



## SCHOOL PROFILES: BEST PRACTICES & HELPFUL TOOLS

### A Practical Resource for High School Counselors

School profiles remain one of the most important contextual documents used in college admissions. Below are several widely used resources that may help schools evaluate, update, or rethink the way school information is shared with colleges.

### GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

- Keep information easy to locate quickly
- Prioritize readability over excessive design
- Update information annually
- Avoid large blocks of dense text
- Use consistent formatting year to year
- Make profiles easy to share digitally

### SCHOOL PROFILE RESOURCES

Several organizations and college admissions professionals have created helpful school profile guides, examples, and recommendations over the years. These resources can provide useful ideas related to structure, readability, content, and best practices.

Helpful starting points include resources from:

- National Association for College Admission Counseling
- College Board
- College Essay Guy
- Other counseling and admissions organizations working in the college access and school counseling space

These guides often include:

- example school profiles
- suggested sections
- formatting ideas
- context recommendations
- admissions-focused best practices



## MAKING CARING COMMON SCHOOL PROFILE PROJECT

The Making Caring Common School Profile Project is one of the more thoughtful and practical resources available for schools reviewing, updating, or rethinking the way they communicate school context to colleges.

The project was developed through collaboration between counselors, admissions professionals, educational organizations, and researchers connected to the college admissions process. One of the central ideas behind the project is that school profiles should help colleges better understand the actual educational environment students experience. Rather than focusing only on statistics or promotional language, the project encourages schools to think carefully about how they communicate:

- academic opportunity
- course access
- school culture
- grading practices
- student support systems
- community context
- institutional priorities
- the realities students navigate within a particular school environment

The resource includes:

- example school profiles
- planning templates
- profile evaluation tools
- reflection questions
- recommendations related to readability and organization
- guidance for discussing rigor, opportunity, and student experience more clearly

Another strength of the project is its emphasis on ethical and transparent communication. The materials encourage schools to present themselves honestly and thoughtfully while helping colleges better interpret student achievement within the context of available opportunities and institutional circumstances.

For counselors and schools beginning to revise their profiles, the project can also serve as a helpful conversation starter internally. Many schools find that profile discussions naturally lead to larger conversations about curriculum access, communication practices, data collection, and how the school wants to present itself to outside audiences.

The project does not suggest that there is one “perfect” format for a school profile. Instead, it emphasizes clarity, accessibility, and thoughtful communication of school context in ways that support more informed admissions review.

The School Profile Project and related resources can be found at:

[mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/school-profile-project](http://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/school-profile-project)



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## MODERNIZING SCHOOL PROFILES WITH SCOFIE

### What Is SCOFie?

SCOFie is a free school profile platform created by practicing college counselors to help schools organize and share school information in a clearer and more accessible way.

Many schools still rely on static PDFs that can be difficult to update, difficult for colleges to locate, or dependent on rebuilding formatting each year. SCOFie was created to provide schools with another option while still allowing schools to maintain downloadable PDF versions if they choose.

Rather than replacing a school's identity or existing materials, the goal of SCOFie is simply to make school profiles easier to maintain, easier to share, and easier for colleges to read and understand during application review.

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### WHY SOME COUNSELORS ARE EXPLORING DIGITAL SCHOOL PROFILES

For many counseling offices, maintaining a school profile can become a repetitive yearly task:

- updating statistics
- adjusting formatting
- replacing outdated PDFs
- fixing broken links
- sending profiles repeatedly to colleges and programs

At the same time, admissions offices are reviewing applications in increasingly digital environments and often need to find information quickly.

Digital school profiles can help simplify some of those challenges by making information:

- easier to update
- easier to organize
- easier to access
- easier to share with colleges and scholarship programs

For schools with limited counseling staff or limited time, even small improvements in organization and updating can help reduce workload over time.



## HOW SCHOOLS CAN USE SCOFfile

Schools may use SCOFfile in different ways depending on their needs and school structure:

Some schools:

- use SCOFfile alongside an existing PDF profile
- use it as a central place to organize school context information
- update information gradually over time rather than rebuilding documents annually

The platform is intentionally designed to be flexible rather than forcing schools into one use.

Schools still control:

- how their information is presented
- what context they share
- how much detail they include
- whether they continue using PDFs alongside the digital version

SCOFfile can help schools:

- organize school profile information more clearly
- simplify annual updates
- reduce repeated formatting work
- share profiles more easily with colleges
- keep profile information more consistent year to year
- make school context easier for admissions offices to access and understand

For schools that may not currently have a strong online profile presence, it can also provide a more accessible and easier-to-maintain starting point.

The goal is to help schools communicate their context more clearly while reducing some of the logistical and formatting challenges that often come with maintaining school profiles over time.

Like any school profile approach, the focus remains the same:  
helping colleges better understand students within the context of their school community.

Learn more at [SCOFfile.com](https://SCOFfile.com) or create one for your school at [SCOFfile.com/form](https://SCOFfile.com/form)

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