INSIDE THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

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Types of Admission

Open Admissions
- High school diploma or GED for admission.
- Examples: Community College

Selective Admissions
- Certain GPAs, ACT/SAT scores are required. Also, an essay and/or interview are often required.
- Examples: Some State Universities, Smaller Private Colleges

Competitive Admissions
- Space is very limited. High school course selection, test scores, and Extracurricular involvement are evaluated very carefully.
- Examples: Some State Universities, Ivy League Institutions
Admission Policy Terminology

- Rolling
- Early Action (EA)
- Restrictive Early Action (REA)
- Early Decision (ED)
- Regular Decision (RG)
Parts of the application

- Transcript
- Standardized Test Scores
- List of Activities
- Letters of Recommendation
- Essays/Personal Statements
What is the admission committee considering?

ACADEMIC RECORD
- Course Selection
- Grades
- SAT / ACT

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS
- Extracurriculars
- Leadership
- Recommendations
- Essays
Admissions Offices evaluate student transcripts by considering the following factors:

- Enrollment in Advanced Placement and/or the IB Program
- Choosing high school courses which prepare students for their college major.
  - Example: more science and math for prospective engineering or pre-med students.
- 12th grade course selection and grades are very important in college admission decisions
- Your high school
  - The percentage of graduates who go on to four-year colleges and universities
  - Which advanced courses are offered at the high school
The Transcript

- Your GPA and class rank
- Curriculum strength
- Grade trend
- What does junior year tell us?
- Any blemishes to explain?
- Senior schedule
Standardized Tests

- Which test should I take?
- How many times should I take it?
- What do schools do with my score?
- What about the writing portion?
- Is the ACT or SAT the only number that really matters?
College Readiness Benchmarks

The ACT scores represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher, or a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing courses. The SAT scores indicate a 75% chance of earning at least a C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT benchmarks:</th>
<th>SAT Benchmarks:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English 18</td>
<td>Evidence-Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math 22</td>
<td>Reading and Writing 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading 22</td>
<td>Math 530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science 23</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Letters of Recommendation

- Clear and comprehensive recommendations can make a difference in admissions decisions.
- Recommendations can come from teachers, counselors, coaches, advisers, employers, etc.
- Provide 3-4 weeks notice for a recommendation to be written.
- Provide a “brag sheet” to the person writing the recommendation.
- Recommendations are reviewed looking for the following information:
  - Comparisons to other students in the class.
  - Information about the school grading system and/or competition for grades.
  - Illustrative examples or anecdotes.
  - Personal information (example personal problems or health issues which had an impact on performance.)
  - Other personal traits or study habit information.
Extracurricular activities

- Commitment, level of accomplishment, initiative, and leadership are most important.
- Admissions offices will ask the following questions when reviewing student resumes/activity lists in an application:
  - How much time does the student devote to this activity?
  - Is there evidence of leadership—is the student an officer or leader in the organization/sport?
  - Balance is best—do not limit involvement to one type of activity.
  - Volunteerism is very important.
List of Activities

- Don’t join every club senior year just to make it “look good”
- We like to see commitment and passion
- Don’t forget work and outside activities
- This is a good time to brag
- There are no activities that “count more” than others
Personal Statements and Essays

- If the application asks a question, answer it. If it imposes a word limit, stick to it.
- The “tell us about yourself” essay
  - If it’s the first time you’ve thought about it, don’t write your essay about it.
  - Be passionate!
  - Let us get to know you.
- Make sure your voice comes through in all of the written portions of the application.
Hints for Writing the College Essay

- Start early
- Be yourself
- Be honest
- Stay focused on your topic
- Write and re-write
- Get a second opinion
- Proofread
- Know which school you are applying to
- Don’t confuse applying on-line with sending an e-mail
What admissions counselors think:

100 admission counselors were asked to name the top 4 hints for high school seniors to make their admission application more competitive.

- Ask for recommendations early
- Thoroughly complete entire application
- Don’t be modest on activities
- Apply before the application deadline
Applying for Admission

- Narrow your choices
- Review college admission test requirements
- Know application fees and deadlines
- Know scholarship requirements
- Submit application materials
Questions?

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