



# ADMISSION GUIDELINES

In association with GHSA regulations and  
NAIS Principles of Good Practice.

Darlington   
SCHOOL

Darlington School seeks students from all ethnic, cultural, racial, socioeconomic and religious backgrounds who can benefit from a challenging academic program and make positive contributions to our school community. Students are admitted on the basis of school records, academic testing, interviews and teacher recommendations. In addition, extracurricular interests and talents are integral parts of the admission profile.

### **What is the role of a parent, alumni, faculty member or constituent in the student recruitment process?**

Parents, students, alumni and faculty members can provide potential students invaluable insight into life at Darlington School, and the Admission Office encourages you to share those experiences with prospective families. Conversations should describe the complete Darlington experience and not focus on one particular aspect. The following points may be referenced when recommending Darlington to a prospective student or their family:

- Conversations should be limited to programs Darlington offers and specific interests of the student. (Academics, Athletics, Fine Arts)
- When someone expresses an interest in attending Darlington, please direct them to the Admission Office and not to a coach or other faculty member.

### **What is athletic recruitment and why does Darlington not engage in this practice?**

Athletic recruitment involves seeking and accepting students into our community for merely athletic purposes. Through the admission process, Darlington seeks well-rounded students who can make a positive contribution to the community as a whole. We view interscholastic athletics as an integral part of a liberal arts education, so it is obvious that students and parents will be interested in the qualities of Darlington's athletic program. Therefore, the following is intended to help students, parents and school personnel exchange necessary information without crossing the line to unethical recruitment or undue influence.

It is important to note that a student-athlete's eligibility can be affected when Boosters, parents, alumni and friends do not follow these criteria or procedures. Georgia High School Association (GHSA) bylaws are very specific regarding recruiting/undue influence of students for extracurricular activities as stated in bylaw 1.71.

## **1.70 - Recruiting/Undue Influence**

1.71 Recruiting and Undue Influence is defined as the use of influence by any person connected directly or indirectly with a GHSA school to induce a student of any age to transfer from one school to another, or to enter the ninth grade at a member school for athletic or literary competition purposes, whether or not the school presently attended by the student is a member of the GHSA.

(a) The use of undue influence to secure OR retain a student for competitive purposes is prohibited, and shall lead to penalties being assessed against either school. NOTE: This violation may cause the student to forfeit eligibility for one year from the date of enrollment.

(b) Evidence of undue influence includes, but is not limited to, personal contact by coaches and sponsors in an attempt to persuade transfer, gifts of money, jobs, supplies, clothing, free transportation, admission to contests, invitation to attend practices and/or games, or free tuition.

(c) Complaints or reports of violations of this rule will be investigated and handled on a case-by-case basis. If coaches are found to be in violation of the recruiting rule, a copy of the investigation will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commission of the Department of Education.

### **As a member of GHSA, Darlington supports this policy and the rules we follow are:**

- 1.** The responsibility for obtaining information about a school's athletic program rests with the family. Our coaches, athletic director, admission officers and current families can and will provide information about athletic teams given that prospective families initiate contact.
- 2.** Darlington School does not offer any athletic scholarships or promise a starting position on a team upon admission.

3. Prospective students and families should make contact with the school's Admission Office to begin the admission process. Darlington coaches, Boosters, alumni and friends are instructed to urge prospects to contact the Admission Office.
4. Athletics, while an important part of our school, is not more important than any other facet of our programs. Our admission, outreach and financial aid policies and guidelines reflect this.

## **Admission Principles**

Darlington School seeks to follow the admission principles of good practice as outlined by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). The following principles of good practice provide common ground for interaction between independent school admission professionals and their many constituents (parents, students, colleagues at other schools, and the public).

Through the recruitment and selection of students, admission professionals play a critical role in their schools' vitality and educational culture. All admission professionals, as well as the head of school, bear the ultimate responsibility for communicating and upholding these principles of good practice to all professional staff and volunteers (including parents, alumni/ae, tour guides, coaches, faculty and board members) who represent the institution in promotion, recruitment, admission and retention activities.

1. The school seeks to ensure an appropriate match between a prospective student and family and the mission and philosophy of the school.
2. The school respects and affirms the dignity and worth of each individual in the admission process.
3. In establishing policies and procedures for student recruitment and enrollment, particularly in the area of nondiscrimination, the school adheres to local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
4. The school has available in writing those policies and procedures of the school, member associations and/or athletic leagues that may affect a family's decision to enroll.

- 5.** The school operates under a clear set of practices for gathering, disseminating and maintaining prospective student information, and respects the confidentiality of students, families and documents in the admission process. The school will ensure that the admission process and/or transcript have provided sufficient documentation of an appropriate match before offering admission to a student.
- 6.** The school maintains an admission process that respects the needs of students and families to learn about school programs and activities, that communicates in user-friendly formats, and that provides clear information, dates and timeframes for all aspects of the admission process, including expectations around financial aid applications and acceptance of an enrollment offer.
- 7.** The school recognizes that general advertising, direct mail campaigns, and communications between other schools and current independent school families guarantee the free market rights of the families and the general public to consider all options, and that such practices from competitor schools should not be seen as a violation of the spirit of collaboration, collegiality and professionalism reflected in these principles.
- 8.** The school recognizes the right of currently enrolled students and families to consider other educational options, and if a transfer is initiated by the family, the school provides appropriate support and documentation in a timely manner, including reminding the family of any policies related to contractual obligations to the current school.
- 9.** The school shares complete information about the total costs of attending the school and other financial expectations with families before an enrollment commitment is required.
- 10.** The school establishes and furthers collegial relations with neighboring independent schools by undertaking collaborative marketing arrangements to tell the independent school story and to encourage more families to consider independent education.
- 11.** School representatives apply the same high standards of integrity whether talking about their own school or other institutions.

- 12.** The school ensures that all recruitment arrangements support the best interests of the student and do not result in a conflict of interest on the part of the school, individual or firms representing the school.

## **Admission Process**

- Complete an inquiry card with prospective student and family contact information. The Admission Office will then send a packet, including an application and financial aid and merit scholarship information, to the family promptly. Admission officers will also follow-up with the family through e-mails and telephone calls to explain and answer questions about Darlington's admission process.
- Once the admission staff has made initial contact with the family, members of the Darlington Community whose responsibilities correspond with the student's areas of interests will be contacted so that the student can begin to form a connection with the school. It is important to remember that all contact and conversations should be documented and reported to the Admission Office so that these records can become part of the applicant's file.
- The family completes the application and mails it to the school. Once the application is complete, the Admission Committee meets and makes an admission decision.
- When an offer of admission is made, updated lists of student interests will be sent to appropriate members of the Darlington community so that congratulatory phone calls and e-mails can be sent. The Admission Office produces this list once a month.

## **Nondiscriminatory Policy Statement**

A nonprofit organization, Darlington admits students regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, and maintains non-discriminatory policies throughout its operation.



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