



SEATTLE ACADEMY

COLLEGE ADVISING

HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE APPROACHES TO THE COLLEGE PROCESS FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN THE ELEVENTH GRADE

What happens between now and senior year?

As junior year continues, students both sustain/improve grades and investment in activities, and work within the very deliberate and informed structure of the Seattle Academy College Advising program. Ideally, students and parents guard against unhealthy obsessions with the college search process which can distract from the most advantageous things students can do: enrich the "raw material" of their applications during this time, and listen to the advice of Seattle Academy College Advising.

What are most advantageous and healthy ways to get started in this process?

While robust access is available starting on Junior College Night, families can access the **Naviance system** as guests:

- <https://connection.naviance.com/fc/signin.php?hsid=seattleacademy> > "I'm a guest" > Enter: "saas"
- Review the **documents and emails** stored under "document library" (over on the upper right-hand side once you log-in).
- Review in detail the Seattle Academy **College Advising handbook** (in the "document library" under "handbook and application tools"). Note that it's common for families to say after the fact, "I wish I'd read that earlier." Go for it!
- In addition, review (in the fall) the **100+ scheduled college visits** to Seattle Academy and talk as a family about a few visits that might be productive to attend (with teacher permission, requested in advance). Once inside Naviance as a guest (above):
 - Click "Colleges" > Click "College search" > Look over to the left and click "College visits"

If you're trying to plan **travel to see a few colleges** over mid-winter break in February, a popular time to do so, the student should email College Advising directly and ask them for a few questions to answer that can help them make some very preliminary travel suggestions. Note, these questions and answers do not replace the required college advising kick-off survey College Advising will assign in January.

Other genuinely useful things students can do:

- Know that the real "stuff" of the college process is not the architecture of a college search, it's the track record, curiosities, and self-knowledge you bring to it. Where possible, continue to challenge yourself with classes that show initiative and keep consistent / stabilize / improve grades depending on your particular situation.
- Attend the Seattle Area Independent Schools Fair (on your various calendars).
- Note the date of this year's mandatory Junior College Night (on your various calendars) and schedule it on your calendar. Note that this sometimes falls during a busy week, so we're warning you now to plan ahead as much as possible on homework and we'll keep the meeting fast and productive.
- Start building a résumé using the résumé template saved here: Naviance log-in (above) > "document library" > "Due in September to Melanie".
- Save all writing from this year, with teacher comments you can incorporate later (or as soon as you get them back).
- Save papers with grades on them.
- Give the seniors space for the very different kind of work they're doing (in the trenches, producing the "stuff" of their applications). You'll be grateful for that time and space when it's yours.

What about standardized test prep?

- Juniors take the PSAT in October. We receive back scores from College Board before winter break and mail them out with interpretive information.
- Ideally, students take the SAT two times and the ACT (with writing) two times, once each in the spring (March/May/June) and once each in the fall (October/November).
- Families monitor www.collegeboard.com and www.actstudent.org for available registration. Registering early for each test ensures a closer test site.
- Students often prep for exams, but in a variety of ways we will discuss with juniors individually during their initial meetings.
- Some students will require SAT II exams. These are not required of everyone and demand some research first to ensure students are not over-testing when they could instead replace an SAT II score with the aforementioned ACT with Writing. In general, for any student from any high school, SAT IIs require prep and should not be taken "cold." Once a student has developed some realistic idea of where she or he might like to apply, the following link can serve as a tool for assessing which tests are required by which colleges:
 - http://www.compassprep.com/admissions_req_subjects.aspx (this link is also saved on Naviance as "SAT II requirements")
- In general, when one signs up for testing of any type, select Seattle Academy as a recipient of scores with our CEEB code, 481154.

What should we not do now?

- Don't mistake the weirdness and ambiguity created by *the mysterious future* for "we're so behind!" You're not. And we're here to help.
- Don't talk about college obsessively. Work together as a family to determine the best times of the week for college talk and work together to focus instead on the real "stuff" of one's college application: the transcript and extra-curriculars.
- Don't buy the manufactured college-search drama. Seattle Academy students have a proven track record of college search satisfaction. If we're managing your stress level, we can't devote as much time as we'd like to students. And we love to devote time to students!