

Parent Guidelines for the College Application Process

An admission decision, test score, or GPA is not a measure of a student's worth. And, parents should always be mindful of the behavior they are modeling for their children. Knowing this, we encourage you to:

- Recognize that gaining admission to college is merely one step in a process of education that will include your student attending a college where she or he can maximize talents and growth.

Emphasize the education.

- Resist doing for your students what they are capable of doing for themselves.
- Allow your child to take responsibility for his or her own part of the college application process.

Be involved in the process, but do not try to control it.

- Resist relying on rankings and college selectivity to determine the most suitable colleges for your child.

- Realize that researching, selecting, and applying to colleges does not have to be an expensive process.

- Resist attempts to turn the process into a status competition. Develop a healthy, educationally based, and family-appropriate approach to college admissions.

- Consider that gaming the system may not only diminish your child's self-confidence, it may also jeopardize desired admission outcomes.

- Listen to, encourage and believe in your child. Do not use the term "we" as in "we are applying to...."

- Discuss the idea of education as an ongoing process, and how selecting a college might be different from buying a product.

- Love them enough to let them demonstrate the independence you have instilled in them.

- Keep this process in perspective. Remember that student skills, self-confidence, curiosity, and desire to learn are some of the most important ingredients in quality education and successful college admissions. Do not sacrifice these by overemphasizing getting into the "best" college.