Final Steps for Wrapping Up Your College Process

Congratulations on all your hard work! As you approach the finish line of your college journey, here is a checklist to help you successfully wrap up your process.

Review and Understand Your College Decisions
Check all admission decisions by April 1. If you haven't received one, contact the admissions office.

- **Admitted:** Celebrate your acceptance! Review all materials, including financial aid packages.
- **Conditional / Alternative Term Admission:** You are accepted but with some qualifications. Clarify any conditions, start date, and other details with the college.
- **Waitlist:** You are not accepted but may be considered for admission at a later date. If waitlisted, decide if you'd attend if admitted and follow the steps to be considered in the waitlist pool – don't stay on the list just to see if you'll be admitted. Assume you'll enroll elsewhere and follow all deadlines for committing to another college while keeping waitlist options open.
- **Denial:** This does not define your potential – great opportunities are elsewhere!

Talk About Costs, Financial Aid, and Scholarships
After acceptance, discuss with your family which colleges are financially feasible. Compare aid packages, considering loans and work-study options — you may find that one college with a higher sticker price is just as affordable as another one on your list.

- ☐ **Review Financial Aid Packages:** Examine all financial aid offers carefully to understand grants, loans, work-study opportunities, and the total cost of attendance.
- ☐ **Follow Up On Delays:** If you applied for need-based aid and haven't received your package by early April, contact the college's financial aid office. Check your portals now to confirm all documents are submitted.
- ☐ **Know Your Deadlines:** Meet all financial aid and scholarship deadlines, usually by May 1. Verify dates, check for possible extensions, and ask the college about appeals if your aid package isn't what you expected.

Compare Colleges
Use your resources to sort the colleges by what they offer and what you want.

- ☐ **Create a Decision Framework:** List strong and weak pros/cons for each option to guide your choice.
- ☐ **Factor in Everything:** Consider academic programs, financial aid, scholarships, campus culture, housing, and career opportunities. Many students end up loving a school they initially dismissed.
- ☐ **Campus Visits and Programs:** If possible, visit your top choices or explore virtual alternatives if visiting is a challenge to gain further insight. Participate in admitted student days, receptions, or other programs.

Make Your College Decision, Feel Confident in Your Choice
Focus on where you'll grow, feel challenged, and be happy—not just name recognition. The best college is one that fits your needs, budget, and aspirations. While transferring is possible, choosing wisely now can save future stress. It's natural to feel both excitement and uncertainty—trust yourself. You've worked hard, and great opportunities await.

- ☐ **Make an Informed Choice:** Consider what truly matters to you. Does the school provide the academic and social environment and support you need? Does it make sense financially and logistically? Avoid making a decision based on outside pressures, rankings, or even the allure of a particular climate. Focus on fit.
- ☐ **Meet All Deadlines:** It is your responsibility to follow the appropriate steps to confirm your enrollment and respond by the college's deadline.

Keep Us Updated, Notify Colleges
We appreciate students keeping us informed about their admission and scholarship outcomes. As part of our process, we ask every senior to report all college results—including scholarships and financial aid offers.

- ☐ **Update Your College Advisor:** If the decisions in your Maia "Applying" list are incomplete, please email us with a complete list of outcomes and scholarship awards. These details help us support you and future students.
- ☐ **Notify Colleges:** As soon as you are certain of which college you will attend, you MUST withdraw your candidacy to make room for other applicants. If a portal does not allow you to decline an offer, here's a sample message to email them: *Dear Office of Admission: My name is [xxxxxxxx] [DOB, High School, College ID if provided]. I am grateful for the time and consideration you have shown me and for the offer of admission. After careful thought, I have decided to attend another [college/university]. Thank you for the opportunity and for your hard work.*

Finalizing Your Enrollment
You are permitted to submit **only one** enrollment deposit by the college's deposit deadline (typically May 1). Double-depositing (committing to more than one college) is not permitted and can put admission offers at risk. SAAS will send only one final transcript per graduate. The exception to this rule applies to waitlists. If you accept a spot on a college's waitlist, you may deposit at another institution while you wait. If you are admitted from a waitlist, please inform all relevant colleges immediately and update your college advisor. If this happens later in the summer, include registrar@seattleacademy.org in your communication.

- ☐ **Submit Your Deposit:** Pay the non-refundable deposit to your chosen college by the deadline.
- ☐ **Notify Other Colleges:** Politely decline other offers to open spots for others.
- ☐ **Do Not Double Deposit:** Committing to more than one college is unethical and can jeopardize your acceptance.

If You're Exploring a Gap Year

- ☐ **Plan Purposefully:** Have a meaningful plan in place for your gap year—work, travel, volunteering, or other growth experiences.
- ☐ **Research College Policies:** Ensure your chosen school allows deferrals and follow their process.
- ☐ **Secure Your Spot:** Submit a deposit and official request to defer enrollment.

Academic and Conduct Responsibilities
The third trimester still matters. These grades are part of your final transcript which is required at the college you choose. As we have discussed, changes to grades or your planned courses can result in the reversal of your offer of admission. Please talk to your college advisor if you have questions.

- ☐ **Maintain Strong Academics:** SAAS expects students to maintain good academic standing (which can include attendance) in third-trimester classes. Colleges review final transcripts and can rescind admission if grades drop significantly.
- ☐ **Make Good Choices:** Any disciplinary actions could impact your admission status.
- ☐ **Keep in Touch:** Inform your college of any major changes.

Preparing for College Life

- ☐ **Save the Date:** "The Transition to College" – a virtual event on Tuesday, May 19 at 7 PM. (Zoom link TBD)
- ☐ **Housing & Orientation:** Register for housing, sign up for orientation, and review important deadlines.
- ☐ **Course Registration:** Look into class enrollment procedures and requirements.
- ☐ **Health & Financial Planning:** Arrange medical records, immunizations, and budgeting for expenses.

Managing the Unexpected

- ☐ **Focus on the Positive:** Even if you didn't get into your first, second, or third choice school, ensure you feel supported in and enthusiastic about colleges where enrollment is available and truly possible.
- ☐ **Handling Denials:** Stay open to transfer possibilities or explore rolling admissions schools.
- ☐ **Second Thoughts, Unanticipated Events:** If you're questioning your choice, consult your college advisor before making changes.

Final Thoughts
We are proud of you and excited for your future! Take time to appreciate your achievements and look forward to this exciting new chapter. This journey has been filled with growth, hard work, and self-discovery, and we are incredibly proud of you. Some of the best college stories begin with an unexpected twist – a denial leading to an exciting new opportunity, or a student discovering a hidden gem of a school.

- Trust the process. You are about to embark on an exciting new adventure, and we have no doubt that you will find success and fulfillment wherever you go.
- Stay open to new possibilities. You've worked hard, and your future is bright.
- We are here for you. If you have any questions or need support, don't hesitate to reach out.

It has been an honor to work alongside you, and we are excited to see where your next chapter takes you. If you have any questions or need support, we are always here for you.