

The flow of our program is designed to give students the time, resources and structure to do thoughtful and informed work in their search, and to help them do thorough work on their applications. Students begin with introspective writing assignments designed to help them identify early guiding forces for their journey and the rest of junior year is spent learning to use resources and information at their disposal to create a balanced and appropriate list. Students will also write drafts of personal statements, complete a Common Application and will receive personal guidance as they plan standardized testing. As junior year comes to a close, there is a big shift of gears as students visit colleges during the summer and return for senior year ready to narrow down their list and hone their applications. The senior fall curriculum is designed to help manage the process in a steady way, allowing students to do thoughtful, thorough work. Along the way, we work with students and families through the details of financial aid and scholarships; through the weighing of acceptances and, the handling of possible waitlist decisions; and through the disappointment being denied admission. If we've all done our job well, there's a lot more happiness and satisfaction than disappointment.

It is important that you remain engaged and invested, that you and your student work to identify times when you will touch base about the process, that you stand by as a supporter and a comfort; and ultimately that you partner in this collaborative effort.

We will work to be in regular contact with you during the entire process, and we invite you to be in contact with us along the way with questions or concerns as they arise. We will encourage your sons and daughters to set aside an hour a month during the junior winter, an hour every couple of weeks during the junior spring, and an hour a week during the senior fall to touch base openly with you about how things are going, and about any details which are developing. Once this time is set aside, you can all go on enjoying the other

It will help your students a great deal if you can help them arrange travel for visits, if you can remain on top of your parts of the financial aid, test registration, and application fee pieces of the process, and if they know you are in their corner. The students themselves should handle all communication with coaches, admission officers or interviewers. In the end, students will yield the best outcomes and feel best about their process if they can take pride in their own work, feeling great about all of our support.

We welcome your questions and we're happy to work with you. Trust your best instincts as parents and try to tune out the "white noise" of sweeping generalizations about the process. We look forward to partnering with you to create the best environment we can for your student to soar in the process.

All the best,

Brooks School College Counseling Office