



Reflections on College Admission

The BB&N College Process

Welcome to the college counseling process! Though at times stressful, this next year is going to be an exciting step towards your future and we feel privileged to be counseling you through this time. It is significant that our office is called the College *Counseling* Office, not the College *Placement* Office, as we will work with you to help you find colleges that match your interests and goals. While further education is important, the end point of your high school experience is not simply “getting into a good college.” The process in which you are about to embark is only one step along your life path. As such, you should view it in perspective – your whole future does not rest solely on a college’s decision about whether or not you will join its entering freshman class.

Starting in the winter of the junior year you, your parents, and your college counselor will work together to find a number of colleges that will suit your skills, interests, and goals. Although many people will help in this process, the final decisions must be yours. Your willingness to accept these responsibilities – the excitement of envisioning your next step after BB&N and the hard work of applying to colleges on time – will indicate your readiness for college and the independence it will offer.

During this process, you will have four primary tasks:

- to determine what you are looking for in a college
- to appraise yourself as a college candidate
- to complete your applications
- to choose the college you will attend.

Once college is a common topic of conversation, you will hear reports (often conflicting) about specific colleges from various sources – parents, counselors, teachers, coaches, relatives, and well-meaning friends. To resist stereotypes and rumors, you must investigate for yourself. Start to research on the internet, with Naviance, or with a good college guidebook. As you become interested in particular colleges, start your own file of materials. Like any good researcher, keep notes of your findings and questions.

As you begin to appraise yourself as a candidate, your college counselor will help you to sort through statistical information regarding former BB&N students and the colleges' admitted student profiles to assess your chances of being admitted.

We hope that by working together, we can provide you with the assistance you will need to successfully navigate the college process. To accomplish this task, each member of the partnership must recognize, understand, and fulfill his/her own responsibilities.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Most Important Responsibility:

It is ***imperative*** that you read every piece of information that you receive from the College Counseling Office. These notices contain information about deadlines, visits to BB&N from college admission representatives, application materials and other important information that will make the process easier.

- **Check your school email daily.**
- **Complete Junior and Senior Student Questionnaire on Naviance**
- **Attend College Fairs.** The BISCCA (Boston Independent School College Counselors Association) Fair is on Sunday, May 1 at Milton Academy. This fair is an opportunity for juniors to collect information on over 100 colleges located outside of New England. The Boston National College Fair is also in April at the Bayside Expo Center (information is available at www.nacac.com).
- **Research the basic admissions criteria at the colleges you are considering.**
- **Plan to visit** as many colleges during spring break and summer vacation as possible among the schools that you might be considering.
- **Complete a Common Application and Personal Essay over the summer.**
- **Meet college representatives visiting BB&N** in the fall of senior year.
- **Complete applications honestly and accurately, noting deadlines.**
- **Request letters of recommendation** from teachers junior year. Usually, the same people write recommendations for all of your college applications.
- **Keep your college counselor up-to-date** on all of your plans, progress and results. Communicate regularly with your counselor.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Be open with your child.** Discuss college plans, including the financial picture and any restrictions, openly and honestly with your child early in the process. Share these thoughts with the college counselor either by phone, in writing, or in person.
- **Support and communicate with your child and his or her counselor.**
- **Please complete the parent questionnaire.** This form, which is available on the college counseling website (www.bbns.org), must be returned to the College Counseling Office prior to scheduling a meeting. We will also invite you to submit a written recommendation for your child to aid us as we write the school statement. Parents who supply such a report add greatly to our understanding of their child, which in turn enables us to write a better, more comprehensive school statement.
- **Be aware of deadlines and other requirements.**
- **Help your child send official test scores to the colleges.** The student, not the college office, is responsible for sending test scores to the colleges that require them.
- **Plan your visits.** Assist your child in visiting colleges of interest as much as is appropriate.
- **Fill out and file financial aid forms,** if applying for financial aid.
- **Keep talking with your child.** Check with your son or daughter periodically about the progress of his/her college application process, testing, and information distributed at School. But please remember, too, that your child should own the college admission process. Help your child to recognize and celebrate their strengths. A weekly college check-in between parents and students is a good way to balance the need to stay on top of the process with the goal of encouraging students to take responsibility for the process.
- **Support, support, support.**

COLLEGE COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Discuss college planning with the student and the parents** and help to develop a balanced list that represents good matches.
- **Provide information** about chances of admission to particular colleges.
- **Provide resources and opportunities** for students and their families to learn about various colleges.
- **Keep students informed** about visitations, special events, open houses at colleges, deadlines, scholarships and testing.
- **Make available certain forms:**
 - a. Common Application
 - b. College Board standardized testing and application fee waivers for students who qualify.
 - c. Special scholarship information and applications
- **Prepare a well-written school statement** that portrays the candidate in a positive and honest light with an emphasis on strengths and patterns of growth where appropriate.
- **Prepare and send transcripts** to colleges.
- **Serve as an advocate** for BB&N students to the colleges.
- **Support and counsel students and parents** throughout the college research, application, and selection process.
- **Send first quarter, mid-year, and final grade reports to colleges.**