

Private School Application Essays

The following essays were used by a client who successfully applied to an elite private school. The client did not attend the institution since she also gained admission to her first choice school. Important details have been changed to protect the identity of the client. We have enclosed both the student and parent essays.

Student Essays

Please list up to four (4) interests and activities you have pursued during your sixth, seventh, and eighth grades (for applicants to grades 10-12, please list activities from your last three (3) years of school) in order of importance to you (starting with most important):

I love fencing and have been competing as a fencer internationally. I usually train at a fencing center. Before the global pandemic I was spending about four hours per week fencing for the last 5 years. I would describe my ability in this area between competent and advanced.

I also enjoy art and specifically drawing. I used to go to an art class and then spend hours at home sketching, but now I am taking an art class online. Before the pandemic I spent two hours every week for the last nine years drawing but now I only spend one to two hours. I believe that my ability in this area could be described as competent.

I also loved choir at school. I would spend at least two hours every week at choir practice for the last 7 years before I moved to a new school. I would describe my ability as competent, and I would like to do more.

Another creative activity I enjoy is writing. In my free time, which is about five hours a week, I am writing a book with a working title of Lynn's Opinions. I have been taking extra-curricular English classes but due to the pandemic, I'm temporarily unable to attend these classes. I would describe my ability in writing as competent. Every Saturday we have reading and writing time in the library for the past 10 years.

What characteristics, skills, or attributes do you value most about yourself? What makes you unique?

I am actually interested in all subjects at my school, and I really enjoy learning about new and different ways to look at the world. One subject that I love to learn about in school is history. Discovering facts about what it was like before I was born is really fascinating; this is mostly because my history teacher, Mr. Bree, teaches history in such a challenging way that my classmates and I have lots of respect for him. History is a very interesting topic and I want to keep learning more about it. I also love taking art classes. I can freely express myself, and I can also relax and have fun! I compete in art contests; in 2019 I entered a Remembrance Day poster contest in Boston and won 3rd place!

What brings you joy? How do you incorporate it into your life?

I fence competitively, and I really enjoy it because it allows me to have fun and participate in healthy and positive competition with my peers. It's exciting and wonderful when I do well. I placed 13th place at the New England Cup last year and my fencing ranking is currently SXC IL 13. It's also wonderful that fencing allows me to travel to competitions and

meet new people. Another activity I love outside of school is taking art lessons. Although I do have art lessons in school, I have added extracurricular lessons because I really love art. I love all the arts, and I took violin, piano, and dance lessons, which are in also different forms of art. Now I am focusing on my drawing skills, and I find art brings me joy because it allows me to express myself.

Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? Did you take action? If so, what was the outcome?

One issue that concerns me in the world, and that I also observe in my own community is sexism. I am trying to help solve this issue by writing a book about sexism to bring awareness of the inequalities between men and women. Obviously, it is hard for one person to change the behavior of so many people, but I feel that identifying the problem is the only way to start to fix it. Some of the suggestions I make are fairly simple: Don't objectify people. Don't make sexist remarks about the opposite gender. If you see someone make a sexist remark, don't stand by and say nothing. Explain what's wrong with what they said and help them understand why it's offensive. I feel that anything I can do to educate people and help provide solutions to this issue will spark conversations about sexism and focus attention on a problem that is still very prevalent in society today.

As a member of the Elite Private School community, I will act to foster inclusion and to promote excellence in all that I do. I commit to approach my decisions with integrity, kindness, and generosity both on and off campus."

Our Honor Code is a guiding statement that speaks to the essential principles of our K-12 learning community. We believe inclusion, excellence, integrity, kindness, and generosity are core values of the Poly experience. Please choose one of the Honor Code principles and share its importance in your worldview, ideals, or beliefs.

The core value of inclusion speaks highly to me. I believe I represent that value in several ways by being open and welcoming to everyone. For me, inclusion means to be non-judgmental of people and to get to know them as people first. I think this has made me a better person because I have learned to reach out to people, and I have learned to talk with others and to listen to them. That has helped me gain new understanding of people and the world. My family has direct experience with this from the time when my mom moved alone to attend school in New England. She found that everyone welcomed her and included her. She has passed this lesson on to me. This is why I hope to attend a school that values diversity because I believe I can learn so much about people that popular media like TV has really not shown.

Parent Essays

We look forward to getting to know you and your child during the admission process. Your written comments on the following topics are appreciated as they will help us gain a better understanding of how Poly might play a role in guiding and educating your child.

As a K-12 school, community is one of Elite Private School core values. Tell us about your family's background, interests, and cultural identity. How would your family uniquely contribute to Poly's vibrant student and parent community?

I enjoy volunteering and have made it a point to be involved with my child's school and contribute in as many ways as I can. I have been part of the parents' leadership council, and I have repeatedly participated as a "class parent," stepping in to support the teacher by organizing the kids and helping out to allow the class to run smoothly.

I have helped out with individual Cross Country competitions transporting equipment and necessities such as first aid and water to the competition. For Teachers' Day I organize the flowers, making sure that they reflect the deep level of appreciation we as parents have for the job teachers do. Since my daughter enjoys choir so much, I have become involved as a volunteer for the school choir competitions, coordinating with different schools and helping to monitor student safety. The same thing is true for the school's Founders' Day event. It is important at an event like this to participate and to support the school through donations. I have made sure to be involved in many aspects of this event to raise money for the school. I know that there is always a fundraising aspect of a parent's participation in a school. I have always volunteered to be a part of this very necessary and important part of school participation by being one of the people on the phone banks, making calls to other parents in order to support the school. I have enjoyed volunteering for my child's school, since it has helped me to feel closer to the institution, let the teachers know how much I appreciate all their efforts, and assist the school to obtain the goals that it wishes to reach.

Kindly share why Elite Private School would be a positive educational experience for your child's academic, social, and personal growth.

Elite Private School's dedication to embracing the creativity of the human spirit resonates deeply with our family, and we believe that the access to both a strong education as well as the focus on the dignity and worth of all human beings will help Lynn thrive and grow. Obviously, we are looking for a strong foundation in the basics of education that will give her the tools she needs to flourish and to continue on to college. Thus, we are looking for an academic environment that emphasizes reading, writing, mathematics and social studies in basic and advanced levels. Our child already loves school. We believe that strong teachers who challenge and command respect from their students while also inspiring them will be essential to helping our child grow and develop into an adult.

We also hope our child's education will allow her to grow in her social skills and worldview. As world travelers who have lived in New England before coming to the United States, we are very aware of how important social issues and equal tolerance for all people are as both a subject to be taught and something that we hope our child will explore first hand. We believe that our child must grow up to continue to be tolerant and accepting of anyone who is different than she is. We want to make sure that our child's openness and kindheartedness is expanded as she goes to high school. We hope her education will allow her to explore her highest ideals while experiencing the challenges that tolerance and diversity can bring to any environment, so that she can participate in a changing world with an open heart and open mind.

How would you describe your child as a student and as an individual? Please include both areas of strength and needed growth.

As Lynn's parents we believe one of our child's greatest strengths as a student is that she is very consistent. She makes sure that she arrives at school on time and is devoted to her education. Even with all her extracurricular activities Lynn is always up to date on her homework. When she traveled for fencing competitions, she made sure to bring her homework with her and to get it done on time. In between her fencing matches, Lynn would use that spare time to complete her homework, and she was entirely self-motivated to do so.

Lynn also loves reading. Every Saturday we would go to the Chapters bookstore and Lynn was always excited to try something new. She loves classical books and newer stories. What I feel is most important to say about our daughter is that she is a kind and respectful person, who feels great friendship and enthusiasm for her fellow students. It is true that at school sometimes girls can be mean and make fun of each other, but I have noticed that Lynn is always encouraging all of her friends to be kind to each other. She never hesitates to help other students and enjoys studying with her friends so that they can all help each other to do their best on each and every test. The growth that Lynn will need to improve on is to find subjects that challenge her and make her think. She is very enthusiastic about every idea that she learns so that it will be important for her to learn how to channel this energy into ways of communicating these ideas with others. We are sure that the right school will recognize Lynn's enthusiasm and help her grow.

Provide a brief family anecdote or personal narrative that speaks to your child's character or personality.

When our daughter was participating in the New England Cup under 16 final at the age of twelve, she was facing an opponent who was confident and (in my view) very intimidating. There was a moment in the match when things did not go well for the opponent. Then my daughter's opponent broke her spare sword. At this point the opponent could easily have been disqualified and the referee would have been completely justified giving the opponent a yellow card. As a result, my daughter would have won the match. My daughter is a competitive fencer and has a spirit of competition that has driven her forward as she has moved upwards in the international fencing world. There would have been nothing wrong with her taking advantage of this situation. Her opponent could have chalked the incident up to bad luck. However, that is not the way my daughter's character works. While she loves competing in fencing, she also has an instinctive sense of fair play and an appreciation for the comradeship of the sport she loves.

Instead of allowing the referee to throw down a yellow card, my daughter did not hesitate. She stepped forward immediately and offered her own spare sword to her opponent so that the match could continue. The opponent was extremely grateful, and I realized that perhaps if the situation had been reversed the opponent might not have acted the same. My daughter completed the match and won it, entering the top 12. The opponent was a gracious loser and seemed to admire my daughter not only for her skills but also for how she had acted. I

am prouder of my daughter's instinctive good sportsmanship and generosity towards other players than I am of her strong finish in the fencing competition. Of course, I was pleased that she had done so well, and that she herself was not knocked out of her own focus by these events. I was also pleased that she demonstrated such great fencing skills under surprising circumstances.

At the same time, I realized that as much as my daughter loves fencing, she will need more than those fencing skills later in life. What this particular moment showed me was that the generosity I had always hoped to instill in my child is now part of her overall good character traits. I believe that this trait of generosity and the overall good character that it demonstrates are part of my child's personality. I know that this kind of behavior is one that she has manifested in every aspect of her life, whether in school or in competition. I believe it will serve her well as she grows.