

MISSION: COLLEGE ESSAY JUMPSTART



Dear Rising Senior:

Congratulations!! You are finally on your way to looking at and choosing the college/university of your choice, and the journey begins right here. Since your class work is beginning to lighten, now is the perfect opportunity for you to get a jumpstart with your college essays.

Attached to this sheet are various topics typically asked on a college application. Take time to read and choose at least two topics you would like to write about. Each essay should follow the format listed:

- ❖ One-two pages in length
- ❖ Essay Title (Top of the page centered)
- ❖ Double Spaced
- ❖ First & last name at bottom of the last page

This is a writing process, and your essays will be considered as a “1st Draft”. All essays will be reviewed by actual college admission counselors, so please put your best foot forward. Over the summer, you and your parent/guardian will receive edited versions of your essays allowing you a chance to review and revise. All final essays will be used and recycled throughout the school year for various college and scholarship applications. This will alleviate unwanted stress from the “Fall College Essay Blues.”

Submit all essays by **hard copy or emailing** to the following:

- ❖ Mrs. Burke, CollegeBound, Room 201 or email a copy to kburke@collegeboundfoundation.org
- ❖ Mrs. S. Farmer, Western High or email a copy to sfarmer@bcps.k12.md.us

We have also attached sample copies of previous essays used in this process. Note: Some essays are “outstanding” and some are “not so outstanding”. Read them and you decide.

Personal Statements

A personal statement simply allows a college admissions counselor to get another perspective of you beyond what's written on the college application. This also allows them a chance to examine (and possibly assess) your writing abilities. Personal statements should be unique, poignant, and allow you the opportunity to stand out from other applicants.

Sample Topics

- ❖ A day in the the life of ____ (Your Name) _____
- ❖ The impact of community service on you
- ❖ Overcoming a personal obstacle
- ❖ What attending college means to you
- ❖ Career interests/choice

Sample College Application Essay Questions:

Howard University: Howard is interested in you as a person, as well as how you express your thoughts. Please submit a 500-word essay describing how you would contribute to the Howard University Legacy.

Pomona College: Reinvent your high school. What is essential? What would you change?

Rhodes College: What risks have you taken in your life? What were the circumstances and the results? How have you benefited from risk taking?

Common Application Questions:

1. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced, and describe its' impact on you.
2. Discuss some issues of personal, local, national, or international concern and their importance to you.
3. Indicate a person who has been a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.
4. Describe a character in fiction, a historical character, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you and describe that influence.
5. A range of academic interests, personal perspectives, and life experiences adds much to the educational mix. Given your personal background, describe an experience that illustrates what you would bring to the diversity in a college community, or an encounter that illustrated the importance of diversity to you.