



Lawrence Academy

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THE COLLEGE COUNSELING OFFICE

March 1, 2019

Dear Parents of the Class of 2020:

It was great to see many of you at the Junior College Day. We write to update you on the activities that are taking place (and will take place during the coming months) in the College Counseling Office. For those of you who attended the College Day, we hope that you found the meetings informative and we welcome your thoughts on the program. Please feel free to email any of us with your feedback.

Since January, each junior has met at least once or twice with his or her counselor. Conversations have covered the broad criteria by which they will choose schools: large/small, urban/rural, unique academic programs, extracurricular offerings, geographic location, etc. We also have discussed their testing plan, what to expect during campus visits, and what will be expected of them these next few months. **It is important to understand that these early mentions of specific institutions are purely for research purposes, and should by no means be considered their “final picks.”** Since we understand that you may have questions at this point, we hope to address some of those in this mailing, and want to make you aware of a few key items that we feel deserve attention this spring.

SPRING TERM CONVERSATIONS: When your child returns to Lawrence Academy in April, our objective will be to construct a list of colleges appropriate for summer visits. To that end, we are asking students to make a few campus visits during spring break, and we encourage you to reinforce this request. The point of the spring visits is not to visit specific colleges (i.e. a “dream school”), but to explore different **types** of schools according to the criteria we have discussed. We recommend that students and their families take a tour given by the admission office, attend a group information session and talk with students if the school is in session. (Please note that in general, colleges do not give interviews to juniors in March.) If you focus on the Boston area, for example, and your child is interested in business, you might visit one of the major universities in the city, then a college with a business focus. Round out your trip at a small liberal arts institution in the area. Once these visits have given your child a better sense of what they might like, we can work with them to craft a list of colleges which reflect these qualities for productive summer visits. Students have registered for Naviance, the web-based software system we use to manage information and communication. Families are encouraged to use this resource to conduct college searches and learn more about admission criteria. Additionally, students have been attending monthly classes with a college counselor. Topics covered so far include an introduction to the college application process, the use of the Naviance website, and college visits. In April we will begin to work with them on the Common Application essay and talk through selecting two teachers from junior year who will write college recommendations.

COLLEGE COUNSELING HANDBOOK: The Lawrence Academy College Counseling Handbook is available on the school website. Please view this helpful resource on the college counseling web page. Follow the link to “**Handbook**” which is located on a tab on the left hand side of our College Counseling

homepage which is found under Programs. We encourage students and families to read each chapter when appropriate. For example, when students have a campus visit scheduled, we recommend that they read Chapter 4, “*College Visits.*” Should they return from that visit with questions about the application, they may find Chapter 5, “*College Admissions Criteria,*” to be appropriate. We encourage families to familiarize themselves with this manual, as you will find helpful information regarding the criteria colleges use to admit students, as well as information students should use to select colleges. There is also a wealth of information on financial aid, athletic and artistic recruitment, and advice for international students.

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE: We enclosed a parent questionnaire in the registration folder you received at our College Day. You can also find the parent questionnaire on Naviance and we also sent it to you recently via email. We ask you to complete this to help give us a better sense of what you, as parents, are thinking at this point in the process. Your responses will also provide us with further insight into your son or daughter as we work toward finding the appropriate college match. If you have not completed it already, we ask that you complete the questionnaire and return it to your child’s college counselor by Friday, May 24.

SAT AND ACT: Most students took the SAT reasoning test in December. Your student’s counselor will be speaking with him or her about which SAT subject tests to take on the June 1 test date (the registration deadline for this test date is May 3). Registration is done online at www.collegeboard.org. Additionally, most students should have taken the ACT which was offered on February 9. If your child did not take the ACT in February we strongly suggest that they register for the April 13 ACT. Please note that the April 13 ACT is not given at Lawrence Academy. Check the website at www.actstudent.org for more information about registration, available sites, fees, and deadlines. The ACT has a writing section; while it is optional, we recommend that students take the ACT with the writing section. Students who need to apply for extended time for either test should contact Cindy Blood, Assistant Dean of Academics for Academic Support, as soon as possible for more information.

B.I.S.C.C.A FAIR: The Boston Independent School College Counselors’ Association is holding its annual college fair on Sunday, April 28. Representatives from over 140 colleges and universities **outside of New England** will be available to speak with you and your student, distribute materials and answer questions. We will be providing transportation from Lawrence Academy for both day and boarding students. We **strongly recommend** that juniors make the effort to attend this event. Exposure to this large number of colleges in one spot is very helpful as you begin planning summer visits. Additional information, including a list of colleges that will be represented, will be mailed home in early April.

In addition to the BISCCA Fair, the Boston National College Fair hosted by NACAC will be held at the Seaport World Trade Center on Thursday, April 4 and Friday, April 5. You can find a list of colleges in attendance online. Also, Colleges That Change Lives will be hosting a fair on Saturday, May 18, at 10:00 am at the Boston Sheraton Hotel.

We will send home an additional letter with more details about the college fairs in March.

We hope you find this information helpful. As always, if you have additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. It is a privilege to be working with your son or daughter during this exciting time in their life.

Sincerely,



Sean Sheehan