



Steps for Wrapping-Up Your College Process

Decision Time

In March, College Advising sends out communications that also address the following.

1. Our thanks for the work together this year and congratulations on your hard work/notifications in general.
 - a. The conclusion of this process carries a range of feelings, from relief to confusion to disappointment.
2. Timing of college decision announcements and what happens for students traveling to the Yukon.
 - a. Timing of College Advising's availability before and after spring break (as communicated, closed during Yukon/Spring Break).
3. Talking with family about how to handle information that comes in while you're away.
4. What the different possible outcomes mean, from waitlist to conditional admit to winter/February start to the option of starting your career on a college's international campus. As always continue to notify us of all admission outcomes.
5. Gap years in general, including the right/wrong reasons to consider one and how to communicate this to your college.
6. College Advising's requirement that your final decision-making conversations include some thinking you've done beforehand about the "strong pros," "weak pros," "strong cons," and "weak cons" for the colleges you're considering that 1) offered admission and 2) offered enough financial aid to make it possible to attend.
7. How to respond to a waitlist (only if actually interested), including responding with a substantive update on information that exceeds that which the college already knows and our strong advice to begin the process of connecting emotionally to a college that already offered admission (rather than remaining hopeful for the waitlist).
8. Financial aid and our recommendation to follow-up with any school from which you're expecting a financial aid package to make sure it has all the materials to issue you one.
9. How to tell a college you won't be attending.
10. How to tell one college on or before May 1 that you will be attending. So-called "double-depositing" is unethical, only prolongs decision making, and won't work because College Advising will only send one transcript to one college for each senior (as well as to colleges where you'd like to remain on a waitlist).
11. If second trimester grades were, say, unhelpful, your third trimester grades are critical in ensuring a college does not reverse its offer of admission.

To Remain Waitlisted or Not to Remain Waitlisted

Should you find yourself on a college waitlist, sometimes called an "alternate list," or even deferred from Early Decision/Action to Regular Decision, the tips below can help you determine how to proceed. Colleges use waitlists in a number of ways. Usually they explain their uses in the letter you receive placing you on the list. If you are waitlisted at a college, here are a few tips:

- ✓ The enrollment deposit you make by May 1 at a college offering admission is critical to holding your place but is also non-refundable.
- ✓ Remain on a waitlist only if truly interested. Positively or negatively, respond quickly to a wait-list offer. It's okay if you're not interested.
- ✓ Do not stay on a waitlist just to see if you get in. Stay only if you know you will attend the college if admitted.
- ✓ If you are interested in the college where you have been waitlisted or deferred, write an email to the college immediately after receiving its decision. Make your commitment to the college very clear; promise to attend *if you can do so honestly*: "I will attend if admitted." Include any new honors, awards, activities, or senior project details that might strengthen your candidacy. Reiterate strong second tri grades. Thereafter, people change their minds about interest so *if* genuinely interested, weekly or bi-weekly updates can help the college know you're still interested. (Again, as hard as it may be to do so, try to develop attachment to another school in the meantime.)
- ✓ Be in touch with your college advisor, who may get a telephone call asking about your continued commitment to the college where you have been waitlisted. The advisor's knowledge of your genuine interest does not guarantee anything but could influence the college's decision.
- ✓ Waitlist activity can happen well into the summer. It's possible you may make a final choice over the summer without talking to your college advisor who may be out of town at the time. If this does happen over the summer when College Advising may not have connectivity, please include Gayle (gpearl@seattleacademy.org) and Kelly (krettenmier@seattleacademy.org) who can also provide final transcripts.
- ✓ Know how you would respond if a college phoned you with an offer (yes, it can happen over the phone) even late into July. While not everyone loves or is accustomed to the telephone, it may be how you are notified.
- ✓ Do not count on admission from a waitlist! For sanity and reality's sake, start focusing on other colleges and proceed with other decision-making. Remaining attached to a place that waitlisted or deferred you can distract from other great colleges where you can make an admission commitment now and really thrive next year. We have seen countless times how the unexpected opens a door to something good. (continued next page)

For final decisions, make a pro-con list that separates big pros (like “I can afford it” and “it has my major”) from weaker pros like weather. As we said above, this is a helpful (and requisite) list for a “decision” meeting with College Advising.

STRONG PRO	WEAK PRO	STRONG CON	WEAK CON
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Also, is prestige alone (or family/peer pressure), or the long attachment to one school, driving a choice against better judgment? We have seen students choose a college based on so-called name recognition when another college actually fit them best.

After You and the Colleges Have Decided

Once a college has notified you of its decision, please inform College Advising so that the school’s records will be accurate. We request that you update an outcome for each of the schools listed in your Naviance account by emailing us all decisions and send us the specifics of merit scholarship money (amount and whether renewable each year). This information is required and helps us advise students in future years.

As soon as you are certain of which college you will attend, you **MUST** tell all other colleges to which you applied, withdrawing your candidacy to make room for other applicants. Generally people do this through a portal or through a means the college describes in its offer letter. If not, do so in a courteous note (an email to your admission counselor or to the admission office is acceptable); see sample below.

You are ethically bound to respond to all the colleges where you are admitted by the Candidates’ Reply Date of May 1. **It is unethical to pay enrollment deposits and make promises to attend two colleges.** We will not support students committing to more the one college and will only send your final transcript (required) to one college. If you have been placed on a waitlist, you may retain that place after making an enrollment deposit, but be honest if the college asks you.

Admission Office
College/University
Address

Dear Office of Admission:
I am grateful for the consideration shown me and for the offer of admission. After careful thought, however, I have decided to attend _____ College/University. Therefore, I am withdrawing my application to your institution.

Sincerely,
Name, School, Date of Birth, Address

More Important Topics to Reiterate/Consider

- ✓ If you applied for need based financial aid and have not received financial aid packages that you expected to receive from your colleges, it is imperative that you call the college(s) and ask when you can expect to receive your package.
- ✓ Third trimester *still matters*. The grades of third trimester, a shorter than usual trimester (the end of which can surprise some students!), are part of your final transcripts which is required at the college you choose. As we have discussed, grades from winter and spring trimester that are lower than those on which you were admitted can result in the reversal of your offer of admission.
- ✓ If you are considering taking a gap year, remember that the best reason for you to choose a gap year is to gain growth or experience that you will take with you to college. Do not take a gap year if you think it will fundamentally change your admission options. Most people do not want to reapply to college during a gap year. Make sure you have sent an admission deposit/commitment to one of the colleges that already offered you admission (where you will enroll after your gap year) and that you have thought through the financial requirements of taking a gap year.
- ✓ Remember that we are proud of and excited for your college options. Thank you for the great work together!