

## Stafford Soccer - College Planning Guide

### Preparation for College

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#### **STUDENTS - Ten Rules To Live By In The College Search Process**

1. Be true to yourself. While you should listen carefully to the advice of others, avoid being overly swayed by peer pressure or the impressions of others.
2. Begin the college search/process early, allowing plenty of time to gather information, to think about your decisions, and to process the paperwork.
3. Gather information from several sources. Use computer sources such as Family Connection and Bridges and Choices programs if available at your school. Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and college websites directly to gather information. Additionally, the College Board's The College Handbook is a valuable resource as well as college and university view books and catalogs. Have discussions with current college students and alumni.
4. Visit the schools to which you apply. There is no substitute for seeing the college and getting the feel for the "match" with your personality and your aspirations.
5. Apply to colleges of varying selectivity standards. Have at least one, preferably two "anchor" colleges on your list. While it is okay to apply to one or two "reach" colleges, be realistic – are the colleges within the range of possibility?
6. Process your applications carefully. Allow plenty of time to complete the applications, especially the long and short essay questions (if applicable) which allow the college admissions committee to know you. Maximize every part of the application, presenting your strengths, your strongest qualities.
7. Proofread, proofread, proofread and revise your applications. Start with a rough draft (a copy of the application, if necessary). Read essay questions carefully, making sure you answer the questions. Revise your responses. While it is usually OK to have someone react to your essay responses, it is, of course, assumed that the writing is your own. Make a copy of all materials mailed to colleges for your own records.
8. Remember, a deadline is a deadline is a deadline. Plot your deadlines on your calendar and establish a workable plan for completing the applications in plenty of time. Allow for unexpected complications at the last moment. Be sure to note if the college's deadline is a "due there by" or "postmark by" deadline if you are applying via U.S. Mail.
9. Don't let the process get you down. Keep in mind that thousands of other students are applying to college along with you and that others share your fears and concerns. Find ways to relieve your stress, and don't hesitate to ask for help when needed. Support your classmates, and they will support you.
10. KEEP YOUR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR INFORMED. Remember your guidance counselor wants to help you, and they can help the most when they know what you plan to do! It is important to keep everything and maintain complete and accurate records!