

## August 2023 Ethical Navigation: Developing a School Profile

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PCACAC is excited to present *Ethical Navigations*, an educational effort to proactively explore issues that might face professionals involved in the college admissions process.

Each month, *Ethical Navigations* explores a hypothetical scenario and potential avenues to approaching the situation using [NACAC's Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission](#) as the lens. This guide is built on the *principles* of honesty, transparency, equity, and respect for students and fellow professionals while including the *core values* of education, access and equity, professionalism, collegiality, collaboration, trust, and social responsibility. This month's navigation is submitted by Jake Talmage, College Counseling Director at St. Paul's School for Boys in Brooklandville, MD.

***This month's scenario:*** Counselor Cat is new to their high school and has started work over the summer to prepare for the upcoming application cycle. Upon starting their job, Cat realizes that the school does not have a profile. Knowing that colleges like to have information about schools, Cat is interested in developing and organizing a document that can explain the school to colleges. But Cat wonders, what should be included? Does NACAC provide any guidance? How might Cat proceed?

***Possible approaches:*** Unsure of where to start, Cat explores the NACAC website and finds [NACAC's Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission](#). Within this guide, Section I *The Ethical Core of College Admission*, point A discusses "Truthfulness and Transparency." Specifically, members are recommended to "accurately describe, represent, and promote their schools, institutions, organizations, and institutions." Thus, Cat's desire to develop a profile to help explain the school would be a best practice.

In addition, NACAC provides another document, [Best Practices for Developing a School Profile](#) which provides specific advice on facts, data and information that a school may want to put on their profile. For instance, the school may want to include school and community facts, school staff and contact info, grading systems and related procedures, standardized test score information, overview of student educational outcomes, curriculum descriptions and special features, and a summary of unique information, programs, or curriculum.

With so much possible information to include in a school profile, developing one from scratch can be daunting. For additional ideas, NACAC provides member profile samples on the website. In addition, a counselor could research local schools to see profiles on their websites, or even ask local college admission officers for feedback on drafts. As can be seen there are many approaches to providing specific information.

In developing a profile, a counselor has a great opportunity to partner with other campuses or school district offices to find and develop information. An additional challenge, though, can be that the school profile is often used by those other offices, too. These offices may or may not want to include all the suggested information; or the other offices may want to include additional information. Furthermore, school districts or other groups may also have a profile. Thus, developing or updating a profile can become a balancing act for a counselor as they navigate providing information to colleges and the wants and needs of school-based constituencies.

If you have any questions, feedback, or proposals for future Ethical Navigations, please contact [info@pcacac.org](mailto:info@pcacac.org).

Do you have a question about NACAC's recommended ethical practices or a suggested revision to the [Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission](#)? Please submit via [this form](#) and a member of the national Admissions Practices Committee will follow up with you.