

EA College Counseling: SUPPORTING YOUR 11TH & 12TH GRADER



As a student's college admission journey continues, family support is critical. Explore these guiding principles from college counselors, parents, and admission professionals as you encourage and nurture your 11th or 12th grader below.



Stay **EDUCATED.**

Be partners with College Counseling. Attend College Counseling programming.

- Encourage your student to communicate freely with their college counselor and build a strong relationship.



Support a Thoughtful **COLLEGE LIST.**

Empower your student to create a manageable list.

- Be deliberate in list-making; a long list isn't always better. Don't overwhelm.
- Strengthen your student's sense of agency.
- Aim for a balanced mix of options that offer positive outcomes.
- Encourage the mindset of having "lots of first choices" instead of a single "dream" school. Avoid unnecessary disappointment.
- Encourage campus visits (in-person or virtual) to get a feel for the environment.



Gain **FINANCIAL CLARITY.**

Research college costs and financing options.

- Use tools like the Net Price Calculator or MyIntuition on college websites to estimate expenses.
- Set and discuss financial boundaries. Avoid confusion or feelings of failure. Avoid tying budgets to prestige or selectivity (e.g., "We'll pay more for an Ivy").
- Allow your student to have a say in decisions that impact their future finances: If loans are involved, ensure your student fully understands the implications.
- Consult with EA's college financing counselor.



Manage **EXPECTATIONS.**

Communicate openly and set parameters. If there are financial or location constraints, share that with your student. Discuss limits early. Can they apply to schools across the country or abroad? Be upfront about any restrictions.

- Discuss factors like location, size, majors offered, and campus culture.
- Help your student understand that college admissions are not fair, and outcomes may not feel just or logical. Self-worth is not measured by college decisions.
- Avoid seeking validation of your parenting or your student's potential through college admissions. You cannot control many things, including admission decisions.
- Ask questions and listen before offering opinions when your student brings up colleges.



Focus Beyond **ADMISSIONS.**

Keep the college search and application process from dominating every conversation.

- Dedicate one night weekly to discuss college topics. Keep the rest of the week college conversation-free.
- Celebrate your student's growth as a learner and individual rather than focusing solely on college outcomes.
- Emphasize that changing one's mind is okay as they learn more about themselves and their goals.
- Take time to talk about life outside of college and savor the moments you have together during this busy time.
- Encourage your child to get outside! Being outside is good for the soul and known to reduce stress. Find activities or quiet moments outside for your child to enjoy, alone or as a family.



Help your Student **REFLECT AND GROW.**

In the ideal, applying to colleges is a time for self-reflection. Encourage your student to reflect on where they are now and who they aspire to be.

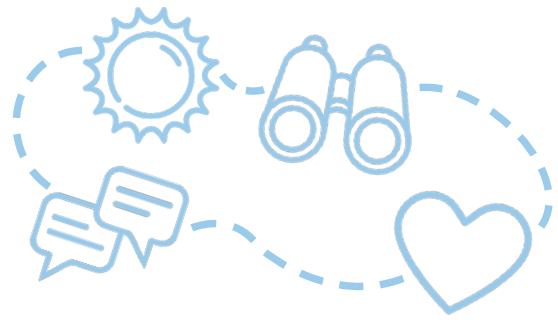
- Support your student in taking on appropriate challenges in the classroom while balancing their strengths and interests.
- Help your student expand their horizons by encouraging them to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Have open conversations about interests, career aspirations, and the college experience they envision.
- Help your student research what a major offers, whether it fits with their goals, and how they have prepared.
- Emphasize resilience. Growth comes from setbacks. Model how to cope when things don't go our way and how we can learn from the experience.
- Talk to your student about why you sent them to EA. Seniors often worry that they need to show a "return on investment" to their parents through their college admissions. Remind them that their growth – as learners and campus citizens in a transformative educational experience – is how you measure ROI.



Encourage a Balanced **SUMMER PLAN.**

Help them create a balanced plan of rest, exploration, and skill-building.

- Encourage your student to recharge during the summer while building life skills through a part-time job, volunteering, or travel.



Stay Grounded **IN THE PROCESS.**

Just as every student is an individual, every college admission journey is as well. Comparing your child's college list, dreams, or application status to those of others is counterproductive.

- Keep college tours and application plans private. Don't post college tours on your social media. Avoid unnecessary comparisons and stress.
- Beware of anecdotes. What worked for someone else may not apply to your student's journey.



Support and **EMPOWER.**

Let your student take the lead in their college search and applications.

- Become a co-planner, assisting with logistics like college visits, testing schedules, or application deadlines.
- Encourage your student to build relationships with their teachers, coaches, and advisors. These mentors will play a key role in their success.
- Discuss options like gap years or post-graduate plans early, ensuring they feel supported no matter their path.
- Discuss time management, budgeting, and self-care skills they'll need in college.
- Allow your student to take ownership of their decisions while being there for guidance and support.
- Provide reassurance as they face uncertainties.
- Celebrate growth and achievements.

REACH OUT.

The EA College Counseling team is always here to help. If you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to your EA college counselor!