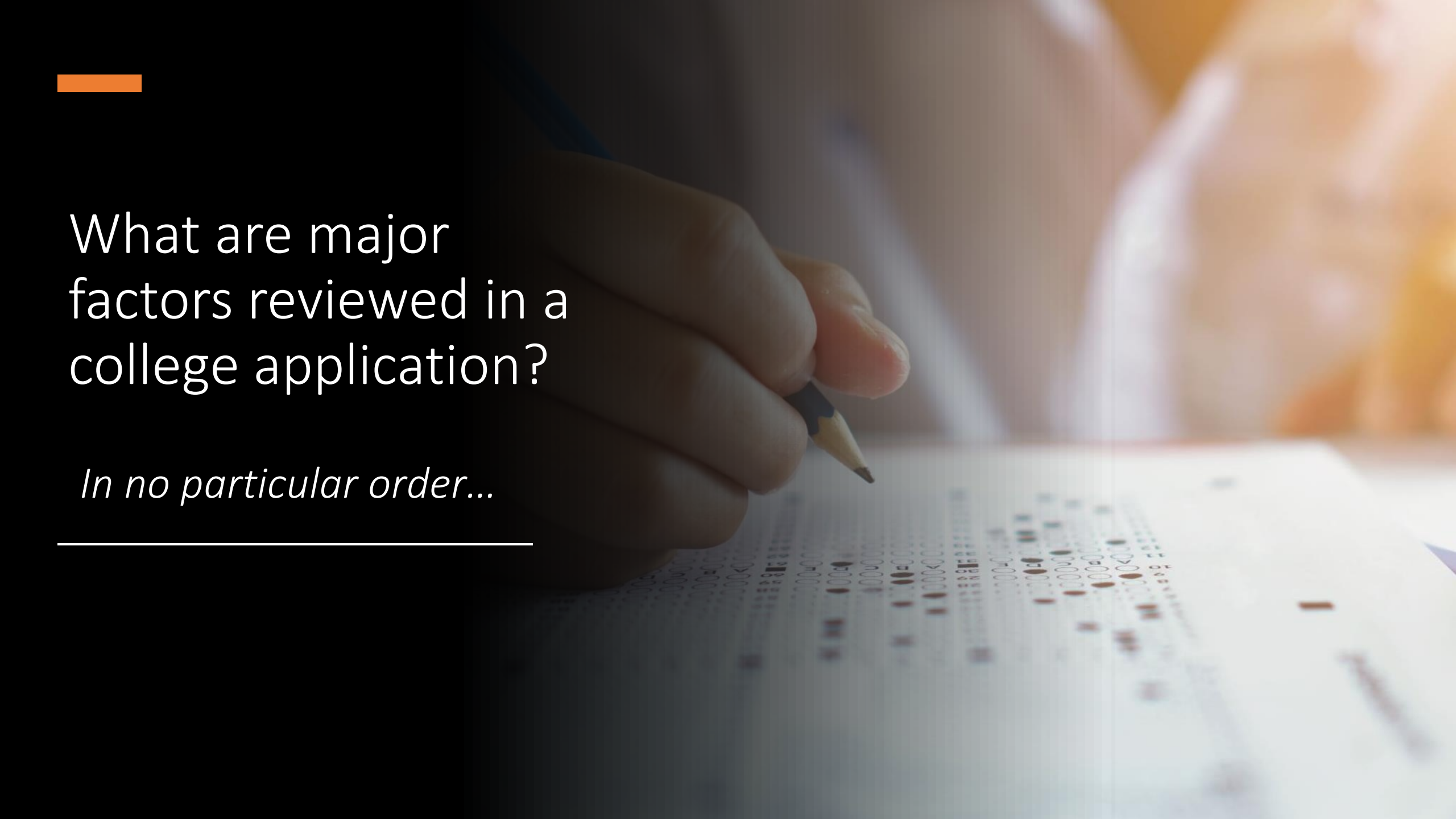


College Planning

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A hand holding a pencil is positioned over a document featuring a grid of small circles, characteristic of a standardized test form. The background is softly blurred, showing a person's face and some indistinct objects, creating a focused and studious atmosphere.

What are major
factors reviewed in a
college application?

In no particular order...



Academic Preparation

- College Prep vs. Honors vs. Advanced Placement vs. Dual Enrollment
- Colleges look for highest rigor possible
 - Is the student challenging themselves? Slightly lower grades in a rigorous program are preferred to all A's in less challenging coursework
 - Grades should show upward trend over the years

Extracurricular Activities

- Anything done outside the classroom
- Quality over quantity
- Explore your passions
- Demonstrate leadership and initiative

Standardized Testing

- Colleges don't prefer one exam over the other
- A few colleges will require reporting ALL scores. Most schools will 'Super Score'
- Testing usually begins spring of junior year
- Digital SAT begins Spring 2024
- Test optional-www.fairtest.org

SAT	ACT
Generally more complex and “thought-provoking”	More “straightforward”
Fewer questions	More questions
More time	Less time
‘No Calculator’ math section	Calculator allowed for all math
Graphics based reading incorporated into Reading and Writing and Language sections	Full graphic based reading section (Science)
Math formulas provided	No math formulas provided
Evidence based reading questions	

Letters of Recommendation

- Required by many four-year colleges
- Provide additional/supporting information that may not be found throughout the student's application
- Not all schools require, or even consider, letters of recommendation. Your college list will dictate your needs. A sampling of schools that don't consider letters: community colleges, Rutgers, Penn State, Pitt, NC State, West Virginia University, University of Florida.
- Plan on asking 2 teachers and school counselor

College Essay

- Start early & pick a topic YOU want to write about, not what you think the reader wants to hear
- A well written essay provides insight into your unique personality, values and goals
- Review Common Application essay prompts as early as spring of junior year
- Many schools also require additional, supplemental essays that are college specific. They are all equally important opportunities to allow the reader into your world - to understand what makes you tick! These typically are available on the Common App August 1st
- Proofread for grammatical errors
- Always have at least 1 person review your essay

Finding Your Fit

Academic

- Academic Profile Match
- Majors Available
- Study Abroad Options
- Honors Programs
- Special Programs
- Internships/Research Options
- Program Accreditations
- Disability Support Services



Social/Environment

- Location
- Distance from Home
- Climate
- Size of School
- Campus Personality
- % Greek Life
- Student Organizations
- Athletic/School Spirit
- Diversity of school/area
- Religious Affiliation
- Counseling Support Services

Financial

- Cost of Attendance
- Ability to Commute
- Financial Aid Package
- Loan Amounts
- Return on Investment
- “Value”
- % of Need Met
- Merit Scholarship Accessibility
- Net Price Calculator

Researching Colleges from Home

- Naviance
- Virtual campus tours & info sessions on college's website
- Google Maps/Earth to explore the area surround the college
- College Scorecard
- Common Data Set
- Follow the college on social media
- Look online for student newspaper
- OBHS Visits
 - Meet with the admissions rep for our area to develop a relationship
 - Sign up in Naviance Junior & Senior Year

Students with 504 Plans/IEP's

Every college has an Office of Students with Disabilities

Apply early for testing accommodations

Disclosure of a disability on an application is optional

Accommodations are not automatic. Based on documentation/review

Student is viewed as an adult. Must self-advocate

Consult with CST/guidance through application process

How Many Schools Should I apply to?

- Reach Schools-Admissions criteria surpasses the student's current academic profile. Typically schools with admission percentages below 25% are reaches for *everyone* – even if you have a matching academic profile.
- Maybe/Target Schools- Student academic profile is a match with the admissions criteria of the college or university.
- Likely/Safety Schools- Student academic profile surpasses the college admission criteria. Chances of admission are likely. (Note: these schools may offer the highest merit scholarships)
- Keep in mind cost of applying to each school
 - Application fees
 - Sending official test scores

Admission Types

- **Early Decision** -Binding contract. May only apply to ONE college as ED because if you are accepted you MUST attend that college or will be held accountable to pay tuition. Also, you may not be aware of financial aid offered before applying ED.
- **Early Action**- Non-Binding and means the deadline as well as the decision will be made earlier.
- **Regular Decision**-Non-Binding
- **Rolling Admission**-Non-Binding, applications are processed as they are received

The Application

- Always review the institution's website for required materials
- Common Application (www.commonapp.org)
 - Most common way to apply, most colleges accept it
 - Fill out one application and submit it to any college that accepts it (up to 20)
 - Can create an account now; information will save in Common App tab only (do not add colleges until August senior year)
- Institutional Application only
 - Specific to a college, will be on a college's website
 - Community College, Georgetown, MIT
- Be sure to check for supplemental application information such as SRAR (Self Reported Academic Record)
- You can submit the application before letters of recommendation are completed

Upcoming College Fairs

Save the Date

Middlesex County
Regional College Fair @
Edison High School-
March 4, 2024 6:30-8PM

NJACAC Regional College
Fair @ Brookdale
Community College-
March 7, 2024 6-8PM

2023 Fall Virtual College Fairs

September Virtual College Fair
Sunday, September 10

October Virtual College Fair
Sunday, October 15

November Virtual
College Fair
Sunday, November 12

NACAC 

**National
College Fairs**

REGISTER NOW!
nacacattend.org

