

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

Step 1: Getting Started - go to <http://www.commonapp.org/>

- Disable all pop-up blockers
- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript activated and cookies enabled
- All emails you receive from Common App will be sent from appsupport@commonapp.net or application_help@commonapp.net . Please be sure to add these email addresses to your address book and/or safe list to prevent the messages from being blocked as “SPAM.”

Step 2: Registration - Register first before applying to Common App to receive a username/password

- You are a ‘First Time Student’
- All required fields are marked with a red asterisk
- Use your full legal name
- Be sure to provide a valid, appropriate email address
 - Often students create one just for apps, if you do this, make sure you check it regularly
- Your Username must contain a capital letter, number and symbol
- Store your username/password in a safe place (use Notes in your phone, so you have it)
 - You will use this information anytime you need to access the Common Application. If you forget your login information, you will have to contact Common App’s Support Center.
- You are an Applicant planning to enroll in 2021
- Your choice whether or not to check the following two questions:
 - The Common Application may share my contact information with colleges that I am considering applying to so they may communicate with me prior to the submission of my application (you can subsequently change your response to this question in your account settings later).
 - The Common Application may communicate with me by email, phone or text message about my account, information relevant to the college admissions process, and my college experience (you can subsequently change your response to this question in your account settings later).

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

- You must agree to the terms
- Once your registration is complete you will be directed to your Dashboard (homepage). You can now login at any time and are now ready to apply!

Step 3: “My Colleges” - You must first add colleges to your list, and can add or delete colleges from your list at any time. Only the college(s) you’ve selected will receive your application when you hit “SUBMIT”.

- Click the “College Search” tab
 - Search for a college - Type the name of the college in the search box, then look below at your search results. Click on the “+” sign next to the college to add it to your list.
 - Click the “Dashboard” tab to see the college on your list

Step 4: Add Your Deadlines - In this step, you will only complete a section of the “My Colleges” tab to populate your deadlines. You will go back to the “My Colleges” tab later to finish the rest of this section.

- You can get to this information in two ways:
 - Click on “Add your term or admission plan” under the college name in the “Dashboard” tab
 - In the “My Colleges” tab, click on the name of a college, then click on “Questions”
- Complete the questions in the “General” sub-section and hit “Continue”
- Go back to your “Dashboard” and you should now see a deadline associated with that college

Step 5: “Common App” tab - Profile

- The first section in the “Common App” tab is Profile. There are 6 mandatory sub-sections and 1 sub-section (Courses and Grades) that will only allow you to fill it out if you are applying to a college that requires it.
- As you complete the sections and subsections, you will receive a green checkmark next to the parts you have completed

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

- Personal Information, Address, Contact Details, Demographics & Geography are self-explanatory to complete
- Language: Number of Languages You Are Proficient In
 - Most students will add one (English)
 - Add more than one language if you are considered proficient meaning you speak it at home or are able to be conversational. Taking Spanish 3 does not count.
- Citizenship: Remember to add your Social Security Number if you applying for Financial Aid and completing the FAFSA. This is not a required question, so make sure not to miss it!
- Application Fee Waiver- you must select yes or no
 - If yes, you must meet at least one of the following indicators of economic need:
 - You have received or are eligible to receive an ACT/SAT fee waiver.
 - You are enrolled in or eligible to participate in the Federal Free or Reduced Price Lunch program (FRPL).
 - Your annual family income falls within the Income Eligibility Guidelines set by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.
 - You are enrolled in a federal, state, or local program that aids students from low-income families (e.g., TRIO programs such as Upward Bound).
 - Your family receives public assistance. You live in a federally subsidized public housing, a foster home or are homeless.
 - You are a ward of the state or an orphan.
 - You can provide a supporting statement from a school official, college access counselor, financial aid officer, or community leader.

Step 6: Family

- Indicate parents' marital status and with whom do you make your permanent home
- Answer questions about each parent/guardian (recommended to fill this out with your parent(s)/guardian(s))
 - Required: Name, Address, Occupation, Employment Status, Position Held, Name of Employer, Education Level, Colleges Attended, Degrees Received and Year Graduated
- Specify number of siblings you have (name, relationship, grade level required)
 - Indicate all siblings you have, even if they do not live in your household. You may add siblings, half siblings, or step siblings. For siblings who have not yet earned a degree,

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

enter the degree they are expected to earn. If you need to enter more than five siblings, use the Additional Information section located on the Writing page.

Step 7: Education

- Search for STEM School Highlands Ranch in database - select school in Highlands Ranch, CO
- Enter: Entry Date: August 2017 (unless you transferred to STEM or you are graduating early)
- Select NO for boarding school
- Graduation Date: May 2021
- List your School Counselor's information in the Counselor section:

Kandace Lytle, College & Career Counselor, kandace.lytle@stemk12.org

- Education Progression: If your progression at STEM was or will be delayed or interrupted in any way, you will need to provide an explanation for each incident you have selected
- Other School: If you have attended more than one high school, enter the number from the drop-down list (Zero is an option if you have only attended one school)
- Colleges and Universities: Enter if you have taken a college/university course beginning with 9th grade, and dual enrollment is included. If no, enter zero. If you have, you will need to indicate which college and course details.
- CBO: Indicate the number of community programs or organizations that have provided you with free assistance in your application process. Only answer this question if it applies.
- Grades:
 - Graduating class size: 167
 - Class rank reporting: none
 - GPA scale: we are on a 4 point scale
 - Cumulative GPA: list your GPA after 6 semesters of work (Junior Year)
 - GPA weighting: indicated whether you are reporting weighted or unweighted
- Current Year Courses
 - List every class for senior year (Ms. Lytle will also upload your schedule)
- We are on a semester system
- Course Levels: Regular/Standard, Advanced, Honors, Advanced Placement (AP)

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

- Course credit: 2 for full year courses, 1 for semester courses
- Honors: Indicate if you have received any honors beginning with 9th grade
 - You are able to list up to 5 Honors
- If you need more space to list honors, use the Additional Information section under the Writing section of the application
 - Honor Roll:
 - Semester GPA of 3.8 or higher have earned Distinguished Honor Roll recognition
 - Semester GPA of 3.5 – 3.799 have earned Honor Roll recognition
- Future Plans: Indicate career interest and highest degree you intend to earn. These plans are not set in stone; they are just giving the college an idea of your future goals.

Step 8: Testing

- Do you wish to self-report standardized test scores? This is up to you this year since so many colleges are test-optional. I would suggest looking up the average score for the university on their website. If your score is above the average, report it. If it is even or below, I would not report.
- If yes, indicate all tests you have taken or expect to take (ACT, SAT, SAT Subject Tests, AP Subject Test)
 - For example, indicate the number of times you took the ACT, report your highest individual composite score. Also report the highest subscores earned so far, even if they are from different test dates - indicate test date. Please note that this reporting method is not meant to imply that colleges will compute a new composite "superscore" based on your individual subscores. Similarly, you should not attempt to calculate a new composite "superscore" based on your individual subscores.

Step 9: Activities

- You are able to list up to 10 activities
- List activities in order of importance to you no matter how much time was spent on each activity

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

- You are able to edit your list by selecting the arrow to move the activity up or down
- Indicate how many hours per week and weeks per year you spend on your activities
- If you need more space to list activities, use the Additional Information section under the Writing section of the application

Step 10: Writing

- Your Personal Essay should be written in a Google Doc or Word first
 - You can upload a doc from your Google Drive
 - Always check for errors when pasting a doc into the Common App essay space
- 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words. Quality over quantity!
- Disciplinary History: you are responsible for reporting your disciplinary history in the Common Application. If yes, you are required to write an explanation.
- Additional Information: can be used to describe what happened with a blip in grades, or to add additional activities or to describe a situation that you feel is important for the admissions committee know

Step 11: College Specific Questions/FERPA Release Authorization

- From "Dashboard", click on "Show more details" listed at the bottom of each college. This will give an overview and links to click on everything that is required for each college.
- After each subsection is complete, you will see a green check mark
- Click on "Recommenders and FERPA"
 - **IMPORTANT: STEM counselors and teachers can decline to write a letter for you if you do not waive your rights.**
 - Under FERPA Release Authorization click "Complete release authorization"
 - Check - "I have fully read and understood the FERPA Release Authorization explanation above..."

STEM Class of 2021 Common Application Instructions

- Check - “ I acknowledge that every school that I have attended may release all requested records and recommendations to colleges to which I am applying for admission. I also understand that employees at these colleges may confidentially contact my current and former schools should they have questions about the information submitted on my behalf.”
- Check - “I waive my right to review all recommendations and supporting documents.”
- Check - “I understand that my waiver or no waiver selection above pertains to all colleges to which I apply and that my **selections on this page cannot be changed once I sign and click Save below.**
- Electronically sign and date by clicking on “Save and Close”
- “Invite Recommenders” **(Your transcript will not be sent unless you invite Ms. Lytle as your counselor!)**
 - Invite your teachers and counselor to submit their letter of recommendation
- Once you complete all of the Common App questions, College Specific questions and writing supplements, your application will be ready for review. Clicking “Review and Submit” for the college in the “My Colleges” tab will walk you through reviewing your application, paying the application fee (if not waived), and electronically signing. We recommend to print preview your entire application to check for errors.

Step 12: Supplements

- If a college/university has a supplement it will be listed in the “Dashboard” with a link, and also found in the “My Colleges” tab
 - Not every college/university will require a supplement

Step 13: Payments

- Once you are ready to submit each college’s application, you will be prompted to pay your application fee
- You will have the option to pay online with a credit card, mail payment or submit a fee waiver request (if you qualify for a fee waiver)