

Education Links

You, Your Child and Brian Proctor at Education Links

Fall 2008



Brian Proctor

Warm Greetings to All

I bring to you supportive and expert counsel that taps deep first-hand knowledge of schools and programs throughout North America and the rest of the World.

The Education Consultant

So exactly what does an educational consultant do? To put it simply, I bring focus to parents who want to conduct a school or program search for their child or teen

The bulk of my family consulting involves four types of clients:

- Clients seeking a traditional school or international placement which would most suit their child or teen's academic needs and development.
- Clients who have a child or teen with a specialized talent such as in the arts or in a specific athletic endeavor that requires more attention for their skill development and desired career path.
- Clients who have a child or teen with learning differences such as dyslexia, ADD, ADHD, bipolar disorder, depression, low self esteem, anxiety, Asperger's disorder - as diagnosed by a psychologist or a psychiatrist.
- Clients who have a teenager in trouble - expulsion, drugs, alcohol, the law, disrupting the home...or all of the above.

Getting to Know You

I pride myself on getting to know the family and their child (in most of my cases - a teenager). The first meeting in most cases is face to face and takes one to two hours. This is essential to the preparation of the Educational Plan. I have visited over 270 programs and schools in the last seven years. In addition I

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have a personal relationship with a further 175 schools which I developed during my eighteen years as Director of Admissions at Trinity College School. I therefore have the ability to provide my clients with a distillate of a small group of schools which best fit the needs of their child or teen.



This saves the family valuable time and money. Then they visit these schools, meet with me upon their return for my input and then they decide which schools/programs they will apply to. Hopefully, there will be at least two or more acceptances and then the choice of school will be theirs.

The Dangers of the Internet

With access to the universal internet in North America there is a temptation for a parent to use it as a 'do it yourself' school or program search. This can be very time consuming, inappropriate and more expensive than hiring an educational consultant. Without first hand knowledge of a school or a program, how does a parent weigh the relative merits of each school? How would a parent know the recent history of a wilderness program that could be abusive or negligent in the care of their teenager? Many of the schools or programs would do almost anything to get a warm body into a desk, bed or sleeping bag. This coming year I estimate that 95% or more of all schools and programs will not have waiting lists. I insulate the family from the 'sales pitch' of admissions offices. If you are going it alone on a school search - 'buyer beware!'

Advice from Colleagues and Friends

Often, clients create their own list of schools based on what they have heard from 'others'. Parents are not unbiased when it comes to their children! They may say; 'Jack would be perfect at this school' or 'Suzie is the ideal candidate for that school' when, in fact, it is the parents vicarious wish for their child to attend this or that school. In the end 'the parent's choice often does not fit the actual academic, cultural and social needs of their child.

My Experience

I can really help a family with their school search. I personally know over 400 schools and programs in Canada, United States, Latin America and Europe. In Canada alone I have a professional or personal association with almost all the 72

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CAIS schools. I am also one of the few Canadian members of an American association which acts as advisors to families on educational options - the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA - www.educationalconsulting.org). This group has over 300 education consultants. We all are interconnected through the internet. We share our knowledge of schools and programs on a daily basis. Many members are personal friends of mine. For example, I often will discover a program or school that I have not personally visited which appears to be perfect for my client. In cases like this, my network of consultants, both IECA members and Independents, are invaluable in corroborating the worth of a program or school.

My Seven Ethics/Guidelines for Educational Consulting

1. I strive to include all family members in the plan.
2. I will discuss with the family my fees and other financial arrangements.
3. I will use all possible resources in the process of providing options.
4. I strive to understand the student's special strengths, values and needs.
5. I do not solicit or accept compensation from any school or institution for placement of the student
6. I will present to my client(s) the most appropriate choices, representing each one fairly.
7. I will make clear the client's responsibilities in dealing with any schools, colleges or institutions.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you again for taking the time to review my philosophy of education consulting and I hope the information provided will be helpful in deciding the future of your child or teen's education.