

The National College Planning Summit

The College Application Timeline

Dr. Joie Jager-Hyman

www.collegeprep360.com

Dr. Joie Jager-Hyman is the author of B+Students, A+College Applications and the founder of CollegePrep360, a college planning company located in New York City. She served as Assistant Director of Admissions for Dartmouth College and completed her Doctorate in Education Policy at Harvard University.

1. What do students need to know about the College Application Timeline?

- a. There are no standardized deadlines – check each College’s Website to make sure you know the deadlines.

2. What are the different Application Timelines?

Early Decision

- a. This is a binding agreement.
- b. You apply early and pledge to the college that you will attend if accepted.
- c. Student, Parents & HS Guidance Counselor sign the application saying this is Early Decision.
- d. By signing you realize you are signing a binding agreement.

Early Action

- a. Early Action typically has a November deadline—You will receive a reply from college in December or January.
- b. It is not binding and you have until May 1st to decide.
- c. Early Action shows schools that you are interested, and that you are comfortable with your academics, without showing more of your Senior year.
- d. You can apply to other colleges and compare financial aid award letters.
- e. 2 types of schools typically offer Early Action.
 - i. Public - funded by taxpayers
 - ii. Catholic
- f. Early Action is more sensitive for students who need to shop for financial aid.

Regular Decision

- a. Most students apply regular decision.
- b. You are basically telling the school, “I’m applying to your school and I’m waiting for your response and the responses from other schools I am applying to and then I will make my decision.”

The National College Planning Summit

- c. Regular Decision is typically a January deadline to submit your application and you hear in March or April if you are accepted.

3. What is Rolling Admissions?

- a. The College is evaluating applications as they are coming in.
- b. If you submit early you will get a response early – generally in 6-8 weeks.
- c. Even though it is “Rolling,” it is important to get your application in as early as possible since colleges will fill up.

4. What is Deferred Admission? - (This only applies if you apply early.)

- a. College would like to review your application with the regular decision applicants.
- b. There are different reasons.
 - i. We like you but we probably won't take you.
 - ii. We like you but we want to see your senior year grades.

5. What is Waitlisted?

- a. This comes later in the application process.
- b. Colleges will defer you in the early round - not wait list you.
- c. When you are waitlisted, the college is saying “We like you. You are on our waiting list.”

6. Do all schools offer all these different application options?

- a. Most Privates have Early Decision.
- b. Most Publics and Catholics have Early Action (and some private colleges have Early Action.)
- c. Every College has Regular Admissions.
- d. Some Colleges offer Rolling Admissions.
- e. It is important for the student to check each school's deadlines and policies.

7. What is the College Yield?

- a. This is the Percentage of accepted students who eventually enroll.
- b. This is an important number for colleges.
- c. Colleges want to be selective. US News & World Report rankings, and other ranking agencies look at this. Alumni look at this and faculty that the University is recruiting look at this.
- d. Schools spend lots of money on marketing to get applications. But they need the students who are applying to actually enroll.
- e. The Yield on Early Decision is 100% - Students are bound to come. Early Decision helps schools manage selectivity.

The National College Planning Summit

8. What if I miss an Early Decision or Early Action deadline?

- a. The Deadlines are on each schools website.
- b. Colleges want applications – they may give you a little leeway if you are only a day or two late.
- c. The best thing to do is call the Admissions Office.

9. Do certain types of students benefit from Early Decision? - I believe everyone can benefit IF they know that this the school they want to attend.

- a. A disadvantage is that you cannot compare financial aid awards from other schools.
- b. However, when you apply early, you probably will get the best financial aid offer from the school.
 - i. Some schools have been accused of not providing aid to early applicants.
 - ii. Other schools say the opposite.
 - iii. Colleges have more money at the beginning of the year and colleges like it when students choose their schools as first choice.
- c. Statistically speaking, applying Early Decision to selective schools is the statistical equivalent of 100 extra SAT points. It can be a more hospitable environment, statistically speaking.
- d. Academically, you don't have time to show your Senior year grades and that is a disadvantage.
- e. The college's acceptance rate percentage can be twice as high for Early Decision than Regular Decision.
- f. Just because their acceptance rate percentage may be higher in Early Decision, if you apply to school that is not appropriate, you will not be accepted.
- g. If you have a strong academic record and your test scores are completed, statistically it may be better to apply Early Decision - if you know that this is the school you want to attend.

10. Do you have any other information about Early Decision?

- a. Students, parents and guidance counselor must sign the agreement on the Application.
- b. You can only apply to one school Early Decision, but you can generally still apply to other schools Early Action. If you are accepted Early Decision you should withdraw your applications from any other school you have applied to. Schools generally share their accepted Early Decision list to their peer schools.

11. Is there any way to get out of Early Decision once I have been accepted?

- a. The one thing that can potentially get you out of Early Decision is Financial Aid – if your award is significantly less than you anticipated. The college might let you out.

The National College Planning Summit

- b. However, this can give bad impression to your High School – colleges will take the view that your Guidance Office did not properly inform you of the Early Decision Policy.

12. Can I apply Regular Decision if I am rejected Early Decision?

- a. No, you have to wait until the next year to re-apply. Students should be preparing applications to other schools in case you are not accepted Early Decision.

13. What should I be doing if I am deferred or waitlisted?

- a. Advocate for yourself – the school likes you so you must be proactive.
- b. Write a letter with updates.(new test scores, grades)
- c. Express your desire to attend.
- d. Make sure your file is updated.
- e. You may send another recommendation.
- f. Call Admissions to let them know it is your first choice college.

12. What do we have to do Senior Year after the application has been submitted?

- a. Make sure your application is complete.
- b. Check your portal to make sure that transcripts and recommendations are in.
- c. Keep up your grades.
- d. If an interview is required make sure to schedule and complete it.

13. What information does the College have about my High School?

- a. The College's Regional Admission Officer often visits High Schools to learn about the school.
- b. Each High School has a "High School Profile" – This Profile is sent with the Student's Academic Transcript to the college. High School Students should ask their Guidance Counselor for a copy of the Profile.
 - i. It includes what courses are offered at the High School – AP Classes, etc.
 - ii. Grade distribution.
 - iii. Average SAT scores, etc.
 - iv. Where students in previous classes have gone to college.
 - v. The percentage of students who go on to college.

14. What is the application review process at the University?

- a. The Regional Admission Officer reads the application first.(Can be quick acceptance or quick reject.)
- b. Most students get in through committee process. 4-5 people review with the Regional Admission Officer. They review academics first, then other aspects of the students. Then they vote.

The National College Planning Summit

15. Does the Admissions Office look at the ability to pay when making decision?

- a. It depends.
 - i. Need blind – Admissions does not look at the financial situation during admissions.
 - ii. Need aware – Admissions is looking at the financial situation during admissions.
- b. Students must submit financial aid forms independently from the academic applications.

16. What happens once I receive my acceptance letter?

- a. The Reply deadline is generally May 1. You must submit your deposit to secure your spot.
- b. Housing & Orientation happen after you submit your deposit.

17. Do you have any final thoughts for our listeners today?

- a. Do all of your applications early.
- b. Submit financial aid as early as possible! Don't be late because the pool of money may be gone.
- c. When completing applications step back and ask yourself:
 - i. "How can I contribute to the college?"
 - ii. "What makes me different?"
 - iii. "How will I take advantage of the opportunities at the college?"
 - iv. "Make sure your application says something about you."

18. Can you tell us more about your book and how to contact you?

My book, B+ Grades, A+ College Applications, is a helpful "How-to" book, available on Amazon. The advice is good for any student applying to college, but I wrote it for the good students who are often ignored by Guidance Counselors that are focusing on the A+ Students. B+ Students are good students who belong at good colleges.

I have a college consulting business CollegePrep360 located in New York City. My website is www.collegeprep360.com.