

Sophomore Planning



PELHAM MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

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 101



- 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 101



- 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 Test Scores



Q: How important are my standardized test scores?

Standardized Tests



- Vary from school to school
- Test optional institutions or SAT/ACT required
- Cut-offs, minimums and mid 50%
- Considered in context
- Should I take the exam?

Extracurricular Involvements



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

Extracurricular Involvement 101



- 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 visit the colleges that I am applying to?

College Visits 101



- 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
- Later on, 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 101



- 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 and Answers?

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