



Guidance for families prior to the assignment of College Advisor

Work with 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, helping students develop compelling college essays and then 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 and growing as people, both of which also have strategic value in the admission process.

How families can support their student

- Encourage a positive academic start in 9th, continuation in 10th and growth 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.
- 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. Encourage students to engage/continue to engage outside of class with their SAAS and local communities.
- Ask questions about why students like certain things or what they believe about the world. Colleges will ask these questions. It's helpful for students to get comfortable with them now.
- Trust the process. Seattle Academy has a well-organized and successful College Advising program. You have already started to experience it by choosing SAAS.
- Help students understand that their value is not rooted in where they go to college.

Important events

- Approximately 130 colleges and universities visit SAAS every fall and 11th graders may attend.
- We host an overview for 11th grade students and families each Fall which all interested upper school families are welcome to attend as well as a Guide to College Financing open to all families.
- 10th and 11th graders may take a practice standardized test (virtual SAT or ACT for 10th and 11th; in-person PSAT for 11th). We host a virtual PSAT 101 program beforehand.
- We host a standardized testing overview webinar open to all upper school families.
- While SAAS does not offer AP courses and few SAAS students choose or need to take AP exams, students register for them on time by November.
- In December, we formally "kick-off" the process for 11th graders and their families.
- Each Spring, College Advising joins a panel for the 10th grade about registration and next steps.
- Check College Advising [grade level pages](#) for calendar items and a link to our [FAQ page](#).

Things to consider

- 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.
- 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.
- Be careful not to let the media, the neighbor or the college prep industry make you feel like your student is behind and should have done certain things already. When in doubt, ask us at collegeadvisng@seattleacademy.org.