

# Senior Parents

4 year college applications and  
your parent role

# Rite of Passage to Adulthood

- Seniors need to own their own plan
- Important to self esteem and transition into adulthood
- Important lessons interacting with adults and adult level processes outside (and a little inside) of HS

# Get Real

- College costs matter, have the talk
- Don't just eliminate out-of-state options if you are cutting back – look at WUE
- Be realistic about the list of college apps
- Plan to discuss progress regularly, you'll be the only one requiring accountability
- Help/encourage seniors to make college visits

# Check the final college list, ask probing questions

- Is it reasonable, manageable, achievable?
  - 1-3-1, 2-2-1, ?-?-?
  - What can be managed effectively this Fall while still doing everything else?
  - Can your senior state meaningful reasons why a college is/is not on their list?
  - Do you recommend changes?

# Require effective management

- Master calendar clearly planned *for the Fall*
- Agree on reasonable and necessary timelines
- Agree on how to schedule work time for Apps
- Print paper copies, use as drafts
- Write and revise essays early
- Keep folders, check lists for each app
- Prioritize apps by tasks and timeline

# College Resource Handbook

- Students received hard copy last Spring and were directed in first steps over the summer
- Also available online
- This guide is very important to the understanding of our application processing steps and best advice for every step

# Handbook contains ...

- Detailed checklists and procedures for applications
- How to choose a college, create a realistic list
- Timeline advice and requirements
- SAT / ACT info
- Admission advice from colleges and various resources
- How-to's on college apps
- Letters of recommendation advice
- Writing college essay tips

# Apps: Big picture order of events

- Scenario A: Most frequently the App can be done entirely online by the student with the exception of the addition of a transcript from the school
  - Student can get the transcript anytime, but should not send until the online App is complete
  - Don't forget your SAT/ACT official score report

# Apps: Big picture order of events

- Scenario B: The App requires teacher/school/counselor Reports
  - Student must create their online App first
  - Within this process student will be sending teachers and counselor online reports
  - Student must follow-up with required materials to counselor (or teacher)
    - Appendix E, Resume, Letter of Ref Form
  - (Or) brings a paper copy of these reports with Appendix E
  - 10 working days prior to due date (at minimum)
  - Don't forget your SAT/ACT official score report
- Submission receipt required to trigger counselor submission of school report
- Be aware that order of events is very important to prevent lost work

# Timeline: Public In-State 4-Yr

- SEPT
  - **Finalize your application list and start to act on it**
  - Organize, prioritize, start creating materials
    - Resumes, polishing essays, looking at actual applications and gathering information
- OCT / NOV
  - Complete your checklists = complete your apps online
  - Order transcripts and SAT/ACT score reports (student sends)
- DEC & JAN
  - “Regular” deadlines start to show up
  - Some colleges start sending letters
- FEB and beyond
  - Become risky for space
  - Admit and deny letters become more common

# Timeline: Private/Highly Selective

- SEPT
  - Finalize your list of Apps
  - Organize, prioritize and start acting on your list
  - Look at applications and start gathering your data
  - Secure agreements from teachers for recommendations
- OCT
  - Completing your App checklist = complete your app online
  - Be aware of the rare “early” / “priority” deadlines
  - Complete follow-up materials (transc, sch reports, letters)
  - Close the loop with teacher rec.’s
- NOV
  - Submit/build your apps online by (or before) Nov 1 so there’s plenty of time for next steps ...
  - After apps submitted/started you address the school’s part of the process ...  
school/counselor reports, transcripts
  - Provide enough time to process (2-3 weeks or more so nobody is rushed)
- DEC & beyond
  - Very risky or too late

# Why so early? In my day ...

- Last year we asked your students to read the handbook and get started over the summer, we advised them to return as a senior with a solid list of colleges ... and that's where we started with them this year
  - If they did not get to this, it's not too late, but they need to do this first to do the rest well
- Early submission is what every college admissions advisor and every high school counselor recommends collectively – *but within reason*
- It's about impressions, availability, risk tolerance
  - Rushing or waiting too long are both to be avoided
  - Apps that arrive as recommended in a timely manner, not rushed or last minute, look confident and the product of a well-organized and thorough student
  - Colleges can and often do start giving away spaces in Nov-Dec to those who applied in Oct-Nov
  - Waiting past Nov. is possible, it's just more risky
  - Space is very limited, but gets more limited the longer you wait
  - Online Apps for public schools can generally be done quickly ... there's little reason to wait longer (it's the essays that will take a while)
- Mail rooms are swamped ... so early might turn out to be “on time”
- You are best off knowing if you forgot something early, than too late
- Some colleges admit on a rolling basis until they reach their target number, first qualified students who apply get in first, etc.

# Combat Procrastination & Anxiety

- In the end either response results in a rush that often results in mistakes
- **If your senior is too anxious**
  - Being too rushed often results in mistakes in judgment and data errors
  - Often too rushed to really think through their list of colleges or have time to visit ... anxiety can come from knowing you're applying to schools where you don't feel confident about your chances
  - High school and college staffs often are not ready to provide their part in September (rank and transcripts not ready, not ready to write letters of reference) – most colleges are not ready until November
  - Student usually won't slow down to draft their application and essays, sometimes writing the wrong essay on last year's prompt or underestimating the importance of a polished essay
- **Procrastinators**
  - Believe that making the final deadline is all that matters
  - Often won't put in the prep work to create an interest list they feel good about
  - Often put things off until Winter Break, or in a rush right before deadline
  - In the end, tend to just rush through things at the last minute when they realize time is running out
  - Don't realize that even "easier to get into" colleges fill up at some point

**Don't allow your senior to procrastinate by not checking in**

**Don't enable them to (a) move too fast (b) miss out on the maturation task of transitioning to college or (c) put things off - all by doing tasks for them that are their responsibility to do**

**Don't let them get scared and try to get it all done too quickly resulting in mistakes**

**Don't let them put it off until December or beyond**

# Talk to your senior about impressions with adults

Impressions count, esp. for seniors who need school references to colleges so its important to ...

- demonstrate they are in charge of the process
- know what they need & why, as well as when it's appropriate to ask for it (follows the process)
- Conduct self in a businesslike fashion
- Present materials in an organized manner
- Have all the appropriate materials at the right place, right time
- Returns for materials at appropriate intervals (when needed)
- Is respectful of adult's timelines to process material requests
  
- Essentially, good impressions come from a student who knows their plan, knows/follows the school's part in the process, comes prepared and works with plenty of lead time before due dates

# The Transcript and Rank

- Public schools (*the majority of the cases*)
  - School's role: Provide an official transcript with rank
    - Pre-pay cashier, bring receipt, complete order form – if you need several try to do them all at once
    - Return to pick them up in a timely fashion
  - Should begin/complete app first online so there's a file when materials arrive
  - UW still does NOT need a transcript for *most* students until admitted
  - all others require “official” transcripts
  - Try hard for no later than NOV 30, prioritize accordingly

# Understand the process Private/Highly Selective

- Require much more work, organization, school input
- Require school / counselor reports & teacher rec's
- Online process makes this more manageable and cleaner for everyone
- Prioritize these for completion considering 2-3 weeks for school part
- First: Student starts/completes the App
- Second: School does their part: school report, letters/ref's, transcript
  - If using the mail pay attention to appendix E requirements and you must time arrival with online app submission so it has a destination
  - **Student must remember to print the submission receipt**
    - **For your records / protection**
    - **For use with the school's checklist (appendix E)**
- Seniors should always come to counseling prepared and well-informed about what they need, why and when they need it (*impressions*)
  - Timing is key – we get swamped and three weeks turnaround time is best for everyone (*impressions*)

# Time Savers

- Common Application
- Applyweb or Collegenet
  - UW, WSU, WWU, CWU, TESC
  - PLU, SU, UPS, Whitman

# Notes on school / counselor reports and Common App

- Common App –accepted at 100's of private/independent colleges
- One application sent multiple places
- **Use the checklist coversheet from handbook, Appendix E, submit appropriate materials**
  - Recommend process done all online

# Comprehensive / Holistic Review

- Has become more the norm at every college
- Everything counts
  - GPA, SAT/ACT, Rigor of Coursework, Essays, Resume, Special Talents
  - For private/highly selective schools:
    - School/counseling reports, Letters
    - Teacher recommendations

## Some schools still use a more direct method

- WSU auto admit at 3.5 +
- EWU auto admit at 3.3 +
- CWU, EWU, TESC still use admissions index scoring for min GPA, SAT/ACT
- Admit qualified students on a rolling basis until full
- Also some others in Idaho and Montana have a formula with GPA and core course work

# Stay the course

- Stick to your calendar, deadlines – you set them for a reason
- Continue to check in about progress and timeline through completion – you're the only *adult* checking in
- Grades still count, like any other year
- Course load still matters ... all year
- Be aware of graduation requirements

# Other considerations

- NCAA
- Scholarships
- College rep. visits in career center
- Campus visit schedules
- Consider “incentives” for meeting agreed upon timelines and completion dates