



MONTVERDE ACADEMY

COLLEGE COUNSELING

HANDBOOK

2024-2025

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COLLEGE COUNSELING AT MONTVERDE ACADEMY

Montverde Academy College Counseling strives to empower students to explore a wide variety of college opportunities, ultimately guiding them to a school that is their best fit.

Montverde Academy’s College Counseling commitment to students:

- We firmly believe that the primary criterion for choosing a college should be “best fit”.
- We are your advocates in the college admission process.
- We will provide each student support in selecting and applying to colleges, information regarding summer opportunities and standardized test-taking, assistance with personal statements and resumes, and guidance in the financial aid and scholarship process.
- We are committed to assisting our students in navigating the college admissions process by providing necessary information and support.

College Counseling defines “best fit” college/university as one that:

- Offers the program of study that matches a student's interests.
- Provides a learning environment that is well suited to that student by providing a level of academic rigor that matches the student’s ability.
- Offers a welcoming and supportive community that focuses on helping the student grow and mature into a well-rounded young adult.
- Values each student.

College Counseling Department:

Marcia Bernatavitz, Director of College Counseling/Dean of Faculty
marcia.bernatavitz@montverde.org 407-469-2561 x3701

Jeff Wexler, Associate Director of College Counseling, Testing & Compliance/ESL Coordinator
jeff.wexler@montverde.org 407-469-2561 x3702

Lena De Lucca, College Counselor
lena.delucca@montverde.org 407-469-2561 x3704

Kimberly Mathes, College Counselor
kimberly.mathes@montverde.org 407-469-2561 x3703

Yasmin Del Valle, College Counseling Office Coordinator
Yasmine.delvalle@montverde.org 407-469-2561, x3700

PREPARING FOR THE COLLEGE PROCESS

College Counseling Timeline

Freshman Year:

- In October, students will take the PSAT. Scores will be released in December.
- Work at keeping your grades up as colleges will look at your cumulative GPA from 9th, 10th, and 11th grade. The academic “clock” starts when you begin taking Upper School classes.
- Get involved in activities, sports, volunteering, clubs, etc. Seek out leadership opportunities.
- Keep track of all honors and awards you receive throughout high school so you will have this information readily available for your college application resume.

Sophomore Year:

- In October, students will take the PSAT/NMSQT. Scores will be released in December.
- Continue in activities, sports, volunteering, clubs, and seeking out leadership opportunities.
- As you plan your junior year courses, keep in mind colleges are very interested in the rigor of your schedule – consider taking Honors or AP classes, with teacher approval.
- Keep track of all honors and awards you receive throughout high school so you will have this information readily available for your college application resume.
- Explore summer programs and/or job shadowing opportunities.

Junior Year:

- In October, you will take the PSAT/NMSQT. Scores will be released in December.
- Plan to attend at least five college rep visits, of the 100+ we host on campus every year. This will help you determine the type of school you want to attend (large, small, public, private, urban, rural, etc.).
- Students will meet formally with a college counselor in the spring to determine specific college interests and options.
- Students will take the SAT or ACT in the spring. The SAT is offered on campus.
- Athletes will work in conjunction with coaches and college counseling to learn more about playing athletics at the NCAA or NAIA level.
- Research schools you are interested in attending using your SCOIR account
- Visit schools on weekends, Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, Spring Break, and during summer.
- Juniors may seek permission for a college visit that may require an absence from school. Students and families should seek approval before making any arrangements, including travel, as not every request may be approved due to academic reasons.
- College visits that require missed school time should be scheduled to occur on a Friday or Monday to avoid mid-week absences.
- In February, students will attend the College Fair at UCF in which over 130 colleges and universities participate.

- In February, we will host a College Counseling Night and encourage you and your parents to attend. Important information from College Admissions Representatives and the College Counseling department and will be shared.
- During the spring, create an account on the Common App (www.commonapp.org) and begin your application – all of your information will be saved for your senior year.
- Meet with your college counselor as often as you would like. It is recommended to make an appointment using Calendly.
- Keep track of all honors and awards you receive throughout high school so you will have this information readily available for your college application resume.

Senior Year:

- Attend the mandatory Senior Retreat in September to gather the information you will need throughout your senior year.
- Meet individually with your college counselor.
- Athletes must also meet with their coaches to discuss realistic college options and share this information with their college counselor.
- International students must attend the “International Student Night” seminar in September.
- Sign up for any ACT or SAT if you need to retake these tests.
- Fill out the FAFSA with your parents beginning on October 1. (Does not apply to international students).
- Encourage your parents to attend the “Paying for College” information session in October.
- Notify your college counselor by October 1st if you are applying EA or ED to any school.
- Submit applications to your target colleges/universities at least two weeks prior to their stated deadlines. Mark colleges as “Applied” in Scoir and send test scores, if applicable.
- Plan to attend several college rep visits on campus in the fall. Meeting with College Representatives must be approved by your teacher 48 hours prior to the visit.
- Seniors are allowed to go on three college visits during the school year, missing 2 days maximum at a time and these will be considered excused absences. (Students may not combine these visits and miss more than 2 days at a time). College visits that require missed school time should be scheduled to occur on a Friday or Monday to avoid mid-week absences.
- Students and families should seek approval before making any arrangements, including travel, as not every request may be approved due to academic reasons.
- Keep track of all honors and awards you receive throughout high school so you will have this information readily available for your college application resume.
- In January, College Counseling will automatically send your mid-year transcripts to all of the schools you identified as “applied” in SCOIR in the fall.
- Notify the College Counseling office of any acceptances and scholarship offers as you receive them.
- Update your SCOIR account to reflect college decisions (accept, deny, waitlist, defer).
- May 1st is National Decision Day for seniors to commit to a school. Failing to notify your college of choice by this date may jeopardize your ability to attend.

- **Student-athletes and PGs are required to meet all of the College Counseling deadlines.**

Working with an Agent/Independent Counselor

Students who choose to work with an agent or independent counselor must notify the College Counseling office at the beginning of their senior year. The College Counseling office will never release a transcript (official or unofficial) to an agent. All documents will be sent directly from College Counseling to colleges only. Students are expected to complete ALL sections of each of their applications. Agents may assist in creating a college list, but not in completing the application. If the College Counseling office becomes aware of the agent or independent counselor completing the application, the student will be sent to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action, as it is an unethical practice.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

While a student's academic record has always been the most important factor in an admissions decision, standardized test scores may also play a role at some colleges. **Students must take at least one SAT and/or one ACT.** The following is a brief overview of the required tests for all Upper School students.

PSAT/NMSQT-The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is given in mid-October to all freshmen, sophomore and junior students. For the freshmen and sophomores, the test is an opportunity to practice for the SAT. For juniors, scores on the PSAT/NMSQT are used to determine Commended Scholars and Semi-finalists in the National Merit Scholarship competition. PSAT/NMSQT results for juniors can also be used to waive the SAT Prep course requirement.

SAT -The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is a measure of the critical thinking skills needed for academic success. Its components include the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing test and the Mathematics test. The SAT is one of the tests which is required as part of the admissions process at a number of schools to which Montverde Academy students apply.

Students have several options for SAT/ACT preparation. Because test preparation needs can vary greatly from student to student, it is best for the student and his/her family to consult with the college counseling office to determine the best option. Typically, students take the SAT two or three times, but it is best to discuss individual testing plans with the assigned college counselor during initial meetings. The SAT is offered at Montverde Academy in the fall and spring of each school year. **Boarding students are only permitted to take the SAT at Montverde Academy. Any student enrolled at MVA will only be permitted to take standardized tests locally.**

ACT-The ACT (American College Test) is another standardized test that can be submitted in support of a student's application to college. It is universally accepted in place of the SAT. It consists of four sections: English, Reading Comprehension, Mathematics, and Science

Reasoning as well as an optional Writing section. Students receive separate scores for each of the four sections of the test and an overall averaged composite score. The ACT is one of the tests which is required as part of the admissions process at a number of schools to which Montverde Academy students apply.

AP-Students that take Advanced Placement (AP) level courses at Montverde Academy are required to take the Advanced Placement Tests in those subjects each May. These exams give high school students the chance to earn credit and/or college placements when they enter college by earning a qualifying score on the exam. AP exams are graded on a scale of 1 to 5. College credit or placement is often awarded for scores of 4 and 5, and sometimes for a score of 3. Each college and university sets policy on the requirements to earn college credit. While no college or university requires AP examination results for admission, students who present a strong set of AP results with their college application are very likely to have an advantage over those who have not taken any AP classes or AP exams.

TOEFL iBT-The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Internet-based Test exam determines if a student — whose native language is not English — has English-language skills that are strong enough to succeed in courses at a college or university in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Australia. It measures the listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills to perform academic tasks in English. Most U.S. universities will expect you to take the TOEFL if you are a non-native speaker residing in a country where English is not the primary language. Even if you attend an English-language high school, many universities still expect you to take the TOEFL.

Test Registration

- For the SAT and ACT, students will need to create a College Board account and/or an ACT student account to register for a test.
- For PSAT and AP exams, the College Counseling Office will register all students and charge the fee to your student account.
- For the TOEFL, students are responsible for registering themselves.

COLLEGE VISITS

Meeting College Admissions Representatives at Montverde Academy-During the year, more than 100 college admissions officers visit Montverde Academy to meet with prospective students or formal applicants. Colleges do this to promote their institutions and hopefully find students who would be just the right fit. The reps meet with students in small-group sessions and discuss academic programs, campus life, financial aid, and admission procedures. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to meet with several college representatives. Students must get permission from their teacher to attend a college visit. Quite often, the rep will be a reader of their application, and putting a face to a name is always helpful. Students might decide a college is not right for them after the rep visit; that helps them better define the type of school they are looking for.

Here are some tips for how to get the most out of these visits:

- **Show up early-** It is good to be there early so you can chat with the rep a little beforehand.
- **Pay attention and do not be doing anything else-** It does not matter if you are listening unless they feel like you are listening, so make good eye contact and do not chat with friends.
- **Sign in-**If the college has a sign-in form, be sure to add your name. This will add you to the college's mailing list and put you on their radar. The fact that you signed in goes in your file and acts in your favor.
- **Take any materials they offer-**Brochures and pamphlets are great ways to learn about programs the school offers and facts that can help you decide whether or not to add the school to your list. These materials can also come in handy when you are writing your application!
- **Ask questions-**Be sure to seem and look interested, and ask a couple of questions, but let the other students ask questions too. If you are super interested, stay after. College reps love to talk to students who feel like the school is the best fit for them, so if you are excited, it's great to show that!
- **Smile and be very polite-**Be sure to put your best foot forward by being professional, polite, and positive.
- **Say thank you afterward and shake the rep's hand-**On your way out, whether the school was right for you or not, be sure to say thank you and give a nice firm handshake to the representative. They traveled a long way to meet with you, so show them your gratitude.

Visiting Colleges- College visits are extremely beneficial, and students are highly encouraged to make initial visits when the Academy is not in session (Christmas break, spring break, summer vacations, and long weekends). Seniors may not take more than three (3) official visits that require missing school time, and each visit may not exceed two school days. Students may not schedule consecutive visits that require absence for more than two consecutive school days. A College Leave Request must be submitted in Veracross and approved in advance by the Dean of Students, who will consult with the Director of College Counseling. A student who wishes to pursue a college visit prior to their senior year, which requires them to miss school, must be approved by the Dean of the Upper School.

Here are some tips for how to get the most out of these visits:

- **Be efficient, be open-**
 - Do not hesitate to visit local schools, especially early in the process. Even if a student is not considering staying nearby, local visits are inexpensive and easy.

They provide great opportunities for students to test, develop, and practice their questions, and to learn more about what colleges have to offer, in general.

- When planning a trip out of the area, get in the habit of visiting more than one school. For example, visiting Boston University and Tufts University on the same trip would make sense for the right student.
 - Do not hesitate to visit any college at the beginning of the search. Often, we will hear students say that they will not visit Yale University because they “would never get in.” If a college visit interests you and/or is convenient, take it! There is a great deal to learn on any visit that you make as you are just starting out.
- **Visit with a plan** – Think about what you want to accomplish on your visit. Call the admissions office to arrange to attend the information session and tour. Remember, the length of a visit is limited, and efficiency is important. Do not arrive on campus thinking that you will just “walk around.” Also, ask the admissions office to set up any special meetings for you. Would you like to meet the swim coach? Would you like to talk with someone from the Business Department? The people in admissions know everyone on campus! Use their expertise.
 - **Take notes** –Students should keep notes and take pictures on each visit. Campuses start to “run together” as you see more and more colleges. Be specific about residence halls, classes, advising, physical setting, general impressions, etc.
 - **Talk to the experts-** This may be the most important part of your campus visit. If you visit colleges while school is in session, you should make a point to approach a few students—in the dining hall, at the library, or just while walking around campus—and ask them any questions you have or even just about their general experience at the school. You will get much more honest answers than you will from tour guides, and most students will be more than happy to stop and chat for a few minutes.
 - **Sign in with the Admissions Department** – Many times colleges and universities keep track of how much contact a student has with the college, whether it is in person, via email, or on the phone. This is called “Demonstrated Interest” and can be an important piece of your file with the college.

TYPES OF ADMISSION APPLICATIONS

Restrictive Applications

Early Decision (ED) - A student applies early in the senior year-usually by November 1st or November 15th. Admissions decisions are then usually sent in mid-December. Early Decision is a **BINDING** plan. If admitted, students are expected to withdraw any outstanding applications, pay the enrollment deposit and commit to attending the school. Students will receive an estimated

financial aid package but a final financial aid package will not be calculated until approximately April. Inability to meet financial obligations is the only way to break this contract.

Non-Restrictive Applications

Early Action (EA) – The student applies in early or mid-November and, in most cases, receives a decision by mid-December. EA is “non-binding,” meaning that if a student is admitted, he or she has no obligation to confirm his or her enrollment until May 1st (the National College Decision date). A student can usually apply to multiple EA colleges and can even apply to a “binding” ED college (understanding that the ED application *is* binding). Students will not receive a financial aid package until April, the same time as regular decision applicants.

Regular Decision Admissions – The most common application plan. Most deadlines for regular decision applicants are in January or February, although some colleges may have an earlier deadline.

Rolling Admissions-Rolling admissions allow a student to apply at any time in fall or early winter. The colleges and universities make decisions on applications as they are received. The college or university will then offer a non-binding decision as soon as they can process the application (usually within four to six weeks). Since colleges are accepting students every day, the later one applies, the more difficult it may become to be admitted. It is strongly advised that students apply as soon as possible (early in September) to rolling schools, for as spaces are offered, the standards of admission can become more selective.

Most ED and EA college application deadlines are 11/1 or 11/15; consequently, **students must notify their college counselor of their intention to apply under such a plan by October 1st**. That allows teachers and counselors sufficient time to write letters in support of a student’s candidacy.

The Common Application

The Common App (CA) is one college application accepted at over 700 colleges and universities. Students enter their information one time and use it to apply to multiple schools (up to 20 on one Common App). The Common App system alerts students when important dates are approaching. Students can manage deadlines and view application progress in one convenient dashboard. (www.commonapp.org)

- First, students create an account – make sure you use an email account that is checked daily.
- Complete the application. (Refer to the document “Scoil Guide to the Common Application.” This document can be found on the College Counseling Canvas page.)
- Add all of the schools to which you are applying to the college dashboard section of the CA. Only member schools of CA can be listed here. (If the school you are applying to does not accept CA, you must apply directly on their website).
- Make sure you complete all required sections to include the essay and any additional supplements for each school.

- Complete the FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) waiver by following these instructions:
 - Under the “My Colleges” tab in CA, click on “Recommenders and FERPA”
 - Click “Release Authorization” and check appropriate statement boxes to waive your rights. Waiving your rights lets colleges know that you do not intend to read your recommendations in the future, which helps ensure that the letters are candid and truthful). You just need to do this once, and it will carry through for all of your CA colleges. College Counseling will not give you access to any letters of recommendation.

The Application Process

1. Choose a good mix of schools based on your interests (the average student applies to 5-7 colleges). Your college counselor will assist you in generating this list.
2. The process of creating a list of schools is not a precise science. The range of competitiveness in the admissions process varies at every level of school and may change notably from year to year.
3. Once students have applied, the next step is to designate the schools as “applied” in SCOIR.

If you are applying Early Action or Early Decision, you must notify your College Counselor by October 1st.

4. Make sure on SCOIR you have clicked on how you applied (via Common App, Coalition App, or directly on the college website) to each school.
5. Go on to your SAT (collegeboard.org) or ACT (act.org) account and send your best scores to all of the schools where you have applied. If you are applying to a test-optional college, speak with your college counselor to determine whether you should submit scores.
6. If you are a new student at MVA beginning your senior year, you must ask a teacher from 11th or 12th grade to write you a letter of recommendation no later than the end of September. The teacher will upload the letter to SCOIR and College Counseling will send the letter with other information to your schools.

****In order to best support your applications, it is important that you notify College Counseling of submitted applications well in advance (2 weeks) of college admission deadlines. ****

Sending Test Scores

Even though a significant number of colleges and universities have become “test-optional,” some colleges and universities that Montverde Academy students apply to still require standardized

testing results to complete the application. **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING THEIR SCORES TO THEIR SCHOOLS.** We will gladly help students with this process, but again **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING THEIR SCORES DIRECTLY FROM THE SPECIFIC TESTING AGENCY.**

*(Remember SAT and ACT charge a fee to send scores to each school).

Transcripts

Official transcripts submitted electronically are only submitted from MVA to the college/university of choice through SCOIR. Transcripts are never sent electronically to agents, parents, or students. If a parent or student requires an unofficial copy of a transcript, one can be picked up at the College Counseling office. To request a transcript for personal use, speak with your college counselor.

College Application Essay

One or more readers will evaluate your college essay subjectively. Think of your college essay as the bonus point portion of an extremely difficult exam. It is important to use this final opportunity to tell the admissions committee exactly who you are and to convince them that you will be an asset to their student body.

Almost every university or college requires at least one essay, possibly two-maybe even three or four. These essays are the responsibility of the student alone. We strongly discourage faculty, agents, and parents from over-editing or rewriting these essays. However, we do encourage students to consult with parents, teachers, and their college counselor regarding the topic, organization, and effectiveness of the writing. Some teachers will also use the college essay prompts in Common App as an assignment for students at the beginning of the school year.

It is important to remember that the essay is the one piece of the application over which the student has total control. In addition to taking the essay writing and editing process seriously, the key to a successful essay is to be creative before being analytical.

Tips for writing your college essay:

- Do not procrastinate. Writing a solid essay that will help you succeed in being accepted into your first-choice school takes time.
- Spend adequate time selecting your admission essay topics. This is the critical first step, and it will be tough to write a compelling essay about a poorly chosen topic.
- Determine what you need to say based on your background. Each applicant is unique and therefore will need to address different weaknesses and trumpet different strengths. Know what your profile will look like to the admission committee, and focus your essays accordingly.
- Keep the essay centered on your experiences and yourself. An essay may ask you to write about a significant event or role model in your life. Make sure that YOU remain the focus of the essay.
- Solicit feedback from others.

- Proofread your essay.
- Write clearly, using proper grammar and spelling.
- Be yourself. Know yourself. Be honest and authentic. First and foremost, colleges want to know who you are to ascertain whether or not you are a good fit for their institution.

Activity Résumé for College

Your résumé is a concise summation of your activities, in and out of school, during your high school years and can be very helpful to provide teachers who are writing your letter of recommendation. It should include athletics, clubs and organizations, employment, the position of leadership, community service, summer activities, and honors and awards. The activity résumé should model a business resume: It should be easy to skim and it should be limited to one page if possible. Students should document all of their activities through the years in a word document and update it as needed beginning freshman year.

Activity Résumé Sample

Name: John Jane

Address: 17235 7th Street Montverde, FL 34756

Phone number/Email: 407-469-2561/1234CG@student.montverde.org

High School: Montverde Academy

Academics:

- National Merit Commended Scholar 2023
- National Honor Society 2021-Present
- Model UN 2023-Present

Honors and Awards:

- AP Scholar Awards
- Second Place: Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest 2024

Extracurricular Activities:

- First place: Montverde Academy Soccer Tournament, 2022
- Second place: Montverde Academy Invitational Tournament, 2023
- Performed in the following productions: *In The Heights*, the role of Graffiti Patricia; *The Spelling B*, the role of Magic Foot, 2021

Community Service

- DreamPlex Soccer – 2023
- Outstanding Service Award, 2024
- Special Olympics, 2022

Summer Activities

- University of Florida – STEM Program, 2023
- USF – Soccer camp, 2024
- Lifeguard at Montverde Academy, 2024
- Julliard – Dramatic Arts Speaker Series, 2023

The College Interview

Some colleges will require a student to be interviewed as part of the application process. A local graduate of the college to which you are applying generally conducts the interview. Usually, the interviewer will want to meet at a local public space or their office. If you are unable to leave campus, (boarding students may not leave campus for an interview) interviews can usually be conducted via Zoom. Always let the College Counseling office know if you have a scheduled interview or if you need help scheduling one.

Guidelines for the College Interview

- Be prompt.
- Dress appropriately – for males, a dress shirt, khakis, dress shoes.
for females, a dress/skirt or dress pants and blouse.
- Research the school prior to the interview.
- Make eye contact with the interviewer.
- Be yourself, be comfortable.
- Come prepared with at least two questions to ask, such as:
 - In your opinion, what do current students like most about the school?
 - Are students involved in community service activities in the town/city?
 - What are the most popular majors?
 - When do you have to declare a major?

Teacher Letter of Recommendation

Many colleges require at least one letter of recommendation from a teacher. If a school requires more than one letter of recommendation, it is the student's responsibility to ask another teacher. See the Forms section of this handbook.

Guidelines for requesting the letter of recommendation:

- Ask the teacher in person, not via email. Once the teacher has confirmed that he/she will write a letter, follow up with a request through Scoir.
- If the teacher says he/she cannot write one for you, it usually means they do not feel they know you well enough to write an effective letter, so ask another teacher.
- The teacher will need at least **two weeks** to write your letter, so do not wait until the night before your deadline.
- Once you have confirmed with the College Counseling office that your teacher has submitted your letter of recommendation on SCOIR, please send the teacher a “thank-you” email or note.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is made up of a variety of sources: scholarships and grants, loans, and work-study programs. Scholarships and grants are monies that are based on need and/or merit and they do not have to be paid back. Loans must be paid back with interest. Work-study programs are part-time work opportunities on campus. College financial aid officers are the best source of information concerning available assistance and should be contacted in writing, by phone, or during a visit to the campus. Students will usually receive their financial aid packages from colleges in April, in time for comparisons and decisions to be made by the May 1st commitment deadline.

Financial Aid Application

All schools require the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and many require the College Board's College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile. Students (and their parents) apply for financial aid when they send in their admissions applications. Students are responsible for logging into their accounts regularly to ensure that they do not miss any of the financial aid requirements or request further information.

The CSS Profile and the FAFSA both assess your family's income and assets to calculate your expected family contribution. Colleges use your expected family contribution to determine your financial aid package. However, the two forms have some key differences.

- The FAFSA helps you qualify for federal aid, including grants, work-study dollars, and student loans. Some colleges also use the FAFSA to award institutional grants and scholarships, but others, mostly private schools use the CSS Profile.
- It costs \$25 to fill out the CSS Profile and submit it to one school and \$16 to send to each additional college. The FAFSA is free, as its name suggests.
- The FAFSA becomes available on October 1st. Most students file the FAFSA much closer to the date it opens than the date it closes. The main reason to file the FAFSA later in the school year would be if you had a major change in your financial circumstances. The information you supply on the form is based on the prior-prior year's income tax return information.

Grants and Loans

Pell Grant-The Federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduates. Students may use their grants at any one of approximately 5,400 participating colleges. Grant amounts are dependent on: the student's expected family contribution (EFC); the cost of attendance (as determined by the institution); the student's enrollment status (full-time or part-time); and whether the student attends for a full academic year or less.

Florida Effective Access to Student Education (EASE)-The Florida EASE Program provides tuition assistance to Florida undergraduate students attending an eligible private, non-profit Florida college or university. Florida EASE is a decentralized state of Florida program, which means that each participating institution determines application procedures, deadlines, and student eligibility.

Institutional Aid-This consists of scholarships and/or grants awarded by the colleges from their funds. The scholarships and grants are based on need and/or merit.

Direct Subsidized Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans-Federal student loans offered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to help eligible students cover the cost of higher education at a four-year college or university, community college, or trade, career, or technical school. Direct Subsidized Loans are available to undergraduate students with financial need. Direct Unsubsidized Loans are available to undergraduate and graduate students; there is no requirement to demonstrate financial need.

SCHOLARSHIPS

It is never too late to look for scholarship opportunities. It may take some research on your part but it will be well worth your time. Think carefully about the affiliations you and your family have. Think about your ethnicity and its affiliations. Check the local service organizations: Rotary, Lions, Elks, etc. Ask your parents to check with the industry in which they work. Labor unions and trade associations often have scholarship opportunities available. The scholarship associations that send information to Montverde Academy are listed in SCOIR, and our database is updated as we receive information.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program-The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship is designed for Florida resident high school graduates with high academic achievement who have met the course credits, GPA, ACT/SAT, and service hour requirements. The scholarship only applies to public or private colleges or universities in the State of Florida. The application will not be accepted until the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) is completed. *The eligibility requirements are subject to change with each legislative session.* For more information: <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPHome/SAPHome?url=home>

International Student Scholarships

Many American colleges offer generous scholarships to international students, and there are a handful of private scholarships available to students as well. Before you write it off as impossible, check out scholarship opportunities for funding college. Most of your scholarship funding will probably come from your chosen college; however, there are a handful of more general scholarships geared specifically towards international students.

www.internationalstudent.com

www.edupass.org

www.internationalscholarships.com

Helpful Financial Aid Websites

www.fafsa.ed.gov

www.finaid.org

www.fastweb.com

www.scholarships.com

AFTER THE DECISION

Receiving an Offer of Admission:

Congratulations on your acceptance! Now, here are your next steps:

1. Share the great news with your family!
2. Notify your college counselor each time you receive an offer letter and any scholarship you may have received.
3. Update the admissions decisions on your SCOIR account. This is very important for future submission of documents.
4. Confirm your enrollment decision by either accepting or declining the offer by May 1.
5. **Official final transcripts will be released to the college/university of choice once the student's account is cleared with the Business office. Official final transcripts will be submitted to the college/university by June 15th.**

The enrollment deadline is May 1. You may deposit at only one school since this indicates your commitment to attend that school. You must tell College Counseling where you have decided to enroll before graduation (specific date will be communicated by the Director of College Counseling).

Note: If you apply ED, you should receive an admission decision early. If accepted, you must confirm your enrollment and promptly withdraw all other applications.

Being Waitlisted

You may choose to remain on one or more waitlists by confirming your intention to hold. You should still go ahead and deposit at one of your accepted schools by May 1 to make sure you have secured a space. If you decide later not to attend this school, you will forfeit your deposit, but at least you will have left yourself with an option. After the May 1 enrollment deadline, colleges will start to have a sense of whether or not they need to go to their waitlists. This can vary from year to year, making it very difficult to predict a likely outcome for waitlisted students.

If you decide to stay on a school's waitlist, you should take these steps to be considered favorably:

- Be prompt in confirming your decision to remain on the waitlist. Colleges are interested to know who is interested in them, and your quick action makes a statement about how likely you are to enroll if admitted.
- Submit any new information that should be considered – updated grades, honors, awards, and other accomplishments.
- Write a personal letter (email is fine) to the college admissions office emphasizing how much you want to attend the school, why you believe it's the best match for you, and stating that you will enroll if upon admission from the waitlist.

Being Denied

This is not easy news to receive, but it is part of the college application process. Try not to take it too personally if your application has been denied by a school. Instead, consider your options and focus on those schools to which you have been accepted. Students with balanced college lists typically receive a combination of admissions results, so prepare yourself to handle bad news maturely and gracefully.

Being Deferred

This is an admissions decision which may be received if a student has applied under an Early Decision or Early Action plan. A “deferral” means that the student has not yet been admitted or denied; the application will be placed in the pool of “regular decision” applicants for another review, and an admissions decision will be sent in late March or early April. Students who apply for Early Decision and are deferred are no longer bound by the ED agreement and can apply to other schools.

Can a College Rescind its Offer of Admission? Yes!

When you are accepted, it is with the expectation that you will continue to demonstrate strong academic performance and good citizenship in your school community. The College Counseling office will automatically send your final transcript to the college you have decided to attend. It is also our obligation to notify colleges if you incur any serious disciplinary infractions in your final days. These situations are reviewed carefully by admissions directors. They may place a student on probation during freshman year or even rescind the offer of admission.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACT: The ACT is a standardized test accepted by all U.S. colleges and universities. It is a multiple-choice test scored from 1 to 36. There are four subtests: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. www.actstudent.org.

AP: Advanced Placement: These are college-level courses offered by MVA and endorsed by the College Board. After an AP course, if completed, students must take AP exams, which are scored on a 1-5 scale (5 being the highest possible score.) Colleges may offer either credit or advanced standing, to any student who has received a recommended AP exam score.

Associate's Degree: The degree awarded after the successful completion of a two-year program, usually at a junior or community college.

Bachelor's Degree: The degree awarded after the successful completion of a four-year program of study at a college or university.

Candidate's Reply Date: The National Candidate's Reply Date is May 1st and is the national deadline for a deposit to guarantee a spot in the freshman class of one college.

CEEB Code: Same as "School Code". MVA's school code is 101185.

College Board: A not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. They are responsible for the following tests: PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and the AP Program. www.collegeboard.org

Common Application: A standard application form accepted by more than 700 colleges. www.commonapp.org.

Common Black College Application: The CBCA allows students to apply to any of the 58 HBCU Member Institutions. <https://www.commonblackcollegeapp.com/>

CSS Profile: A form that collects information used to determine eligibility for institutional and private funds for a fee. Several colleges/universities will ask that a student complete both the CSS Profile and the FAFSA.

Doctoral Degree: The degree awarded after intensive study in a particular field, such as an academic discipline (Ph.D.), medicine (MD), education (EdD), or law (JD). Also called a doctorate.

Early Action: A process whereby an application is submitted and a decision is received early in the senior year. Usually, an application is submitted by November 1st and decisions are sent by mid-December. Early Action is a non-binding plan; students will not receive a financial aid package until April, the same time as regular decision applicants. Students will typically have until the Candidates Reply Date (May 1st) to decide if they will enroll.

Early Decision: A plan where a student applies to a college in the early fall of their senior year and notification is sent by mid-December. If accepted, this is a binding contract and the student must attend. The only way to break the contract is if financial obligations cannot be met.

Fee Waiver: An exemption from paying for some applications and/or testing fees granted to those students who demonstrate a substantial need for financial assistance. Specific eligibility guidelines must be met.

Financial Aid: Need-based aid offered by the federal government and by colleges; packages generally include grants (which do not need to be repaid), loans (which must be repaid), and often work-study (funds earned by the student through on-campus employment during the school year).

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): An application that must be filled out by a student and parents who want to apply for federal and state student assistance. The programs are student loans, work-study, scholarships, and grants. www.fafsa.edu.gov

GPA: Grade Point Average: a number (such as 3.0), which indicates the average of all grades for courses earned in a term, a year, or cumulatively. MVA calculates a “weighted” GPA which includes an extra .8 for AP classes and an extra .4 for Honors classes in the calculation.

Master’s Degree: The degree awarded after the completion of the first postgraduate (Bachelor’s Degree) program.

NCAA: (National Collegiate Athletic Association) The governing body for many college athletic programs. The NCAA must certify an athletic recruit who wishes to compete at Division I, II, or III level. (www.ncaa.org) If a student plans on competing in collegiate athletics at Division I, II, or III levels, he or she must register at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

Net Price Calculator: A financial aid tool that allows students and families to calculate an estimate of the net price of attendance at an institution. Net price is defined as the cost of attendance minus grant and scholarship aid and estimates are typically based on what similar students paid in a previous year.

PSAT: Required of all students for practice during their freshman, sophomore, and junior fall semesters. The test is taken during a school day in mid-October. The junior sitting may qualify students for consideration in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

SAT: A standardized exam administered by the College Board and accepted by all U.S. colleges and universities. The SAT consists of two sections: Evidence-based reading and writing. Each section has a maximum score of 800 with a combined maximum score of 1600.

Scholarship: Money given to a student by an institution of higher learning or an organization for academic accomplishments. Scholarships do not need to be repaid.

Secondary School Report Form: A required portion of the application that must be submitted to all colleges. The College Counseling Office submits this form on behalf of students.

Student Aid Index (SAI): An index number that's calculated using the information that you and your contributors provide on the FAFSA form. Your SAI can range anywhere from –1500 to 999999. Note that it is not a dollar amount. The SAI replaces the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) starting in the 2024–25 award year. Once your college, career school, or trade school knows your SAI, they will use it to calculate how much and what types of financial aid you're eligible to receive.

Super-scoring: The process of combining the highest scores from individual sections of a standardized test (either the SAT or ACT), from multiple sittings of the exams, to create a higher combined score.

Wait-list: An admission decision to an applicant stating that his/her application is acceptable, but that the limit of accepted students has already been reached; wait-listed students may be admitted after May 1st if space becomes available.

FORMS

Teacher Recommendation Form

Today's Date: _____

Recommendation Deadline: _____ (*should be at least 2 weeks from today*)

Student Name	Graduation Year
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Teacher Name

AFTER your teacher agrees to write a recommendation letter, please give them this completed form. Be thoughtful about your responses and use examples where possible. No one word answers allowed!

Name of course(s) and final grade(s) earned:

Describe a SPECIFIC moment from class where you were at your best. You can share more than one example, but make sure to share details for each.

What did you enjoy most about the class(es)?

What did you find most challenging?

As a student in this class, how would you describe yourself? What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?

What challenges have you overcome in this class?

Does the subject matter tie into what you might want to study in college? If so, please explain.

Is there anything specific that you hope the teacher will share in your recommendation?

**Counselor's Letter of Recommendation
Student Questionnaire**

Name	
What is your planned college major? Why do you wish to pursue this major or career?	
What experience do you have which will prepare you for that major?	
What do you consider to be your greatest strength? Please give one example of a situation in which this strength has been shown.	
Do you have any additional responsibilities at home that preclude you from getting more involved in activities, or in your local community? (i.e. Do you have to work to contribute to your family? Are you responsible for picking up younger siblings after school?)	
Do you feel that your academic record is a true assessment of your ability? Do you feel you have worked up to your potential?	

Choose **two or more** questions below and answer them thoroughly to give your counselor some ideas of what to include in your letter of recommendation:

1. What might your teachers say is your greatest strength as a person? As a student?

2. Colleges are always looking for “uniqueness” in a student. How are you unique?

3. If your best friend were asked to describe you, what would he/she say?

4. Discuss an event in your life that has had a significant impact on you, your life, and/or your academics.

HOW TO SUBMIT A COLLEGE LEAVE REQUEST

**** Must be submitted no less than 48 hours prior to leave****

Day Students:

- ✓Parents will visit their Veracross portal using their MVA login
- ✓Click on College Visit Leave Request
- ✓Complete form and submit

Boarding Students:

Submit a leave request through **Orah**, indicating that you are requesting leave for a College Visit.



EARLY DECISION/EARLY ACTION NOTIFICATION FORM

Return this form to College Counseling by October 1st

Early Decision Self-Evaluation Questionnaire*

Answer the following questions to decide whether or not to apply early to a particular school. If you answer yes to every question, consider applying ED. If you answer one or more questions with a no, consider applying EA or regular decision.

Question	Yes	No
Have I completely researched this college and other colleges that interest me?		
Have I visited this college while classes are in session and met with someone at the admissions office?		
Have I explored my academic, extracurricular, and social options at this college?		
Have I talked with a financial aid officer to get an estimate of college costs and to find out how early decision could affect my aid package?		
Have I discussed this decision with my family and college counselor?		
Is this a true first choice, or do other colleges still interest me?		

*Excerpted from NACAC's Steps to College online newsletter

Check all that apply:

am applying **Early Decision (ED)** to _____.

I will agree to attend this college if I am accepted and it offers an adequate financial aid package. I understand that I can apply to only one college for Early Decision. I will apply to other colleges through the regular admission process, but if I am accepted to my first-choice college early, I will withdraw from all other applications.

I am applying **Early Action (EA)** to _____.

I understand that this decision is non-binding. I will have until May 1st to make my school choice.

STUDENT NAME (Please print): _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____



TRANSCRIPT REQUEST/RELEASE FORM

https://montverde.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Transcript-Request-Form_digital.pdf

Name: _____ Date of Request: __/__/____
(Print Clearly) Last First MI
DOB: ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YYYY) Last year attended: _____
Maiden name or other last name: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____

SEND OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT(S) TO:

Name of school and address

Number of Copies:
Official (School Use) _____
Unofficial (Personal) _____

Student/Parent Signature: _____
(Required for release of transcript)

Please return by:
Mail: Montverde Academy, 17235 Seventh St., Montverde, FL 34756
Fax all requests to: 407.469.3711 (Credit Card payments ONLY)
Email requests to: Karen Hall at karen.hall@montverde.org (Credit Card payments ONLY)

PAYMENT METHOD - CHECK ONE: Cash/Check \$5.00 Credit Card \$6.00
 AMEX VISA MC DSCV Check Cash

Name on Card: _____ CCV: _____

Billing Street Address: _____

Billing Zip Code: _____

Office Use Only:
Date Received: _____ Date Sent: _____