools are moving to a holistic approach in the admissions process. A holistic approach looks at the whole student including GPA, school and community involvement, the college essay and SAT/ACT scores if the student opts in to including test scores. Even if schools do not require SAT scores, class placement and some scholarships require an SAT and/or ACT score. Be sure to check the admissions page of the college you are applying to determine what you need to report as part of the application package.

To register for the SAT visit: [collegeboard.org](https://collegeboard.org)

To register for the ACT visit: <https://www.act.org/>

\*Some Colorado colleges and universities require a writing test score from the ACT or SAT. Check the college website to see if writing is mandatory.

### **Test Prep Resources**

ACT Prep– [www.actstudent.org/test-prep](http://www.actstudent.org/test-prep)

SAT Prep– [www.sat.collegeboard.org/practice](http://www.sat.collegeboard.org/practice)

Khan Academy- [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)

High Five Scholarships- [www.highfivescholarships.com](http://www.highfivescholarships.com)

## **COLLEGE PLANNING CALENDAR**

### **Junior Year: Test and Inquire**

- Take on leadership roles in extracurricular and volunteer community service activities. Now is a great time to also explore internships and community jobs.
- Enter the PSAT/NMSQT competition. Top scorers can qualify for scholarships.
- Create a tentative list of colleges for consideration, and get on the college/university mailing lists.
  - Research colleges by attending fairs, exploring websites and scheduling college tours.
- Take the spring ACT/SAT tests.
- Take the SAT Subject tests if required by colleges on your list.
- Start searching for scholarships to understand scholarship eligibility and the process for applying.

### **Senior Year: Apply, Visit and Confirm**

- Continue with leadership roles in extracurricular and volunteer community service activities as well as internships and community jobs.
- Take/retake ACT/SAT or SAT subject tests.
- Attend college fairs and workshops.
- Narrow college choices to 3-5 colleges remembering to include schools in your “reach”, “comfort” and “safety” categories.
- Apply for admission and establish relationships with admissions counselors at the schools. During the application process:
  - ✓ Prepare a personal essay.
  - ✓ Contact teachers/counselors about writing letters of rec.
  - ✓ Fill out a FAFSA form (October).
  - ✓ Apply for scholarships (each has its own deadline).
  - ✓ Consider admission offers, and confirm your intent to enroll.



## **Monthly “to do” list**

### **September**

- Review your transcript and academic record.
- If necessary, retake ACT or SAT and have scores sent DIRECTLY to the schools of your choice through College Board.
- Attend in state and out of state college nights and fairs.
- Visit college reps who come to Chatfield.
- ATHLETES – make sure you are registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center (<https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>).

### **October**

- Submit FAFSA (complete online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>) and other financial aid forms.
- Start narrowing application choices.
- Continue to ask questions and sort through information.
- Start looking for scholarships. There is a scholarship list on Naviance: <http://connection.naviance.com/chatfield>; Scholarships can also be located on the Counseling “Local-Chatfield Scholarship Spreadsheet” found on the Counseling web page.
- Apply for FREE on the Colorado FREE Application Day if possible.

### **November**

- Keep going! Continue with the steps you’ve initiated.
- Good rule of thumb is to have your application(s) and materials completed and submitted by Thanksgiving.
- Maintain your academic standards.

### **December**

- Make transcript requests *before* the winter break.
- Check on the status of your application about 4 weeks after submitting the application.
- See your Counselor for a credit check and course review for second semester.
- *Enjoy the winter break.*

## **January and February**

- Register for COF (Colorado Opportunity Fund) at: <https://cof.college-assist.org/>
- Request mid-year transcripts through Naviance, if needed.

## **March, April, and May**

- It's decision time! It's time to choose the college or university that is best for you.
- Notify the Career Hub of any grants, scholarships, or awards you receive (from your attending college only) for recognition at Senior Awards Night.
- By the beginning of May, complete the required 'Jeffco Senior Survey' and all other assigned tasks in Naviance in the 'About me' section.
- Select the college you are attending in the 'Colleges I'm Applying To' section in Naviance. This is where your final transcript will be sent.

## **RESOURCES**

Naviance: <https://connection.naviance.com/chatfield>

College in Colorado:

<https://secure.collegeincolorado.org/home/home.aspx>

Colorado Department of Higher Education: [higher.ed.colorado.gov](http://higher.ed.colorado.gov)

Common Application: [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

Early Decision/Early Action:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/104.html>

WUE: Western Undergraduate Exchange:

<https://www.wiche.edu/wue>

NCAA: [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

NAIA: <https://play.mynaia.org/>

Junior College Athletics: <http://www.njcaa.org/>

CSS/Financial Aid Profile: <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>

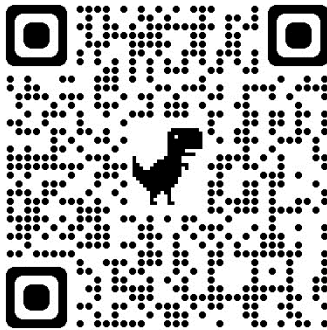
Federal Student Aid: [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)

ASVAB: <http://www.asvabprogram.com>

Khan Academy: [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scan the QR Code for a list of Scholarship resources.



## QUESTIONS/FEEDBACK FORM

Your feedback and questions are important to us! Scan the QR Code to provide feedback on how we can improve for next year. Counselors will respond to questions via email.

