



NYC Admissions Solutions SM

*School can be overwhelming.
School choice doesn't have to be.*

NYC Public High School Admissions Process

Top 10 Tips for Middle School Families

1. High schools do not see how you rank their school's programs on your application

Despite any pressure you may get, you can feel good knowing that you can list choices in your true order of preference.

2. High schools will not see your score on the SHSAT (Specialized HSs Admissions Test)

Regardless of how you perform on the SHSAT, your score has no impact on your candidacy for other high schools.

3. There are only 2 guarantees

The only guaranteed high school matches are a) choosing your own school that continues to grade 9, and b) choosing your zoned high school program – if you have one. But be sure to list those choices at the bottom of your list of other choices.

4. Admissions priorities can significantly impact your chances of matching to a school

Be sure to list at least some choices on your application that represent schools in which you fall into a higher priority group.

5. Program selection criteria are important targets

Published selection criteria, whether grades, test scores, etc., are important targets to follow. When you consider schools for which you do not meet the published criteria, your chances of becoming a strong candidate can be significantly diminished.

6. Screened programs should not represent all your choices

Much like the college selection process, it is in your best interest to select a variety of program types to maximize your chances of receiving a match – especially since you are most likely competing against many other high achieving applicants.

7. Generally, risk decreases with number of choices

Generally speaking, the more choices the better. If you can fill up your application with 12 choices you are willing to accept, you put yourself in the best position. Remember, it's better to stretch yourself now than be left with nothing later.

8. Don't rely on Round 2 or appeals

Round 2 and appeals do not represent additional chances to get what you want. Do everything you can to get a Round 1 match, since after that the choices become more limited.

9. There are no waitlists, nor do spots open up later

Even if your friend gives up their spot, that does not create an opportunity for you. The match you get is the school you are expected to attend, so choose wisely.

10. The more the better, but...

The best strategy is to make as many choices as possible, paying close attention to admissions priorities, admissions methods (screened, limited unscreened, etc.), and selectivity (program demand, seats, selection criteria, etc.).

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