



SHADY SIDE  

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ACADEMY

An Early Preview:  
Navigating the College Landscape for Middle School Parents

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# Agenda

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- I. How this event came to be
- II. Landscape of College Admissions in 2018
- III. College admissions/college counseling at SSA
- IV. Navigating the landscape as a middle school parent - advice
- V. Q&A



# Almost every question relating to college admissions can be answered by “it depends”

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- Is my kid better off playing a sport at school, like soccer, or developing in a less-common activity, like fencing?
- Is it better to do general summer camp or specialized enrichment opportunities or community service or something else?
- As we look ahead towards high school, should I push to have my child in the most challenging classes/path that SSA offers?
- Will athletics/arts/talent/academics/ability to pay/other help or hurt my student’s chances of getting into a college?

*Becoming the most authentic, reflective, kind, healthy and whole people they can be is what will help them most*



# College admissions in 2018: the landscape has changed and continues to each year

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## National Landscape

- Schools (some) are more selective
- Kids are applying to more schools
  - The Common Application
- New SAT (year 2 of the “new” test, skews higher)
- Competition is fierce
- Good news – every school has raised their level of offerings and services to stay competitive



# So many colleges we visit! (this was last year alone)



University of St Andrews



# SSA within the more competitive landscape

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## Here at SSA

- Students are getting into great schools
- Average number of applications 7-8
- Highly personalized process
  - Touch points at each grade level
  - Layers of advising and support to making the most of Senior School experience
- Students benefit from broad exposure to many opportunities
  
- Outcome: Students are attending a wide range of schools, diverse as the students and people they are



# Advice for navigating this changing landscape as Middle School parents

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## Help your sons/daughters to:

- Make decisions and be confident in trying new things – big and little
  - Talking to teachers
  - Joining a club/sport
  - Activities, summers, friends
- Get organized
- Develop independence
- Celebrate failure
- Lean into discomfort

## Help yourselves to:

- Trust the school and the professionals dedicated to your kids
- Celebrate failure
- Expose your kids to broad definitions and paths to success



# Discussion / Q&A

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