



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO THE COALITION APPLICATION



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When you're first getting ready to look at college applications, the entire process can seem daunting. You might forget whether you placed 3rd or 4th in that slam poetry contest freshman year, or feel like there's no great place or folder to store the application essays that got you into your favorite summer program. Fear not, because this is where centralized application systems such as the Coalition Application and Common Application play integral roles. These are the primary websites you will use to apply to colleges.

While the Common Application is the most well-known and widely-used application system, the Coalition Application is known for its dedication only to include schools that provide a generous amount of need-based financial aid. The Coalition's mission of inclusivity is to "make college a reality for all high school students through its set of free, online college planning tools that help them learn about, prepare for, and apply to college." College education is often not accessible for students from low-income backgrounds and the Coalition member database serves as a good resource for students to find schools which prioritize aid.

The Coalition App is also famous for "the locker," a cloud-based drive where students can upload any media files, graded papers, essay drafts, or recommendation letters and keep them all in one place.

Not all of the portions of the Coalition App are required. **The required sections of the Coalition App are:**

- Personal Information
- Contact Information
- Demographic Information
- Citizenship Information
- Family Information
- High School Information

The following sections are optional for self-reporting on the Coalition App, but since they're required by most schools, you will have to submit them from other sources if not the Coalition. These are:

- 12th Grade Coursework
 - 9th-11th Grade Coursework
 - SAT/ACT
 - College Information
 - Subject Tests
 - Additional Tests
 - Honors and Distinctions
 - Academic Interests
 - Activities/Experiences
-

While it may seem like there are a lot of sections to fill out, the Coalition App is actually very user-friendly. Once you know exactly what each section asks for, the instructions are rather straightforward and can help set you up perfectly for a college application process that is as stress-free as possible. To guide you through all of these sections, we will take a closer look at each of them, and provide tips to help fill them out, alongside more detailed guides on exactly which schools are Coalition members, how to navigate the helpful Locker, and an examination of the Coalition personal statement prompts.

SCHOOLS USING THE COALITION APPLICATION

Before you register for a Coalition App account, it's obviously important to know how many of the schools on your college list use the Coalition App. (Note that some schools have their own application systems like the Texas schools, Elon University, and the University of Florida. Check out the full list of Coalition member institutions below, paying special attention to the colleges in bold signifying that they are not a member of the Common App.

- Adelphi University
 - Allegheny College
 - American University
 - Amherst College
 - Arizona State University
 - Babson College
 - Barnard College
 - Bates Colleges
 - Beloit College
 - Boston University
 - Bowdoin College
 - Brown University
 - Bryn Mawr College
 - Bucknell University
 - California Institute of Technology (Caltech)
 - Carleton College
 - Carroll University
 - Case Western Reserve University
 - Claremont McKenna College
 - **Clemson University**
 - Colby College
 - Colgate University
 - College of the Holy Cross
 - College of William & Mary
 - Colorado College
 - Columbia University
 - Dartmouth College
 - Davidson College
 - Denison University
 - Depauw University
 - Drew University
 - Duke University
-

-
- Elon University
 - Emory University
 - Florida Southern College
 - Florida State University
 - Franklin & Marshall College
 - Franklin W. Olin College Of Engineering
 - Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech)
 - Hamilton College
 - Harvard University
 - Harvey Mudd College
 - Haverford College
 - Illinois State University
 - Indiana University—Bloomington
 - **James Madison University**
 - Johns Hopkins University
 - Juniata College
 - Kenyon College
 - Knox College
 - La Salle University
 - Loyola Marymount University
 - **Loyola University Maryland**
 - Lycoming College
 - Manhattan College
 - Marist College
 - Mercyhurst University
 - Miami University—Ohio
 - Michigan State University
 - Middlebury College
 - Mount Holyoke College
 - North Carolina State University at Raleigh
 - **North Central College**
 - Northeastern University
 - Northwestern University
 - Oberlin College
 - Penn State—University Park
 - Pomona College
 - Princeton University
 - Purdue University
 - Ramapo College of New Jersey
 - Reed College
 - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
 - Rice University
 - Rollins College
 - **Rutgers University—Camden**
 - **Rutgers University—Newark**
 - **Rutgers University—New Brunswick**
 - Saint Michael's College
 - Simmons College
 - Skidmore College
 - Smith College
 - Southern Methodist University
 - St. John's University
 - **St. Mary's University**
 - St. Olaf College
 - Stanford University
 - Stetson University
 - Stony Brook University
 - SUNY Albany (University at Albany)
-

-
- SUNY Binghamton
(Binghamton University)
 - SUNY Buffalo (University at Buffalo)
 - SUNY Geneseo
 - Susquehanna University
 - Swarthmore College
 - Sweet Briar College
 - **Texas A&M University**
 - The College of New Jersey
 - The College of Wooster
 - The Ohio State University
 - **The University of New Mexico**
 - **The University of Texas at Austin**
 - Trinity University
 - Tufts University
 - Union College
 - University of Arizona
 - University of Chicago
 - University of Connecticut
 - University of Dayton
 - University of Delaware
 - **University of Florida**
 - **University of Georgia**
 - **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**
 - University of Iowa
 - University of Kentucky
 - **University of Maryland—College Park**
 - University of Mary Washington
 - University of Michigan
 - University of Minnesota—Twin Cities
 - University of Missouri
 - **University of Montana**
 - University of New Hampshire
 - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 - University of Notre Dame
 - **University of Oklahoma**
 - University of Oregon
 - University of Pennsylvania
 - University of Pittsburgh
 - University of Richmond
 - University of Rochester
 - **University of South Carolina**
 - University of South Florida
 - University of Tampa
 - University of Vermont
 - University of Virginia
 - **University of Washington—Bothell**
 - **University of Washington—Seattle**
 - Ursinus College
 - Vanderbilt University
 - Vassar College
 - Virginia Tech
 - Wake Forest University
 - Washington University in St. Louis
 - Wellesley College
 - Wesleyan University
 - Williams College
 - Yale University

The Coalition App has far fewer schools than the Common App - 147 compared to the latter's 700+. Member colleges include most public universities, as well as each of the Ivy League schools, Stanford University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Chicago and top liberal arts colleges such as Williams, Amherst, Wellesley, and Bowdoin.

Now that you know exactly which schools you'll have access to through the Coalition App, it's time to fill out the actual application.

PREPARING TO FILL OUT THE COALITION APPLICATION

In order to successfully fill out the Coalition Application, you'll need certain documents and information. These are:

- Your high school grades
- A list of your extracurricular activities
- Your parents' or legal guardians' employment information, education, etc.
- Your test scores
- Contact information for your recommenders and guidance counselor
- Your school's College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) code

Start collecting these documents now. You don't want to be rushing around the house looking for your sophomore year report cards an hour before all of your college applications are due. Similarly, start deciding who will write your letters of recommendation. Talk with these teachers and ask if you can add their information to your application. If you will use additional letters of rec, reach out to the coaches and internship supervisors who know you best. These additional letters can be uploaded to the Coalition locker in digital "sealed envelopes" as soon as they are ready.

Fill out each section with great care. Not only do these matter individually, but they paint a holistic picture for admissions officers to evaluate whether or not you'd be a suitable fit for their school. Admissions officers refer to these sections, and your application as a whole, to gain more context on where and how you grew up, the setting of your school, and extracurriculars and academic subjects which peak your interest.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

The first section of the Coalition Application asks for basic information such as your name, sex, gender identity, Social Security Number, armed forces status, current high school enrollment status, anticipated graduation year, anticipated first year of college, whether you intend to apply for need-based financial aid, and if you're part of a community-based organization.

Preferred First Name

Suffix

Sex * ?
 Female
 Male
[Clear](#)

Gender

Other Names (Records May Be Under)

Do you have a US Social Security Number? *
 Yes
 No
[Clear](#)

United States Armed Forces Status *

What is your current enrollment status? *
 Middle School / Junior High
 High School
 2-year College
 4-year College
 Not Currently Enrolled in School
[Clear](#)

When will you graduate from high school or receive high school equivalency? *

 (Format: yyyy-mm)

What year do you plan to begin your college studies? *
 2019
 2020
 2021
 2022
 2023
[Clear](#)

Do you intend to apply for need-based financial aid? *
 Yes
 No
[Clear](#)

Are you participating in a Community-Based Organization (CBO)? * ?
 Yes
 No
[Clear](#)

If you're currently serving or have previously served under the United States Armed Forces, your application fees will be waived.

United States Armed Forces Status *

Currently Serving

Armed Forces Fee Waiver

The following application fees are waived based on your United States Armed Forces status:

Adelphi University	ADD TO LIST
Amherst College	ADD TO LIST
Bates College	ADD TO LIST
Beloit College	ADD TO LIST
Bowdoin College	ADD TO LIST
Bucknell University	ADD TO LIST
Caltech	ADD TO LIST
Carleton College	ADD TO LIST
Carroll University	ADD TO LIST
Case Western Reserve University	ADD TO LIST

The Coalition Application also wants to know whether you've received assistance in filling out your application from community-based organizations such as Questbridge or Upward Bound. Community-based organizations do not include guidance counselors or private counselors (such as InGenius Prep) who might have helped look over your materials.

Community-Based Organization (CBO) 1
Please type in the name of your CBO *

Search For Community-Based Organization

Be careful not to make careless mistakes such as confusing your first name and last name or mixing up digits on your Social Security Number. Your Coalition Application will be sent to many, if not all, of your colleges, so a name mismatch could send you on a long spiral of fixes later on.

CONTACT INFORMATION

As you can deduce from the header, this section of the Coalition Application collects information on how to reach you if admissions offices need to ask you a question, or send you application materials or letters. More specifically, this is the section where you fill out your phone number, current mailing address, and permanent address (if different). Within your address, you will be asked when you started living at your current residence - think back and make sure you know that information!

Mailing Address	Home Phone Number *
Country *	Country Code *
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 1 (Including Apartment or Suite Number) *	Number *
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 2	Mobile Phone Number *
<input type="text"/>	Country Code *
City *	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	Number *
Province *	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	
ZIP/ Postal Code *	
<input type="text"/>	
Start Date	
<input type="text"/>	
(Format: yyyy-mm-dd)	
End Date	
<input type="text"/>	
(Format: yyyy-mm-dd)	

The permanent address section would only be different if you don't live at home, for example if you attend a boarding school. Fill out these sections very carefully - if you don't attend boarding school, don't accidentally put in your school address instead of your home address! Your mail could end up at the wrong place and you could miss important deadlines.

Similar to filling out your SSN earlier, don't mix up the digits on your phone number. An admissions officer might want to call you with a waitlist update for example, and you wouldn't receive the call because you didn't put in your number correctly!

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Colleges value a diverse student body, comprised of candidates who come from many different backgrounds. You can click one or more ethnicities, including stating whether you're Hispanic or Latino. Where your family comes from provides schools with further context on you and the culture around which you grew up.

Are you Hispanic or Latino? [?](#)

- Yes
 No

[Clear](#)

Select one or more of the following:

- American Indian or Alaska Native [?](#)
 Asian [?](#)
 Black or African American (including Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Afro-Caribbean origin) [?](#)
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander [?](#)
 White (including Middle Eastern) [?](#)

The Coalition App also asks you to list each of the languages you speak and which language you grew up speaking at home. There's a separate clarification to note your proficiency in a language, so even if you're not a native speaker or completely fluent, you can check that you're able to write or speak that language. This is a simple opportunity to tell admissions officers more about your interests and cultural influences.

What Languages Do You Know?

Language *

English [v](#)

Proficiency Level *

Native [v](#)

[ADD LANGUAGE](#)

Primary Language Spoken at Home *

[v](#)

CITIZENSHIP INFORMATION

Colleges keep track of where their students are from and the number of international students and students with dual-citizenships they admit. That's why they ask for your country of citizenship, whether you are a U.S. citizen or U.S. refugee, and your country of birth.

Are you a U.S. Citizen or U.S. National? *

Yes

No

[Clear](#)

Are you a U.S. Permanent Resident or Refugee? *

Yes

No

[Clear](#)

Green Card Upload

[ATTACH FROM YOUR LOCKER OR DEVICE](#)

Birthplace

Country *

Province *

City *

Alien Registration Number *

Alien Registration Number Expiration Date *

(Format: yyyy-mm-dd)

In addition to U.S. Permanent Residency/Refugee Status, List your Citizenship(s) *

[ADD A CITIZENSHIP](#)

FAMILY INFORMATION

Your family background is a big part of providing admissions officers with further context about who you are and where you come from. They want to know if you were raised by a single parent, whether you grew up in a divorced home, whether one of your parents has passed away. This information helps admissions counselors picture the familial circumstances you grew up in and the external factors affecting your childhood and adolescence. There is no specific answer that colleges look for -- the information you fill out will simply help them understand your background better.

This section is also for admissions officers to determine where your parents went to college, what they do, and their current position. Many colleges value the perspective of first generation students and look to see if you are coming from that background. They also want to know whether you have a sibling and whether you're the oldest or the youngest sibling. If your siblings or parents attended the college where you are applying, this counts as legacy, and can assist your admission, especially if you apply in the early decision round.

Who is in your household? (select all that apply) *

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- Sibling(s)
- Spouse
- Child(ren)
- Just me

Household Size * ?

What is the highest level of education earned by any of your parents? *

Parents/Guardians

Parents' Marital Status (relative to each other) *

Parent/Guardian 1

Please check if deceased

Legal First Name *

Legal Last Name/Family Name *

Relationship To You *

Email Address *

Home Address

Phone Number

Country Code

Phone Number

Country Code

Number

Highest Level of Education *

Name of Educational Institution

Year Degree Received

Occupation and Position/Title

Place of Work

Birth Country

Siblings

List up to 4 siblings in the fields below. You may list additional siblings in the "Additional Sibling Information" box.

Sibling 1

Relationship *

Full Name *

Date of Birth *

(Format: yyyy-mm-dd)

Highest Level of Education *

HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION

Your time in high school is undoubtedly very important in guiding college admissions officers through whether you are fit for college-level academics or not. By viewing your course list, grades, and grading system in the Coalition Application, colleges are able to scrutinize your transcript and determine your academic proficiency. Admissions officers will also have access to a report from your high school that indicates the resources available - number of AP classes offered, graduation rate, number of students on reduced lunch programs - to learn more about the environment where you received your education.

High School 1

US High School
 Non-US High School
 Home School

Select a state to begin searching. *

▼

When did you most recently attend this school?

Date started *

📅

(Format: yyyy-mm)

Date ended

Currently attending 📅

(Format: yyyy-mm)

How are classes scheduled at this school? *

Full Year
 Semesters
 Trimesters
 Quarters
 Quinesters

This school uses block scheduling.

Grading Scale *

Letter
 Numbers
 Other
 This school does not provide grades

12TH GRADE COURSEWORK

Speaking of your transcript, grades are an essential component of your application. Top colleges not only want students who've challenged themselves with a rigorous course load, but also want to see candidates who have maintained consistent or upward-trending academic excellence. While admissions officers will note your 12th grade coursework choices, you might not have grades from senior year when you apply, especially if you apply early. However, you should still put effort into your performances because schools will see your mid-year report (even if you've been accepted early). The mid year report is sent by your counselor, and it consists of your GPA, class rank, and updated transcript.

SAT/ACT

Most colleges require that you submit SAT or ACT scores, and even if test-optional, they will consider your scores if you choose to report them. The Coalition Application asks you to confirm the number of SAT or ACT tests you've taken, what your highest total score has been, and your individual section scores. Depending on college policies regarding score choice (when you may pick which scores to send each school) or superscore (a composite resulting from the highest score you achieved in each section if you've taken the SAT multiple times), your scores are reported to colleges accordingly.

Do you have any SAT Scores you wish to report? *

- Yes
 No
[Clear](#)

When did you take it? *

- I took the SAT before March 2016
 I took the redesigned SAT after March 2016

How many times have you taken the SAT? * ?

Two 

Highest Total Score *

Date Taken *

(Format: yyyy-mm)

Highest Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Score *

Date Taken *

(Format: yyyy-mm)

Highest Math Score *

Date Taken *


 

(Format: yyyy-mm)

Highest Essay Scores

Essay Reading Score

Essay Analysis Score

Essay Writing Score

Date Taken

(Format: yyyy-mm)

The following table includes some of the top schools that require submission of all scores, some schools which use score choice, and some top schools which are test optional. The asterisk indicates schools which allow score choice, but prefer that you submit all of your scores. Note that many schools appear in more than one column. Cornell, for instance, requires that you submit all scores, but also assures students it will only actually consider their highest component scores. Dartmouth, on the other hand, offers score choice, but will also consider your superscore if you submit more than a single sitting.

Schools that require ALL scores	Schools that use score choice	SAT optional schools	Schools that superscore
Barnard	Amherst College*	Arizona State	Brown
Carnegie Mellon	Boston University*	Bates	Caltech
City College of New York	Brown	Bowdoin	Cornell
Colgate University	Columbia	Brandeis	Dartmouth
Cornell	Dartmouth*	Bryn Mawr	Duke
Georgetown	Duke	Bucknell	Georgetown
Howard University	Harvard	Clark	Johns Hopkins
Mills College	Harvey Mudd College*	George Washington	MIT
Pomona College	Johns Hopkins*	Hofstra	Northwestern
Rice	MIT	Middlebury	NYU
Scripps College	Mount Holyoke College	Pitzer	Princeton
Stanford	Northwestern	Sarah Lawrence	Rice
Tufts	NYU	Smith (for US permanent residents and citizens)	Stanford
UC System	Smith College	University of Chicago	Uchicago
UMass Lowell	Tufts*	University of Iowa	UPenn
University of Maryland	UChicago*	Wake Forest University	Vanderbilt
Yale	University of Pennsylvania*	Wesleyan University	Yale

Use your better judgment and don't report scores that weaken your application if they aren't required.

COLLEGE INFORMATION

This section is applicable if you've attended classes at a local college for credit to take advanced courses not offered at your school or that you could not fit into your high school schedule. Online college courses for credit and summer programs that offer courses for credit are also listed here. All of these efforts show admissions officers that you took an extra step to explore a topic of your interest further than required at your school.

You should not enter AP or ECE courses in this section. This is the section to add any college courses you took for credit that do not appear on your high school transcript.

If you've attended college, search for your college(s) and add attendance information below.

Have you taken college classes or earned college credit? *

Yes

No

Clear

Are you currently taking classes in college? *

Yes

No

Clear

How many college credits have you earned to date? * ?

How many credits were earned after high school? *

FEE WAIVER

Since the Coalition Application is dedicated to a mission of inclusivity towards underrepresented and low-income students, you can receive fee waivers for the colleges you apply to if you answer “yes” to any of the following questions:

- Are you eligible for and/or enrolled in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program at a U.S. High School?
- Have you received a College Board fee waiver?
- Have you received an ACT fee waiver?
- Have you received a NACAC fee waiver from your high school counselor?
- Have you participated (or are you participating) in TRIO programs such as Upward Bound?

Since it costs anything between \$50 and \$90 to apply to each college, applying to ten or twelve schools can add up to a ton of money! If you qualify, definitely take this opportunity to save up for actual tuition itself.

SUBJECT TESTS

The Subject Tests section asks you whether you have any scores from SAT subject tests, AP, IB or A-Level classes that you wish to report.

Not all schools absolutely require SAT subject tests, while some require them only for entry into certain programs, such as Duke's Pratt School of Engineering which asks that you submit scores from either Math I or Math II subject tests. The Coalition App asks for your highest score in each subject test (students usually take each subject test once), and the date taken.

SAT Subject Tests

How many SAT Subject Tests would you like to report? * ?

SAT Subject Test 1

SAT Subject Test *

Highest Subject Score *

Date Taken *

(Format: yyyy-mm)

Similarly, you should report scores from any AP, IB or A-Level exams that you've taken prior to your college applications and the date on which you took the exam.

Do you have any AP Exams you wish to report? *

Yes

No

Clear

AP Exams

How many AP Exams would you like to report? * ?

AP Exam 1

AP Exam *

Highest Score *

Date Taken *

(Format: yyyy-mm)

ADDITIONAL TESTS

If you're an international student, U.S.-based colleges require English language proficiency tests such as IELTS and TOEFL to determine whether you are prepared for an academic setting in English. You can report the number of tests you've taken and your score in the Additional Tests section.

Have you taken the TOEFL, IELTS, or other exams that test English proficiency? * ?

Yes
 No
Clear

Proficiency Exams

How many results for the TOEFL, IELTS, or other exams that test English proficiency do you wish to report? *

One

Proficiency Exam 1

Exam Type *

Total/Overall Score *

I have not received my scores for this test.

Date Taken *

(Format: yyyy-mm)

Are you planning to take the TOEFL, IELTS, or other exams that test English proficiency in the future? *

Yes
 No

HONORS AND DISTINCTIONS

The Coalition Application has a section for any honors and awards that you might have received in the last few years. Unlike the Common Application, where awards are limited to academic achievement, the Coalition Honors section asks that you include up to 5 meaningful awards of any kind. You list the title of the honor, when you earned it, and the level at which the award is recognized (high school, district, regional, statewide, national, international). There is no separate space to describe the award in greater detail, so use the "title" box to be as specific as you can. If you have more than five awards worth noting, strategize on whether you can include two awards in one slot. Instead of just saying "basketball award," you could write "1st Place: New York Basketball State Championship & MVP."

Please list any Honors or Distinctions that you have received in order of importance to you.

We know that many students may not have honors or distinctions to share—particularly prior to commencement. Feel free to return to this section if you have anything you want to record.

You are allowed to list a maximum of 5 Honors/Distinctions. Don't worry that you won't be able to include ALL your honors/distinctions. We are most interested in those that are most meaningful to you so please be selective and choose the 5 honors/distinctions that are most important to YOU.

Honor/Distinction 1

Honor/Distinction Title *

Level *

Grade *

ACADEMIC INTERESTS

The Coalition Application's Academic Interests section is the place to let colleges know what subjects you're interested in studying and the level of your interest, up to 3 academic interests in case you're still deciding, or would like to pursue a double major.

Academic Interest 1

Academic Interest *

Level of Interest *

REMOVE

Academic Interest 2

Academic Interest *

Level of Interest *

REMOVE

ACTIVITIES/EXPERIENCES

Admissions officers look for top students who have the best grades, but this is not the only measure of determining how unique a student is. After all, multiple students achieve top grades at every high school. This is why it's very important for you to pursue activities that you're passionate about and maintain a level of commitment to them throughout high school. Don't just participate in clubs. Make sure you're vying for leadership positions or starting your own organizations relevant to your field of interest.

In the Coalition App, you choose from a drop-down menu of categories:

- Academic
- Arts
- Club Activities
- Family Responsibilities
- Sports
- Others

You're also given a chance to describe the activity in ONE sentence - so make that sentence count. Note that you are then asked how long and frequently you participated in the activity, whether you've had individual or shared leadership positions, and to list any individual distinctions you've achieved related to the activity. So your one sentence should use as much detail about your commitment or tangible achievement as you can fit.

The Coalition Application specifies that the first two out of the eight possible activities that you can list should be non-academic, to help colleges get a clearer picture of your extracurricular interests. When considering which activities to choose, think about the ones you've participated in the longest. Sustained involvement allows opportunities to nurture your leadership skills or build community within your organization. You should also think about tangible achievements within different extracurriculars. Quantifiable data such as the number of members you've recruited, or the amount of traffic on a web page can succinctly help admissions officers understand the results of your hard work.

Activity/Experience 1
Category *

Activity/Experience Name *

Please provide a one-sentence description of your experience. ?

When did you have this experience? *

9th

10th

11th

12th

13th

Post High School

Are you currently participating in this activity or experience? *

Yes

No

Clear

How many weeks per year did you participate in this activity? * ?

Hours per week on the high end ?

Hours per week on the low end ?

List any individual distinctions you earned in this activity or experience.

Are you involved in a leadership role? *

Yes

No

Clear

Do you share leadership with anyone else? *

Yes

No

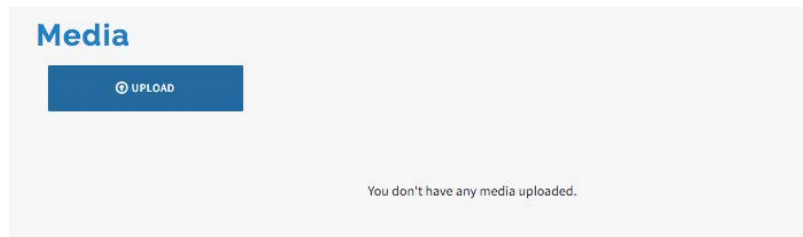
Clear

THE LOCKER

Now that we've gone over the sections where you have to write and explain your achievements, it's time to look at a feature which makes the Coalition Application unique. The locker, a cloud-based storage drive, accommodates media files and documents to submit to schools during the college application process.

While you may be familiar with Google Drive to store your files, the locker is installed within the Coalition App. If you are someone who loves planning in advance, you can start using the locker as early as the ninth grade to upload your portfolios, performance videos, certificates, essays etc.

If you take appropriate advantage of the locker, you won't have to scramble around the house in search of old papers, awards, or photos. Instead, all of your materials will be organized in one place. The locker can hold an unlimited number of files but note that there is a file limit is 50 MB per individual file.



High School Counselor Recommendations (up to 4)

Click "Add a Recommender" to get started



Academic Recommendations (up to 4)

Click "Add a Recommender" to get started



General Recommendations (up to 8)

First Year applicants can use General Recommendations for any additional recommendations.

Click "Add a Recommender" to get started



PERSONAL STATEMENT

An essential way to separate yourself from other top students is to narrate your story, one which only you can tell, that distinguishes you as a strong writer and unique candidate. Although the Coalition App doesn't enforce a word limit, it recommends that the essays you submit be within 500 to 550 words, so it wouldn't be wise for you to deviate much from this. Sometimes schools institute their own word limits. A few schools, however, allow you to upload PDFs, and have no way of cutting off your words after you've reached a certain point. To stay on the safer side, plan to keep your essay below 550 words. It's not about the quantity, it's about the quality of your essay and the intrigue in the story you tell. It all starts with the right topic.

The Coalition Application prompts for 2019-20 are as follows:

- Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
- Describe a time when you made a meaningful contribution to others in which the greater good was your focus. Discuss the challenges and rewards of making your contribution.
- Has there been a time when you've had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged? How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your beliefs?
- What is the hardest part of being a teenager now? What's the best part? What advice would you give a younger sibling or friend (assuming they would listen to you)?
- Submit an essay on a topic of your choice.

As you can tell from the topics, you can write about pretty much anything. Remember, the admissions officer will be reading thousands of applications. How can you grab their attention from the get go? Write about something meaningful - is there something that has influenced the way you think or helped your personal growth? What would you count as a defining experience?

The goal here is for you to stand out, tell your story and convey some of your biggest passions and what is important to you. If you talk about your Model UN trip from 8th grade, it won't come across as very meaningful. Lots of students participate in Model UN, and 8th grade was a long time ago! How can you differentiate yourself? It could be an experience that you were actively engaged in. Or your essay could be influenced by a part of your identity - such as your cultural background, religion, or sexuality.

Once you've written a first draft, the ride is far from over. It's time to proofread! Make sure you catch all spelling and grammatical errors. Watch out for run-on sentences, repeated words, and overuse of cliches. It can always be beneficial to have a parent or counselor read your essay and offer feedback. You want to go through at least 8-10 drafts of your personal statement before you can be happy with a polished final product.

NEXT STEPS

Now that you've familiarized yourself with what each section of the Coalition App is like, it's time to embark on the journey yourself. Go ahead and log on to the website and register. Review the sections and requirements and see if you prefer the format over the Common Application. If you have any confusion, you can always return to this guide and review the tips and tricks on how to approach each section.

You've got a long journey ahead of you, and it all starts here. The pressure can feel overwhelming, but if you take it one step at a time, going over every detail, making every character count, you should be set to take full advantage of all that the Coalition Application offers. Good luck!
