



# COLLEGE PLANNING



## College Application Deadlines Don't Have To Be Stressful

(NAPSA)—As if juggling academics, extracurricular activities, after-school jobs, and family commitments weren't enough, high school seniors face the additional stress of getting their college applications in on time. For many students, the prospect of writing essays, getting recommendations, and filling out forms before January deadlines is overwhelming.

Even applying early decision to just one school can be stressful. Early decision plans require students to commit to attend the school if accepted—so students must be very sure before they apply.

But students might be surprised to know that 3,060 colleges—or 85 percent of all colleges in the U.S.—use an admissions policy that allows them to apply at their own pace.

These colleges use “rolling” admissions, whereby students' applications are reviewed as they come in. According to the College Board, most public universities, many private liberal arts colleges, and almost all community colleges use rolling admissions.

Renee Gernand, senior director of College Planning Services at the College Board, said, “Applying to schools with rolling admissions is one way to relieve some of the stress of the college application process.

“Students typically hear back from schools four to six weeks after they apply. In some cases, students can apply to a school in the fall and receive a decision by



**Eighty-five percent of all U.S. colleges allow students to apply at their own pace.**

December—without the binding obligation that comes with early decision policies.”

This flexibility can be crucial for busy students, or for those who need more time to narrow down their list of favorite schools.

Ms. Gernand said, “Most schools with rolling admissions also accept applications into the spring, which can help students who need a little more time to make their decisions.”

More information on colleges, and their application requirements and deadlines, can be found in the *College Board College Handbook 2004*.

The *Handbook*, which describes every four- and two-year college in the U.S., helps students understand their options as they plan for college.

It includes information on early decision policies at hundreds of schools, as well as an index of schools that accept applications year round.

The *Handbook* can be found in bookstores everywhere, or purchased online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

