



Reach. Access. Insight. Today's Common App.

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May 7, 2020

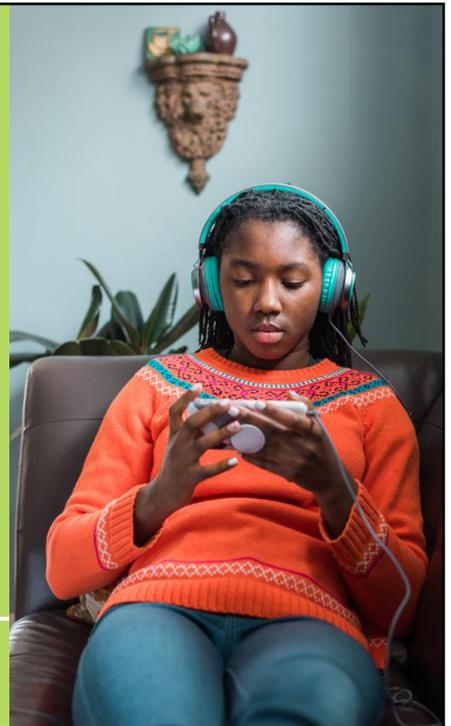
Common App response to COVID-19

- We're working with members and advisory groups to determine how to add space in the application and recommender system to accommodate and collect COVID-19 related information.
- Our goal is to help reduce stress and anxiety for member institutions, applicants and the counseling community.
- For free tips and tools visit www.commonapp.org/coronavirus



Free college advising is only a text away.

Learn more about our new [texting campaign](#), in partnership with AdmitHub and College Advising Corps, to support underserved students during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Agenda

1. **Expanding our reach**
 - Our members
 - Our applicants
 - Our counseling community
2. Increasing access
3. Delivering insight
4. Q&A

Agenda

1. Expanding our reach
- 2. Increasing access**
 - Celebrating student achievement
 - Supporting those who support students
3. Delivering insight
4. Q&A

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Agenda

1. Expanding our reach
2. Increasing access
- 3. Delivering insight**
 - Tools you can use
 - Overview of 2020-2021 application and recommender system enhancements
4. Q&A

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Expanding our reach



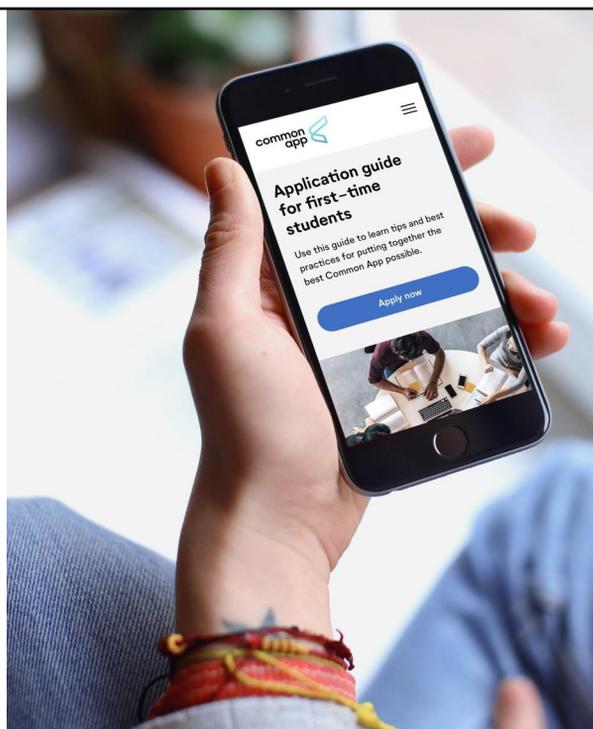
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Mission Driven

Common App is a not-for-profit membership organization committed to the pursuit of access, equity, and integrity in the college admission process.

Key Strategic Priorities

- Scaling our impact
- Reducing barriers for all students
- Supporting those who support students
- Leveraging data and insight to inform practices
- Broadening the types of students and institutions we serve



Common App membership

897

Member
Institutions

50

US States, DC,
and Puerto Rico

63

International
Members

209

Public
Institutions

19

Countries outside
the United States

404

No Application
Fee

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First-year and transfer numbers

as of April 15, 2020

1M

Unique first-year
applicants

5.6M

First-year
applications
submitted

31%

First-generation
students

85K

Unique transfer
applicants

177K

Transfer
applications
submitted

39%

First-generation
students

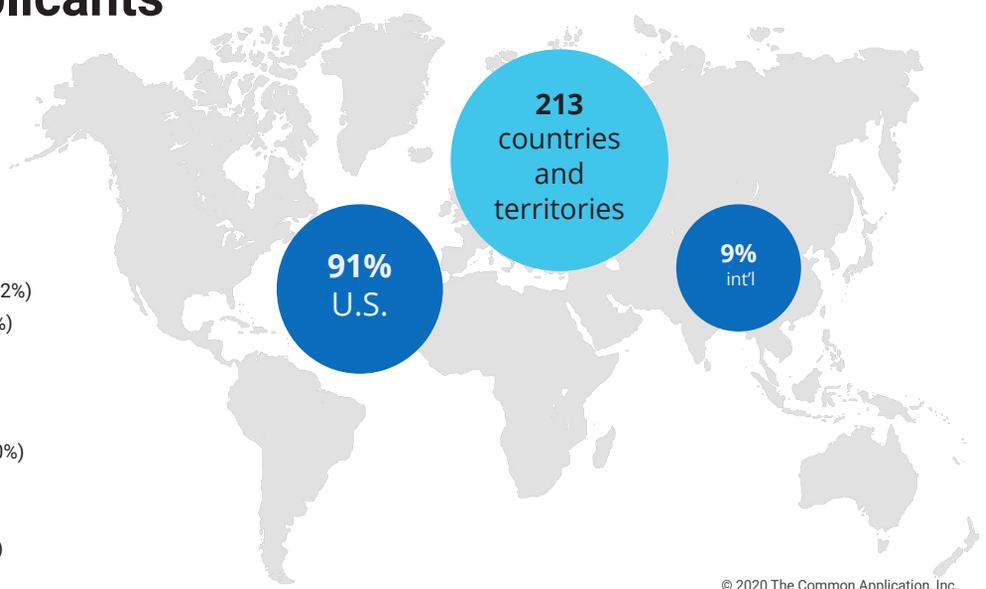
commonapp.org/impact

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The applicants

Top 15 states

- New York (11.2%)
- California (9.3%)
- New Jersey (6.6%)
- Florida (5.7%)
- Illinois (5.6%)
- Massachusetts (5.2%)
- Pennsylvania (4.9%)
- Ohio (4.9%)
- Virginia (4.1%)
- Texas (4.1%)
- North Carolina (4.0%)
- Georgia (3.2%)
- Maryland (3.2%)
- Connecticut (3.0%)
- Michigan (2.5%)



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Increasing access



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Creating a viable future for all students



Reach Higher

Common App and Reach Higher have united to help millions more students live their college dreams.



Supporting Gen Z



Connecting via Text



Celebrating Counselors



Honoring Commitments to Higher Education



Combating Summer Melt



Grants and funding

We are managing over \$3.5M in multi-year grants from six major foundations, covering student engagement and college coaching, family engagement, scholarships, data, and research.



THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION



TheJoyceFoundation

**BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation**

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Advancing our access agenda



Family engagement

Family engagement is critical to student success, yet few resources exist.



Evidence-based interventions

Why do some students who intend to submit a college application not submit?



Scholarship solutions

Scholarships are a two-way treasure hunt.



Community college pathways

We can streamline the pathways to starting and continuing a student's postsecondary education.



Thought leadership grounded in research

Insights from data will inform our work and our role in the higher education discussion.



Reimagining the college application process

"I'll know change is happening when we scale the best ideas across our campuses."

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What is College Signing Day?

What?

An opportunity to celebrate students committing to pursue their education past high school.

When?

Usually recognized every year on May 1, but it can be celebrated by schools, organizations, and communities any day that works best for your students.

How can I learn more?

- Listen to a [webinar](#)
- Download the [toolkit](#)
- Follow the [#SigningDayChat](#) on Twitter

BetterMakeRoom.org/collegesigningday
[#CollegeSigningDay](#)



How to host a digital College Signing Day

Using social media is a fun way to highlight your students and their accomplishments.

Encourage students to share photos of themselves wearing college gear and holding signs to celebrate the day. Post them on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat with the hashtags **#CollegeSigningDay** and **#BetterMakeRoom**. Tag us in your posts so that everyone can follow along with your celebrations!

Get your juniors involved, too! Ask them to create a [Common App](#) account and add at least five colleges to their list to start researching schools. This will help them get ready to complete college applications in the future.



It's not too late to join the celebration!

- 1. Register at BetterMakeRoom.org/collegesigningday.**
Let us know you're going to celebrate!
- 2. Download the guides.**
Use our templates to help you plan the details, especially the social media guide.
- 3. Set the date.**
Celebrate your College Signing Day event any day that works for your students. Be sure to post on social media throughout the month as students make their commitments.
- 4. Celebrate!**
Share your excitement on social media with *#CollegeSigningDay* and *#BetterMakeRoom*



Virtual Graduation

**June 6 at 3:00 PM ET/12:00 PM PT
on YouTube**

Join former First Lady Michelle Obama for a commencement celebration to salute the Class of 2020.

Mrs. Obama and Reach Higher have received dozens of requests to address graduating classes whose in-person commencement events have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Join YouTube's "Dear Class of 2020," a virtual commencement to celebrate graduates, families, and their communities.

Go to ReachHigher.org to sign up and for more information.



"Dear Class of 2020"

a virtual commencement celebration
with **Michelle Obama,**
President Barack Obama,
& **Friends**

Saturday, June 6
3PM ET / 12PM PT

reachhigher.org

 **YouTube**  **REACH HIGHER**
Empower your students. Don't just give them.

Delivering insight



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[EXPLORE](#)

[PLAN](#)

[APPLY](#)

[Counselors and recommenders](#) ▾

[Members](#) ▾



[Log in](#)

[Create an Account](#)

Your future starts here

Whether you're applying to college for the first time or looking to complete your degree, Common App will help you reach new heights.

[Apply now](#)

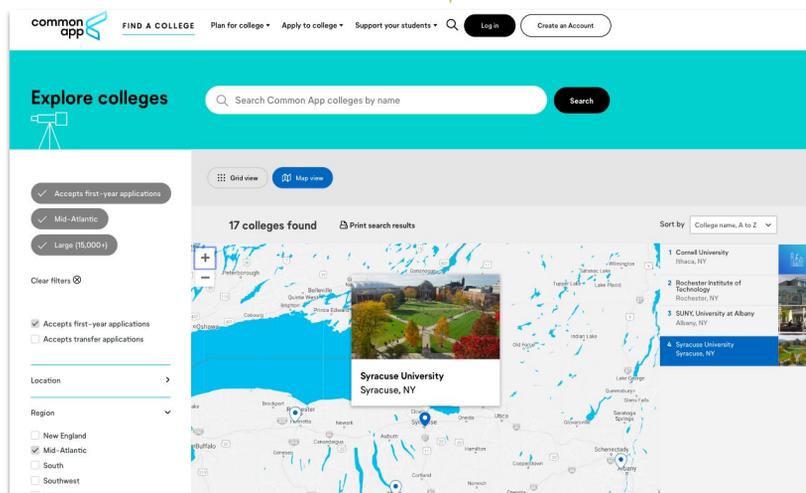
commonapp.org

Explore colleges



- Expanded filter options
 - First-year / transfer
 - Public / private
 - Enrollment size
 - Campus setting
 - Merit / need-based aid
 - Test-optional
 - Specialized mission
- Map and list views of colleges
- PDF export of college lists

commonapp.org/explore

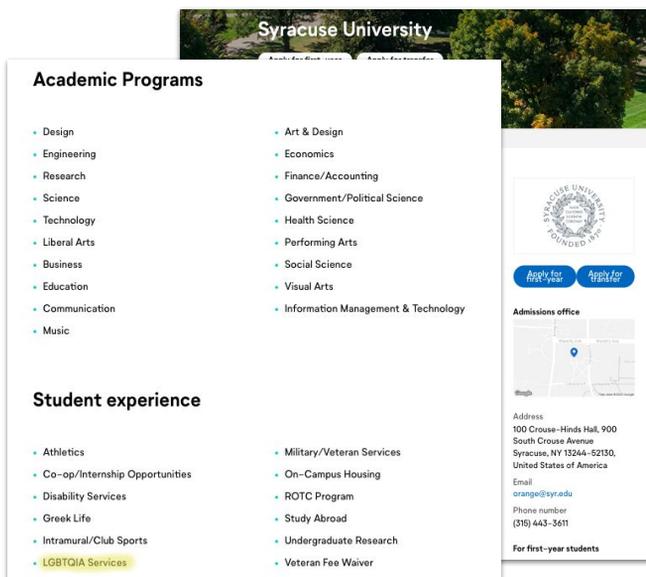


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College details

- Details on application requirements
- Virtual tours and image galleries
- Ability for colleges to showcase specialized programs

commonapp.org/explore



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Plan for college

- College roadmaps for middle school, high school, community college, and military students
- Application and Recommender Guides
- Learn about paying for college
- Parent resources

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Plan your future

Get connected with everything you need to apply to college, research financial aid and scholarships, and get advice from counselors, advisors and mentors.

WHY COLLEGE MATTERS
College is an investment in yourself. It's worth it because you're worth it.
[Learn more >](#)

PAYING FOR COLLEGE
You have more options than you know. We can help you find them.
[Learn more >](#)

YOUR COLLEGE ROADMAP
The path may seem unclear. Luckily we know the way, including all the shortcuts.
[Learn more >](#)

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Common App Ready

A toolkit of tips and best practices to help students with each step of the application process

- Getting started
- Preparing your application
- Telling your story
- Working with recommenders and advisors
- Paying for college

commonapp.org/ready

Resources

- WHAT IS COA**
[Download PDF](#)
- HOW THE FIP**
[Download PDF](#)
- APPLICATION**
[Download PDF](#)

Understanding your financial aid offer

Congratulations, you've been accepted to college! First, celebrate this success. Next, figure out the cost of attending college.

Start by reviewing the financial aid offer letter from each college you've been accepted to. This letter can come with your acceptance notification via email, separately in the mail, or can be found on your student portal on the college's website (if you're not sure, call the college's financial aid office). Each school will offer a different amount of money, so it's important to review this information with your family or a trusted adult.

Every financial aid offer letter is different, but the key terms are similar across colleges. Use this guide to help make an informed financial decision about where to go to college.

Helpful terms

Cost of Attendance (or COA)
The estimated total cost of attending a college for one academic year, including direct and indirect costs.

Direct costs
Tuition, student fees, room & meal plan, usually paid directly to the school.

Indirect costs
Other costs of going to college such as books, travel, and personal expenses.

Don't forget:
It's okay to have questions. You can, and should, contact a college's financial aid office.

There are lots of reasons to pick a college, the best choice for you may not be the college with the lowest price tag.

Note: the COA may change from year to year (e.g., if tuition increases annually or if you choose an alternative housing & meal plan). If the COA is not listed on your financial aid letter, contact the college's financial aid office and request the direct and indirect costs of attending.

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Encouraging students

A Student's Guide to Your First Year of College

Created in partnership with Michelle Obama and Reach Higher, YouTube Originals and NowThis produced a [10-episode crash course for students entering college](#). The series covers topics ranging from financial management to finding mentors and friends to living on your own.

A Year of Firsts

Michelle Obama partnered with the digital media company ATTN: to launch [A Year of Firsts](#) video series on IGTV showing [inspiring stories about four students navigating their first year of college](#).

reachhigher.org
bettermakerroom.org



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Advisor role

- Counselors and advisors can track student progress in the Common App recommender system
- Students can share a PDF preview of their in-progress application
- Counselors and advisors can review college-level details for each student

Counselor information is shared with colleges; Advisor information is not

College List for Bob Dylan

College	Decision Plan	Student Details		
		Student Deadline	Application Submission	Application Downloaded
Adelphi University	Rolling Admission	03/01/2020	Not Submitted	
Arizona State University	Rolling Admission	07/27/2020	Not Submitted	
Florida Institute of Technology	Not Yet Selected		Not Submitted	
University of Bradford	Rolling Admission	07/29/2020	Not Submitted	
Vassar College	Regular Decision	01/01/2020	Not Submitted	

Education

Current or Most Recent Secondary School
 Central High School, Philadelphia, PA, USA, Public, CEEB: 393275 (09/2017 - 06/2021)

Counselor Rachel Owens, School Counselor
Email rachel.owens@myschool.edu
Progression No change in progression
Graduation Date 06/2021

Colleges & Universities

School **George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA** Summer program, Credit awarded directly by college (08/2018 - 08/2018)

Grades

Rank na / 300

Current or Most Recent Year Courses

First Semester	Second Semester
English 12	English 12
Pre-Calculus	Pre-Calculus
Human Anatomy	Human Anatomy
AP US Government	AP US Government
Spanish III	Spanish III
Studio Art	Studio Art

Community-Based Organizations

CBO 1 Philadelphia Futures
Counselor Brian Saunders
Email, Phone bsaunders@advisor.org

Future Plans

Other, Art Historian, Masters

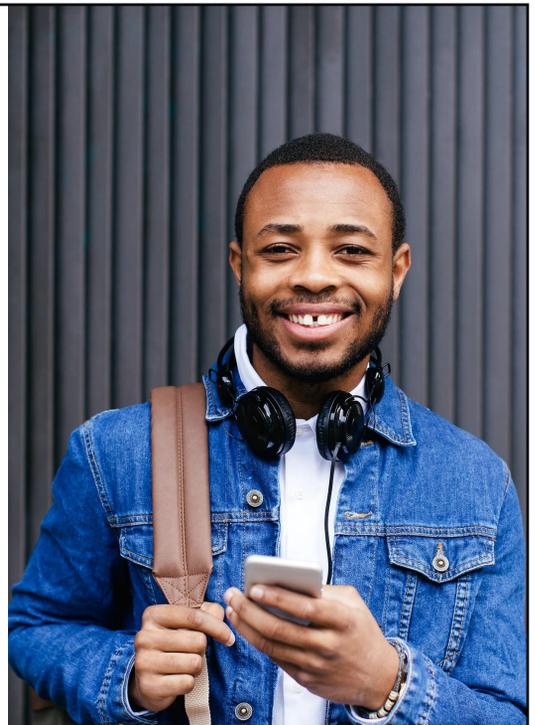
2020-2021 System Enhancements



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The first-year application will include several user experience improvements.

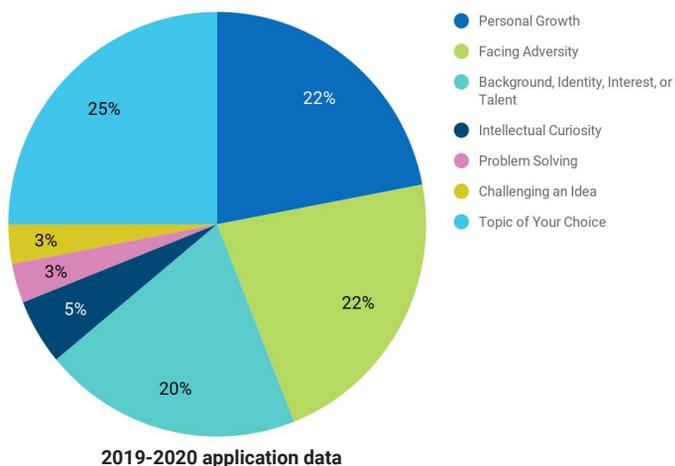
- Update “Hispanic or Latino” to “Latino/a/x”
- Addition of a non-binary gender option for siblings
- Ability to indicate proficiency in more than one “Other” language
- Honors section update to allow for “Add Another” (similar to Activities section)
- In the Activities section, separate the “Organization name” and “Position or Leadership description” into two separate questions
- Ability for any student to update their FERPA waiver prior to a recommendation submission (regardless of what platform recommenders use)
- Offer space in the application for students to address COVID-19 and other community disruptions



2020-2021 first-year essay prompts remain the same

Pro tip: Students can use content from Google Drive in their application. 🗄️

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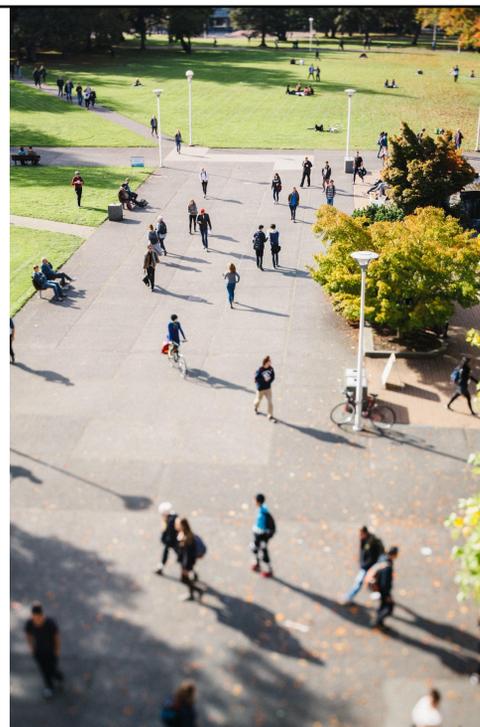


2020-2021 transfer personal statement prompt

In response to feedback and survey responses, we are making the following enhancements:

- Update the transfer personal statement prompt to align with the first-year essay prompts
- Improve instructional text
- Add an 'Educational Path' question so that it will continue to be available for colleges who wish to ask it
- Add an 'Additional Information' question to the common portion of the application

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The first-year recommender system is getting a refresh

Background & User Research

- Recommender support survey from past 3 years (over 1,000 written requests for improvement)
- Recommender interviews & testing
- Focus group at NACAC Conference
- Outreach Advisory Committee input
- Previously submitted ideas from users and stakeholders

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Project Drivers

- Modernization
- Accessibility
- Responsiveness
- Branding

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The screenshot shows the 'My students' page in the Common App interface. At the top left is the 'common app' logo. At the top right, it says 'Good evening, Irene · Counselor'. On the left side, there is a vertical navigation menu with icons for 'Students', 'Profile', 'Resources', 'Settings', and 'Sign out'. The main content area has a blue header with the text 'My students'. Below this, there is a search bar with a 'Student name' label and a 'Search filters' button. A 'Sort By: Last name' dropdown is also present. The student list includes: Lamar Abrams (LA) with a deadline of March 01, 2021; Yoon Ha Lee (YL) with a deadline of January 05, 2021; Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (CN) with a deadline of December 31, 2020; and Rebecca Sugar (RS) with a deadline of January 05, 2021. On the right side, there is a 'This week's to do list' section with a green border. It includes a table with columns 'This week', 'Next week', and 'Total'. The items are: School reports (35 of 35 submitted), Early decision 1 agreements (5 of 5 submitted), Early decision 2 agreements (0 of 2 submitted), and Recommendations (30 of 30 submitted). A button at the bottom of this section says 'Students with deadlines this week'.

common app Good evening, Irene • Counselor ▾

College List

College	Se	Ad
Adelphi University	N	Se
Alaska Pacific University	N	Se
Albright College	R	Ad
Cornell University	E	De
D'Youville	N	Se

* Recommendations th

Teachers

Name
Multi Merhige

Lamar Abrams

LA Student info
FERPA waived

School report
Submitted

Lamar's information

CAID: 12345678
August 24

Common app progress

Profile Complete Family Incomplete Education Complete Testing Complete Activities Incomplete Writing Complete C&G Not complete

This student has not enabled application preview.

Lamar's colleges Sort By: College name ▾

- Amherst College**
December 01, 2020 • Regular decision
- Hazelhooft University**
November 01, 2020 • Early decision 1
- University of San Francisco**
January 01, 2021 • Regular decision
- Western Colorado University**
January 15, 2021 • Regular decision
- Western New England University**
June 05, 2021 • Rolling admission

Lamar's teacher recommenders

Alan Zhou - Not yet submitted

FERPA: Waived
Dates are Eastern Time

FW	CR
Not Required	Required
Required	Required
Not Required	Required
Required	Required

lege or university.

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Tips & Best Practices

- Celebrate #CollegeSigningDay with your students
- Create a practice account
- Watch video tutorials
- Explore the Common App website
- Check out the blog for updates
- Sign up for the monthly newsletter
- Download Common App Ready resources
- Access the resources tab in the recommender system
- Use the Advisor role and Application Preview to support students
- Follow @commonapp, @reachhigher, and @bettermakeroom on social media
- Contact 24/7/365 support when you need it
appsupport.commonapp.org or appsupport@commonapp.net
recsupport.commonapp.org or sfsupport@commonapp.net

commonapp.org/counselors-and-recommenders



Your questions

We're committed to continuous improvement:
ideas.commonapp.org



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Thank you

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