

Competitive College Admissions

The Challenge of the Admissions Committee

- ◆ Which applicants would you choose for a highly competitive college?
- ◆ A community?

Example of a competitive college application: The Common Application.

Download it at www.commonapp.org

Six Things Looked At By Competitive Colleges

Academic Achievements

- ◆ Rigor of Course Work
- ◆ Achievement in Course Work
- ◆ Standardized Test Scores

Personal Qualities/Extracurricular Achievements

- ◆ Counselor & Teacher Recommendations
- ◆ Extracurricular Activities
- ◆ Student Essay

Rigor of Course Work and Achievement in Course Work

- ◆ Goal: to encourage your child to take as many rigorous courses *as she can do well in*.
- ◆ Help out by researching advanced high school options.

Standardized Testing Tips

- ◆ The junior year PSAT is the qualifying test for the National Merit competition, so students should prepare for it the summer before 11th grade.
- ◆ If possible, students should take one or two SAT subject tests before 11th grade.
- ◆ Remember Score Choice beginning March of 2009.
- ◆ Help your child find a test preparation method that works for him.
- ◆ A free online program can be found at www.Number2.com.

Counselor & Teacher Recommendations

- ◆ Review the Common Application Teacher Recommendation form with your child.

Extracurricular Activities

- ◆ Encourage your child to explore several areas early in high school and then make a serious commitment to a few areas.
- ◆ Include a service activity that is meaningful to your teenager.
- ◆ Encourage your child to expand his horizons beyond the high school.
 - Summer programs
 - Competitions
 - Science fairs, math competitions, essay, creative writing, arts, etc.
 - Community organizations
 - Churches, non-profits, hospitals, museums
 - Internships & Other Employment

Student Essay

- ◆ An excellent essay should add something to the application, be interesting, & sound like an 18 year old
- ◆ Help out by showing your child examples of good and bad essays.

Putting It All Together

- ◆ Throughout high school, help your child define who he is and what is special about him.
- ◆ Begin long-range academic and extracurricular planning early to help your teenager make the most of her opportunities and build an outstanding high school record.
- ◆ Help your child put together a college application that is an appealing representation of his or her best self.
- ◆ Help keep your child motivated by reminding him or her that college is fun!

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