



New Summit Academy's College Guidance Program

The goal of New Summit Academy's College Guidance Program is to guide students in the discovery of an academic environment where they will be successful after graduation from High School. As our students each enroll in different phases of their high school careers as well as the college search and application process, we strive to meet each one at their particular point in the process, and lead them through the subsequent steps based on their individual needs.

New Summit Academy students may enroll knowing exactly where they want to apply and what they wish to study. Others may arrive with very little idea about their interests and talents, much less how to apply them to college and a career. To address this, we have divided the process into phases which follow the most logical and practical approach to researching options and applying to appropriate colleges. Students and parents may enter the process at any phase, taking advantage of those phases each individual may require, and adding additional phases as needed.

NSA's College Guidance program has also been designed to, when requested by parents, work collaboratively with students' previous college counselors or educational consultants throughout the process. These professionals are often able to offer additional guidance by providing their perspectives and knowledge of specific colleges and universities. Outside college counselor or educational consultant input is especially useful during the creation and narrowing down of college lists, the writing and editing of essays, and the final considerations after college acceptances have been sent out, although their services can be integrated into any phase of the process at parents' request.

It is vital that all parties involved – students, parents, teachers and counselors, educational consultants and case managers – strive to guide each student in identifying, applying to, and enrolling in a college or university where he will experience success. To this end, we must all commit to finding a balance that allows students to meet real-world deadlines yet respects their Personal Growth needs. While New Summit Academy will make every effort to support and guide each student in his quest to find the right college, the reality exists that some students may join NSA too late in the year or may not be ready for the pressures of college applications to enroll in the Fall after their High School graduation. In this case, New Summit will work with students and families to create alternative options leading to college application and acceptance.



The College Guidance Program

Each phase is meant to take one to two months to complete, though some phases are woven throughout the entire process. Parent updates and requests for participation will be made throughout the process.

Phase One: Exploration and Analysis of Interests, Strengths and Challenges

- Student intake interview: interests, plan, goals, dreams
- Analyzing strengths and challenges, school record and background
- Strategic planning to boost credentials, improve high school record, make-up credits, etc.
- Identifying and maximizing "stand out" academic, extracurricular, cultural and summer activities that differentiate the student from other applicants
- Interest and Career Counseling:
 - Interest and working-style surveys
 - Career exploration
 - Careers and college major search

Phase Two: Creating the College Application List

- College selection criteria surveys/conference
- Generation of College list emphasizing best fit (multiple sessions)
- Virtual College Tour Assistance
- Development of Comparison Charts and sessions on chances of acceptance
- Narrowing down the list to "Target", "Reach" and "Safety" Schools

Phase Three: Organizing and Beginning the Application Process

- Decisions Options and Strategies including Early Admission, Early Decision, Single Choice Early Action, Rolling & Regular Admissions and Spring Term Enrollment
- Development of a specific plan of action to meet deadlines
- Tips on filling out the Common Application & individual college applications
- Managing applications and deadlines

Phase Four: Resumes and Letters of Recommendation

- Brag sheet design and development
- Resume assistance and updating
- Letters of Recommendation:
 - Input on how and from whom to get the best letters of recommendation
 - Appropriate methods to identify and emphasize "defining moments" to recommender
 - Timing, follow through and eventual submission



Phase Five: The Application Essays

- Essays Assistance:
 - Brainstorming ideas to develop the "unique" voice
 - Writing & editing sessions which aim to avoid trite topics, reveal life themes, and break through using our program's Cultural, Adventure, Academic and Experiential activities
 - Assistance with "documentation" (essays) which addresses many of our students' non-traditional educational paths to high school graduation such as multiple transfers, wilderness programs, etc.

Phase Six: Review and Submission of Applications

- Application Submission:
 - Application components (including essays & brag sheets) readied for maximum impact
 - Thorough review of applications prior to submission
 - Providing and Tracking supporting documentation (such as transcripts)
 - Supervised submission of all applications

Phase Seven: Take a Deep Breath (included in all packages)

Phase Eight: Making the Final Selection

- College Selection Advisement:
 - In-depth college selection advising, based on acceptances
 - Final comparison of academic programs
 - Emotional, student life, student support fit evaluations
 - Financial considerations



Optional Phases: Add-ons Depending upon Student and Family Needs

Campus Visitation Preparation

- Assistance planning visits
- Logistical Assistance and Appointment-setting
- Visitation tips & questions to ask
- Creation and review of Ratings sheets

Standardized Testing Registration and Preparation

- PSAT, SAT and/or ACT Registration and Facilitation
- Application for Accommodations when eligible
- Facilitation of some Accommodations on-site when applicable

Interview Preparation

- Mock interviews, using actual college interview questions
- Development of a specific question list for each college, to ask the interviewer
- Videotaping of practice interviews to improve techniques and raise comfort and confidence

Financial Considerations

- Overview of financial aid and college funding process
 - Programs
 - Methodology
 - The importance of applying regardless of family income level
- Assistance with private scholarship search and application
- Assistance with FAFSA completion and submission when requested
- Review of aid awards