

“What I Wish I Knew” College Search Tips

- **Try to get a sense of what criteria is most important to your student, but do not limit yourself to those criteria. Your child may think he/she wants a big school until they see how spread out it is or want a small school, but realize it is not much larger than their high school. Look at a variety of types, sizes and locations of schools before narrowing down the choices too early in the search process.**
- **The college or university’s tour guide absolutely makes a difference so if you have a choice, choose the perkier, happiest, most gregarious one to go out on tour with. That student will set the tone for the whole school. You can also (quietly) change groups if you are assigned to a tour guide who might not be so perky.**
- **Choosing a school for a particular major is certainly an important consideration, but we know many students change their majors once on campus so it is important for the schools to have a wide range of majors available or several majors that the student would consider pursuing.**
- **The importance of thorough campus visits cannot be stressed enough. There is so much to see and to assess. And most importantly, do not rush from school to school if you can avoid it. Take your time on each campus. Have a meal in the dorm. Grab a newspaper. Look for activity or club flyers all over campus. People-watch in the Student Union. Go see the rec center. Talk to students and college officials. Take photos as well. And go where the tour did not take you. If you can, meet with DHS alumni on that campus. Take them out for a meal or coffee-they will tell you what the admissions office won’t about the school.**
- **Attend the school’s reception programs in our area. Get to know the admissions representative from each school as they will be the one reading your child’s application and possibly making a recommendation for admission. And this tip helps with schools who “take attendance”. They will be able to gauge your child’s interest in the school once they start attending their hosted events in the Chicago area. In fact, they would expect to see your child at their reception and events if the colleges are far from Chicago.**