

COLLEGE COUNSELING PROGRAM

College Counseling Support
Standardized Testing
Academic Records
Athletes
Visual & Performing Artists
Financial Aid and Scholarships

2021-22



CHADWICK
S C H O O L

THINK. DO. LEAD.



Context Matters

College Counseling at Chadwick

A natural aim is for Chadwick to find the right collegiate home for our graduates and to make the college exploration another powerful learning experience, developing lasting and transferrable skills for our graduates to identify and discern opportunity and cultivate self-presentation skills that may help advance careers. Counselors engage students frequently in both scheduled and unscheduled individual conversations designed to help students reach a greater awareness of who they are and to focus on ideal learning environments. Parents engage in group programs and in individual and family meetings with counselors.

When equipped with a well-articulated sense of self, students are prepared to find colleges that are good matches. Our approach is student-centered, and we believe that satisfaction with their college choices is enhanced when students are empowered to own the process and decisions. Central to support and success is open and good communication among students, parents and college counselors. Outcomes are important, yet it is the process of self-discovery leading to college-discovery that drives our program and addresses and enhances the core competencies of Chadwick.

College Counseling Philosophy

Chadwick School's college counseling office guides students and families through the college admissions process, helping the students select and gain admission to colleges and universities appropriate to their interests and demonstrated abilities. The Chadwick School curriculum is designed to meet or exceed the entrance requirements for the University of California and, by extension, any undergraduate liberal arts college or university in the United States. The curriculum prepares the conscientious student for study at the collegiate level while allowing those with special gifts and/or interests to take advanced level courses in all disciplines. The success of the academic program and the college counseling program is not measured by the appropriateness of each placement and the high quality of the work of our students once they are in college.

College Counseling Program

The College Counseling Office offers a number of programs for Chadwick families. The first formal contact with the college counseling center occurs in Middle School with parent information sessions geared to that level with a look ahead. Throughout each year, the college counseling program offers grade appropriate presentations and workshops. A variety of meetings are held for each Upper School grade level about the college admission process, and speakers are invited to address topics such as financial planning for college and understanding the admission process at competitive and highly selective colleges and universities. Individual meetings with sophomores and their families begin during the sophomore year.

At orientation meetings, juniors and their parents are provided a timeline and overview for the process. A comprehensive college counseling handbook is available on the school portal and is available in print. Full of details about process, calendar and step-by-step guidance, it is available to all Chadwick families, from grades K-12.

Following small sessions for parents and students in the sophomore year, the more intensive individual phase of the college counseling program begins midway through the fall semester of the junior year. With counselors responsible for approximately 30 students each, every student has their counselor's focused attention in a highly individualized college search process. Because of the flexibility afforded by Chadwick's size, all of the college counselors become acquainted with the entire class and students and their families may feel comfortable approaching any counselor.

Although the college counseling program is necessarily and most intensely focused on juniors and seniors, students and parents at any grade level are welcome to use the resources of the college counseling center and to call or email the college counselors with their questions.

The college counselor will begin by guiding the student in creating a personal inventory of interests and aspirations. The student will be taught how to research colleges and prepare a final list, how to deal with campus visits and interviewing, essay writing, and completing an application. Throughout the process, students and families will use a web-based programs to assist them in their exploration and planning. After an initial family meeting with the college counselor, students have a series of individual formal and informal meetings starting in the fall of the junior year and continuing through the college research and application process.

Core Values & Core Competencies

Chadwick's College Counseling Program builds from and upon the intentions of the School and the ambition for students to **Think. Do. Lead**. The advising that begins with the Chadwick admission program carries through the Village, Middle and Upper Schools through the efforts of the College Counseling Office.

The college counseling program naturally builds upon our mission: we are dedicated to academic excellence and to the development of self-confident individuals of exemplary character.

Chadwick's Core Values of honesty, respect, responsibility, fairness, and compassion, are fostered and modeled in classrooms and co-curricular activities and in our work in college advising.

Fundamentally, we build upon and from the **Chadwick Core Competencies** in working with students and their families to bring those qualities of mind and person to the identification of colleges that reflect student learning styles and their community and campus interests. In our explorations with students and families, counselors advocate for students and will encourage them to draw upon those Core Competencies, using **critical and creative thinking** and problem solving skills, analytically approaching what is possible and what is intellectually, socially and personally valuable.

We encourage students through their investigation of colleges to represent themselves and their ideas reflecting real **courage and character**, testing themselves, with integrity. We move them to explore and understand their adaptability, initiative and risk taking in looking at colleges and ultimately in presenting themselves to colleges, revealing in that process well-developed skills in effective **communication**. In demonstrating in their activities and inclinations, they will show valuable capacities in **collaboration**, cultivating both leadership and teamwork. Counselors strive to encourage students to represent their ability to see a larger world, showing in their investigation of colleges and in their representations to colleges their ability to move through ideas, exploration, reading and experience with a developed capacity to bring **cultural competence** to next steps.

The College Counselors

Alicia V. Akers, Director

Univ. California, Berkeley, B.A.; Stanford University, M.A.

Alicia Valencia Akers joined the Chadwick community in Fall 2013 after 9 years of experience working in undergraduate admissions at Scripps College and the University of Southern California. She later worked with graduate business school students at USC and later as director of Management Leadership for Tomorrow, a national organization which readies students for admission to top business schools in the nation.

Libby Browne, Associate Director

SUNY Geneseo, BA; Salem State University, M.A.

Libby comes to Chadwick from the University of Rochester, where she has served as a regional associate director of admission since 2016, working with the College of Arts, Sciences and Engineering. Her earlier work included a role as Regional Assistant Director of Admission for the University of Colorado, Boulder, and as assistant director of admission at the Monserrat College of Art.

Marian Hersh, Director

Wittenberg University, B.A, Kent State University, M.A.

Marian Hersh has more than 30 years of experience in the admission and college counseling profession. She came to Chadwick School in 2000 after earlier work in college counseling at Milken Community High School.

Marian began her admission career at Wittenberg University before becoming the Associate Dean of Admission and Financial Aid at Claremont McKenna College.

Aaron Levine. Associate Director

Haverford College, B.S. Vanderbilt University, M.Ed.

After graduating Haverford, Aaron moved into admission work at his alma mater. He worked with the Alumni Admission Volunteer Program, and served as the athletic liaison in the Office of Admission. While a graduate student, Aaron served as an application reviewer for the Owen School of Management at Vanderbilt. He also worked with students in the college counseling office at the University School of Nashville and service as a candidate reviewer for the QuestBridge Program, a national, scholarship program for top first-generation to college students.

Bruce Poch, Dean of Admission & Executive Director of College Counseling

Oberlin College, A.B. Harvard University, Ed.M.

Bruce brings 45 years of work in college admission and counseling. Prior to Chadwick, Bruce served Pomona College as Vice President and Dean of Admissions for 24 years. Prior to Pomona, he was associate dean of admissions at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Bruce has written for *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *Chronicle of Higher Education* and *National Public Radio* and appeared on *The Today Show*, NBC and CBS News and NPR. He has been cited by national news outlets on college admissions, aid and opportunity. He contributed a chapter titled, *Sanity Check to College Unranked*, published by Harvard University Press.



Alicia Akers

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Bruce Poch

The Process and the Cycles

All students and families have the opportunity to participate in class meetings, college nights, financial aid and special athletic programs. College Counselors meet individually with students and their families multiple times, throughout their high school years, to discuss curriculum, summer opportunities, testing plans and options, to assist in the consideration of college lists and college visits, interview preparation and assistance in developing the applications and follow-up. The College Counseling office typically hosts more than 100 college representatives each year, works with Chadwick faculty in the preparation of school and instructor recommendations, and serves as both sounding board and advocate for the student. By participating in and presenting at conferences, counselors expand professional networks, and work with educators, policy makers and journalists, to reinforce opportunity for students and for expanding the already strong reputation of Chadwick.

Additional coordination with coaches and the director of athletics is brought to work with prospective college athletes in the recruitment process. The partnership brings together the full resources of Chadwick and becomes a key part of the student's learning and skill development. Parallel work is done with students focusing on visual and performing arts.

Although students ultimately are assigned an individual college counselor, the counselors work collaboratively to benefit the student as we draw from the collective wisdom and experience of the team.

Freshman and Sophomore Years

Conversations about college, summer opportunities and long term objectives begin early at Chadwick but focus on planning, not specific college choices. The counselors hold an orientation and college information meeting for parents of 9th grade students followed by meetings with the class over the year. Academic advisors connect regularly with their students to reinforce the importance of program and performance. College counselors are available to address questions about the college process that may surface at any time.

Parents of Grade 10 students participate in orientation programs led by a director of college counseling in addition to smaller group "coffees" to describe the next steps in the college counseling program, a college planning calendar, and to introduce more fully the resources available. Families are briefed on grade level college related activity, including PSAT and tests during the fall for Grades 9 and 10. Grade level meetings with students, include opportunities in small group meetings. Academic advisors and college counselors work with students to convey the importance of balancing programs, extracurricular involvements and possibilities for summer plans. Students may meet with members of the college counseling team to review transcripts and activities. College counselors will schedule family meetings to engage in thinking together that will help move a student to support their interests and talents. This commitment is deep and involves multiple hours of meetings with families and their student to bring our full consideration of aspirations, student records and faculty insights.

Junior Year

College counseling shifts into a higher gear during the junior year, including several scheduled mandatory and individual meetings with students and their families. A fall meeting is held for parents and there are introductions and orientations provided for students and parents to Family Connection/ Naviance, a college research database and records system. Parents and students are expected to open separate but linked accounts to help them manage their part of the college process.

The junior year also moves students to invest time in self-assessment questionnaires and conversations. Parents contribute significantly to the counseling process by providing information on questionnaires and through meetings with the counselors. The aim is to grasp student learning styles, academic preferences, interests in developing a preliminary college list that will reflect performance and special talents. We will suggest ways to use and plan for college visits during breaks that may help refine thinking about college possibilities. Junior year inevitably involves students taking appropriate SAT, or the ACT and Advanced Placement tests. College counselors help students consider options that may ultimately best represent them, mindful that different colleges require different (or no) standardized testing as part of their admission processes, with an eye toward keeping as many options open as may be possible.

Junior year ...continues next page...



Support for Students with Collegiate Athletic Interests

Athletics are an important part of Chadwick's culture, so it's no surprise that a large percentage of our graduates choose to participate in collegiate athletics. Many play intramural or club sports and approximately 20% play on the varsity level in college – an extraordinarily high number for a school of our size.

To help students consider how college athletics may fit into their college planning, coaches, the director of athletics and the college counselors work as a team to best support our prospective student athletes and to communicate with appropriate college and university coaches and admission staff. Our common goal is to represent our student-athletes' talents as fully as possible.

We work with families to navigate the athletic recruiting process, offer workshops about athletic recruitment opportunities and pitfalls, suggest presentation of athletic resumes and, where appropriate, video and, work to inform families about NCAA regulations, registration requirements and to discern the differences between Division I, II and III programs. The College Counseling Handbook and the websites for both Chadwick Athletics and the College Counseling Program outline the processes and timetables.



Junior year, continued....

During the second semester of the junior year, students are encouraged to contact college admission offices, visit as appropriate, contact college coaches where there is interest in collegiate athletics participation, and plan for the senior year college process and course selections. Financial Aid and Scholarship Workshops are held for parents. Before the summer break, college counselors work with students to identify faculty who may serve as recommenders.

The Senior Year

Typically, application and essay writing workshops are held during August, before school begins. At that time, college counselors begin writing and reviewing the college recommendation letter on behalf of the School.

Then, the home stretch: students, their families and Chadwick's college counselors, faculty, staff and coaches are fully engaged as partners in the college process, running at full speed. Students and their families have virtually unlimited availability meetings with college counselors to carefully develop college lists, early decision or early action plans, if any, and may assist in reviewing college essays, Common Application supplements and applications. Counselors offer mock interviews for training and assist students as they refine their college lists while the fall progresses. There are multiple opportunities for students to get substantial feedback on essays from our team with experience as admission officers at highly selective colleges. Throughout the season, college representatives visit the campus specifically to meet with Chadwick students and counselors.

College counselors convey the transcripts, secondary school reports, evaluations and teacher letters to colleges. The college counselors coordinate very closely and routinely with coaches to be sure everyone is informed about particular interests shown in student athletes by colleges. A workshop on filling out financial aid forms is led by a college financial aid officer.

Counselors assist students in their consideration of ultimate admission results and communicate throughout the process with the colleges admission offices.

Special Talents

...in the Creative Arts

College counselors work closely with faculty whose experience with students in the creative and performing arts, including music, visual art, creative writing, theater and dance, may assist us in building appropriate portfolios and resumes for academic program. College counselors and faculty in the visual and performing arts will also guide students whose interests may suggest the benefits of developing a portfolio, resume or video presentation of their work that may support their candidacies at a variety of colleges, whether or not they may pursue that field as an academic major.

... in the Sciences

Chadwick provides enormous opportunities for budding scientists through both courses and collaborative projects. Integrated science and AP courses reflect the approach taken by top colleges and universities, and Chadwick provides extraordinary mathematics offerings for the most advanced students. Students' work in robotics leads to regular engagement in international competitions, deepening the reputation of the program and of our students. Small classes and labs open faculty to identify unusual science interest and talent in our students. Important mentoring in those small classes and labs results ultimately in powerful advocacy on the student's behalf.

Summer Programs and Planning

College Counselors may also help our students think about summer internship possibilities, summer jobs, and summer programs on college campuses or through boarding schools, as well as other program opportunities. Representatives from programs regularly communicate their offerings to college counselors and occasionally make visits to Chadwick to meet directly with our students. Notices are routinely sent by the college counselors about special opportunities.

Office of College Counseling
Warnock Hall ♦ 310.377.1543 ext. 4075
pv-collegecounseling@chadwickschool.org