

# Planning for College in 9th and 10th grades

# My Philosophy

Give parents and students the information and tools needed to find the right fit for each individual for post secondary school.

It's about finding the right fit for YOU!

Keeping the stress down- information, education statistics, encouragement and reality- whatever I can do to make this an exciting time.

Admissions is only the beginning. The real goal is going to a school that is such a good fit that you stay until you graduate and have the skills to begin your career.

# Recent Trends

Many paths to a career goal.

Dual Admission and/or 2+2 Programs- increase in Community College

Employment- expect there will be post secondary training

Internships and experiential learning expectations

Skills Focus- not degree or school based

Integration and combining of programs

Career Focus begins early

Cost

# Curriculum Planning

## **4 year College: Bachelor's Degree**

4 years of English

3-4 years of Social Studies/History

2-4 years of Foreign Language (2 years required,  
3 preferred)

4 years of Math (Alg 2 plus 1 level)

3-4 years of Science (including 2 lab sciences-  
typically Bio and Chem)

*The most selective colleges expect 4 years of all core courses.*

# Curriculum Planning

## **2 year Colleges: Associate's Degree**

4 years of English

2-3 years of Social Studies

Math: minimum of Alg 1 but differs by program

Science: 2 years but many programs require certain classes

Often Biology and Chemistry

# Curriculum: What do Colleges look for

- ▶ Did you meet the basic, minimum requirements for admission and for your major? (Will you be able to come to this college and do the work?)
- ▶ Did you challenge yourself? Rigor counts!
- ▶ Extras: Extended Learning Opportunities (Internships, Ind Study etc), Online Classes, Dual Enrollment, CTE Vocational Programs

# Simple vs Weighted GPA and Rank

- ▶ Weighted GPA- core courses (English, SS, Math, Science and For Lang) only, added weight for CP, Honors and AP.
  - ▶ Weighted GPA is used for NHS and to generate the Weighted Rank used for top 10 etc.
  - ▶ Weighted Rank tells colleges how the student compares in context of everyone else in the same school with same opportunities and the same weighting calculation
- ▶ Simple GPA-average of all grades.
  - 4 point scale: (0.0 F 1.0 D 2.0 C 3.0 B 4.0 A)
  - ▶ Can be compared (with limits)

# What Colleges Do with the Rank and GPA

- ▶ Many colleges re-calculate the GPA according to their own rules.
- ▶ They use the grades on the transcript
- ▶ High schools send a School Profile to describe what we offer and what the levels are
- ▶ They only include certain subjects and even certain classes
- ▶ They add their own weight
- ▶ Goal is to make everyone as equal as possible



# What level should I take?

- ▶ College Prep: a student who completes this course will have all the concepts that colleges expect a student to have knowledge of to continue in college
- ▶ Honors: More depth, covered more curriculum than the minimum preparation for college
- ▶ AP: level is same as taught in college. Very specific curriculum, national, test. Colleges know exactly what a student was taught.

What do colleges want me to take?

The highest level that you can get A to B- in.

If you are going to be getting a C in an Honors class, it may not help you to be in that level. This is a blurred line- no exact rule.

AP courses are difficult enough that getting lower grades is “okay” within reason

# Well- that really clears it up. Not.

- ▶ For most colleges, solid A's and B's in all college prep and above will earn admission easily
  - ▶ Proof that you can do the work expected at the college level
  - ▶ I can't get anything less than a B-?!!!
    - ▶ There is a wide range of college admissions and colleges that will accept students who got C's and lower
    - ▶ However, they want to be sure you can be successful in college.
    - ▶ Trending upward is good
- ▶ For very elite schools (the top 50), the competition will be in in Honors and AP courses.
  - ▶ Most will be getting A's and Bs to be competitive
  - ▶ It's more about who you are competing with

# Not Just About Grades

- ▶ Admissions asks 2 questions:

**1. Will this student be successful academically? Will they be able to graduate?**

**2. Will this student fit well into this college community? Will they be happy enough to stay and graduate?**

- ▶ What you do with your free time: activities, work etc
- ▶ What impact have you made on your school and community?
- ▶ What you like, what you want: essay, recommendations,
- ▶ It's all about **FIT**

# Additional Factors Colleges Consider

Positive recommendations from educators and mentors

Personal statement and essay(s) demonstrating writing ability and self-expression

Extracurricular activities, including participation in sports, performing/visual arts, volunteering, etc.

Knowing why a school is a good fit

Community involvement, part-time work or internship

Interview (if applicable)

# Activities

Not a laundry list- more is not always better

Exploring is fine- Trying something and deciding it's not for you is okay

Quality over Quantity: Commit to an activity, have an impact, really care about it.

What impact did the applicant have on their school and community?

# Keeping the Stress Down

- ▶ There are more pathways to goals than ever before and there are a lot of great colleges out there.
- ▶ No college is perfect. But there are many great fits for each student!
- ▶ Focus on doing your best in high school- don't forget to enjoy the ride.
- ▶ Find subjects and activities that excite you- and do them! Take advantage of opportunities. It's okay to learn what you don't like too.
- ▶ Get to know your counselor, college counselor and your teachers so we can help you find your way and write you great recommendation letters.
- ▶ Expect lots of change in your interests and ideas- it's okay! There is so much out there to explore. You don't have to plan your whole life now.

# What can I do to figure out the best fit?

- ▶ Visit colleges- doesn't have to be an official tour. Could be a camp, going to a game, strolling through while doing something else.
- ▶ Internet- use virtual tours, search vehicles, fun sites that compare schools
- ▶ Think about what is important to you- be in a city? Be near the ocean? Have an experience far from home?
- ▶ Career: best programs for your interests
- ▶ Just feels right- some campuses just feel more like a place you belong
- ▶ Don't focus on the statistics too much, don't be swayed by a terrible tour guide or a friend's opinion

# How can I help my child?

Developmental Process- not every student is ready to think about the future or make plans or figure out what they want to do on our timeline

Exposure- talk about careers, changes in jobs, options and colleges as an ongoing discussion.

Point out how certain interests may be something you can study or do as a career. Make connections between what they are doing and what they might want to do.

If you are near a college, drive through. You don't have to do a tour.

Tours of nearby schools- junior year. Just to get some baseline ideas about size, setting, feel of the campus.

Focus on the positive and what is successful. Be realistic

Focus on FIT- where am I going to be successful, prepared for a career and happy?



# Statistics

Of the 1,364 four-year colleges and universities:

17 admitted fewer than 10%

29 schools admitted between 10% and 20% of applicants

More than half admitted 66% or more of applicants

# Stats that Matter

Students are applying to more colleges so the numbers can be misleading

Colleges are marketing to more than ever

There are fewer high school college bound seniors than spaces in colleges.  $\frac{2}{3}$  of colleges did not meet their “yield” rates for the last couple of years year.

Retention rates, graduation rates and job placement- these are numbers to focus on and ask questions about

# Current Events.....

How will grades from this time period be dealt with?

Will it affect my child's chances of getting in?

What about lost curriculum and long term effects?

What can we be doing now?

Test Optional

Colleges in Financial Trouble

Virtual Tours, Virtual Visits and Spring Tours

How will grades from this time period be dealt with?

Early feedback on this year's admissions

Secrets!

# Questions?

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When there is not a pandemic, I visit English classes each year to do some group presentations about post secondary options of all kinds. During the junior year, I go into English classes at least twice and then also in the fall of senior year.

While I start to see most students individually beginning in January of the junior year, I am happy to meet with students at any time who would like to.

Since I write the letter of recommendation, my goal is to meet with students multiple times to get to know them as individuals, understand where they have come from and want to go, what's important to them and also see them in context of the school community.

I have the best job!