

Parents in the Process

Greg Zaiser, P'20, '22
Vice President for Enrollment
Elon University

Things to Consider

In what ways has your student surprised you?

Does he/she excel at something you never thought possible?

Consider the personal growth in your student since his/her freshman year in high school.

Do you have specific concerns about the college planning process?

How significant a role will financial aid play in the decision making process about where your student will attend college?

“We” are not applying to College

Get Excited about the academic year.

Know your student’s standardized testing plan and encourage them to prepare.

Foster a good relationship with the high school counselor.

Encourage your student to nurture their relationships with teachers.

Begin college visits.

“We” are not applying to College

Be supportive and understanding of their opinions and thoughts.

Let your student drive the process.

Emphasize allocating time for the college search process and staying organized.

Don't write anything for your student.

Let your student communicate with each school.

Talk about financing.

Schedule a regular time to meet and discuss the experience.

Don't limit options in the college admission process.

Balance is key when helping with college admission requirements.

It's all about Perspective

Avoid referring to “our” favorite college or “our” application. You’re not going to classes, and you won’t be writing term papers.

If your student truly wants to load up with A.P. and honors courses for a challenge, that’s admirable. But don’t force advanced classes on students who aren’t up to the task.

Plan family nights with banned mentions of ACT/SAT scores, supplemental essays, or your cousin’s contacts with lacrosse recruiters.

Community service should be done out of a spirit of helping, and not because it looks good on a resume. Volunteering is just as worthy 10 miles from home as it is in Nicaragua.

When accomplished students apply to competitive colleges, they might be rejected not because of personal flaws, but because this year coaches and faculty want a bassoon-playing linebacker or an engineer from North Dakota.

Roles for Parents

Coach

Consultant

Executive Secretary

The key is remembering this is your student's decision. The choices can – and should – be made with our guidance, input and support, but this is the first real adult decision your child will make. Allow them to make it.