



Guidance for families prior to the assignment of College Advisor

Work with Seattle Academy College Advising begins in earnest during the winter of 11th grade. At that time, College Advising spends a great deal of time learning about students' interests and talents, developing balanced college lists that include a range of likely, target and reach options, guiding students through the process of developing compelling college essays, and then strategizing and advising them on the submission of all of their applications. Before this process begins at SAAS, we urge students to focus mostly on being students. We recognize that every student (and family) is on a continuum in the college search, as they are in life. A proven record of College Advising history, structure, expertise and success informs your student's process and we will not let them fall behind.

How families can support their student

1. Encourage a positive academic start in 9th, continuation in 10th and start in 11th. The high school transcript is the most important document in a college application. It is reviewed, however, relative to the student's story.
2. Encourage the pursuit of genuine interests and curiosities. Students who engage authentically may stand out more than those who are groomed or who simply do what they are "supposed" to do.
3. Encourage students to engage/continue to engage outside of class with their SAAS and local communities.
4. Ask questions about why students like certain things or what they believe about the world. Colleges will ask these sorts of questions and it's helpful for students to start to get comfortable with them now.
5. Trust the process. Seattle Academy has a well-organized and successful College Advising program, and you have already started to experience it by choosing SAAS.
6. Help students understand that their value is not rooted in where they go to college.

Important events

1. Approximately 130 colleges and universities visit SAAS every fall, and 11th graders may attend.
2. October: We host an overview for 11th grade students and families which all interested upper school families are welcome to attend as well as a Guide to College Financing open to all families.
3. October: Tenth and eleventh graders may take a practice standardized test. Details about them will appear in the SAAS Friday communications email as school begins.
4. November: We host a standardized testing overview open to all upper school families.
5. November: While SAAS does not offer AP courses, and few SAAS students choose or need to take AP exams, students register for them using instructions in the Friday communications emails.
6. December: Official college "kick off" for 11th graders and their families.
7. Spring: We participate in a panel for 10th grade parents and guardians, answering common questions.

Things to be mindful of

1. Too much, too early can backfire. For all kids, burnout is real, and this includes the college admissions process. SAAS draws on years of experience to time this process intentionally and to maximize student development while ensuring they have access to their best fit college options.
2. Don't get fixed on one "thing" – any one type, location or selectivity of school. We will insist the eventual college list is strategically varied.
3. Be careful not to let the media, the neighbor or the for-profit college prep industry make you feel like your student is behind and should have done certain things already. When in doubt, ask us!

Resources

1. College Advising answers questions from students and families anytime. Please email collegeadvising@seattleacademy.org and a dedicated member of the team will answer general college-related questions from 9th and 10th grade families.
2. See the College Advising page at www.seattleacademy.org for a helpful list of questions and answers..