

MCNEAL SAMS COLLEGE CONSULTING NEWS AND NOTES

NOVEMBER CHECKLIST



SCHEDULE: If you have not already scheduled an appointment to meet with your consultant to discuss schools, NOW is the time. Remember your consultant is going to need time to prepare for the meeting, and you are going to need to provide the consultant with information prior to the meeting so plan accordingly.



PREPARE: Your first term of your junior year either is just concluding or will shortly. Junior year grades are very important. Be sure to prepare well for your end of term exams, including taking care of yourself. Get plenty of sleep, eat well, and plan de-stressing time into your schedule.



REGISTER: It's time to register for your official SAT and/or ACT. Use these links to register:

[ACT](#)

[SAT](#)

READY, SET, LAUNCH ...

It's time. Beginning the college choice journey in earnest, by creating a list of schools to seriously consider and doing some real research, may feel overwhelming. Yet, we view it as one of the most fun aspects of the journey. Why? That is simple, because you have so many choices.

The luxury of choice means YOU decide what matters the most and then find the options that meet your needs. It means with some thoughtful work you can be assured that as you wrap up your college selection next year you will have the choices that offer you the experience, the environment, and the opportunities that are most likely to bring *you* success.

You don't have to just take our word for it. We often recommend articles and blog posts from several "guru's" in our profession. One of our favorites is Rick Clark, the Assistant Vice Provost and Executive Director of Undergraduate Admission at Georgia Tech. If you don't already subscribe to his blog, you can [sign up here](#). His advice and insights are timely, thoughtful, and funny (sometimes), too. He is worth the read.

In June of 2021, Mr. Clark wrote a post called, "[Mission Matters](#)". As you launch your search for the right list of schools, we hope you will take to heart his message, and ours, a school's mission not only tells you who they are and what matters to them but also drives their admission decisions. If you want to build a list of schools to apply to that makes the most sense for you, you need to begin by defining your mission and then create a list of schools that will support you.

All of this is to say that no two college search journeys are the same because none of you are the same. Your list of schools should be perfect for you. It does not matter which schools are on your friends' list or your relatives' lists or even your barista's list (and yes everyone you meet who discovers you are a junior in high school will be suggesting schools). What matters are the schools that are on your list.

So, let's get busy having fun! Let's begin to create that list. If you have not already done so, schedule a meeting with your consultant to talk about specific schools you may want to consider.



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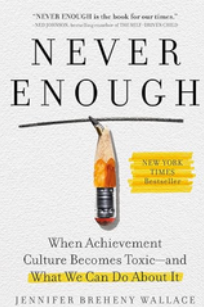
NEWS AND NOTES

TALK AROUND TOWN

This month we discovered these useful resources regarding college admission:

Article: [The Colleges That Change Lives](#) offer sage advice and an interesting list of schools to consider in [“Ready, Set, Go! How to Begin a College Search”](#). They also have a series of articles you may find helpful throughout your college choice journey. [Here’s a link to the full list.](#)

Book: It’s all over the news and the New York Times Best Sellers list. *Never Enough: When Achievement Culture Becomes Toxic - and What We Can Do About It*, by Jennifer Breheny Wallace



Podcast: We raved about him in the opening article to this newsletter so we suggest considering Rick Clark’s podcast to go along with his blog posts, [College Admission Brief](#).

FOCUS FEATURE: RESUMES

Do you have a resume ready to go? Receiving a resume request is only a matter of WHEN, not IF. Even before your college application process, a resume will help you proactively find summer opportunities and set you up to easily complete the Common App’s “Activities” portion. Drafting your resume this fall/winter can prevent a moment of panic when you face that inevitable first request.

Seeing your story on paper can also be a good gut check for how you want to spend your time this spring, summer and in the fall. Reflection on what you care about compared to where you have put your time can translate to more thoughtful decisions on how to invest your energy going deeper or broader. Think not of “resume building” or “checking boxes” but of your own self-development.

To cover your bases, start with a “master” version that includes everything you’ve done, organized into important categories. Keep that version continually updated, even if it gets very long. This will serve as your foundation for the Common App and for any unexpected upcoming requests. When you have a specific need, you can easily create a shorter version tailored to the qualifications for that opportunity.

This brings us to a word about format. KISS—Keep it simple starting out, so that you are your story’s custodian and won’t need to rely on someone else each time you update it. If you find yourself with down time (whatever in the world is that?), you could even invest in learning some formatting tricks in Google Doc or Word, but don’t try yet for more sophisticated programs unless you have the heart and patience for it!

Whatever the current state of your resume, we’ll help you take it to the next level. Ask your consultant to assist you or to connect you with our resume specialist, Elizabeth Schnell.

KINDNESS CORNER: SHARING ISN’T ALWAYS CARING

Most of you have received your PSAT scores, or will shortly. Let’s remember a few pertinent items:

- Share your Halloween candy, not your scores. It’ll leave a better taste in your mouth.
- “There’s book smart, there is street smart, there’s relationship smart, there’s money smart, there’s movie smart, there’s computer smart... There are just too many different kinds of smarts for people to know all the smarts.” —J.B Smoove
- Be good to each other: if scores come up in conversation, change the subject. Somebody nearby will silently thank you.
- This same advice applies to your college search. This is your process, no one else’s. You are under no obligation to tell anyone the schools you are considering, except your parents and your consultant, of course!