

AURORA





► The Full Picture

To conquer the college application process, students need to start early they need to be strategic, and they need to think comprehensively. Aurora helps students see the full picture.

From guiding strong intellectual development, to creating the right extracurricular strategy, to crafting a testing plan, to selecting the best way to spend the summer, the Aurora Program helps students address all the important parts of their application profile simultaneously. Student cannot rely on high test scores, good grades, or some leadership opportunities alone to gain admission to the most competitive schools. Everything must be strong, and Aurora is the answer.

Aurora is a comprehensive program that takes students through the college preparation and application process.

► How Does it Work?

Aurora is effective because rather than just putting the best spin on a student's activities and accomplishments in a college application, it serves to improve students' profiles in areas that are fundamentally important in US admissions. From intellectual engagement to leadership and impact in extracurricular activities, Aurora guides students through a process of self-improvement and reflection, making them more interesting students, and therefore more desirable to admissions officers. In the second half, the students are guided through all parts of the application process, so they benefit from an insider's perspective as they learn what to do and what mistakes to avoid when applying to college. The program helps students take a strategic approach to admissions, removing the guesswork from the process while also making sure students create the best application possible.

What are the details?

Aurora is open to students finishing 10th grade until February of their 11th grade.



Students also have free access to Due West's application courses, workshops and presentations. There are no minimum requirements to be part of Aurora, but students and families must recognize that the student will be required to complete a significant amount of work over the course of the two years. Due West helps students best when students themselves take ownership of this process.

Case Study

International Student in Beijing

A solid student, but lacking in direction. We helped her define and develop her academic goals so that she had a much more robust activity list and more attractive college profile to succeed in competitive admissions.

Before Working at Due West

- Student switched to a new school to take the bilingual IB diploma
- Student was limited in leadership activities at new school
- Student had good grades, but was not the most academically competitive in her class
- Student took courses in business, math, art, etc.; couldn't decide on her academic passion
- Grades: 39/42 IB score
- ACT : 31
- TOEFL : 118
- Activities
 - Founder & President, *Humans of Beijing*
 - Editor-in-Chief, school's first bilingual newspaper
 - Writer, Beijing Student Press Association
 - Participant, Yale Summer College, Political Journalism
 - Vice President, Student Union Club
 - Delegate, Harvard Model United Nations

Due West Difference

- By encouraging her to combine her interest in Chinese society with writing, Due West coached Student on how to apply to a Political Journalism course at Yale Summer Session.
- Due West managed student's leadership profile, guiding her to set up a photojournalism project, *Humans of Beijing*, to document diverse individuals around the city
- Due West helped student brainstorm an essay on an art project that confronted the materialism she experienced in her old school
- Due West secured student's participation to an exclusive information session with admissions officers at her top choice school

Our Results

Accepted by Wellesley College

- Student eloquently articulated her interests in the intersection between politics, art and Chinese society in her essays and interviews
- Student was accepted Early Decision to her top choice school, Wellesley College, ranked #4 Liberal Arts College

Local student who attended boarding school in the United States

A low-performing student with weak testing who was struggling in an American boarding school environment. Because he needed overall guidance, better discipline, and time management support to put together his admissions profile, we helped him achieve his new goals.

Before Working at Due West

- Student had difficulty adjusting to new boarding school environment
- Student had below average GPA and low TOEFL; limited options for top 100 universities
- Student had limited activities and leadership positions
- GPA: 3.92
- SAT : 1500 / 400 CR / 430 W / 670 M
- TOEFL : 78
- Activities
 - Mountain biking
 - Business internship
 - Member, school's Rubix Cube Club
 - Volunteer, homeless shelter

Due West Difference

- Due West set goals for Student, prompting him to join more activities, such as playing sports and volunteering at a homeless shelter
- Due West nurtured student's interest in mechanical engineering, computer science and robotics
- Due West helped student find connections with schools that would take his profile seriously. These schools had programs that included a direct pathway to Ivy League institutions

Our Results

Enrolled in 3+2 program with Columbia University

- Student accepted to 3-2 dual-engineering program to study a 3-year Bachelor of Arts in computer science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, a small liberal arts college in New York State
- Student has plans to automatically enroll in a 2-year Bachelor of Engineering program at Columbia University



Breaking down the program



1. Parent and Student Orientation

An introduction to the Aurora Program and working with Due West.

2. SD: Due West Strategy Assessment

You will benefit from Due West's team approach when you meet your counselor and a former admissions officer, who evaluate different areas relevant to the admissions process.

3. SD: Strategy Assessment Discussion

After Due West produces your official Strategy Assessment, you will meet with your counselor to go through the document and agree on your priorities over the next several months.

4. EI: Extra-Curricular Strategy

In this session, you and your counselor will establish your extracurricular strategy for the year, creating a multi-step plan for creating greater impact and improving your profile in this crucial area.

5. MF: Recommendation Roadmap

You and your counselor will discuss how to build relationships with teachers and mentors, setting the stage for strong letters of recommendation.

6. SD: Testing Strategy

Testing is of course an important component of US admissions, and in this session you and your counselor will agree to a plan to complete all your college testing requirements.

7. ID: Intellectual Development Strategy and Research Project

You and your counselor will decide on a research project to expand your intellectual profile and allow you to examine a subject from multiple angles. This culminates in a presentation competition.

8. SL: School List Research

The first college list discussion; Due West will teach you how to think about schools by starting broadly and eventually narrowing your list.

9. EI: Types of Leadership

Leadership means more than being the president of a school club. In this session, you'll learn about the different ways admissions officers consider leadership and how to cultivate your own leadership potential.

10. ID: Intellectual Field Trip

Join Due West counselors and other students on a field trip in Beijing. If you're not in Beijing, your counselor will help guide you on how to take advantage of resources in your area.

11. IC: Interview Preparation

The interview is one of the most important – and most authentic – parts of the college application process. In this first session, you'll learn about the different kinds of admissions interviews and how to prepare for them.

12. EI: Extra-curricular Strategy Execution

In this session, your counselor will check in on your progress with your extra-curricular projects. You will re-evaluate your EI strategy and decide how to achieve your goals.

13. ID: Research Project Check-in

You and your counselor will discuss your process on your research project.

14. MF: Resume Builder

Summer programs and internships often require students to submit resumes. In this session, learn how to communicate about your academic and extra-curricular achievements on paper effectively.

15. SB: Summer Break Strategy

In this session, you and your counselor will discuss the possibilities for how to spend your summer and settle on a strategy.

16. SB: Summer Application Brainstorming

You and your counselor will discuss how to complete the applications for your target summer program(s).

17. SB: Summer Application Submission

You and your counselor will review your summer application(s), making sure there aren't any errors before submitting.

18. ID: Research Project Presentation

The conclusion of your book project. You will give a presentation to your counselor – either in person or online – about your project, the format of which will depend on your subject. The top presenters will be nominated to present at a Due West competition.

19. EI: Extra-Curricular Strategy Review

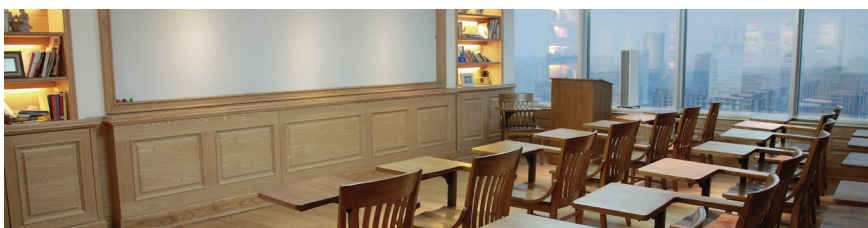
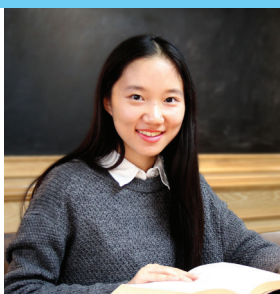
At the end of the academic year, you and your counselor will review how your EI strategy worked and discuss steps for the next year.

20. SB: Summer Plan Review

After you hear back from summer programs, you and your counselor will discuss next steps.

21. IC: Videotaped Interview

Seeing yourself on video can be embarrassing, but it's the best way to improve. In this session, your counselor will tape an interview of you for future review.



22. IC: Videotape Analysis and Discussion

After your counselor reviews your video, the two of you will meet to discuss your interview strengths and weaknesses.

23. AE: Application Angle Advisor

A Due West Council (DWC) member, one of Due West's former admissions officer, will meet with you and your counselor to help determine what your admissions angle should be.

24. SL: Early School Selection and School List

The second college list discussion: You'll begin to narrow your list and select a school or schools for Early Action/Early Decision.

25. AE: Common Application Introduction and Personal Statement Brainstorm

Your counselor will introduce the Common Application and brainstorm your Personal Statement with you.

26. AE: Essay Feedback Review

After one of our DWC members edits your personal statement and offers suggestions for improvement, you and your counselor will meet to go over the DWC's notes together and discuss how to improve your essay.

27. AE: Early School Essay Brainstorm

You and your counselor will brainstorm essay topics for your early school(s)' supplement(s).

28. IC: Interview Guru 1 and Common Application Review

The first session on preparing for the college interview. Additionally, your counselor will point out areas to make improvements on your Common Application forms.

29. MF: Early School Submission Review and Financial Certification

You and your counselor will review your entire application before submitting, while a Due West parent coordinator discusses financial certification requirements with your parents.

30. SL: Finalize School List and Parent Update Discussion

You and your counselor will agree on your final list of schools, and Due West will discuss your progress with your parents.

31. AE: Regular Decision Calendar Review and Brainstorm Group 2 Essays

Your counselor will review the calendar for the rest of your application work, and you will brainstorm your supplemental essays for your second group of schools.

32. AE: Essay Writing Progress Report 1

The second opportunity to discuss your writing strengths and weaknesses with your counselor.

33. IC: Interview Guru 2

The second session on preparing for the college interview.

34. AE: Brainstorm Group 3 Essays and Adjust School List

Brainstorm your next group of supplements and potentially adjust your school list based on late developments, including changes in GPA, testing, or competitions.

35. AE: Brainstorm Group 4 Essays and Early School Update Letter

Brainstorm your final group of supplemental essays and discuss sending an update letter to your early school(s).

36. AE: Essay Writing Progress Report 2

The final session to discuss your essay writing strengths and weaknesses.

37. SD: Program Review and Parent Update

An opportunity to review your work through the North Star Program and update your parents on your progress.

38. SD: Post-Submission Support

To provide assistance with update letters and other questions after all applications have been submitted.

39. IC: Interview Guru 3

The final session on preparing for the college interview.

40. SD: Post-Decision Support

To help you evaluate your college options and address any concerns after decisions have been released.

Sample Aurora Calendar

Sophomore Year

June

Introduction to Due West and establishing your priorities for the program.

July

Begin intellectual development and extracurricular involvement projects.

Junior Year

August

Establish testing strategy and begin to build relationships with teachers and mentors.

September - November

Building student profile: executing ID and EI strategies.

December

Preparing for next summer: setting a summer break strategy.

January

Applying to summer programs and beginning to prepare for college interviews.

February-March

Continuing to build student profile: executing ID and EI strategies.

April

Culminating ID and EI experiences: book presentation and EI plan execution.

May-June

Evaluating summer plan and executing testing strategy. Beginning work on college applications. Starting to construct school list.

Senior Year

July

Executing summer programs. Continuing work on college applications. Settling on Early Decision school(s).

August

Completing first round of applications, including all supplemental essays for Early Decision school(s).

September

Gathering school forms, finalizing recommendation providers, and continuing work on application essays.

October

Beginning interview prep and starting last round of supplemental essays. Finalize the school list.

November

Submit all applications. You're almost done!

December

Continuing interview preparation.

January-March

Final interview preparation, and preparing update letters to schools as needed.

April-May

Deciding on which school to attend.

June-August

Preparing to begin college!

Add-Ons

In order to support students with more particular needs, Due West developed Add-Ons address more specific requirements.

Athletics

Interested in DI or DIII sports? Due West will help you navigate the complex athletic recruitment process

Arts


Do you have a talent in music, arts or an interest in dance or architecture? Have your work reviewed and improved with Due West's arts experts before submitting to colleges

Schools

Are you interested in applying to more than 10 schools? Add schools to your Due West list. Price depends on whether or not the school requires additional essays

Aurora Reach is another option, suitable for some students.

Student Testimonials



"After taking my second SAT, I lost my confidence. I was talking to a lot of consulting companies at that time. They all told me that my future was unclear until I had a higher score. I felt that only my score would decide the results of my application. But when I came to Due West, my counselor easily figured out my advantages. He told me to identify my strengths. He said that my activities were special and that those made me a strong applicant. It was the first time I realized that I really had done some cool things. I felt like Due West would help me explore and do more."

——Student at a local school in Beijing

"I worked with many people at Due West during the application process. It was so cool. I learned a lot about writing. Now every time I write an essay, I try to edit my own work the "Due West Way. "

——Student at an international school in Shanghai

"I was not sure I what I wanted to study before I worked with Due West. I wanted to study mathematics because it's a very basic subject and it would give me a lot of flexibility, but Due West suggested I be more direct and consider studying business as an undergrad, instead of waiting for grad school. Due West told me that I needed to figure out whether I liked this field or not, so I went to the summer program, Leadership in the Business World as Due West suggested, and I realized that I fit the field a lot. Now I know I really like to work with people and organize business plans."

——Student at a local school in Beijing

"Due West also focuses a lot on how to educate students. Other companies teach you how to write certain essays, but Due West also changed my thoughts about education, about Americans, and about this whole application process."

——Student at local school in Guangdong



Follow our wechat to get more information