

Sophomore College Planning Night

Pelham Memorial High School
February 6, 2020

Topics for Discussion

Course Selection

High School Performance

Standardized Test Scores

Extracurricular Involvement

College Visits

Importance of “Fit”

Course Selection

Q: How important is my course selection in general, and specifically for my junior and senior year of high school?

Course Selection

- ▶ Should be appropriate for the individual student
- ▶ Rigor vs. Performance ex. Take H or AP or get an A in a CP level class
- ▶ Preparation for different intended college majors ex. AP Physics for Engineering
- ▶ Evaluation in context of your high school
- ▶ Academic classes vs. electives
- ▶ Minimum requirements for high school graduation vs. college matriculation

Grade Point Average

Q: How important is my
high school
performance?

GPA

- ▶ Different schools will have different approaches, but generally important
- ▶ Cumulative GPA over time in conjunction with Grade trends and rigor
- ▶ Weighted vs. unweighted GPA's
- ▶ Recalculating
- ▶ Academic classes vs. electives

Standardized Tests

Q: How important are my standardized test scores?

Standardized Tests

- ▶ Vary from school to school
- ▶ ACT, SAT, SAT subject tests
- ▶ Test optional institutions
- ▶ Cut-offs, minimums and mid 50%
- ▶ Considered in context
- ▶ Prepare for exam
- ▶ How many times should I take the exam?

Extracurricular Involvement

Q: How important is it
for me to be involved
outside of the
classroom?

Extracurricular Involvement

- ▶ Well rounded vs. targeted interest
- ▶ Application padding or true passion?
- ▶ No right list of groups and organizations
- ▶ Leadership and sustained involvement
- ▶ Community involvements
- ▶ Part time employment
- ▶ Research

College Visits

Q: How important is it to take a trip to the colleges that I am applying to?

College Visits

- ▶ Important, but be practical in early stages
 - ▶ Use local institutions as a guide
 - ▶ Do your research in advance
 - ▶ Look for Regional programming/high school visits for distant schools
- ▶ Take advantage of everything that is available to you (classes, interviews, information sessions, tours)
- ▶ For school's you are seriously considering, don't stop with the admission office
- ▶ Demonstrated interest
- ▶ Use a journal to keep track of your experiences to inform your final decision

Importance of “Fit”

Q: What is the importance of “fit” in my college list?

Finding the Right Fit

- ▶ Much like with clothing, fit is everything!
 - ▶ This is a student decision within the framework of family input
 - ▶ Have conversations early as a family to set expectations
- ▶ Name recognition does not necessarily equal best experience
- ▶ Self Reflection in key:
 - ▶ “What is most important to me in a college experience? What are my ‘deal breakers’? Where will I be most successful? Where will I learn best?”
- ▶ College process is about discovering the place that will suit your needs-academically, socially, financially etc.
- ▶ Use your college counseling office, university websites/material and guidebooks

Questions

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