

COLLEGE CONNECTION GUIDE: HELPING STUDENTS COBBLE TOGETHER A PERFECT COLLEGE LIST

College Connection remains astonished by the fact that far too many public and private high school college counselors, as well as a fair number of private college advisors, are risk averse in helping students devise their all-important college list, typically guiding their students away from applying to more prestigious reach colleges towards applying to less prestigious safety and target colleges.

In this regard, I still recall an anecdote from my former assistant, Patrick, who attended the most prestigious public high school in New York City. When Patrick informed his high school college counselor that he wanted to apply to MIT, Patrick's college counselor immediately responded: "Forget about it; you'll never get in." Fortunately, Patrick ignored her advice, and, four years later, graduated summa cum laude from MIT.

As in all areas of the college admissions process, College Connection again charts its own course in helping its students cull together a great list of colleges to apply to. In this regard, College Connection helps its students select two/three safety colleges, four/five target colleges, and four/five reach colleges, with special emphasis placed upon encouraging its students to apply to their respective dream colleges.

In cobbling together this list of colleges for its students, College Connection, once more, takes an individualized approach to assisting its students. Using analytics, culled from 15 years of helping students get accepted into their respective dream colleges, as well as other prestigious colleges, College Connection applies the same relevant markers the colleges use -G.P.A. (Weighted or Unweighted), standardized test scores (SAT/ACT, A.P. Exam scores), extracurricular activities, etc.- in guiding its students, respectively, towards those colleges that College Connection believes its students will have a fair to likely chance of gaining admission to.

As part of this process, College Connection carefully evaluates each of its students' analytics as compared with the incoming freshman class of the various colleges its students are applying to. Furthermore, College Connection carefully evaluates its students' increased, or decreased, chances of gaining entry into a particular college by applying early, either through the binding Early Decision ("ED") Program or through the non-binding Early Action ("EA") Program of applying early to a particular college. College Connection has also paid careful attention to the recent trend in college admissions, especially at the more prestigious private colleges, of the increased number of applicants opting to apply early, especially opting to apply Early Decision. In this regard, College Connection advises its students to only apply Early Decision to the students' respective dream colleges. Furthermore, College Connection also knows, when students opt to apply early through a college's Early Action Program, such colleges fall into two categories: A) Those colleges which permit its Early Action applicants the proverbial "two bites at the apple"; and, B) Those colleges which do not permit its Early Action applicants "two bites at the apple." In fact, in College Connection's experience, acting in the capacity as a college advisor, for the past 15+ years, every time one of College Connection's students was given a "second bite at the apple" in the form of having its students' applications rolled over into the college's general applicant pool, that student was ultimately accepted into the college, even into such prestigious colleges as Yale and Princeton, which, along with Harvard, now employ a Single Choice Early Action Plan.

Finally, once College Connection learns of its students' respective dream colleges, College Connection has put forth the effort of researching the colleges in order to find unique methods of helping its students gain entry into the college. For example, College Connection established a summer program with the Dine people of New Mexico, which helped one of its prior students gain entry into the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business.