HIGH SCHOOL ADVICE FROM FELLOW CS PARENTS

GENERAL

• **Listen** to the school Guidance Counselors...they do know what they're talking about
• When embarking on this year long process, definitely look at it objectively...be realistic. Inhale...exhale! Don’t stress, make it a fun activity
• Make sure to include your child in the process. Listen to what they have to say...allow them to opine. Their input is as invaluable as yours
• While you're looking at every program, forget about the “ideal school” or school with the most mass appeal; think about what’s best for your child
• Help your **child challenge** him/herself by seeking schools that offer more than they have already experienced (don't let children get comfortable with sticking with what they already are familiar with)

DO YOUR RESEARCH / BE PREPARED

• Look at every school's overall progress report grade. Not only the most recent grade, but also grades for the past 3 years including:
  o Areas for improvement...did they improve and if so in what areas did they improve in?
  o Consistency...any drop offs in grading that may be of concern
  o State ELA/Math Test Scores
  o Key: College Readiness, Graduation & Post-Secondary Enrollment Rate
• Be cognizant of which schools take District 3 kids and which do not
• Leverage all available resources:
  o Insideschools.org
  o Borough HS Fairs / Events
  o Open houses
  o High School Directories
  o The Computer School Website

• If your child even **might** be interested in any artistic endeavors (even if it is not his/her main interest), get lessons and direction early on so that, when auditions come up, your child will be prepared.
• Have a plan on who to ask for letters of recommendation
• **Ask the children** who already attend the school what they think of the curriculum, the teachers, the extracurricular activities, the culture, the discipline, etc
• Consider the following:
  
  o Would you allow your child to travel outside the borough of Manhattan?
  o Profile/Makeup of the Program
  o Do you envision your child in that program for the next 4 years?

TOURS / OPEN HOUSES / FAIRS

• Tour the schools and see for yourself
• Attend tours/open houses in spring of 7th grade if possible
• When you get to the high school fair, *don’t try to visit each and every table*: eliminate the obviously undesirable schools (whether due to distance, interest, eligibility, etc)
• Be prepared for Beacon High School to arrive at least an hour early for the tour. Waiting lines are wrapping around three Street blocks.

ESSAYS

• Many schools use the same essays each year. Go online to schools and see what the essay questions are
• Prepare your child early for upcoming essays, don't start last minute; do essay over summer between 7th and 8th grade, if possible

APPLICATION

• When completing the high school application, be sure to include any and all schools your child is interested in (do *not* depend upon your child getting into the one school of his/her choice), in the order of acceptability.

TEST PREP

• Buy test prep book and have child practice
• Make sure that your child takes practices tests at least 4 times
• Leverage tutors