

5 Things to Keep in Mind This College Admission Process Season



It should be an enjoyable process and as stress free as possible

The college admissions process can produce a lot of unnecessary stress for high school seniors. While it's normal to feel anxious about the process, it's important to keep in mind that knowledge is power when applying to college and knowing what to expect and keep in mind as you complete your admissions journey this fall is the key to having a successful admissions season.

There are a lot of misconceptions about the college admissions process and those can cause more stress than the actual application season itself. When applying to a balanced college list of best-fit schools this fall, keep these five college admissions insights in mind.

Perfect Grades and Test Scores Won't Guarantee Admission

The US admission process is holistic meaning that admissions officers consider much more than just grades and test scores when evaluating applicants. Straight-A students with perfect SAT scores get rejected from highly selective colleges all the time. Yes, applicant need to have grades and test scores within the range that the college considers admissible, but that's not sufficient in and of itself to merit admission. Don't think because you have a great SAT score and GPA that you're a shoo-in at your top-choice schools. Spend time crafting a compelling personal statement Be genuine and tailor each of your application supplements to each individual school. Be courteous and thoughtful when selecting teachers to write letters of recommendations and be thoughtful about your activities list. All of these elements matter in the admissions process, so don't neglect them because you have good grades and test scores.

Focus on Quality – Not Quantity

We can't stress this enough. When it comes to your activities, or even your balanced college list, quality is the most important – not quantity. Things like extracurricular actives, community service, advanced courses, and more aren't just counted and used to compare one student to another. Admissions officer are going to look at the quality of those elements, not

the number. They're going to ask, "Did this student make an impact" Students should pick just a few activities or interests that really appeal to them and devote a significant amount of time to them over the course of high school. Colleges aren't looking to admit "serial joiners" or "well rounded" students –they're looking for specialists, so they can build a well-rounded class. So, don't worry about padding your resume with 20 different clubs and activities. Focus on those activities that you truly enjoy and determine how you can make a positive impact.

Don't Obsess Over Rankings

There are so many different college rankings lists out there it's hard to keep track of them all. Each list has different criteria for evaluation and the number one school on one list can be toward the middle or bottom of another. Even within the same list a college can jump or fall an unbelievable number of spots in the span of just a few years. Instead of worrying about where a school falls on a list, focus on fit! The top school on a rankings list might not be the best school for you. Fit is key when building your balanced college list, so take steps to create your own rankings. Don't rely on someone else's list to create your own.

Admissions Officers Are People, too

There's often a misconception that admissions officers are looking for any and every reason to reject students from their schools. The truth is, admissions officers are

looking for why to admit students – not reject them. Admissions officers take no joy in denying students. They're just as human as you and they wrestle over difficult admissions decisions. They advocate for students they think can really contribute to the college – it's a very human process. It's a mistake to think that admissions officials don't care about applicants or that they are trying to work against them. They also read thousands of applications each season, which is a very tedious and exhausting process. Keep this in mind when communicating with admissions officers. Be patient and understand that this process isn't meant to be painful and rejections aren't personal – it's just the result of a highly-competitive process. But if you apply to a balanced list of reach, target, safety and best-fit school, you will get into a college where you'll be happy and successful.

This Process Is Supposed to Be Fun!

The stress of maintaining good grades and staying active in activities, all the while completing a dozen college applications can take the fun out of the process. Remember, this is an exciting time! You're learning more about who you are as a student and a person. You're visiting the schools you might very well attend next year, meeting new people, and making memories. When you're feeling overwhelmed, take a step back and get back to the basics – what do you enjoy? Is it your drama troupe? Your volunteer work? Or is it just

reading a good book when you have a chance? Take time to do the things you enjoy and reflect on your ultimate goals. At the end of the day this process is supposed to be fun, so do what you can to make it enjoyable again.

Need help navigating the college admissions process? Contact us Today for more information on our college counseling services for high school seniors

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