

Speaker 1 ([00:01](#)):

Hi everyone. It's August and today we are talking about the 10-Step Guide to Private School Admissions. This is an essential resource for families who are navigating the intricate world of private school admissions. It is authored by our entire team here at Evolved Education Company with contributions from Randy Dumont, Caitlin Hassan, Amy Nathan, Becky Reback, Sophie Roberts, and Liza Steele. We have put together a guide that provides a comprehensive step-by-step framework that helps secure the best-fit school for your child from early education all the way through postgraduate high school programs. I'm really excited to talk with you today about this book and give you a little bit of insight into it. And I also want to talk with you a little bit about the ways that we consult with families. So this is a perfect podcast for families who are going to be going through the private school admissions process this season or next season, and it's a really great introduction to the way that we work here at Evolved.

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So if you're thinking about working with us, this is a really great podcast, and if you're already working with us or going through this process, it's also a great podcast for you. So first of all, let's take a broad look at this process. We have a child who's going to go into a nursery school, a pre-kindergarten, a kindergarten, a middle school, a high school, or a postgraduate high school program. And the parents need to go through this process with their child. They need to fill out an application, they need to give the prospective schools all of this information that is required for the application, and then they have to wait for the notification dates, which are typically in February or March if you're going through boarding school applications. So why is there 10 steps to this process? It sounds easy enough, right? We're just going to put together this information about my kid, send it in and wait for the decision.

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Well, the issue is that there's many different nuances to this process. There's also something really big to consider here, and that is the educational placement of your child. To us, this is one of the most important decisions and processes that parents and families make and endeavor to do together. And something that I want you to know about evolved is that we're educators and we got into this business because we love the process of teaching and we love the process of developing skills. And this process allows us to do that work with your family and with your children. And so what you can get when you work with evolved is not only great advice to make sure your process goes as well as possible to make sure you're getting the best chance to get admissions into your favorite schools, but also the transformative experience that comes by going through a process such as this.

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You're just not going to come out the same as when you started because you're going to learn about your child in ways you haven't before. Your child's going to learn skills they've never had before, and you are going to be able to take a look at the landscape of education in ways you never have before and really see what's out there and see what really excites you and fits with your child. So the process itself is quite transformative. It's also quite successful here. Every year we have results to be proud of our families, get into the very best educational institutions in the Tri-state area, in particular New York City in particular. And we every year have happy families who are excited about where they're going. Now I'm going to take you through these 10 steps so that you can get a sense of them. So first of all, the very first couple of steps, I would say, all the way through step number 4, 1, 2, 3, and four are very important because they lay the foundation for everything that we do.

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So the first thing is we discover your child's learning profile. This is how is your child learning? What is their development like if they're very young, we have checklists for two year olds, three-year-olds, and four year olds. We can really get a sense of where their development is in an academic sense, but also a social emotional and physical sense. And we can also learn a little bit about the way in which your child

might learn best by asking you questions about how they're learning right now. The first chapter of this really talks about your child's current level of functioning. What are some of the notable areas of development? What are some examples that the student has already endeavored that shows us where they learned successfully? What are the instructional methods that are ideal for your student? Do they benefit from direct multisensory instruction, group learning, accelerating the curriculum project-based learning inquiry-based learning, Montessori approach?

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Regio Amelia approach. A lot of different options in education, really. And so where is your child going to learn at their best? And we have ways of asking questions and ways also of assessing children to determine what may be best. We also ask about the classroom environment and the activities that have the optimal experience of learning for your child, such as the classroom presentation. Is it very modern without very much visualist stimuli? Is there notes and reminders for students to follow? Is there a schedule that they have at the school that's very helpful? Are there activities and supports as necessary? And what kinds of teachers are best for your child? Are they very relational? Are they experts in their subjects? Are they coaches, athletic coaches as well as teachers? Sometimes that's especially important as we look at boarding schools. So really talking about what kinds of teachers are best for your child.

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So we're really spending some time here, maybe we're reading reports that your older children have. We're doing assessments with children. Becky Reback has a host of assessments that she provides that help us as the consultants know more about how your child learns best, and you get to have this information as well. So it's really a valuable step to take because everything in the process can be anchored back to our understanding of your child's learning profile. We're particularly good at creating this learning profile because of our education background. A lot of consultants that we work with are wonderful guides and advisors, but what makes evolved really special is that we are educators. We understand how to assess students and their learning profiles. We understand how that learning profile is going to be effective in one setting versus another. That's a really huge add value in the work that we do.

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After we understand the student's learning profile, then we get with you, the parent, and we talk with you about your wish list. This is maybe related to the student learning profile, but it incorporates much more than just that. It can mean asking you about the location of the school, if it's co-ed, it's single sex, if there are different activities or cultural components that are important to you if there is a campus school that you're looking for, a boarding school, that you're looking for a certain travel that you're willing to take to get to a school. So all of these kinds of questions we ask you in this wishlist creation, if your child is older, middle school, high school applicants, get to have this wishlist questionnaire as well so that we can understand what they wish for as well in terms of their next placement. So that is really helpful because then we go into the third step, which is where we create the school criteria.

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The school criteria you can think of as the ingredients of what you are looking for in a school. It considers the student learning profile, it considers the wishlist. It might also be something that the advisor puts into your realm of idea. So we're saying, Hey, I think you should, I know I've heard what you said about your student learning profile. I heard what you said about your wishlist. I have this experience. And I think given those two different pieces of information, we should also add this in as another component of your school criteria. So this is where really the add value comes in this third step with working with one of our consultants. So it's really talking about maybe a signature program that you're looking for that would be helpful, such as maybe an entrepreneurship program or some kind of executive function coaching program. And we're really looking at volume of homework.

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So maybe your student has the ability to do a good amount of work on their own versus a student who maybe isn't, or a family who really doesn't want to support a whole bunch of work going on at home versus a family that does. So we're really looking at a lot of different components in terms of creating a school criteria. In the book, we give you some examples of some school criteria that we've created and then we go to the school list. So now we're writing down these are the schools that match this school criteria. Here are the places that can deliver on what you're looking for. And the key is with this fourth step is that we are now putting in our expertise in terms of knowing the landscape of schools in the way that we do and making sure that you have schools you've maybe never thought of, schools that you've already thought of, and now we're making it really clear as to why you're looking at these schools because we're showing how these schools match your school criteria.

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Now, the interesting part of this work is that sometimes the school criteria, it's not met by every single school that we look at. Just like you might be shopping for a house and you're looking for three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and in the school district and with a dishwasher and a certain laundry setup, and maybe for example, there isn't a certain laundry setup and there isn't a dishwasher, but all the other criteria is met. And you say, you know what? We'll go look at that particular house because it mostly fits our criteria. And I think if we find it doesn't have those other components, we can either source them outside of the home or we can build them into the school or home later. You see where I'm going with this? So we write out sort of how these schools meet the criteria for the family.

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Now they get to go into the school and start looking at the schools and interfacing with the schools and right, this is where our families are so well positioned for the process at this point because if they've done this work with us, which is what we call school list building, it's our school list building service, you can get this service as a standalone service or you could also get it as your full service that we do for the whole entire process. So the school list building service helps families because it gives them a foundation of who their student is and why they're looking at this school as related to their student. And so everything else that the family does in the application process can be rooted back to this work, how they talk in the interviews, how they speak in the essays, how they talk to the school about why they want to go there and demonstrate that interest and write those letters of interest.

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Everything can go back to the school criteria, which is rooted in understanding of the student, the wishlist, and then also that advisor input. Interestingly and important to note is that the school criteria is a dynamic list, meaning it can change, it doesn't have to stay the same. The student might change their learning profile in the fall when we're applying. They might change their wishlist as they go. Look at schools, all is permitted. We are working with a dynamic process and there is room for students and families to change their list, to change their wishlist, to change the student learning profile, to evolve within this school building process. In fact, we asked families to be reflective and really to look back at what this document says as they look at schools, even as we are experts in so many schools, we really know them well because we're also tutoring within them.

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We're professionally developing teachers within them. We're having conversations with tutors that work here who teach there. So we have a lot of ways of understanding schools beyond the ways that most consultants do. But I will say something that's really important is that families have to go to the school in the time of the school admissions process and learn about what's happening right now. Schools are also dynamic places and what was happening last year may not be happening this year. And it's very important to consider and take in information in current times and really interface with the school to learn about them in the present time. Now, this lends us into the next part of our service, which is application

guidance and support. A lot of times families will come in and say, I know I have to write the essay. I know I need help with that.

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I know I have to prepare for these interviews. But what they don't often anticipate is that there's a good amount of questions and answers and just reflection that goes on in the process. And having an advisor who knows your child, knows your family, who you can just talk with and process what you're going through in this time is sometimes a really helpful part of this process. And that really takes us into these next couple of steps. So we talk a lot about how to prepare. The next step is sort of determining your strategy. How are you going to present yourself as a family, as a student? What are some of the things you can leverage in your child's application that will really make them appealing to this particular school? So we offer that in this initial part of this application support. So we're really getting this application strategy together.

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And then we're talking about how is your family going to prepare? What's the best way for your child to prepare for the tests? What's the timeline for the tests if they're going to be taken, what's the timeline for them to really get involved in writing their essays, interview prepping? How much runway do they need to do all of this? What do you guys need as a family in terms of how to get this stuff done that you need to get done? We have some ideas, but we usually talk with our families and just help create a plan that works with whatever they need. So this is really on to now step six. So step five is creating the strategy. Step six is planning out your family's preparation and how you're going to prepare for the process. And then step seven is this management system. We call it the Evolved School Admissions Management System or ESAMS for short.

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And really what it is is a spreadsheet that houses all of your schools. And then it tells you specifically once the process opens what you need to be doing for each of the schools in terms of completing the application. And then we will also help you with organizing your digital materials such as your essays, your interview prep. All of that will be linked back into that spreadsheet so that you can have everything in one place. This is really, really monumentally helpful because when you go into a school for your interviews, you're going to want to look back at what you wrote in your essays if you've already submitted them or you want to look back at what you already submitted in terms of your application. Having everything organized in one place in a system that we've already used a million times is really, really helpful.

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So we set up that system with you as part of this application support and guidance process. So you'll go through some of your other pieces here and everything will be tied into this spreadsheet. So step eight is completing the application. So you will need to make sure that you share information with schools so that they have a really strong understanding of who your student is. You're going to go visit schools, you're going to go interview at schools, and you're going to write your essays and fill out. The older children will also write essays as well. And in this section we have guidance for those kinds of essays and what typical essays you might see and how to maybe start to think about approaching them. But of course the best case scenario again is that we've done the work in the very beginning so we understand who your child is a learner, what kinds of wishlist components you want, and then going forward, we talk through that application strategy and how you are going to leverage some of these opportunities to share who your child is in the process.

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So this takes this application. Completing the application takes you all the way through sending in your school reports, transcripts and recommendations. There is nuance and strategy to this. I will say that often

our families will put forth amazing applications. They really will, and they will share wonderful things about their children, but they will have maybe not considered what the school is saying about their child. This is a confidential piece of communication, but there are ways that parents can become informed about what schools will be saying and ways that they can advocate and discuss how the student will present in their next placement. So it's important just to know that the ingredients of this process really has to do with a prospective school, truly understanding who your student is and how they may do well their school. So we have to do that job. We have to help them with that process.

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If we don't, it's going to be difficult for the committee to say yes to you. So it's important if we need to put together supplemental materials. This is especially important in a boarding school process, somewhat important in the high school process, but we have to help you with that part too. So the completing of the application really goes from September all the way through January and sometimes even late into January. And so we're doing a lot of work with our families. There's a lot of discussion, a lot of task management. And you can also hire us surely for a la carte items. So you can work with us on exclusively a set of tasks such as the essay, the interview, letters of interest and decision day planning. You can hire us exclusively for advocacy purposes to explain your child to a school, for example. We have sets of work that we have to do within that.

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Of course, we have to know your student, we have to assess your student. We have to read through all the reports and really understand who they are. So there is some catch up we're going to have to do, do something like that, but it's all possible. And we have all of these services outlined. If you're curious about them, you can call us and we will walk you through the options and see what makes sense for your family. The very last step, of course, is to make your decision. So you could be admitted to multiple options. You could be admitted to only one option. You could be waitlisted, you could not be admitted to any option, and sometimes we need to really work on a plan B, C, or D and so on and so forth. So that's the very last step and we can't forget it because it's sometimes as important to navigate as all the things we've done before.

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So the 10 step guide is really, again, 10 full steps to get you from the very start of this process, which begins by understanding your child all the way through decision day planning, which for all of you listening, if you're going through this fall's process is happening in February of 2025 or March of 2025 if you're going through the boarding school process. So just to restate a couple of things for you, if you're listening and you're wondering how to work with our team, just understand we have a full service from start to finish through the 10 steps process that we work with families on. And this is a process that can actually take us a full year to do with families. We can pull it out and start it in February and end in February, or we can begin with you and get the steps done starting in September or even October.

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And some families come in December and they're going through some kind of boarding school process, and we can fast track all of the steps and get 'em done in a smaller amount of time. But it's true that we have that service. You can engage with us through the full entire process. And then in terms of the other options, you can break apart the services and do the school list building service. If you just want a school list and you get your student learning profile, the wishlist, the school criteria, and your school list, then if you want to just do you already have your school list and you want to just work on the applications, we would start with step number five, which is the strategy and making sure we have an appropriate application strategy. And then going forward from there to step number 10. If you want to just do certain tasks with us, we can just do the certain tasks without ongoing q and a and assessments and different types of discussions.

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You can just simply have us review your essays. You can have us work on your interviews. You can learn about the letters of interest and work through decision day planning. So there's a package that we have that's just for those for tasks that you can purchase with us, or you can do even each one of those separate. So that's another idea. So there's lots of different ways that we have worked with families through this process. We do that because we know not every family needs or requires everything that we offer, and we do want to just be reactionary to what our families need. And that's important to us. We're very highly relational here. We really get to know our students in anything that we even do, even if we're spending a very short period of time. The last thing I'll tell you is in case you're just not sure and you want to get a sense of what we can offer you, we do have smaller consultations.

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We call them comprehensive and impactful consultations. These are where you do a three-part consultation with us. One is a little more involved, the comprehensive and the impactful is a little bit of a smaller bite, but you can come in and simply ask us questions about a particular topic, or you could come in and learn about the system here in New York City, in the public or private sense or charter school sense. You can learn about what the boarding school process is like. And so there's ways that you can also just come in and we can teach you something in a more bite-sized amount of time, and you might be able to take that education and apply it on your own with the guide at your fingertips too. So I hope you found this helpful. I do hope you come in and talk with us this fall at any step.

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It's never too late. In fact, we just say, please come and please just have a complimentary call with us and talk with us about what's going on, see if there's a way we could support you in any way, shape, or form. If you have a few hundred dollars on your budget or many thousands of dollars in your budget, just anything in between, we can certainly help you and we're set up in that way. So please don't be shy and make sure that you use us as a resource through this important process. And we do hope to hear from many of you this fall who are engaging in this. And just a last plug for the book, please go to Amazon and purchase the 10-Step Guide to Private School Admissions by Mary Miele, with Randy Dumont, Caitlin Hasson, Amy Nathan, Becky Reback, Sophie Roberts, and Liza Steele. All of us work here at Evolve and are very happy to serve you through this process. If you're not sure which one of us is the best person for you, you can certainly just fill out our major inquiry form, which is on our website,

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And then that form actually goes and it will go to the best fit advisor for your family. Okay? Every one of us has a little bit of a different spin on what we're doing, and sometimes it's important just to go to the person who's really studying that particular area that you need guidance within. Okay? Alright, I will talk to you all soon. Have a wonderful start to your school year. I'll see you in September when we'll be talking about scripts for how to talk with your child's teacher. So that will be what we'll be talking about in September. I'm excited about that. Alright, have a good one everyone. Bye-Bye bye.