

Email from Kim to parent when personal statement is almost done

We send this email when the student is almost done with the first essay. It goes out from Kim and complements the final email from the coach (Joe or David), where they remind the parent why they are happy with the student's essay. Since you are likely both coach and company president, you can use it in place of the final email template or incorporate parts of it in an email, a conversation, an info page, a video... whatever works for you.

[Parent],

I just wanted to check in and let you know how pleased we are with [Student]'s progress. [Write something positive and encouraging, such as this: As [Coach] has already told you, [Student] is moving through the Common App with ease; he is almost done and will be ready to start his supplements for [School] very soon.]

Meanwhile, I wanted to share some tips for reading this essay and others when [Student] is ready to share them with you. We like to remind parents that first and foremost, it's important for their child to feel confident that they have made good choices and written an effective essay they feel proud of.

By the time we've reviewed and proofread any essay, we've already agreed with the student that the essay is effective and finished. We read for theme and reflection; we also consider how much the essay has improved over multiple drafts. With that in mind, I encourage you to read it alone (not in a room with your child) and to make sure you have the prompt and theme with you when you are reading. [Student] can provide the prompt and theme. Remember that at its core, the college essay is all about reflection. It's a *thinking* task as much as a *writing* task. It provides students an opportunity to show people who may never meet them just what kind of person they are. While there is no rubric for a good essay, the most effective ones - the ones that stand out - share a few common features. Regardless of the prompt, an effective essay like [Student's]:

- Answers the prompt.
- Showcases a positive trait or characteristic.
- Sounds like the high school student who wrote it.
- Illustrates something meaningful about the student.
- Demonstrates reflection.

If you read the essay and love it, please tell [Student] everything you think is wonderful about it. If have any questions, or think it could be different or better, please talk to me first before you say anything to your child! I doubt that will happen, but sometimes parent expectations don't match what admissions officers are looking for, and negative feedback can be demoralizing to a student who has worked so hard on an essay they are proud of.

We love this advice from Alison Slater Tate, from the *Washington Post*: "If your child asks you to read their essay, it's okay to point out a typo, but you should refer them to a counselor or teacher for more substantive edits. Treat that essay like the picture they drew you when they were 4 years old: To you, it's brilliant. Let other people give constructive criticism. Save the red ink and just tell your kid that you're proud of them."

[Coach] looks forward to continuing to work with [Student].