

# Save the Date

## A back-to-school primer for parents

Whether the kids are going back to the same school, or applying to a new one, after Labor Day parents need to hit the ground running.

Savvy city parents keep spread sheets, mark calendars and palm pilots to keep track of it all. "Absolute dates often can't be changed," attests Grace Ball, Riverdale Country School's former director of lower school admissions for 27 years and now director of placement at Garden House, an elite Upper East Side nursery school.

Applying to schools is practically a full-time job. Multiple visits are necessary. Without a doubt, appointments for interviews and tours are not to be missed, barring some emergency. At all the best private schools admissions directors like to meet both parents and child. At St. Bernard's, Buckley and Chapin, two separate interview appointments are required.

"Some schools will be nice and say, 'Sure we'll give you another date,'" says Ball, who also advises private clients. "But other schools will say, 'Sorry, you have to go on a wait list, and when another child drops out we'll try and fit you in.' That's exactly what they do, and it's an awful thing if that school is your first choice."

Ball also stresses following up, and staying on top of each school. "They're all very different," she says. "Some schools only do tours in May and October others offer huge tours every day."

As if that weren't enough, parents need to stay on top of camp calendars, summer programs, athletic schedules, proms, graduations, prep classes, tutors, registration dates, college interviews, early and regular application deadlines, and after-school activities.

So, parents, get ready, get set and save these dates:



Victoria Goldman

### Middle & High School

#### September

- ✓ Call for applications.
- ✓ Fall athletes purchase necessary equipment.
- ✓ Mark calendars for parents' days or nights.

#### October

- ✓ Complete applications, schedule tours, interviews and testing.
- ✓ Hire a tutor if a child is falling behind.
- ✓ Re-enroll in camp/summer program.
- ✓ Register for spring league sports.
- ✓ Freshmen and sophomores register for January's SAT IIs.

#### November

- ✓ If you're set on a summer program, register and send a deposit. All the best programs fill early.
- ✓ Pre-season practice for winter sports.

#### December

- ✓ Sophomores planning on taking January's SAT IIs prep.
- ✓ Early admission is offered to siblings and legacies who qualify.

### Juniors & Seniors

- ✓ Juniors should be registered for PSATs, seniors for SAT Is and IIs.
- ✓ Juniors & seniors prep for Oct. SATs.
- ✓ If applying early, seniors write essays and choose teachers to write recommendations.
- ✓ Seniors narrow college options.

- ✓ Juniors take PSATs; some seniors take SATs hoping to improve scores.
- ✓ Juniors choose SAT prep classes/tutors.
- ✓ Seniors wrap up college visits and if applying early make a final decision.
- ✓ Prom planning begins.

- ✓ Juniors explore summer options—such as community service, travel, internships or course work.
- ✓ Nov. 1st or 15th most early decision deadlines.
- ✓ Few seniors take SATs.

- ✓ Juniors who are planning on taking SATs in January prep.
- ✓ Very few seniors take SATs.
- ✓ Around Dec. 15, seniors who have applied early decision to colleges receive letters of acceptance or rejection.
- ✓ Seniors who haven't been accepted early complete additional college applications.