

NORTH AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

Ready for More?

Worksheet: Developing your independent school admission plan

The most important piece of your private school admission process – beyond your student and your decision to pursue a private school application – is building a systematic approach, or plan, for your application process.

Notice we use the word process. A private school application is a process with many pieces to gather, combine and bring to completion. We also use the word process rather than recipe because the result may be different from what you visualized at the outset.

The process may lead you to understand your child differently than at the start, and you may end up applying to schools that you hadn't considered, or known about, before heading down the boarding school road.

And, some of the pieces – such as teacher recommendations – are things you don't directly control. Teachers and other potential recommendation authors are busy and need to fit writing into their schedules. Standardized testing dates can require you to plan around them.

How best to manage a process? Build an admission plan.

Make your application planning easier by using our [Private School Admission Calendar and To Do Worksheet](#) (see page two).

We know that many families may not begin their private school application process until later in the school year. Still, this calendar can serve as a guide for condensed timelines as well by providing helpful reminders for tasks you may need to complete. Remember that completing and submitting an application is not the conclusion of the process.

A quick word on financial aid – if financial aid is part of your private school admission application process, you will be completing a separate, but concurrent, financial aid application alongside your admission application. Your financial aid application will require its own work and documentation that can be equal to, or greater than, the admission application.

And don't worry if you've arrived late to the process. The document, [Applying To Private School After The Deadline](#), is for families arriving at their private school application late or outside of the traditional admission calendar.

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Private School Admission Calendar & **To Do List**

Late Summer/Early Fall

Know, and be able to articulate, why you're considering private school for your child. Evaluate your child's personality, interests and skills. Understand your child as a student and what he/she needs in a school environment to succeed.

- Make sure your child is taking a healthy balance of the right courses for them.
- Help your child improve their reading and vocabulary skills.
- Help your child improve their math skills.
- Help your child find and participate in extracurricular activities to help develop interests and skills beyond school.
- Talk with private school friends and families. Ask them about the schools their children attend. Begin gleaning insights into different kinds of schools.

September

- Prepare a list of questions to ask school admission officers.
- Prepare for topics that an admission officer might ask you to address — an academic rough spot, absence due to illness, a change in family structure, a passion, a goal, a dream.
- Request and read through school catalogs, websites, social media sites and applications.
- Register and prepare to take the appropriate standardized admission test(s) (SSAT, ISEE, TOEFL, etc.).
- Create files to keep copies of applications and correspondence.
- Set up a calendar to track important dates and deadlines.

October–November

- Attend private school fairs.
- Identify characteristics you want in a school.
- Take campus tours, attend open houses on campus.
- Request letters of recommendation to include with your admission applications.
- Begin working on admission application essays.
- Interview at the schools of interest.
- Take the required standardized admission test(s).

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December

- Narrow your school list to a reasonable number. You may start with 8-10 schools, but should narrow that list down to about 4-5.
- Know your application and financial aid deadlines.
- Determine which financial aid forms the schools on your list require.
- Collect family tax information.
- Schedule your child for a standardized test administration if still needed.
- Talk with private school friends home on break.
- Keep your files organized and up to date.
- Complete and submit applications.

January

- Submit your financial aid information with current tax return information as soon as you can complete it. Again, be mindful of each school's financial aid deadline. Some schools may have deadlines in December.
- Reminder: if you haven't, register and prepare for standardized test(s).
- Send transcripts to schools.
- Respond quickly to any requests from schools.

March

- School decisions arrive around March 10. This date may vary by region and school type.
- Carefully read your letters.
- Choose whether or not you want to pursue any waitlist opportunities.

April-May

- Attend accepted student days if possible.
- Make a decision. Most schools request your reply by about April 10.
- Send your tuition deposit.
- You will want to reserve a spot (make a deposit) even if you are pursuing a waitlist situation at another school.
- Respectfully decline offers from schools that you will not attend.
- Send "thank you" notes to individuals who contributed to your application.