

Dear parents:

We understand that the college search causes some international students and families to be nervous. We know all parents want and expect the best experience for their children, but cannot be here to help. We also want the best situation for your child. Let me explain briefly what we do to help ease your mind.

We get to know our international students before and during the junior (11th grade) year. We work with your students to create appropriate course schedules based on their skills and interests with an eye toward post-secondary aspirations. We discuss their experiences at Fryeburg Academy and work at building a rapport to support them while here and to drive the post-secondary conversations that will follow.

We begin formal and routine college counseling meetings in the second half of the junior year. We understand that post-COVID, the US college landscape has changed, with many schools continuing to be test-optional; however, we monitor and stay informed of current trends.

In those formal meetings with students, we discuss:

- School and university search considerations—including selectivity
- Size, location, area of study, setting
- Areas of academic interest
- Hopes for the future (including parental hopes)
- Grades and courses
- College vocabulary—terms and definitions

Your child and an assigned counselor will talk a lot and begin to create a list of reach, target, and safety schools based on the above-mentioned criteria—designation of reach, target, and safety are student-specific. What may be true for one is not for another. We remind students that ***famous does not equal good, and good does not equal famous***. There are thousands of very good schools in the United States, many are not famous or well-known. We introduce possibilities to students based on ***who they are*** as students and people. We help students to understand that ***college is a match to be made, not a prize to be won***.

By senior year, we expect they have done additional research based on the information we've gathered, taken TOEFL or DuoLingo, and have an SAT exam score (they may not need the score, but it is good to have in the event a college/university does require it.) We meet with the entire group again in early September, then begin to work in individual meetings. On average, students apply to ten schools ranging from reach to safety schools. We reserve the right to pick two schools if we believe the student does not have appropriate safety schools on his/her list. We also work with students to fill out and submit all parts of the application, which can be confusing even to native English speakers! Additionally, we help students navigate the college essay process with our English teaching staff here at Fryeburg Academy.

Occasionally parents hire agents. ***This is not necessary***, but we understand if you choose that avenue. We are unable to send transcripts, recommendations, or applications to agents. We will send all appropriate documents to colleges or universities to which students have applied.

We really appreciate the opportunity to work with your child. The transition from high school to post-secondary school is exciting and scary, and we will be there every step. We aim to create a unique relationship with your child so we can best guide him/her. Please do not hesitate to call or email us anytime with questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

Kelley Hodgman-Burns, Director of School Counseling

Colleen Watson, School Counselor

Mary Bazanchuk, School Counselor