

Finding the Fit

Personalizing the College
Search/Selection Process

Issaquah High School

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Adolescence & Admissions

- Erickson's Theory of Social-emotional Development
 - Identity vs. Role Confusion
 - Who Am I?
 - Internalized recordings of external messages from family, friends, school, community, popular culture, e-community on the internet
 - Am I normal?
 - Am I competent?
 - Am I lovable & loving?
 - Swings between independence & dependence-input from parents as supporters & guides, not shaming dictators

Know Yourself & Your Reasons for Attending College

- Interests & values
- Personal goals
- Strengths & weaknesses
- Prepare for a career & expanded learning
- Extracurriculars & social life
- Influence of family & friends

Academic Requirements

- More core! More core! More core!
(English, math, science, social studies, world languages)
- Standardized tests- ACT/ SAT/ SAT Subject Tests → more core is the best prep for standardized tests AND college!

Beyond Academics

- What makes you an interesting person?
- What do you love to learn?
- What do you do outside of school?
 - Work
 - Service to others
 - Commitment to activities-school, sports, community, family, church/temple, other...
 - Meaningful activities vs. resume builders
 - Senior Project/Culminating Project

How Do You Pick Colleges?

- How do you pick your friends?
 - Spending time together
 - Learning about each other & the interests you share
 - Overlooking small things that might bug you (i.e. the C- in that class last year...the fact that the laundry facilities are in the basement & that the whole campus isn't wireless)
 - Looking forward in the same direction

Consider College Characteristics

- Majors & Educational Programs
- Location & Size
- Costs & Financial Aid (WUE)
- College Religious Affiliation
- Accreditation
- Campus Activities/Student Life
- Support Services
- Admissions Policy, Retention, Graduation Rates

Handouts

- Sizing Yourself Up Survey
- NSSE Pocket Guide
- The Education Conservancy

Other

- College representatives visit high schools in the Fall
- College catalogues-read mission statements, educational philosophies and course offerings
- College That Change Lives Fair August 4, 2007 10am-12:30pm Meydenbauer Center
- National College Fair-November 4 & 5, 2007 @ Washington State Convention Center
- Spring College Fair-March 15, 2008 @ Seattle U
- Counselors, Career Center Specialists & Teachers
- Parents, students, alumni

Marketing

- The underbelly of college admissions
- US News & World Report-rankings vs. studenthood. (Education Conservancy)
- Beware of “priority applications.” Think the “sizzle without the steak” mentality.
- Does the school participate in NSSE? What have they learned about their student’s experiences?
- Contact professors

What Really Matters in College: Student Engagement (NSSE)

- Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of college impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage student engagement. Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 2005, p. 602
- How does the college mission match the opportunities & outcomes for students? Effective educational strategies
- Readiness for college & student engagement

Campus Visits

- Plan ahead
- Reserve your spot on the daily campus tour & take the tour. Get out of the car!
- Meet with an admissions counselor
- Attend a class
- Meet with a professor from a department of which you have some interest
- Walk the halls & read the walls
- Talk with students & faculty. How about the lunch lady?
- Career services
- Send a thank you note

Resources

■ Books :

- Looking Beyond the Ivy League-Pope
- Colleges that Change Lives-Pope
- College Match: A Blueprint for Choosing the Best School for You-Antonoff & Friedemann
- Less Stress, More Success: A New Approach to Guiding Your Teen Through College Admissions & Beyond -Jones & Ginsburg
- The Fiske Guide-Fiske
- Making the Most of College-Light
- The College Finder-Antonoff
- The College Board Book of Majors

Websites

- www.nsse.iub.edu
- www.nacacnet.org
- www.ctcl.com
- www.act.org
- www.collegeboard.com
- www.ncaa.org
- www.google.com
- www.collegeplanninghelp.com (see Useful Links)

Show Initiative & Be Assertive

- Talk with your parents. What are their hopes & dreams for you? What parameters do they have for you?
- Own your process. Don't get caught up in the media or the anxiety of your peers.
- Listen to your child...be patient with the process.
- Making sound decisions will lead to satisfying & successful experiences.

Thoughts

- College planning is not a game
- There are no absolutes-look out for “listmania”
- Research!
- Expect a lot from your student, but be mindful of the teenage years. Anxiety, anger is a cover for fear.
- Open yourself up for discovery
- The key question is not, “Is college X a good college?” Rather, the question is, “Is X a good college for me?”

Take responsibility for your future

- This is an important decision...are you ready?
- Be patient, listen & explore with an open mind.
- Find your fit, don't change yourself to fit a college image. Remember the glass slipper.
- What you do in college is a better predictor of future happiness & success than where you go to college.

Congratulations!

Best wishes as you embark on
this exciting adventure!

Questions? Comments?