

The Balanced Method Path to Success


The strongest college applications are built over four years, not four months.

9TH
GRADE

BUILD THE FOUNDATION

4–8 ADVISOR HOURS

	ACADEMICS	• Four-year academic roadmap • Sophomore course selection guidance • Honors/AP planning
	ACTIVITIES	• Evaluate commitments • Identify opportunities worth pursuing • Lean In • Maintain • Let Go planning • Avoid résumé padding
	SUMMER	• Summer planning and recommendations
	COLLEGE EXPLORATION	• Early exposure to college fit factors
	THE COLLEGE STORY	• Track activities, awards, and accomplishments • Begin Story Notes and reflections



OUTCOME: *Student starts high school with a plan instead of hoping things work out.*

10TH
GRADE

CREATE DIRECTION

4–10 ADVISOR HOURS

	ACADEMICS	• Junior-year course selection • AP/Honors rigor recommendations • Academic positioning review
	ACTIVITIES	• Leadership planning • Activity depth strategy • Lean In • Maintain • Let Go refinement • Passion project exploration
	SUMMER	• Research, internship, work, and program planning
	COLLEGE EXPLORATION	• Academic and career pathway discussions • Early college fit conversations
	THE COLLEGE STORY	• Identify emerging patterns, strengths, and interests



OUTCOME: *Student begins focusing time and energy where it matters most.*

11TH
GRADE

BUILD STRATEGY

8–16 ADVISOR HOURS

	ACADEMICS	• Senior-year course selection • Testing strategy • Transcript review
	COLLEGE PLANNING	• Preliminary college list • College fit discussions • Visit strategy
	ACTIVITIES	• Leadership and impact review • Recommendation planning
	THE COLLEGE STORY	• Analyze years of Story Notes, activities, and accomplishments • Identify authentic themes and potential essay topics



OUTCOME: *Student enters senior year with a clear plan, balanced college list, and strong personal narrative.*

12TH
GRADE

EXECUTE THE PLAN

30+ ADVISOR HOURS

	APPLICATIONS	• UC, CSU, Common App, and supplemental support • Application strategy and timeline management
	ESSAYS	• Personal statement • UC PIQs • Supplemental essays
	APPLICATION REVIEW	• Activities list • Résumé • Final application review before submission
	DECISION SUPPORT	• Financial aid overview • Final college decision guidance



OUTCOME: *Applications are completed thoughtfully, strategically, and on time.*



Students can begin at any point. Starting earlier allows us to build academic strategy, activity depth, leadership, and personal insight over time rather than trying to create it during application season.

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