SOAR

THE PARENT PLAYBOOK

"WHAT EVERY PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW"

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SOAR College Kickoff : A Parent's Playbook

SOAR Consulting provides a detailed outline for "College Kickoff" that focuses on three things: understanding the student/family and counselor roles in the college application process, the college application timeline and process of using college connection tools to become successful in the college application process Please use the guide to get an overview of the topics, most important for the College Kickoff:

1. Who is responsible for what?
2. College Applications
3. Transcript Request Form
4. Official High School Transcript
5. Standardized Test Scores
6. Teacher and Counselor Recommendations
7. Essays
8. Admission Interviews
9. Naviance
10. FERPA Waiver
11. The Common Application:
    a. Common App College Search
    b. Common App College Search Results
    c. Common App Recommenders and FERPA
12. Completed Application
13. NCAA Eligibility
14. Financial AID
15. Internet Resources
16. Other Resources

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A Parent's Playbook

1. Who is responsible for what?

These are the counselor's responsibilities:

- Transcript: Transcript Request Form, available on guidance webpage and in the guidance office (requires parent signature)
- School Profile
- Secondary School Report Form (if required)
- Counselor Recommendation (if required/requested)
- Teacher Recommendations (if required/requested)
- Submit mid-year grades
- Submit final transcript

These are the student/parent responsibilities:

- Application requirements:
  - Deadlines
  - Testing
  - Recommendation letters
  - Essay(s)
- Testing registration and deadlines
- Naviance
  - Pre-application packet (student and parent)
  - Update "Colleges I'm applying to"
  - Complete FERPA (Common Application)
  - "Match" Common App & Naviance
  - Teacher recommendation request
- Transcript Request form(s)
  - TWO WEEK ADVANCE NOTICE
  - Parent signature required
- College visits/choosing colleges
- Scholarship applications
- AP scores/college credits (if applicable)

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2. College Applications

- College applications are available online at individual school websites. Each school will have information regarding their application requirements.
  - Georgia Application: www.gafutures.org for all four- and two-year GA schools and some GA community colleges
  - Common Application: www.commonapp.org. Over 400 schools accept this application.
  - Universal College Application: www.universalcollegeapp.com. Over 40 schools accept this application
  - Common Black Application www.commonblackcollegeapp.com Over 52 HBCU-Historical Black Colleges.
- Students need to be aware that there may be supplemental forms, essays, or specific documents requested to be sent with the application.
- College applications are the responsibility of the student.
  Parents may want to proofread applications, but the student should be the one completing the application.
- A copy of the completed application, essays, or other documentation should be made prior to submitting/mailing the application to the school.

3. Transcript Request Form

- Students must fill out one form per school that they apply to

- They should hand the form in TWO WEEKS before their application deadline

- The form must have a parent signature

- Pick one up in the Guidance Office (It may look like the sample below)

Sample

Xyz School

STUDENT NAME:_____   DOB: _____

I.   NAME & COMPLETE ADDRESS OF COLLEGE/SCHOLARSHIP/ORGANIZATION:
_____   _____
_____

 CHECK ONE: ___Regular Admission   ___Early Decision   ___ Early Action

 Application Deadline Date: _____ Date you submitted application:_____

II. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY: ___ Common Application   ___xyz Application(submitted directly)

  ___ Direct College Application   ___Paper Application

 III. LIST NAMES OF TEACHER(S) WHO ARE SUBMITTING A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION: (IT IS THE STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITY TO REQUEST TEACHER(S) TO UPLOAD LETTER TO NAVIANCE)
_____
_____
_____

 IV. STUDENT CHECK OFF:

  ___ I have added this college to my active application list in Naviance

  ___ I have completed FERPA waiver on Common App / Naviance.

  ___ I have added requested teacher(s) to Naviance.

      SAT AND/OR ACT SCORES MUST BE SENT DIRECTLY BY THE TESTING AGENCY

V.   STUDENT SIGNATURE:_____DATE: _____

     PARENT SIGNATURE:_____DATE: _____
_____

        FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: _____ Envelope _____ Transcript _____Include most recent report card

        Initial Transcript   Mid-Year Transcript   Final Transcript
         Date: Date: Date:

        _____UPLOADED   _____UPLOADED   _____UPLOADED

        _____MAILED   _____MAILED   _____MAILED

        _____FAXED   _____FAXED   _____FAXED

        _____HAND CARRIED   _____HAND CARRIED   _____HAND CARRIED

            REQUESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO DEADLINE FOR COLLEGES

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4. Official High School Transcript

- Sent to colleges directly from guidance office along with school profile
- It is a record of all the courses that have been taken during high school, including failed courses and summer school courses
- Students' three-year class rank and three-year gpa. are listed
- Students' Regents scores and final exam grades are included
- Shows senior year courses in progress
- Shows absences and tardiness
- Standardized test scores ARE NOT included

5. Standardized Test Scores

Scores must be sent directly from the testing agency.

- SAT and AP scores from College Board: www.collegeboard.com
- ACT scores from ACT: www.actstudent.org

6. Teacher and Counselor Recommendations

- Your student should choose teachers with whom they have developed a positive relationship and whom they have shown a strong work ethic
- Requests for letters should come from students in person, not by telephone or email
- Students should provide counselors and teachers with a resume or activity list; this provides a larger picture for the writer to work with. Activities are not limited to school-based clubs. Community service, church involvement, boy/girl scouts and work should all be included.
- Students should give teachers a month or more to complete letters

7. Essays

- Students should author their own essays. Parents are welcome to proofread (if your student agrees), but the final product should be the student's
- Encourage your student to start early and to follow the directions, topic choices and deadlines
- If your student does not seek your opinion, encourage him/her to seek the opinion of someone they respect for feedback
- Students should focus on being genuine in their essays
- Some essays require that part A and part B be completed; help your student check the packet before the final documents are submitted
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8. Admission Interviews

- Not all schools require interviews, but one can be requested if your student has weaknesses or inconsistencies to address. Your student should call the school to inquire about and arrange for an interview if one is desired, but not a normal part of the application process
- The more your student knows about a college, the better questions they will be able to ask their interviewer, showing interest and awareness
- If you are driving your student to an interview, make sure you plan plenty of time to arrive promptly. If your student is driving, help them with directions and getting out the door on time
- Help make sure your student has appropriate clothing to wear to an interview

9. Naviance

Many High Schools uses Naviance to manage the college application process.

Students are expected to:

- Update prospective and active applications
- Complete surveys
- Request letters of recommendation
- Check email daily and respond. Is your email address appropriate?
- Naviance/Family Connection (outline of Naviance)
  - o Welcome page
  - o Home page
  - o About me

- - Complete teacher & counselor surveys, pre-application packet (students), pre-application packet (parents)
    - Create or update resume
  - Colleges
    - College planning tools
    - College search
    - Search results
    - Search individual colleges
    - Scattergram
    - Compare me
    - Colleges I am thinking about
    - Prospective & active college list
    - Request teacher recommendation in Naviance

10. FERPA waiver

- FERPA stands for: Federal Education Rights Privacy Act
- In order for your counselor to send your school documents electronically, this form must be completed
- Create a Common Application account: www.commmonapp.org
- After adding a college in "My Colleges" in the Common App, click on "Recommenders and FERPA" and complete the FERPA release authorization

11. THE COMMON APPLICATION:

a. Common App College Search

b. Common App College Search Results

c. Common App Recommenders and FERPA

12. Completed Application

- Application submitted online by student
- SAT or ACT scores requested, by student, to be sent from testing agency
- Transcript Request submitted and school package sent from Guidance Office. This includes:
  - Transcript
  - Counselor Recommendation (if required)
  - Teacher Recommendation letter(s) (if required)
  - Teacher Recommendation form(s) (if required)
  - School Report Form (if required)
  - School Profile

13. NCAA eligibility

- In order to play sports at a Division I or Division II school, there are grade, curriculum and SAT/ACT criteria that a student must meet to qualify to play
- Students register with the NCAA and request that a transcript be sent to the NCAA Clearing House. Registration can be completed online at: http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/eligibility-center
- Final clearance does not take place until after graduation
- More information is available at the above website, including a list of NCAA-approved core courses offered

14. Financial AID

Every student in their senior year should apply to financial aid beginning October the 1st. Sign up through www. fafsa.ed.gov

- Step 1: Apply for an FSA ID. ...
- Step 2: Submit the FAFSA. ...
- Step 3: Submit the CSS/PROFILE and other financial aid forms, if applicable. ...
- Step 4: Apply for scholarships. ...
- Step 5: Review your Student Aid Report.
- Step 6: Compare your award letters.
- Step 7: Apply for loans, if necessary

15. Internet resources

- www.collegeboard.com – testing and college information
- www.princetonreview.com – testing and college search
- www.cappex.com – college information and search
- www.gsfc.georgia.gov – Georgia Student Finance Commission specific, financial aid information
- www.ncaaclearinghouse.net – NCAA Eligibility criteria
- www.fastweb.com – scholarships
- www.ctcl.com (colleges that change lives)
- www.mymajors.com – Information on college majors
- www.fafsa.ed.gov – Federal financial aid
- www.gafutures.org – GA website
- www.commonapp.org – Common application website

16. Other resources

Books- some suggestions:

- College Match- Antonoff and Friedemann
- The College Board College Handbook
- The Fiske Guide to Colleges
- The Insider's Guide to Colleges
- Barron's Profiles of American Colleges
- Colleges with Programs for students with Learning Disabilities or ADD- Mangrum and Strichart
- The College Board Index of Majors
- Rugg's Recommendations on Colleges- Ruggs
- The College Application Essay- McGinty
- Campus Visits and College Interviews- Dincin
- Letting Go: A Parent's Guide to Understanding the College Years- Coburn and Treeger
- College Unranked: Ending the College Admissions Frenzy- Thacker