



A Team Approach: Roles and Responsibilities

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The Role of the Independent College Counselor

- to provide professional insight about the strengths of individual colleges and universities and how the admissions process works at different institutions (i.e. highly selective colleges and universities, public Ivies, state universities etc.).
- to analyze the transcript, extracurricular activities, summer enrichment, work experience, personal interests etc. to identify strengths and areas that need to be strengthened.
- to offer an ability assessment for students who which to have a more comprehensive analysis of their personal learning style, cognitive strengths, and specialized learning aptitudes that would be important in making a decision about the next step in their education, such as college, a major, graduate school etc.
- to work the student and parents initially to develop a balanced college list that includes colleges in the reach category, the likely category and back-ups.
- to work one-on-one with the student to identify the colleges that are the best “match” based on individual interests, ability strengths, personal goals etc.
- to review the PSAT results and plan the standardized test schedule for spring of the junior year and fall of the senior year, if appropriate.
- to review course selection for the senior year
- to discuss various summer enrichment through study abroad, college programs, work experience, community service, internships or self-directed projects.
- to discuss different application strategies with the student to determine the advantages of applying early action/ early decision or regular decision.
- to be a sounding board to counsel the student and parents at each stage of the college process, especially after each college visit.
- to revise and update the college list in the fall of the senior year based on the standardized test scores, final grades in the junior year, and campus visits.

- to help brainstorming college essays and application questions and provide editorial comments on all writing materials sent to colleges
- to be a resource for the professional evaluations of college acceptances and offer strategies for any wait-list options, if applicable.
- to offer on-going meetings throughout the year to keep students and parents well informed about the trends in competitive college admissions.

The Role of the Student

- to research all colleges and universities on the college list .
- to complete a full round of SAT I and two or three SAT II tests or the ACT With Writing by the end of the junior year.
- to finish the junior year with strong academic momentum and accomplishment.
- to get approval from two teachers to write letters of recommendation.
- to plan a rigorous course of study for the senior year and plan summer enrichment i.e. study abroad, internship, independent travel, work, or community service etc.
- to visit top college choices during the spring and summer.
- to prepare the preliminary draft of the college essay, a resume of activities, and the common application over the summer.
- to make sure that the college applications are completed prior to deadline dates for Early Action and Early Decision (typically November 1st or 15th), and Regular Decision (typically January 1st or 15th).
- to take additional SAT I or SAT IIs or the ACT in the fall, if needed.

The Role of the Parents

- to recognize that their son or daughter is essentially at the center of this process and needs to be encouraged to take responsibility for completing the applications.
- to facilitate the college visits and travel during spring break and over the summer.
- to let the student “own” the application process, essay writing and final decision.
- to understand that this process represents a separation between you and your child and to appreciate that this process is essentially being driven by your child working with the professional guidance of the independent college counselor.