

MCNEAL SAMS COLLEGE CONSULTING NEWS AND NOTES

WHAT TO DO NOW CHECKLIST

- It's time to begin picking your courses for next year. Think about how to appropriately build in rigor and exploration of areas that are of interest. Think about your schedule over the remainder of high school. How will you meet graduation requirements, show interest, and take on growing academic challenges?



- Explore options for what you will do this summer. See the second page of this newsletter for ideas and information about why making the most of the summer is important.



Need assistance with any of these items? Contact your consultant.

WELCOME TO OUR QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

We have something new just for you. Each quarter of your freshmen and sophomore years, you will receive a newsletter. The newsletter will highlight recommended "to do's" and share insights into the various aspects of your college choice experience. You will also receive our recommendations on interesting articles, podcasts, and books regarding college admission and college life. Our goal is to keep you informed and help guide you through your college choice journey. We hope you enjoy!

WHAT MATTERS IN COLLEGE ADMISSION?

As a high school student, we hope the one message you have received is what you do in high school will determine your opportunities in college. What does this mean, though? College admission in the US is one of the most confusing and misunderstood processes you will encounter. That is because the United States has a unique system of higher education that is centered on the idea of choice. You have the luxury of choosing the place that is best for you. Of course, this also means that the colleges have the same luxury. They get to choose to admit the students who will help them best fulfill their mission, be comfortable with the school's values, and help the school best achieve their goals. What does all that mean for you and for admission?

It is not surprising that one of the most frequent questions we receive is some form of what really matters in college admission. While each school will have its own priorities for reviewing candidates, there are some criteria all schools use. The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), an organization made up of more than 26,000 college admission and college counseling admission professionals, the top 3 factors in admission year after year are your grades overall, your grades in college preparatory courses, and the strength of your curriculum (in other words, how much additional rigor you have added to your coursework). That's right, the top three factors, by an overwhelming majority all relate to the work you are doing in your high school classes.

Certainly, there are many other factors that come into play as well. Those factors vary in their importance by the school. **You can see NACAC's full report, The State of College Admission, here.** And we will discuss standardized testing specifically in college admission in a later edition of this newsletter.

All of this is to say, your grades matter, and your willingness to explore and challenge yourself matters. Confused? Not sure what this means for you? Contact your consultant to discuss college admission, your goals, and how to lay a foundation for success in your college selection experience.

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NEWS AND NOTES

TALK AROUND TOWN

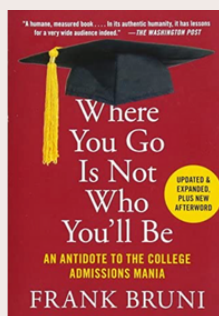
Some items we have found interesting recently:

Article: [5 Things to Know About Selective College Admission in 2022](#),

by Matt Musico

Podcast: [College Admissions Insider](#)

by Bucknell University



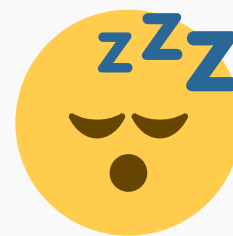
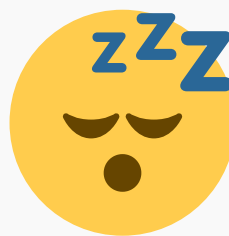
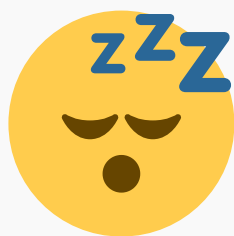
Reading Recommendations: *Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be*, by Frank Bruni

KINDNESS CORNER: WHY WE LOVE SLEEP

In our role as counselors, we talk a lot about what you can do to give yourself the best college options. Give your full effort in school; get involved in the community; be good to yourself and others. But is there any easy way to accomplish all that? Yes. Get more sleep. 70% of teenagers report getting just seven hours of sleep a night – or fewer. The average adolescent needs anywhere between eight and ten hours. That includes you!

Getting enough sleep improves brain function, mood, efficiency, and judgment. You're less likely to act impulsively when you're rested. Your reflexes will be better, making you a more capable athlete, dancer, even driver. We know you're busy. But we also know that 89% of teens keep their phones in their rooms at night. *I swear, I'll stop after the next TikTok...*oops, suddenly you've lost an hour to watching that tiny kitten scare the family Doberman or Harry Styles forgetting the lyrics again.

Think about how to increase the amount of sleep you get. Make the investment in yourself. It will pay off in so many ways. You deserve it.



SPOTLIGHT ON SUMMER

It may be the early days of winter but it is not too early to begin planning your summer. The summer is the perfect time to explore a potential career, develop your leadership skills, hone your expertise in a favorite area, earn some money, or share your talents with others. Whatever you choose is okay: it is just important to make this summer productive. Click on the images below to explore some fascinating options. Please note, the links below are not exhaustive lists of all the opportunities available. Ask your consultant for suggestions that make sense for you.

RESEARCH



CAREER EXPLORATION



THE ARTS



VOLUNTEER

