

# College Admission Tips

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BOOST YOUR ODDS? GET AN ADMISSIONS OFFICER TO NOTICE YOU!

College admissions officers use a comprehensive review process to evaluate students' academic accomplishments, as well as their essays and personal statements, their leadership opportunities, contributions to the community, individual circumstances, and distinctive attributes. Test scores are also evaluated, but admissions officers say that test scores are rarely the decisive factor.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Distinguishing factors that have a positive impact on college applications include:

- ☐ **Challenging senior year:** Taking a full academic load through senior year.
- ☐ **World languages:** Taking 3 or 4 years of the same foreign language.
- ☐ **Math & Science:** Taking Math through pre-calculus or calculus and 4 years of science, including chemistry and physics.
- ☐ **Rigorous courses:** While advanced classes such as AP, Honors, Running Start, and IB are outstanding options for many students, taking a full schedule of "regular" classes can be equally impressive in the application review.
- ☐ **Personal attributes:** Perseverance in the face of significant hardship; personal contributions to the community, including multiculturalism, exceptional talent, leadership, heart, and passion for a subject, activity or cause.
- ☐ **Strong application:** Well-written essays or personal statements.
- ☐ **Strong extracurriculars:** Sustained involvement and leadership, including risk taking.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

Here are some areas where students hurt themselves on college applications.

- ☐ **Too little challenge:** Little or no academic coursework beyond the core requirements, even though more challenging options are available.
- ☐ **Senioritis.** Students who mistakenly assume that senior year is not important.
- ☐ **Too little Math or Science:** Less than 3-4 years of math or missing core requirements for Chemistry or Physics.
- ☐ **A grade slide:** Sporadic attendance or negative grade trends, frequently followed by an across the board drop in curricular rigor.
- ☐ **Poor presentation:** Not taking the time to put the best foot forward; missing deadlines; failing to follow up on requests for additional information.

*Summarized from Western Washington University's Admissions Office "We Admit" Newsletter, March 200*